

Chairman Breen called the meeting to order at 8:02 p.m.

**Roll Call:**

ASCC: Breen, Clark, Von Feldt, Warr  
Absent: Gelpi  
Town Council Liaison: Wengert  
Planning Commission Liaison: McKitterick  
Town Staff: Deputy Town Planner Vlastic

**Oral Communications**

Oral communications were requested, but none were offered.

**Conditional Use Permit Amendment X7D-29, Spring Down Equestrian Center, 725 Portola Road, Goodstein**

Vlastic presented the March 6, 2008 staff report on this request for use permit amendment relative to extension of the permit termination date and allowance for local horse shows after 2010. He noted that the project was preliminarily considered at the March 5 planning commission meeting and he referenced the February 14, 2008 report prepared for the planning commission preliminary review. Vlastic also advised that the 3/6 staff report sets forth the key concerns expressed by planning commission members and notes that the ASCC need not take any formal action on the permit, but only provide comments and reactions that should be considered by the planning commission during its formal hearing on the requested use permit amendment.

Vlastic commented that he had met with the applicants earlier in the day and that they would be offering additional information in response in particular to the comments of planning commissioners.

Stan and Carol Goodstein and their representative Donna Coulton presented the request to the ASCC and offered the following comments and project clarifications:

- A site plan was presented and described showing the location of parking during the horse show activities. The plan was used to describe how horse trailers access the site and maneuver and park during a typical local horse show event. It was clarified that service roads on both sides of the covered arena are used for horse trailer maneuvering and that sufficient trailer parking space exists along the north side of the main access road/parking area. It was noted that copies of the parking and access plan would be prepared and delivered to the town.
- It was explained that between events during horse shows, competing horses are tied to trailers and that conflicts between vehicles, horses and pedestrians have never been an issue. It was stressed that vehicles travel very slowly through the parking area and that pedestrians and horses always have the "right of way." It was also stressed that for

several years now, the horse show activity has all been conducted on the rear parcels and there has been no use of parking on the town center property.

- Carol Goodstein explained the nature of the horse shows and stressed the following characteristics:
  - a. The horse shows are targeted to local riders, i.e., the immediate area and from portions of the South Bay area.
  - b. The events are geared to entry-level riders, the majority of competitors being under 18 years of age. This facility is not on the "A" level circuit of horse shows nor is it intended to be. The entry fee is typically in the \$150 range, while the "A" level circuit commands entry fees of \$1,000 or more.
  - c. Spring Down often provides scholarships or subsidies for local riders who otherwise could not afford to participate in the horse shows. The events are not intended to be "money-makers" but to give local youth the opportunity to compete, not dissimilar to the kinds of experiences obtained with local youth soccer and baseball leagues. The children gain experience with horses and equestrian competition and also friendships that extend well beyond the equestrian events.
  - d. Most of the horses that compete in the shows are stabled at Spring Down. Further, many of the riders at this level don't have their own horses and Spring Down provides horses for their use.
  - e. During the day of a show, no horse riding lessons are given at the facility. Typically, on a week-end day, there are roughly 80 lessons.
  - f. Spring Down is a unique facility. One of its primary objectives is to encourage youth to experience, appreciate and want to participate in equestrian activities. The youth programs provided by Spring Down are the only ones of their kind in the area. These programs are supported by the overall facility, but are really the passion of the operation.
- In response to a question, it was noted that with the town approved, but yet to be constructed open riding arena, a new sound system would be installed and would be designed with the involvement of an acoustic consultant to minimize potential for off site noise impacts.
- In response to a question, it was noted that the design of the surface for the planned new open arena was the same as used for recent improvements at Golden Gate Fields. It was clarified that the design allowed for percolation into the soil and minimized potential for storm water runoff. It was noted that the surface has been found to be "good for the horses and the environment," as it has good stability, minimizes runoff, requires no watering, and does not generate dust.

Also in response to a question, Vlasic advised that under provisions of the use permit, as amended in November of 2007, monitoring of water quality is required on an annual basis, and the public works director has been given the discretion to require water filtering

improvements if any are found necessary based on the annual water quality monitoring program.

Public comments were requested. **Rick Anderson, Woodview Lane**, offered comments in support of the request. He noted that while he did hear some “noise” from a recent horse show, it was not a problem or out of line with other noises generated from athletic activities at the town center. He also noted that whenever he has had a question with respect to activities at Spring Down, he has contacted the owners and received immediate responses to any concerns.

ASCC members discussed the proposal and concurred that both the requests for horse shows and extended life were appropriate. Members concurred that the facility was an asset to the community, providing a unique service, particularly to local youth. ASCC members referenced experiences they or their neighbors have had with Spring Down and reacted that it should continue for as long as possible as it fits with the other athletic activities at the town center and, again, provides an important service to the community.

Warr commented that the manner in which horse parking is accommodated and horses taken care of during the course of a horse show is common and appropriate based on his personal and lengthy equestrian experiences.

While Breen fully supported the request, she commented that recently she noticed a lighted sign at the entry to the parking area. Carol Goodstein stated that white lights were recently installed around the sign and fountain at this location. Breen commented that this lighting should be reviewed by staff for CUP conformity and that, typically, the town does not support such decorative lighting.

Vlasic advised that the ASCC comments and reactions would be forwarded to the planning commission for consideration during the formal public hearings on the use permit amendment requests.

**Follow-up to March 5, 2008 Joint Site Meeting with Planning Commission --Preliminary Review of Site Development Permit X9H-555 for landslide mitigation, 16 and 42 Santa Maria Avenue, Hibbard**

Vlasic presented the March 6, 2008 staff report on the subject applications. He advised that the matter is on the agenda primarily to provide the opportunity for ASCC members to offer any additional comments to those presented at the March 5, 2008 joint site meeting with the planning commission. Vlasic also referenced the February 27, 2008 staff report on the site development permit request and “deviation” proposals that were considered at the March 5 joint site meeting. He then provided a summary of planning commission preliminary review comments offered at the March 5 evening commission meeting and as contained in the March 6, 2008 staff report to the ASCC.

Applicants John Hibbard and Linda Lee and project engineer John Berry were present to discuss the project with ASCC members. The following new information and project clarifications were provided for ASCC consideration:

- A letter dated March 10, 2008 from Lloyd Colman, Vice President of Valley Community Bank in San Jose was presented. It was noted that the letter advised that the \$450,000 estimated landslide repair costs could be accommodated into the "construction budget" for the two properties only if the average value of the two finished homes is, at a minimum, \$2,150,000. The letter also opined that this would require a residence of approximately 3,000 sf on each site and that ". . . a house significantly smaller on the upper lot is not economically viable given the base land value and the cost of the slide remediation."
- In further reference to the letter from Valley Community Bank, it was noted that Mr. Coleman advised that the Bank ". . . is willing to consider the funding of a loan for the repair of slide conditions and the construction of two residences once building plans have been finalized."
- There is frustration with the length of time that this matter has been under consideration and there is a need to now get it resolved as soon as possible.
- The history of the slide and conditions associated with drainage problems were again reviewed and a packet of the following materials was provided for the record:

December 13, 1983 letter from Jean Isaacson to the California Water Service Company

January 9, 1984 letter from Jean Isaacson to Town of Portola Valley

January 2, 1984 addendum to January 2, 1984 letter from Jean Isaacson to Town of Portola Valley

January 11, 1984 letter from Jean Isaacson to Town of Portola Valley

January 11, 1994 letter Jean Isaacson to the California Water Service Company (with attachments to the letter)

June 10, 2004 letter from John Hibbard to Michael Wilmer, 1111 Portola Road (with attachments to the letter)

It was stressed that these documents explain the drainage problems related to the Hayfields subdivision and underscore the applicants' and neighbors' position that the drainage was the critical problem in the area and not simply the matter of unstable slopes. It was opined that if the drainage on the Hayfields had been properly handled, the slopes would not have slid. It was also noted that the drainage problems extend to the water tank property uphill of the subject sites and that the water tank is also in the area identified as Pd on the town's map of land movement potential.

- The proposed repair will achieve compaction of 95%, whereas under normal conditions, prior to earth movement the compaction level would be approximately 70%. The higher proposed level of compaction and drainage improvements have been designed to resolve the site drainage problems and protect not only the site but also surrounding properties.
- In response to a question, it was noted that in order to achieve the level of improvements and safety needed for the bank loan, the upper cottage would be removed and replaced with a new structure with new foundation. This will result in a higher level of safety than trying to repair the cottage using the existing foundation even

though it was not damaged by the landslide. It was stressed that efforts were made during the damaging storms to save the cottage including installation of piers “into solid material,” but still the preference for safety would be to remove all existing improvements and replace them with designs that meet current codes and incorporate the recommendations of the geotechnical professionals.

- In response to a question on the possibility of combining the two lots into one for development, it was noted that this would not solve the economic problems relative to the needed bank loan and that one large estate would be out of character with the other development in the immediate area, i.e., served by Santa Maria Avenue.

Mr. Hibbard also commented that he understood that more interaction with staff was needed based on the comments offered at the March 5 planning commission meeting. He advised he would likely be ready for such a meeting within a week or so.

Public comments were requested.

**Jean Isaacson, 19 Santa Maria Avenue**, expressed frustration not only with the drainage problems associated with the Hayfields, the length of time it has taken to address the Hibbard/Lee landslide problem, but also with the town’s process for keeping track of public input provided at public meetings. She reviewed the history of the drainage concerns as set forth in the packet of materials provided by Mr. Hibbard and stressed her 30-year involvement with trying to obtain corrections to the problems. She also stressed the need for all town meetings to be recorded and hoped they would be recorded on a CD, but more appropriately on a DVD so that anyone interested could obtain a full appreciation of what occurred at a meeting.

(Vlasic advised that the ASCC minute are not taped or recorded, but that he prepared them and attempts to include all relevant data as offered at the meetings.)

**Nate McKitterick, Planning Commission Liaison**, advised that one of the major concerns of the planning commission was safe siting of the upper house/cottage. He noted its location just beyond the edge of the proposed repair area and that the slope above the house would not be repaired, and would remain in a Pd condition. He added that it was understood that permanent drainage improvements would be essential to the repair, but he also stressed the need for complete input from the town geologist as to the risk to the new structure and that this risk would be a key factor relative to the commission’s determining of how much floor area should be permitted.

ASCC members then discussed the proposal and concurred that to the extent possible the town should provide latitude needed to facilitate the repair effort. Members also concurred that the repair effort should take place as soon as possible. The following additional comments were offered on the project:

- There are no significant natural topographic features or native vegetation in the proposed slide repair area. Thus, the grading effort would not have a significant impact on “natural” site conditions. Further, with implementation of proper landscape and site improvement plans, site conditions would be substantially better than the current chaotic condition.

- The adjustments to the repair effort that appear to be being worked out with town staff would likely result in a repair process with little if any potential for off site impacts.
- This is an unusual situation and the town may need to consider factors it typically does not get involved with, particularly project economics, to help bring about a timely solution.
- It is possible that with the slide repair, some adjustment to the actual locations of house improvements would be needed to ensure appropriate rebuilding to the level of safety anticipated in amended Resolution 500. This is particularly true of the uphill property. This needs to be considered, including geotechnical recommendations for the new house foundations, in finalizing the requests for planning commission consideration.
- Any decisions as to the deviations for added floor area need to ensure the house sizes are in keeping with the residential conditions in the immediate neighborhood.
- The town needs to take an active role in helping to resolve the drainage issues in the area, particularly with respect to the way water is conveyed from the site to Portola Road.
- The planning commission should move the decision making process ahead as fast as possible as it appears clear that the repair is needed for the overall safety of the site and surrounding areas.

ASCC members also wondered about the applicants' and neighbors' contentions regarding the uphill drainage problems, including those possibly related to Hayfields subdivision improvements. Vlastic advised that the planning commission had also asked about this and that he would be discussing the matter further with the public works director and town geologist. He commented that some review of this had been completed by the public works director and that he could not properly comment on the matter until he had more background on it.

Vlastic advised that he would forward the ASCC comments and other information presented at the meeting to the planning commission for consideration by commissioners during the formal public hearing on the site development permit and deviation applications.

**Follow-up Review, Final Landscape Plan, Architectural Review and Site Development Permit X9H-553, 170 Mapache Drive, Holland/Yates**

Vlastic presented the March 6, 2008 staff report on this follow-up submittal. He advised that architectural review plans for the project were approved by the ASCC on December 11, 2006 and the planning commission on March 7, 2007 approved the site development permit portion of the project. He also noted that on March 12, 2007 the ASCC completed follow-up review of the project, essentially "signing-off" on all conditions, except for the final landscape plan.

ASCC members considered the staff report and the following plans, prepared by Thomas Klope Associates, Inc. and revised through January 28, 2008, to satisfy the one outstanding "landscape plan" approval condition:

Sheet L5, Perimeter Screening Landscape Plan  
Sheet L6, Planting Plan  
Sheet L7, Planting Legend and Details

Vlasic advised that since the staff report had been prepared one comment had been received on the proposal. He clarified that neighbors Mr. and Mrs. Jorgensen, 20 Zapata Way, had advised the town that while they could not be at the ASCC meeting, they were in discussions with the project landscape architect with respect to final siting of approved perimeter screen landscaping. Vlasic added that it was his understanding the final siting of materials would be based on view and shade considerations.

Linda Yates and project landscape architect Tom Klope presented the plans to the ASCC. Mr. Klope confirmed he has been in discussions with the Jorgensens and would be adjusting the screen planting, prior to installation, to ensure their concerns were respected. He then reviewed the proposed final landscape plan and explained the adjustments made to the plan based on a February 2008 "Habitat Opportunities Report," prepared by TRA Environmental Sciences. ASCC members were interested in and supported the design approach using the Habitat Report and, based on their comments, Ms. Yates advised that she would make copies of the report available to the town.

In response to a question, Klope advised that the only new fencing would be that provided for the planned east side vegetable garden, with the fence fully within the parcel's building envelope. It was also noted that a portion of the existing parcel line fence along the boundary with the Wells property, 15 Naranja Way, would be removed, with agreement from the neighbor, to enhance opportunities for wildlife movement.

Klope also commented that the proposed seed mix for the "native sod" would be similar to that used on a "green" living roof, but that a final seed mix had yet to be selected. He also commented that it is hoped that most of the plants would be well established in two to three years and that after that there would be no potable water needed or used for landscaping.

Public comments were requested. **Alison Wells, 15 Naranja Way**, received clarification with respect to location of approved perimeter planting. She wondered if the precise siting of materials and scope of planting could be adjusted to ensure views from her property were not blocked and that plant materials would not grow to encroach in any significant way on her property.

ASCC members discussed the detailed landscape plan and found it generally acceptable. Concern was, however, expressed over the potential for massing of new plant materials along the Mapache frontage of the property. The applicant agreed to modify the plan to open views to the planned meadow area and reduce the scope of planting along Mapache Drive.

Following discussion, Warr moved, seconded by Von Feldt and passed 4-0, approval of the of the final landscape plan submittal subject to the following conditions:

1. The landscape plan may be modified by the applicant to resolve the concerns of Mrs. Wells presented at the ASCC meeting.
2. The landscape plan shall be modified to the satisfaction of a designated ASCC member to reduce the scope of proposed Mapache Drive frontage landscaping and, particularly, to open views to the planned meadow area.

**Architectural Review for Garage/Accessory Structure Addition, and Follow-up Review Site Development Permit X9H-581, 110 Willowbrook Drive, Morgan**

Vlasic reviewed the comments in the March 6, 2008 staff report on this project and explained that after the request was scheduled and noticed for March 10, 2008, it was determined that several significant floor area issues needed to be resolved and that the application was not ready for ASCC consideration. Vlasic advised that these issues were discussed with the applicant and it was agreed that project review should be continued to the March 24 regular ASCC meeting.

Public comments were requested, but none were offered. Thereafter, application review was continued to the March 24 regular ASCC meeting.

**Approval of Minutes**

Von Feldt moved, seconded by Clark and passed 3-0-1 (Warr), approval of the February 25, 2008 field and regular evening meeting minutes as drafted.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

T. Vlasic