

Chair Warr called the special field meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. on the terrace of the existing residence at 330 Golden Hills Drive.

Roll Call:

ASCC: Warr, Aalfs, Breen, Clark, Hughes
Absent: None
Town Council Liaison: Derwin
Town Staff: Deputy Town Planner Vlastic, Manager Lambert

Others present relative to the Klope project:

Tom Klope, project landscape architect
Peter Murray, project landscape architect
Mary Gullixson, realtor for pending sale of property
John Henry McClenahan, project arborist
Berry Blocker, president Oak Hills Homeowners Association, 390 Golden Hills Drive

CONTINUED REVIEW -- REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF REDWOOD TREE REMOVAL, 330 AND 340 GOLDEN HILLS DRIVE, OAK HILLS SUBDIVISION, *KLOPE*

Vlastic reviewed the status of the project, including the discussion on it that took place at the March 8, 2010 regular ASCC meeting. He explained that at the 3/8 meeting ASCC members and neighbors were generally supportive of the concepts for redwood tree removal as evaluated in the March 4, 2010 staff report and shown on the following project plans prepared by Thomas Klope Associates and dated 2/19/10:

Sheet L1, Tree Survey Plan
Sheet L1.1, Tree Survey Index
Sheet L2, Tree Status Plan
Sheet L3, Proposed Planting plan

Vlastic noted, however, that ASCC members concluded that the field meeting was needed to consider opening of views from neighboring parcels, particularly the Starling residence at 345 Golden Hills Drive and the Schreck parcels at 255 Golden Hills Drive. He also noted that at the 3/8 meeting the ASCC had specifically stated it would reserve the right to take formal action on the request at the site meeting if the meeting findings supported such an action. Vlastic added that ASCC members concluded that, again based on site meeting findings, they may want to add conditions relative to bringing both the house color and site lighting into compliance with current town standards and policies.

Vlastic then provided the following information relative to communications received since the March 8th ASCC meeting.

- ASCC member Aalfs had distributed a March 9, 2010 email to ASCC members, staff and town resident Linda Yates setting forth cautions relative to the tree removal request and this email had been retransmitted in an email to the ASCC and staff from Linda Yates. Vlastic advised that due to procedural requirements, and Brown Act limitations, such emails should not be distributed to all ASCC members and that the matter had been shared with the town attorney. Vlastic further advised that while this type of communication should not be repeated on a matter before the ASCC for consideration,

the town attorney had advised that Aalfs could continue to participate in review of the subject project.

- Linda Yates, in a March 10, 2010 email to the town, raised certain “habit” and timing questions relative to the project and provided background data relative to the May 2008 Sensitive Biological Resources Study prepared for Portola Valley by TRA Environmental Sciences, Inc. Vlastic advised that this study identified the site as “Urban Forest/Garden,” with no indication of sensitive biological resources. He did note that the site was just east of the edge of a potential Horay bat nesting habitat and that for this reason, the March 4th staff report included a recommendation that any tree removal work be preceded by a professional prepared raptor nesting survey and analysis and that the tree removal operation be timed, as determined necessary, to ensure there is no impact on during the nesting period.
- Berry Blocker had advised staff that while the HOA is generally supportive of the request, it has three specific concerns as follows:
 - a. The tree removal process should be conducted to ensure that there is no parking or blocking of traffic on the adjacent streets.
 - b. The noise generating work, i.e., cutting of trees, grinding of stumps, etc., should be limited to the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
 - c. The tree removal operation should be conducted in as tight a time frame as possible to minimize the impact on the neighborhood.
- It was noted that the property files were reviewed relative to the entry gate plans approved for the main driveway that connects directly to Golden Hills Drive on the west side of the site. Vlastic advised that the gate and fencing were permitted prior to current town fence standards and that planting of redwoods were part of the requirements associated with approval of the entry gate plans. He clarified, therefore, that the ASCC might also want to consider, as a condition of tree removal, requiring that the existing gate and fencing along the street right of way be brought into conformity with current town standards.

Jeff Aalfs then addressed the email communication he had transmitted to other ASCC members earlier in the week. He noted that he had only intended to raise cautions as to process, but not to otherwise take a position on the project. He expressed understanding of the concerns with the appropriateness of the email. He added that he did want to ensure that adequate biological surveys were completed and the tree removal schedules adjusted as determined necessary to avoid any habitat conflicts.

Thereafter, Tom Klope led all present on an inspection of the site and consideration of views from neighboring properties. Specifically, the redwood trees on site were inspected, as were the redwood trees in the town’s right of way and the redwood trees in the private access way on the south side of the subject property. The relationships between views, the redwood trees to be removed, and oaks and other trees to remain were considered to and from the following properties:

- Porter property, 315 Golden Hills Drive. It was noted that while the Porters had been contacted by Ms. Gullixson, they were on a trip and had not provided a specific response to the proposal. It was noted that several redwood trees would remain on the Porter parcel and that a view easement on the subject property had redwood trees that

exceeded the height limits associated with the view easement that is for benefit of views from the Porter property.

- Starling property, 345 Golden Hills Drive. It was noted that Ms. Starling was not home, but at the 3/8 meeting had advised that her main concern was over opening of views from her pool and guest house area and that she asked the ASCC members to come to her property and consider the views. These views were considered and it was noted that the removal of the redwoods would open views to the “tower” area of the house on 330 Golden Hills Drive. It was also noted that the oaks to be preserved provided some screening and that the views from the guest house and pool were to the subject property not necessarily primary views. It was also noted that the guest house and pool were accessory use areas.
- Schreck property (three parcels), 255 Golden Hills Drive. It was noted that the two Schreck parcels with frontage on Golden Hills Drive directly west of the subject property were mostly undeveloped, but that a riding ring was located on the “corner” Schreck parcel. It was noted that a number of oaks had grown to offer screening of views, and that the primary views from the likely building sites were to the northwest and west and not back to the subject house/property. Nonetheless, it was recognized that removal of the redwoods would open some views and that some additional selective screen planting should be considered.

During the course of the site and area inspection, the project design team offered the following clarifications:

- The applicant is fully agreeable to the conditions recommended in the March 4, 2010 staff report. Further, it is agreed that the final landscape plan should be adjusted to only provide for screen planting where needed and that new planting should not be “over landscaped.”
- There are understandings over the matters of bringing the house color, site lighting and the gate and fencing into compliance with current standards.
- In response to a question, the project arborist noted that removal of the redwoods would not “shock” the oaks in a negative manner. He stated that the added sunlight and removal of the existing irrigation system would help the oaks flourish. He clarified that the trees would also respond in a normal growth manner and not sprout with “pompon” like growth.
- The long-term plans include removal and/or replacement of the large lawn areas with meadow grasses, but this is not part of the current landscape plan.

After the site inspection and consideration of views from neighboring parcels, all present convened again at the terrace area of the main house on 330 Golden Hills Drive. Mr. Blocker then confirmed the comments he had made to staff as recorded above, but also offered that the HOA is generally supportive of the proposal for tree removal. He offered, however, that that applicant should continue to reach out to the Porters to ensure any concerns they may have are addressed.

ASCC members then confirmed that while they continued to be supportive of the request for tree removal, they wanted to ensure that the project was done correctly. Members discussed the recommendations in the March 4, 2010 staff report and also the findings from

the site meeting. They noted the conservation committee's support for the request and considered the data provided by staff relative to the TRA biological analysis.

Following discussion of issues, Breen moved, seconded by Hughes and passed 5-0 approval of the tree removal request subject to the following conditions to be addressed, unless otherwise noted, to the satisfaction of the ASCC prior to release of the actual permit for tree removal:

1. A detailed tree removal plan shall be developed and implemented. Prior to ASCC consideration of the plan, it shall be shared with the Oak Hills HOA for review and comment. The plan shall include or provide for at least the following items:
 - The dates for the tree removal work, and anticipated length of the project. The timeline shall be as "tight" as possible and the project contractor shall specifically set forth the measures to be employed to achieve the timeline.
 - The truck hauling routes, staging of the loading process for the cut tree trunks, patterns of on-site circulation, and provisions for traffic management.
 - Provisions for no parking along Golden Hills Drive or staging of any work along the street, except if needed for removal of the trees close to the street.
 - Assurance that all work would be limited to the days allowed for in the town's noise ordinance, but with the added provision that use of sound generating equipment shall be limited to the hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 - Identification of an on-site project manager who would be available during all work times for contact by the town or HOA if any issues arise.
 - Provisions for protecting the existing oaks from the tree removal process and measures to be employed to ensure the tree cutting equipment has been cleaned to ensure against any potential for SOD contamination.
 - Appropriate erosion control measures as may be needed for areas disturbed by grinding and removal of stumps.
 - The agreements that have been made or specific provisions that will be employed for recycling of the cut redwood logs.
2. Prior to the time the tree removal work is to take place, a formal inspection of the trees to be removed should be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no significant raptor nests or habitat would be disturbed. If there is any potential for such disturbance, the schedule for tree removal shall be adjusted according to the recommendations of the biologist. This condition shall be addressed to the satisfaction of planning staff.
3. The proposed screen planting plan shall be revised to address the specific areas needed for screening of the more sensitive views from the neighboring parcels. This plan shall ensure against over planting, and locate the screen planting as close to the existing house on 330 Golden Hills Drive as possible. Prior to ASCC consideration of the proposed plan, it shall be shared with the conservation committee and Oak Hills HOA for input.
4. An overall concept landscape plan shall be provided setting forth the intentions for the restoration of the lawn areas to meadow grasses, etc., and shall explain how the overall site landscaping will be managed to be consistent with town and state water conservation requirements.

5. A plan shall be developed for replacement of the existing driveway entry gate on the west side of the site to a design that conforms to current town gate standards. This plan shall be implemented to the satisfaction of planning staff.
6. The applicant is encouraged to modify the existing fencing along Golden Hills Drive to a design that conforms to current town fencing standards. The ASCC, however, reserves the right to require fencing adjustments depending on the final screen landscape plan and the plan for replacement of the existing driveway gate.
7. An overall exterior lighting plan shall be provided that includes removal of all existing yard lighting that is in conflict with current town standards and policies for exterior lighting. Any replacement or new lighting shall be in conformance with town standards.
8. Depending on the scope of screen planting that is feasible with the revised landscape plan, the ASCC reserves the right to require repainting of the main house to a color that is in conformance with current town standards and policy guidelines.
9. Following ASCC approval of revised screen landscape plans, gate plans, lighting plans and setting of any final fencing or house color requirements, a bond or other surety shall be posted to the satisfaction of the town attorney guaranteeing compliance with the ASCC requirements,

ASCC members also supported removal of the redwood trees in the public right of way, but understood that this would require issuance of an encroachment permit for such removal by the public works director. In addition, during the site inspection it was noted that a storm drain line from the site was connected to a culvert on the east side of Golden Hills Drive that conveyed water under the street and onto the Schreck property. It was suggested that this culvert connection be inspected by the public works director to determine if there were any issues or concerns with it and the manner in which it had been tied in to the culvert.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the special field meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

T. Vlastic