

Architectural and Site Control Commission*
Special Site Meeting, 302 Portola Road, Woodside Priory
Portola Valley, California

February 1, 2011

Vice Chair Aalfs called the special site meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. on the easterly Priory play field, immediately north of the Portola Road frontage of the school.

Roll Call:

ASCC: Aalfs, Breen, Clark, Hughes
Absent: Warr
Town Council Liaison: Richards
Town Council Liaison to Planning Commission Liaison: Wengert
Planning Commissioners: McIntosh, Von Feldt
Town Staff: Town Planner Vlastic

*This special site meeting was noticed as a joint meeting of the ASCC and planning commission. Since only two planning commission members were in attendance, however, a quorum was not present and the planning commission meeting was cancelled.

Others Present:**

Tim Molak, Priory Head of School	Sean Brown
Mike Amaral, Priory landscape consultant	Jon Silver, Portola Road
Ed Boscacci, Priory civil engineering consultant	Sherri Coates
Brother Edward, Priory School	Katharine Stoymeyer
Father Martin Mago, Priory School	John Baldin
Sharon Reich, Georgia Lane	Siobhan Lawlor
Leah Zaffaroni, Georgia Lane	Ken Tehaney
Michael Jernick	Jennie Chu
Bob Finney	Lissa Teoman
Kathy Feldman, Grove Drive	Betty Noguchi
Shirley Tamaría	Sally Anne Reiss

**This list was largely taken from a meeting sign-in sheet and may not include all those present at the meeting. Further, those present did not, unless noted in comments recorded below provide specific addresses or affiliations. Thus, this is not intended to be a complete list of all attending the special site meeting.

Oral Communications

Oral communications were requested and none were offered.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATION -- REVIEW FOR CONFORMITY WITH PROVISION OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) X7D-30 AND SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FOR FIELD GRADING, AND REFURBISHMENT OF SCHOOL PLAY FIELDS, INCLUDING USE OF ARTIFICIAL TURF, 302 PORTOLA ROAD, *THE PRIORY SCHOOL*

Vlastic stressed that this was a preliminary review of this project being proposed to address drainage and field use issues associated with the existing easterly natural turf play fields of the Priory. He presented the January 27, 2011 staff report to the planning commission and ASCC on the project and noted that the proposal called for an all weather track, artificial turf and new storage building as shown on the Multipurpose Field Upgrades Plan, prepared by

BKF and dated 1/26/11. He advised that while this matter was also originally on the February 2, 2011 planning commission regular meeting agenda for discussion, the item had to be removed from that agenda due to a lack of quorum on the matter. He clarified, however, that it would be placed on the February 15, 2011 ASCC agenda and February 16, 2011 planning commission agenda for continued preliminary discussion. Vlastic advised input from the preliminary review would assist the applicant and staff in further development and processing of the proposals.

Tim Molak, Mike Amaral and Ed Boscacci presented the plans and discussed the proposed drainage improvements, artificial turf elements and problems associated with the existing natural turf fields. They clarified the design and referred to the drainage details provided in the January 6, 2011 letter from Mr. Boscacci included with the January 27, 2011 staff report.

In response to questions, the location of the storage building was identified and it was noted that no permanent painting of the artificial surface was planned. It was noted that the field would be stripped for the particular sport as is currently done with the natural turf field.

In response to a question, Mr. Molak and other Priory representatives advised that 75-80% of a playing season was lost during a recent very wet winter and that often the school's soccer team has to play at other venues due to the wet and uneven condition of the natural turf. It was stressed that no matter what new surface is installed, significant drainage improvements were necessary, with considerable associated grading.

Mr. Molak advised that the design with all weather track would present some limits for use of the softball field, but that most softball field use impacts would be minimal.

During inspection of the site conditions, a number of issues were discussed with differing opinions shared by a number of speakers. Some spoke in favor of artificial turf and noted that their children played on it regularly. Others expressed concern over the potential environmental issues, and it was noted that staff, in any case, would be further evaluating the issues as presented in the various reports provided with and referenced in the materials prepared for the preliminary review meeting.

Some of the key matters noted during offering of comments were:

- The "in-fill" pellets on the turf spread the rubber chemicals and pellets find their way to cars, homes, etc.
- The scope of grading and soil impact will impact the natural soil and earthworm environment, destroying a process important to the natural ecology of the area.
- Chemical run-off in the storm drain system needs to be evaluated as does the air quality impacts of the artificial turf.
- The water usage impacts need to be considered.
- The field surface and in-fill pellets would need to be replaced every 8 to 10 years. The sustainability of such a replacement needs to be fully considered.
- The Priory would, with the project and recent natural turf field improvements, have both natural and artificial surfaced fields. Thus, players could select the fields they want to use if they have issues or concerns.

- There are two fields at Woodside School, one natural and the other artificial. The experience with the fields as well as the new artificial fields on Palo Alto School District sites should be considered.
- Before any final action, the proposed storage shed building should be modeled with story poles.

While a number of speakers noted that the proposed artificial surface would enhance playing opportunities, Jon Silver expressed extreme caution and concern and cited a number of scientific studies opposing use of artificial surfaces. He offered that we all “should wait” until there is a better record and understanding of all the health and environmental impacts associated with such surfaces and that it is too early to conclude they are truly safe or acceptable.

ASCC member **Breen** noted that she would like more data on the impervious surface matter and the environmental issues referenced. She noted that the location of the storage shed appeared generally acceptable, but that story poles would be helpful. Further, she indicated that the general concepts for play field improvements appeared acceptable, but this was without any conclusion relative to the appropriateness of the artificial surface.

ASCC members **Clark** and **Hughes** generally concurred with Breen, but noted that they might want to see the storage building siting adjusted to ensure it would not be highly visible from Portola Road. All ASCC members noted that they would likely have additional preliminary review comments to offer at the February 15th ASCC meeting.

Planning Commissioner **McIntosh** stated he wanted to visit and learn more about the other artificial surface fields in the area before making any additional comments. **Von Feldt** also commented that she, like Breen, would be seeking more data on the matter of impervious surface and the environmental issues associated with the use of artificial surfaces.

Thereafter, Aalfs thank all present for the participation in the preliminary review site meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the special site meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

T. Vlasic