

Architectural and Site Control Commission
Regular Evening Meeting, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, California

September 14, 2009

Chair Clark called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the town center Historic School House meeting room.

Roll Call:

ASCC: Clark, Aalfs, Hughes, Warr
Absent: Breen
Town Council Liaison: Derwin
Planning Commission Liaison: Von Feldt
Town Staff: Deputy Town Planner Vlasic

Oral Communications

Oral communications were requested, but none were offered.

Report on Cancellation of Scheduled Special Afternoon ASCC meeting, Preliminary Architectural Review for residential redevelopment and Site Development Permit X9H-604, 133 Stonegate Road, McAdam

Vlasic advised that the subject scheduled special ASCC site meeting on the McAdam project could not take place as noticed (i.e., for 4:00 p.m.) as a quorum was not available. He explained, however, that two ASCC members were present as were the applicant, project architect and several neighbors. He advised that he would report on the events of the informal site meeting during formal preliminary consideration of the McAdam project, which was the next item on the ASCC agenda.

Preliminary Architectural Review for residential redevelopment and Site Development Permit X9H-604, 133 Stonegate Road, McAdam

Vlasic presented the September 11, 2009 staff report on this preliminary review of a proposal for residential redevelopment of the subject 1.28-acre Stonegate Subdivision property. He explained that the proposal calls for removal of the existing residence, decommissioning of the existing swimming pool, and construction of a new, contemporary design home with flat roof forms. He further explained that the driveway would be preserved but most other yard improvements would be significantly modified with the project.

Vlasic commented that due to site slopes, tree cover, septic system requirements and the desire to concentrate development toward the center of the parcel and further away from, particularly, the house on the parcel to the east, the project calls for concentrating more than 85% of the permitted floor area in the house with attached garage, i.e., the single largest structure. Vlasic explained that this is only possible subject to the ASCC making special findings as discussed in the staff report.

With respect to grading, it was noted that the plans call for a total volume of grading 910 cubic yards and that since the volume exceeds 100 cubic yards but is less than 1,000 cubic yards, the subject site development permit is required and the ASCC is the approving authority for this permit.

The proposed plans listed below were considered during the course of preliminary project discussion. It was noted that, unless otherwise noted, the plans were dated July 14, 2009 and prepared by Tobin Architects PA:

- Sheet CS, Cover Sheet (with computer model images)
- Sheet C1.0, Grading & Drainage Plan, Plan, Giuliani & Kull, Inc., Engineering, 6/5/09
- Sheet L1.0, Landscape Plan, Thomas Scherer Associates
- Sheet A1.0, Architectural Site / Lighting Plan
- Sheet A2.0, (N) Basement Level / Foundation Plan
- Sheet A2.1, Main / Split Level Floor Plan (with exterior lighting details)
- Sheet A2.2, Second Level Floor Plan
- Sheet A2.3, Roof Plan
- Sheet A4.1, Left and Back Elevations
- Sheet A4.2, Entry and Right Side Elevations
- Sheet A5.1, Sections

Also considered were the exterior colors and materials board dated July 2009 and the cut sheets for the proposed house light fixtures.

Vlasic stressed that this is a preliminary review of the subject applications and that following sharing of public and ASCC comments and reactions, project review should be continued to the October 26th regular ASCC meeting. It was noted that this would permit time for completion of processing of the site development permit request and also for the project design team to respond to preliminary review comments.

Vlasic then provided the following summary of the events that occurred during the informal, afternoon site visit. He noted that the inspection took place between 4:00 and 5:30 p.m. and was attended by the following persons:

- ASCC members: Clark, Breen
- Tim McAdam, applicant
- Tobin Dougherty, project architect
- Kathy and Dan Williams, 141 Stonegate Road (neighbors to the south)
- Ann Kohs, 115 Stonegate Road (neighbor to the north)
- Wil Patterson, 126 Stonegate Road
- Tom Vlasic, deputy town planner

Vlasic stated that Mr. Gerald Kohs, 115 Stonegate Road, could not attend the afternoon session, but had left a voice mail at town hall expressing concerns over the two story portion of the project, echoing concerns expressed by Ms. Kohs during the course of the site visit. Specifically, it was noted that the voice message expressed the hope that the two-story portion could be moved to a different location and away from the slope over the downhill property.

Vlasic then summarized the following information gathered by staff and others during the informal afternoon site visit:

1. Story poles and mesh taping were in place to facilitate project understanding. These were inspected at several locations onsite and from Stonegate Road as well as the Kohs property.

2. The project architect and applicant offered the following clarifications during the course of the informal review:

- The two-story element was actually moved six feet south from the original proposal in response to early staff review and recommendations.
- All metal features will match the proposed “chocolate” zinc finish. The windows would be metal or have exterior metal cladding. The steel beam will be painted to match zinc color.
- In response to comments in the staff report, the lighting plan will be modified to eliminate the one upper, recessed light over the doors to the west side terrace.
- No new fencing is now proposed, but may be considered for vegetation protection from deer.
- The landscape architect will be at the evening meeting to clarify the proposals.
- The objectives with the placement of the two-story element were to keep it away from property lines and place within the established tree canopy. A solid deck railing (18-20”) below the open, upper steel pipe railing helps to shield views and potential light spill.
- Driveway materials have not yet been clarified, but would be selected to meet fire district standards.
- Construction staging would take place in a phased manner on site and the Stonegate Road cul-de-sac bulb would not be used for construction staging and parking.
- Photovoltaic panels would likely be mounted flat on the flat roof portions of the house. At this point, the intent would be to use more “flat-mounted” panels before considering angling the panels at 30 degrees.
- The existing house would be slowly deconstructed. At this point, construction is tentatively planned to start in the Spring 2011, with a 12 to 14 month construction period.
- The plans anticipate removal of one very poor Blue Oak in the rear yard area and, perhaps in time, one large cypress. Further, two oaks adjacent to the two-story extension would be trimmed, and perhaps the low angled trunk of the double-trunk oak removed. A considerable amount of new planting is, however, proposed on the north side slope below the two-story element.
- In response to a question, it was noted that drainage visible on the north side of the site is likely from the existing “French Drain” and not from the existing septic system. It was also noted that work is continuing with the County Health Officer on the the septic system design that would be needed for the proposed project, and that new “perc” tests have been completed for the property.
- In response to a question, it was noted that no ceiling can lights would be used in the master bedroom and that, instead, lighting would be with wall sconces. It was also noted that north side window areas are limited, further limiting potential for light spill.
- With respect to the proposed north side master bedroom deck, it was noted that it has a small depth, i.e., six feet, and is not “entertainment” space. It is only for the purpose of enjoying views on this side of the house.

3. The neighbors offered the following comments:

Mr. and Mrs. Williams:

- The existing south side fencing is not on the property line and actually extends onto the Williams property.
- There is concern over the view to roof and solar panels, particularly if they are mounted at 30-degree angle adding height to the roof area.

- Second story windows are of concern, but the plans appear to have been modified to resolve this concern.
- Lighting at night should be limited.
- Screening along property line is needed, but can be worked out between neighbors.
- The small, non-standard cul-de-sac bulb is a problem for delivery of large materials and should not be used for construction staging or parking.

Wil Patterson:

- The key concerns are over construction staging and limitations presented by the undersized cul-de-sac bulb.
- Shared Kohs concerns over two-story element before Mrs. Kohs arrived.
- Advised that he has not yet noticed the story poles from his property but will check and advise the applicant and town of any concerns.

Anne Kohs:

- Main concern is over the second story above her property. Also concerned with the size of the house and whether or not the proposed architectural character is in harmony with residential conditions neighborhood. (Town house size policies and standards, as well as architectural policies, were discussed and clarified at the Kohs property.)
- Concern over placement of the two-story element at the “top of the slope.”
- In general, “like proposed architectural style,” just worry if it fits the neighborhood.
- Drainage and leachfield concerns need to be fully considered before building plans are approved. New septic system and drainage plans need to be properly developed and implemented.

4. During the visit to the Kohs property it was noted that a large “street light” on a utility pole is located on the property just to the north of the proposed McAdam house extension. Mrs. Kohs advised that this is a preexisting pole and light has been on the site prior to her purchase of the property.

5. **Breen** advised that she could not attend the evening meeting, but offered the following preliminary comments and concerns:

- “Lovely project,” and general reaction to the design approach and architecture is positive. Further, based on the site visit, there is less concern over the two-story element. This conclusion was reached after visiting the Kohs property and considering the proposed plant screening.
- Significant screening is planned along the north side of proposed house extension and is appropriate.
- The interior lighting in master bedroom needs to be clarified on the plans.
- Construction staging and tree protection plans are essential to making the project successful.
- Existing oleanders should be removed.

6. **Clark** advised that he would offer preliminary comments at the formal evening ASCC meeting.

After Vlastic presented the summary of the informal afternoon site visit, project discussion continued between the project design team and ASCC members. Mr. McAdam, Tobin Dougherty and Tom Sherer, project landscape architect, were present. They reiterated much of the data shared at the afternoon session (as reported above).

During the course of the discussion, public comments were requested. Only **planning commission liaison Von Feldt** offered input. Specifically, she suggested that instead of using fencing to control deer feeding on new native shrubs, consideration be given to installing bunch grasses around the shrubs as deer do not like to walk in such grasses. Mr. Scherer advised he would consider this approach.

Aalfs advised that while he could not attend the afternoon session, he was able to visit the site earlier in the day and consider the story poles and, in general, site and area conditions.

Hughes advised that while he could not attend the afternoon meeting, he hoped to visit the property in the next few days to consider the story poles and concerns and issues associated with the project.

After discussion, and considering the report on the events and clarifications presented at the afternoon site visit, the following preliminary ASCC comments and reactions were offered for consideration as plans are readied for ASCC consideration at the next regular meeting:

- In general, the location of the two-story element is appropriate. An arborist, however, needs to consider the potential tree impacts and also advise on tree trimming and tree removal.
- While the architectural design approach and two-story element siting are acceptable, more design effort is needed to “de-emphasize” the height at the northerly master bedroom extension, particularly the northwest corner. A refined use of colors and materials should be considered. Further, extending the appearance of the master bedroom deck form/materials might be considered to further break-up the two-story massing.
- The proposal for concentration of floor area seems appropriate and superior in this case to a plan that would include a detached accessory structure.
- The site plans need to be clarified to show all existing materials to be removed, including the oleanders and the junipers along the driveway.
- Plans for “deer” protection of the screen planting proposed along the north side need to be presented on the landscape plan. The preference is not to use fencing, but if temporary fencing is proposed it should be shown on the plans.
- The screen planting along the south property line should be worked out with the uphill neighbor and plans modified as appropriate. While the proposed orchard may be acceptable, the need for additional view screening should be considered and this may require some adjustment to the orchard plans. Further, the plant screening along the south property line should be less linear than suggested with the current plans, and the orchard layout should be more “orchard like.”
- The colors and materials appear acceptable as presented and clarified. The plans, however, should clearly detail the finishes for all metal surfaces including the steel tubing to be used for the deck railing systems.
- If any new fencing is proposed or if any existing fencing is to be relocated, this should be shown on the plans.

- Septic system plans need to be clarified.
- Details for the proposed rear yard shed and BBQ trellis are needed.
- The applicant may want to consider some window opening in the rear garage wall to allow more natural light in the garage area.
- Clarify the details for mounting of the proposed solar panels and roof placement of the panels. It appears that both the lower and upper roof areas could be effectively used for the panels. Further, the finishes for the flat roof areas need to be clarified on the plans and colors board. Reflectivity is of concern.
- Consider using the E-3 light fixture instead of the E-1 fixture at the “kids playroom” door and on the wall at the south side of the family room. Further, eliminate the two west facing E-3 step lights at the front entry steps.
- Clarify plans for controlling solar gain at the west side high window areas. (It was noted that shades would likely need to be used.)
- A detailed and comprehensive construction staging and tree protection plan will be needed.

Following discussion and sharing of the above comments and preliminary reactions, project consideration was continued to the regular October 26, 2009 ASCC meeting.

Architectural Review for House Additions and remodeling, 5 Quail, Portola Valley Ranch, Eyre

Vlasic presented the September 11, 2009 staff report on this proposal for the addition of 1,059 sf of floor area to the existing single-story, pitched roof, 2,201 sf residence on the subject Portola Valley Ranch parcel. He explained that the project includes bedroom, bath and stair additions on the existing main level that total 668 sf and a lower level recreation space containing 391 sf. Vlasic noted that the project also includes main level deck additions and modification of some windows and sliding glass doors and new roof volume over the existing west side living room.

ASCC members considered the staff report and the following project plans received by the town on September 3, 2009 and, unless otherwise noted, dated 7/31/09:

- Sheet A1.1, (N) Site Plan
- Sheet A2.0, Demolition Plan
- Sheet 3, Proposed Floor Plan
- Sheet A2.1, (N) Main Floor & Schedules
- Sheet A2.2, (N) Lower Floor
- Sheet A3.1, (N) Elevations
- Sheet A3.2, (N) Elevations
- Sheet A2.1, (N) Main Floor & Schedules
- Sheet AB1.1, (E) Site Plan, 5/20/09
- Sheet AB2.1, (E) Floor Plan, 5/20/09
- Sheet AB3.1, (E) Building Elevations, 5/20/09
- Sheet AB3.2, (E) Building Elevations, 5/20/09
- Sheet AB4.1, (E) Roof Plan, 5/20/09

Sheet AB5.1, (E) Fdn. Plan & Section, 5/20/09
Sheet A2.1, (N) Main Floor & Schedules (with exterior lighting plans)
Sheet A2.2, (N) Lower Floor (with exterior lighting plans)

Also considered were several photo images of the existing house and site conditions including an image of the existing house T-111 siding, which is finished in a solid taupe colored stain. It was noted that existing trim and fascia boards match the siding and that all new exterior materials and finishes would match existing conditions.

Ms. Susan Eyre presented the proposal and a project model with ASCC members. She also advised that the plans had been approved by the Portola Valley Ranch Design Committee as stated in the August 13, 2009 letter from Deborah Soule of the Portola Valley Ranch Association. It was noted that this approval letter had been included with the staff report on the project.

Ms. Eyre also noted that, as explained in the staff report, the buyers of the subject property desired to have the addition plans approved by the Ranch and Town according to the phased improvement process set forth in the Ranch approval letter. She also noted that no landscaping was planned at this time and the Ranch approval did not include any landscape requirements.

Public comments were requested, but none were offered.

After brief discussion, Warr moved, seconded by Aalfs and passed 4-0 approval of the project as proposed subject to the following conditions to be addressed to the satisfaction of planning staff prior to issuance of a building permit:

1. The drawing details and notes shall be clarified to be clear as to the demolition plan and existing and proposed conditions.
2. A detailed construction staging and vegetation protection plan shall be provided and, once approved, implemented to the satisfaction of planning staff.
3. Necessary tree trimming for the 36-inch Blue Oak in the construction area shall be done under the direction of the project arborist. Further, final foundation plans shall be subject to review and approval by the project arborist to ensure the long-term health of the 36-inch Blue Oak.

Vlasic advised that the ASCC approval would "run with the land" and be valid for a period of two years from the effective date of any ASCC action. (The effective date of an ASCC action is 15 days after the date of the action.)

Update on the status of various projects involving the ASCC

Vlasic provided an update on the status of a number of projects currently being processed that, in due course, would require ASCC attention. In particular, the status of the following were briefly discussed:

Neely Conditional Use Permit (CUP)
Fogarty Winery CUP amendment
Sequoias CUP sound mitigation efforts
Lefteroff Site Development Permit modifications

Young architectural review and site development permit for 210 Golden Oak
T-Mobile, conditional use permit for communication antenna at Peak Lane

Vlasic advised that all but the Letteroff project, at 5922 Alpine Road, would not be ready for ASCC consideration until late October. He noted, however, that due to concerns over the coming rainy season, it would be appropriate to consider the proposed modifications to the Letteroff grading plans as soon as possible. Thereafter, ASCC members concurred they could convene a special site meeting on the afternoon of September 16 at 4:00 p.m. on the Letteroff project. Vlasic advised that staff would check with Breen as to her availability and also with the project team to see if the 9/16 date would work.

Scheduling relative to the September 28 and October 12 ASCC meetings

Vlasic noted that while a number of projects are being considered, as discussed, most are not ready for ASCC scheduling and looking ahead to the next two meeting, the agendas would be light. In addition, he advised that he would be traveling to a family reunion in Europe during part of this time. Thus, it was agreed that the 9/28 and 10/12 regular ASCC meetings would be cancelled. It was also noted that if any urgency item came up, Town Planner George Mader could provide necessary ASCC staff support and guidance.

Approval of Minutes

Vlasic advised that at the afternoon informal site meeting on the McAdam project, commissioner Breen noted that she could not attend the evening meeting, but wanted a clarification added to the August 24, 2009 draft minutes relative to the Demienne project, 17 Redberry Ridge. Specifically, she advised that the comments at the end of the fifth paragraph on page 2 and in condition 3b. on page 3 relative to "not using live oaks," were intended to be a general view, and not specifically a prohibition for the Demienne project. Vlasic noted that Breen indicated that live oaks could be used, but she preferred the use be limited and that, in general, she would prefer less use of live oaks for landscape projects.

Thereafter, Hughes moved, seconded by Aalfs and passed 4-0, approval of the August 24, 2009 regular meeting minutes with the clarification requested by Breen.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

T. Vlasic