

March 11, 2009

Dear Architects,

Since 2004, the Town of Portola Valley has required the completion and submittal of the San Mateo County Green Building Checklist with all ASCC project applications as a means of educating both residents and their architects on the importance of sustainable building and that beginning in the project design phase is key. While not mandating completion or installation of items indicated on the submitted checklist, the Town has followed-up with project teams at the end of project construction to gain insight on the ability/feasibility of projects to carry out greener building measures and reasons for omission of elements under certain circumstances.

Additionally, during these past four years, the Town has provided a number of sources to further educate residents and their project teams on building with sustainability in mind. This has been accomplished by providing the San Mateo Green Building Guidelines handbook, posting information and articles on the Town website, discussing greener design elements during the conceptual stage of projects, adopting the Sustainability Element to the Town's General Plan, and most recently in the creation of the position of a Sustainability & Resource Efficiency Coordinator, held by Brandi de Garreaux, who actively works to educate and generate interest in sustainability throughout the community.

As the Town of Portola Valley moves forward to educate the community and actively take measures to reduce our carbon footprint and promote sustainability, we are in the process of developing a Green Building Ordinance that will mandate a "point system" for both addition/remodel and new construction projects via the Build-It-Green (BIG) Checklist. We will also be using BIG's Guidelines. In order to prepare for the requirements of this upcoming ordinance, **we are transitioning from using the San Mateo Green Building Checklist to the BIG Checklists (there is one for existing homes and one to be used for new homes) as of April 1, 2009.** All ASCC applications received as of April 1, 2009 must be accompanied by both a completed BIG Checklist and have it included on one of the plan sheets. Until the Town of Portola Valley adopts a Green Building Ordinance, the completion and installation of any items checked off on the list will be "voluntary" and we will continue to conduct end-of-construction follow-up on these projects.

Please browse the Build-It-Green website, their guidelines, and checklists at www.builditgreen.org. If you have any questions, please contact me at (650) 851-1700 ex. 211.

Sincerely,

Carol Borck
Planning Technician