

Architectural and Site Control Commission **February 13, 2012**
Regular Evening Meeting, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, California

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

Roll Call:

ASCC: Hughes, Breen, Clark, Koch, Warr
Absent: None
Town Council Liaison: Aalfs
Planning Commission Liaison: Zaffaroni
Town Staff: Town Planner Vlasic, Planning Technician Borck

Welcome to new ASCC member Megan Koch

ASCC members welcomed new member Koch.

Oral Communications

Oral communications were requested and none were offered.

Continued Consideration -- Architectural Review and Site Development Permit X9H-635 for new residential development – 3 Thistle (Lot 3004 Portola Valley Ranch), Portola Valley Associates

Vlasic presented the February 8, 2012 staff report on the continuing review of the subject project. He explained that on January 23rd the ASCC conducted a preliminary review of the proposal and in response to review comments from the ASCC and project site neighbors, the following revised plans were prepared and submitted for ASCC consideration:

Architectural Plans, Knorr Architecture:
Sheet A0.1, Site Plan, rev. 2/6/12
Sheet A1.4, Building Elevations, rev. 2/6/12

Vlasic clarified that other plan sheets and project materials not impacted by the revisions, i.e., as listed in the record of the 1/23 meeting, remain part of the application. He also noted that since ASCC members Clark and Koch were unable to attend the formal 1/23 ASCC site meeting, the applicants, project architect and town planner met with them at the site on the afternoon of February 7th to review the information provided to other ASCC members and to also advise them of the plan revisions.

Vlasic then identified for the record the following communications received after the 2/8/12 staff report was prepared and distributed to ASCC members by email:

- February 8, 2012 email from Steve Levin seeking a lowering of the gable roof of the proposed house to be no higher than the peak on his home at 5 Thistle.
- February 13, 2012 email from Rita Rubinfeld and Joe Cooper, 2 Thistle, supporting comments in the Levin email.
- February 8, 2012 email from Ruth Ramel, 4 Sandstone, supporting comments in the Levin email.
- February 9, 2012 email from Ursula Burger-Nafeh and John Nafeh, 7 Thistle, supporting comments in the Levin email.

February 9, 2012 email from Judi Buckingham, 6 Thistle, supporting comments in the Levin email.

February 13, 2012 email from Torin Knorr, project architect, responding to the neighbor comments in the above listed email.

Vlasic also reported that in the comments from neighbors commenting on scope and form of development, that the design of the project was governed by both the PC Zoning and the conditional use permit "PUD" statements. He made use of 1991 and 2001 air photos to describe the project form, clustering and Coal Mine Ridge open space contributions. He noted that the tight clustering of lots and homes was essentially a trade off for most of the 453 acre Ranch property being placed in open space easements. He also noted that the key issues relative to height in the later units of the Ranch (i.e., Subdivision Units III and IV) were related to views from below up to the houses whose average heights were up to 34-36 feet. He noted that while consistent with the PUD provisions these taller houses were still considered somewhat large. He noted that the current proposal is well under the height limit and with the recent one-foot height reduction conforms to the more restrictive 28 and 34-foot height limits that apply in portions of the town not in Portola Valley Ranch.

Vlasic noted that he had also discussed the matter of setback averaging, a concern of Mr. Rex Brooks owner of 1 Thistle, with Ranch architectural consultant Bill Maston as discussed in the February 8, 2012 staff report. He noted that the subject plans should not present any building envelope issue for Mr. Brooks and that he understood a communication from Mr. Maston on the matter had been prepared, but that the town had not received the communication.

At this point, Mr. Brooks provided copies of a memo from Mr. Maston to Tom Vlasic dated 2/10/12. Mr. Brooks acknowledge that the memo that was to be distributed by email apparently did not get distributed as intended and that he also did not receive a copy of it. Vlasic and ASCC members than took a few minutes to review the memo. Mr. Brooks referenced a deck issue in the memo that was considered.

ASCC members considered the revised project plans, staff report and additional written communications and the colors and materials board provided with the original application submittal. In addition, applicants Joe and Mike Whelan and project architect Torin Knorr provided the following additional information and project clarifications:

- Knorr presented exhibits showing house design and height comparisons for the houses along Thistle. He referenced the average height dimensions in his 2/13 email and noted that the average height of the proposed house was actually lower than the dimensions for the house at 5 Thistle based on the data in the email from Mr. Levin.
- Knorr presented photo comparisons of the Thistle houses to further demonstrate that the proposed house was in character with the other houses on the street. He also noted that the proposed house is considerably further from the street that the original house approved for 3 Thistle and the garage and house at 5 Thistle. He emphasized that the increased distance would further open views along the street corridor.
- Knorr acknowledged receiving a copy of the 2/10/12 Maston email and discussing it with Mr. Maston as late as 4:30 pm "this afternoon." Knorr advised that it was his understanding that Mr. Maston, after walking the site, did not have remaining concerns over the "deck" issue and was generally supportive of the proposal.

- The applicants then, again, reviewed the plan revisions, including lowering of height, modification of garage location, correction of rear deck setback encroachment and removal of Redwood trees, i.e., as recommended by the ASCC at the preliminary review meeting.
- The plans will be modified to include up-to-date landscape and grading plans to reflect the changes and also address the mounding issues noted in the staff report.

Public comments were requested. **Mr. Rex Brooks, owner of 1 Thistle**, noted that while he generally supported by the project, he remained somewhat concerned with the deck comments in the note memo from Mr. Maston. He added that he understood Mr. Maston would attend this evening's meeting to provide additional clarifications of matters discussed in the memo. (*Mr. Maston did not attend the ASCC meeting.*)

Mr. Joe Cooper, 2 Thistle, requested and received clarification from Mr. Knorr relative to the height exhibits provided at the ASCC meeting.

In response to questions from Breen relative to the comments in the January 24, 2012 communication from Christopher Berg, 4 Thistle, and compliance with town mandatory town green building standards, Vlasic provided the following comments:

- While the proposal is essentially a Typical "J" plan, efforts were made in the later stages of Ranch development to introduce more variety to the "typical" plans. These include not only different details, but roof forms for both houses and carports/garages. He also noted that a key design objective was to ensure that each house had a sense of exposure to a large open space on the side away from the street and that there was not a standard that called for ensuring views across a house or above a house from the street. He did note, however, that some increased efforts were made for grouping of houses for views between groups in Units III and IV.
- The project will meet contemporary green building standards and, as noted in the original staff report, in this case the proposal targets 173 BIG points.

ASCC members discussed the project and concluded that with the revisions the plans were generally acceptable. It was noted that the deck and view corridor concerns in the memorandum from Mr. Maston should be reviewed with the development of the final landscape plan and that perhaps some low mounding or reduction of deck size, i.e., at the north end, could be considered to address visual and privacy relationships between 1 and 3 Thistle. Breen, however, cautioned that any berm grading needs to be done with care and the site should not be over landscaped. She also suggested some thinning of the existing overgrown oaks and other materials in the front yard area and possible removal of additional oaks.

Following discussion Warr moved, seconded by Clark and passed 5-0 approval of the project plans as revised and the site development permit subject to the following conditions to be addressed, unless otherwise noted, to the satisfaction of the ASCC prior to release of any building permits or the start of site grading:

1. A final landscape and grading plan shall be provided that is consistent with the 2/6/12 plans revisions and that also addresses the "mounding" matters and other landscaping issues discussed in the staff reports and at the 2/13/12 ASCC meeting.

2. A final, detailed exterior lighting plan, with light switching patterns identified shall be provided.
3. The final plans and project construction shall adhere to the requirements called for in the following site development committee review reports to the satisfaction of the specific reviewer:

Fire Marshal report of 1/17/12

Public Works Director report of 1/24/12

Town Geologist report of 1/27/12

Request for modifications to previous approval, mailbox addition and color change -- Additions and Remodeling, addition of attached garage and other site improvements, "Lauriston"- "Willowbrook Farm," Superintendent's House and Office, 451 Portola Road, Naify

Vlasic presented the February 8, 2012 staff report on this request for approval of a freestanding mailbox and for a change to the approved shingle stain color for the house addition/remodeling project. He then reviewed the "proposed" mailbox design and location as shown on the "Landscape Plan," received by the town on January 30, 2012. He also provided the proposed shingle color sample, received January 30, 2012, noting it was medium gray blue color stain.

The applicant, Leslie Naify, and project contractors Derek Gaffney and Michael Limosana presented the proposal to ASCC members. The offered the following comments and clarifications:

- Samples of the proposed stain color applied to shingles were displayed.
- The mailbox likely is, as suggested in the staff report, partially in the Portola Road right of way. If approved by the ASCC it will be moved out of the right of way consistent with the recommendations in the staff report.

Public comments were requested, but none were offered.

ASCC members found the proposed shingle stain color acceptable as presented. Warr commented that when the mailbox design standards were approved it was to avoid a monument style mailbox like this and, in any case, such a design should not be in the public right of way. He noted a preference for no monument mailbox.

Other ASCC members concluded that the mailbox design, in this case, was consistent with the historic character of the Superintendent's house and the office and that they did not find it inconsistent with site conditions.

Following brief discussion, Clark moved, seconded by Breen and passed 5-0 to approve the requested shingle stain color change and to approve the mailbox design subject to the condition that the mailbox be located out of the right of way, consistent with the comments in the staff report. It was clarified that the condition should be addressed to the satisfaction of town staff.

Prior to consideration of the following applications, Warr left the ASCC meeting. He explained that he was conflicted from acting on the Richards application as a neighbor within 500 feet of the project site. He added that his firm was the project architect for the project at 55 Golden Oak Drive and, therefore, was also conflicted from acting on that application. Prior to his departure, the ASCC completed review of the January 23, 2012 meeting minutes as recorded later in these minutes.

Also prior to consideration of the Richards matter, Clark temporarily left his ASCC position. He noted that he too was conflicted as a neighbor within 500 feet of the project site.

Fence Permit and Request for Relief from Fence Ordinance Standards, 178 Corte Madera Road, Richards

Vlasic presented the February 8, 2012 staff report on this request for ASCC approval of a fence permit that also seeks relief from the front yard fence standards due to the somewhat unusual conditions associated with the subject 1.0-acre property. Vlasic explained the conditions associated with the property and then reviewed the fencing request as shown on the "Deer Fence Plan" dated 1/12/12, prepared by J. John Richards, Architect.

Vlasic clarified that pursuant to Section 18.43.080.C.3. of the zoning ordinance fence provisions, the ASCC is authorized to grant relief from the fence ordinance standards taking into account parcel conditions and that, in this case, for the reasons explained in the staff report, staff has concluded that the required findings to grant relief could be made.

John Richards, applicant and project architect, presented the request to the ASCC. He noted that the site and use of the desired small garden is impacted by both deer and wild turkeys. He offered that the majority of the site would remain open and that the area to be fenced should have no impact on views or wildlife passage over the property.

Public comments were requested but none were offered.

Following brief discussion Breen moved, seconded by Koch and passed 3-0, to make findings in support of relief from the fence ordinance standards as evaluated in the staff report and to approve the fencing plan as proposed.

Architectural Review for residential additions, 55 Golden Oak Drive, Rizvi

Vlasic presented the staff report on this proposal for architectural review approval of plans for additions to the existing single story residence on the subject 1.1-acre, Alpine Hills subdivision parcel. He clarified that the proposal is to add approximately 771 sf of living area to the ground level of the existing house that would include largely additions to the master bedroom at the southwest corner of the residence. He noted that also planned is a basement under the proposed main level additions that would include a media room, bathroom and storage.

He reviewed the history of the previous, 2011 ASCC approvals for the property, the status of work on these other elements, how the current plans relate to these elements and lighting

and color changes proposed with the current application, all as explained and evaluated in the staff report.

ASCC members considered the staff report and the following project plans and materials, unless otherwise noted, prepared by CJW Architecture and dated 11/1/11:

- Sheet: T-0.1, Title Sheet
- Sheet: T-0.3, Build It Green Checklist
- Sheet: A-1.1, Site Plan
- Sheet: A-2.1, Floor Plans
- Sheet: A-2.2, Lower Level Plan and Roof Plan
- Sheet: A-3.1, Exterior Elevations

Three cut sheets for the proposed wall mounted light (Sheet A), pathway light (Sheet B) and rear porch pendant light (Sheet C). Proposed light locations are shown on the enclosed site plan.

Colors and materials board dated 1/20/12

Vlasic provided the original colors board for comparison with the new proposed color scheme.

Kevin Schwarckopf, project architect, presented the plans to the ASCC. He explained that the proposed lighting plan was incomplete due to the lack of showing the planned garage light fixtures. He added that the intent was to provide a revised final lighting plan as called for in the staff report.

Public comments were requested, but none were offered.

ASCC members briefly discussed the project and the evaluation set forth in the staff report. Members found the project acceptable, generally as presented. Relative to the non-native materials on the slope between the building site and Golden Oak Drive, members considered the issues discussed in the staff report. It was concluded that while some of the existing plant materials were not consistent with current town landscape guidelines, they were important to screening of views, particularly relative to Golden Oak street traffic. At the same time, the applicant was encouraged to consider a long-term plan, likely 10-years, for installation and development of replacement screen materials that would conform to current town landscape guidelines.

Following discussion, Clark moved, seconded by Breen and passed 4-0 approval of the proposed plans subject to the condition that a revised, complete and comprehensive exterior lighting plan be provided to the satisfaction of designated ASCC member prior to release of any building permits for the house addition. It was understood that this plan would address the issues discussed in the staff report and be a plan for the entire site including the guest house and other elements approved with the 2011 project.

Approval of Minutes

Breen moved, seconded by Warr and passed 4-0-1 (Koch), approval of the January 23, 2012 regular meeting minutes as drafted.

Reports, Miscellaneous Comments

Clark reported that the plans for refurbishment of Ford field may proceed with the infusion of more donor money allowing for some expansion of the scope of the project. He noted that this may result in the ASCC being asked to consider the plans for the expanded project.

Breen expressed concern with the growth of Coyote Bush along the fence at the town's Frog Pond open space area. She suggested that management of the pond was needed to address the matter.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

T. Vlasic