



**TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY  
ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE CONTROL COMMISSION (ASCC)  
Monday, February 23, 2015  
7:30 PM – Regular ASCC Meeting  
Historic Schoolhouse  
765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028**

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**7:30 PM – REGULAR AGENDA\***

1. Call to Order:
2. Roll Call: Breen, Clark, Harrell, Koch, Ross
3. Oral Communications:

Persons wishing to address the Commission on any subject, not on the agenda, may do so now. Please note, however, the Commission is not able to undertake extended discussion or action tonight on items not on the agenda.

4. New Business:
    - a. Discussion of Outdoor Lighting Ordinance and Polices
    - b. Discussion of Architectural Design Review
  5. Commission and Staff Reports:
  6. Approval of Minutes: February 9, 2015
  7. Adjournment:
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\*For more information on the projects to be considered by the ASCC at the Special Field and Regular meetings, as well as the scope of reviews and actions tentatively anticipated, please contact Carol Borck in the Planning Department at Portola Valley Town Hall, 650-851-1700 ex. 211. Further, the start times for other than the first Special Field meeting are tentative and dependent on the actual time needed for the preceding Special Field meeting.

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**PROPERTY OWNER ATTENDANCE.** The ASCC strongly encourages a property owner whose application is being heard by the ASCC to attend the ASCC meeting. Often issues arise that only property owners can responsibly address. In such cases, if the property owner is not present it may be necessary to delay action until the property owner can meet with the ASCC.

**WRITTEN MATERIALS.** Any writing or documents provided to a majority of the Town Council or Commissions regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at Town Hall located 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA during normal business hours.

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**ASSISTANCE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Assistant Planner at 650-851-1700, extension 211. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the Town to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Public Hearings provide the general public and interested parties an opportunity to provide testimony on these items. If you challenge a proposed action(s) in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the Public Hearing(s) described later in this agenda, or in written correspondence delivered to the Planning Commission at, or prior to, the Public Hearing(s).

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This Notice is Posted in Compliance with the Government Code of the State of California.

Date: February 19, 2015

CheyAnne Brown  
Planning Technician

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**Reference Materials**

1. Design Guidelines - Lighting
2. Design Guidelines - Entryways
3. PVMC Section 18.42.018 – Outdoor Lighting
4. PVMC Section 18.36.040 – Accessory Uses
5. PVMC Section 18.12.040 – Accessory Uses Permitted

# Lighting

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- In order to maintain the rural character of Portola Valley, a *minimal* approach should be taken to outside illumination of any use, site, or structure within the town. Excessive lighting on an individual site (and/or the impact of cumulative lighting on adjoining sites) can create a glow that tends to obscure the night sky and stars, and results in a community that is more urban and less rural.
- Use only the **minimum** amount of lighting necessary to achieve essential illumination. The primary objective of exterior lighting should be **safety** for pedestrians and other non-vehicular uses around the primary building on the site. Lighting of front entries, main access doors, frequently used stairs, etc. may be appropriate, but should be determined on a case-by-case basis. Further, some lighting to identify address numbers and driveway entries may be acceptable, but should be considered only when it is determined that reflectors and reflective numbers cannot be used effectively.
- Natural site conditions and location should be taken into account in development of any plans for exterior lighting of a structure and/or property. Sites that have little tree cover and that are in very open and easily accessed locations should have less need for lighting than more secluded sites with heavy tree cover and difficult points of access. Further, in the development of all lighting plans, consideration should be given to maintaining the rural unlit character of the environment and to using natural lighting (e.g., moon light), lighting provided by vehicles entering a property and illumination passing through windows from inside a building.
- Exterior lighting should be located as close to building entries and key stair and accessways as possible.
- Lighting for purely decorative purposes should be avoided. For example, lighting around or within landscaped areas, accent lighting of architectural features, lighting of the perimeter parking and similar areas are discouraged. However, if landscape lighting is found necessary, for example, to light paths to a pool or deck or provide some light around such a feature that is used at night, low level recessed type lights should be used. Use of strip light type systems, such as multi-bulb step lights strips, should be avoided. Up-lighting of landscaping or structures is prohibited (Code Section 18.42.018, A.)

- Lighting for night use of game courts (i.e., tennis, paddle tennis, basketball, etc.) is **prohibited** (Ord. 18.36.040.b.). Such lighting is considered to be in direct conflict with the *minimal* approach to lighting desired in the town. Any lighting within or around such features should only be lighting that is necessary for safety. Such lighting should be low level and close to the ground. Any lighting that would flood large portions of the court surface is inappropriate.
- Lighting, for the most part, should be manually controlled so that lights are on only when needed. Lighting controls should be selected and adjusted to light areas only at the times lighting is essential. It is preferable to have lights manually controlled or on timers rather than to be controlled by photocells or motion detectors. Photocells can result in lights being on during all dark hours. Motion detectors can be triggered by animals, passing cars, etc. Such situations disturb both the natural conditions in the area and nearby residents. Individual control of lighting by the property owner is preferred.
- All light fixtures should be selected for their ability to focus light on the feature (i.e., step, path, entry) to be lighted and to have minimum light spillage. Fixtures that are designed to light large areas generally are considered unacceptable. Use of conventional unshaded or non-recessed spot lights and spot light or flood light bulbs of 75 watts or greater should be avoided.
- The source of light in any light fixture, i.e., the bulb or other source of indirect illumination, shall not be visible off-site. Exceptions in which the bulb itself may be visible from off-site are nonreflector bulbs of no greater than 75 watts incandescent light\* if frosted or otherwise diffused, or no greater than 25 watts incandescent light if clear. (Ord. 18.36.040.8b).
- The total electrical power of any single exterior light fixture visible from off site, irrespective of the number of bulbs the fixture can contain, shall not exceed 75 watts incandescent light if frosted or otherwise diffused, or no greater than 25 watts incandescent light if clear.
- In addition to the above lighting guidelines, lighting of all signs is regulated pursuant to the provisions of Ord. 18.40.050.

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\*The term incandescent light as used herein refers to the light emitted by a standard incandescent bulb, not including spot, flood, or similar special reflector bulbs.

# Entryways

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- Lighting of entryway features, including pillars and posts, are only permitted subject to prior approval by the ASCC. (Code Section, 18.42.018, B.)
- In zoning districts requiring 1 acre or more, entryway features, excluding mail boxes, shall be set back from the road right-of-way a distance of at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the required front yard. (Code Section 18.42.016, A.)
- Entryway features requiring a building permit are subject to approval by the ASCC. (Code 18.42.016, C.)

18.42.018 - Outdoor lighting.

Outdoor lighting is subject to the following limitations:

- A. Up-lighting of landscaping or structures is prohibited and any fixtures illuminating landscaping, trees or structures shall be subject to ASCC approval.
- B. Lighting of entryway features, including pillars and posts, are only permitted subject to prior approval by the ASCC.
- C. Lights may not be placed in trees except as permitted in D., below.
- D. Temporary holiday lights may be placed in trees and other locations on properties without requiring prior approval by the ASCC.

*(Ord. 2001-338 § 2 (part), 2001)*

18.36.040 - Accessory uses.

A. An accessory use is a related minor use which is either (a) necessary to the operation or enjoyment of a lawful principal use or conditional use, or (b) appropriate, incidental and subordinate to any such use. No use in any district shall be permitted as an accessory use which is not qualified as hereinabove set forth, or which constitutes in effect a conversion of a principal use to one not permitted in that district. In addition to other uses meeting the qualifications set forth in this section, and subject to the limitations set forth in this title, the following accessory uses are permitted in all districts when located on the same parcel as the principal use:

1. The installation and operation of necessary facilities and equipment in connection with such schools and other institutions as are permitted in the respective district;
2. Recreation, refreshment and service buildings in public parks;
3. Required off-street parking spaces and required off-street loading spaces as regulated by this title;
4. Fences and walls subject to the height and area regulations of this title;
5. Hedges, trees, shrubs and other ornamental planting;
6. Horticulture;
7. Electric and communication service lines provided that all such lines are placed underground except where exempted in accordance with the procedure set forth in subsection B of [Section 18.36.010](#)
8. Outdoor illumination, with the following restrictions:
  - a. Outdoor illumination shall be the minimum intensity necessary to provide safety for pedestrians and other nonvehicular uses.
  - b. The source of light, that is the bulb or other source of direct illumination, shall not be visible from off the premises. Exceptions in which the bulb itself may be visible from off the premises are nonreflector bulbs of no greater than seventy-five watts incandescent light if frosted or otherwise diffused, or no greater than twenty-five watts incandescent light if clear. This section does not by itself limit the electrical power of indirect illumination. The term "incandescent light" as used in subsection A8b and c of this section refers to the light emitted by a standard incandescent bulb (not including spot, flood or similar special reflector bulbs).
  - c. The total electrical power of any single exterior light fixture visible from off the premises, irrespective of the number of bulbs the fixture can contain, shall not exceed seventy watts incandescent light if frosted or otherwise diffused, or not greater than twenty-five watts incandescent light if clear,
  - d. Outdoor illumination for night use of uncovered game courts, including but not limited to tennis, paddle tennis, and basketball courts, riding rings, and similar outdoor recreation facilities and areas, is prohibited;
9. Septic tanks and drainfields;
10. Antennas designed to receive television or microwave signals transmitted from satellite or terrestrial stations. Antennas with diameters exceeding four feet are subject to review by the architectural and site control commission as provided for by paragraph 6 of subsection A of [Section 18.64.010](#)
11. Tennis courts and paddle tennis courts, provided the sum of the maximum depth of cut and maximum height of fill for such facilities shall not exceed the following:

Parcel Area	Combined Cut & Fill Feet
1.0 ac. or less	<u>8</u>
1.2 ac.	<u>9</u>
1.4 ac.	10
1.6 ac.	<u>11</u>
1.8 ac. or more	<u>12</u>

B. This section shall apply to new construction or replacement of fixtures upon adoption, and to all installations after an amortization period of five years.  
 (Ord. 1991-266 § 1 (part), 2, 1992: Ord. 1988-242 § 3 (Exh. B) (part), 1988: Ord. 1987-219 § 2, 1987: Ord. 1979-166 § 17, 1979: Ord. 1976-145 § 2, 1976: Ord. 1967-80 § 1 (6303), 1967)



## 18.12.040 - Accessory uses permitted.

Accessory uses permitted in the R-E district shall be as follows:

- A. Accessory uses, as permitted by Section 18.36.040 and Chapter 18.40
- B. One second unit on a parcel of one acre or larger subject to the following provisions:
  1. All provisions of Title 18 (Zoning) pertaining to this district prevail unless otherwise provided for in this subsection B.
  2. A second unit shall comply with all provisions of the site development and tree protection ordinance, set forth in Chapter 15.12
  3. The parcel already contains an existing single-family dwelling or the second unit is being built simultaneously with a new single-family dwelling that will be the principal dwelling.
  4. The second unit is attached to the principal dwelling, at the ground floor level or in a basement, and does not exceed a floor area of four hundred square feet. Second unit floor area is inclusive of any basement area, but exclusive of garage or carport area. Second units that are larger than four hundred square feet in floor area, that require a permit under Chapter 15.12, the Site Development and Tree Protection Ordinance, or that are located above the first story are subject to architectural and site control commission (ASCC) approval per Chapter 18.64
  5. Whether attached or detached from the principal dwelling, the second unit floor area may exceed four hundred square feet subject to ASCC approval per Chapter 18.64. In such cases, however, the second unit floor area may not exceed seven hundred fifty square feet.
  6. Second units up to seven hundred fifty square feet may be created by converting space within an existing home. When created within the first floor of an existing home, or including an addition of four hundred square feet or less, such second units may be permitted solely with a zoning permit, and without review of the ASCC. However, staff at their discretion may refer an application to the ASCC if the application includes proposals for doors, windows or other exterior improvements that could potentially have a significant effect on the aesthetics of the structure.
  7. The second unit complies with the definition of dwelling unit in Section 18.04.150
  8. The second unit is served by the same vehicular access to the street as the principal dwelling and complies with off-street parking requirements for dwellings set forth in Chapter 18.60 except that parking spaces do not have to be covered, guest spaces are not required and tandem parking is permitted.
  9. The second unit shall have the same address as the principal dwelling.
  10. A second unit shall not exceed a height, as defined in Section 18.54.020, of eighteen feet with a maximum height of twenty-four feet. A second unit may be permitted to a height of twenty-eight feet and a maximum of thirty-four feet subject to ASCC approval per Chapter 18.64
  11. The second unit shall have colors, materials and architecture similar to the principal dwelling. Architecture not similar to the architecture of the principal dwelling is subject to ASCC approval per Chapter 18.64
  12. Color reflectivity values shall not exceed forty percent except that trim colors shall not exceed fifty percent. Roofs shall not exceed fifty percent reflectivity.

13. Exterior lighting on the structure shall not exceed one light fixture per entry door. Each fixture shall be fitted with only one bulb and the bulb wattage shall not exceed seventy-five watts incandescent light if frosted or otherwise diffused, or twenty-five watts if clear. Each fixture shall be manually switched and not on a motion sensor or timer. Path lights, if any, shall be the minimum needed for safe access to the second unit and shaded by fixtures that direct light to the path surface and away from the sky.
  14. Landscape plantings shall be selected from the town's list of approved native plants and shall adhere to the town's landscaping guidelines.
  15. An application for a second unit shall be referred to the town geologist, director of public works, fire chief and, if dependent on a septic tank and drain field, to the county health officer in accordance with town policies.
  16. An application for a second unit shall supply all information required by Section 18.64.040A.1 through 13.
  17. Second units on parcels with frontage on Portola Road or Alpine Road, both of which are identified as local scenic corridors in the general plan, are subject to ASCC approval per Chapter 18.64 to ensure consistency with the general plan.
- C. Equestrian facilities serving a single residential dwelling including stables, corrals, exercise rings, and the like, provided that (i) requirements of the stable ordinance, Chapter 6.12, shall apply, (ii) for a corral, the sum of the maximum depth of cut and maximum height of fill shall not exceed six feet and (iii) corrals and riding rings shall be set back a minimum of twenty feet from property lines.
- D. The renting of rooms and/or the providing of table board in a dwelling as an incidental use to its occupancy as a dwelling, provided that not more than one paying guest is accommodated. Provided further that this shall not be construed as authorizing the establishment of any rest home, convalescent home, boarding home, or any other institution of a type which requires any state or local license, nor any other operation which tends to change the character of the property involved or of the neighborhood.
- E. Home Occupation. The conduct of an art or profession, the offering of a service, or the handcraft manufacture of products subject to the following conditions:
1. Such occupations shall be conducted entirely by resident occupants.
  2. The floor area used for such occupations shall not exceed that equivalent to one-fourth of the floor area of the main residence but shall not be more than four hundred square feet in any case.
  3. No products shall be sold or stocked for sale other than those finished products which are produced on the premises.
  4. There shall be no unusual external alteration of the dwelling to accommodate a home occupation, and the existence of a home occupation shall not be apparent beyond the boundaries of the parcel.
  5. There shall be no show window, window display, or sign to attract customers or clients.
  6. There shall be no emission readily discernible at the property lines of sound, vibration, odor, electrical interference, light, dust, waste, or other properties not normally associated with residential occupancies.
  - 7.

No motor power other than electrically operated motors shall be used in connection with a home occupation. The horsepower of any single motor shall not exceed one-half horsepower, and the total horsepower of such motors shall not exceed one horsepower.

8. Automobile, pedestrian or truck traffic attendant to such occupations shall not be other than on an infrequent or occasional basis, and shall not be significantly in excess of the normal amount required for residential uses in the district. Vehicles or equipment of types not normally accessory to a dwelling shall not be parked or stored in any exterior location.
  9. In the case of a physician, surgeon, or dentist, the use shall be subordinate to the use of an office located elsewhere unless the practice is of such restricted nature as to involve only occasional visits by patients.
  10. The uses permitted under this subdivision shall not include a commercial photo studio, beauty parlor or barbershop, or any similar service enterprise; or a music school, dancing school, business school, or other school of any kind with organized classes or similar activity.
- F. Private swimming pools, cabanas, tennis courts, and similar recreation facilities.
- G. Private garages, carports, and parking areas.
- H. Signs as permitted and regulated by Chapter 18.40
- I. The sale of agricultural products grown on the premises, provided that no building or structure is maintained specifically for such purposes.
- J. Household pets and domestic animals permitted by town ordinances.
- K. Emergency shelters for up to ten individuals only when located on a parcel with a conditional use for a religious institution, subject to a zoning permit. Architectural and site plan review shall be required for the design of the emergency shelter unless the shelter is located within an existing structure, but no discretionary approval shall be required. Emergency shelters shall comply with the following standards:
1. Temporary shelter shall be available to residents for no more than sixty days. Extensions up to a total stay of one hundred eighty days may be permissible if no alternative housing is available.
  2. On-site management shall be provided during the hours of shelter operation.
  3. Emergency shelters may include common space for the exclusive use of the guests, and office and meeting space for the exclusive use of emergency shelter staff.
  4. Each shelter shall have a designated outdoor smoking area that is not visible from the street or from adjacent properties. The outdoor smoking area may be screened by vegetation.
  5. On-site parking may be provided as shared parking with the church use. If separate on-site parking is needed, the maximum amount required shall be 0.35 parking spaces per one bed plus one space per staff member on duty when guests are present.

*(Ord. 2011-390 § 4, 2011; Ord. 2003-354, § 1, 2003; Ord. 2003-352, § 1, 2003; Ord. 2001-338 § 6 (part), 2001; Ord. 1991-263 §§ 4, 5, 1991; Ord. 1988-242 § 2 (Exh. A) (part), 1988; Ord. 1979-166 § 20 (part), 1979; Ord. 1969-99 § 4, 1969; Ord. 1967-80 § 1 (6501.33), 1967)*

**Reference Materials**

1. PVMC Section 18.64.050 – Review – Guiding Principles for External Design
2. PVMC Section 18.64.060 – Review – Site Development Criteria
3. Design Guidelines - Introduction

**18.64.050 - Review—Guiding principles for external design.**

In carrying out the purpose of this title with respect to the external design of structures, the commission shall keep in mind the following principles:

- A. It is not a purpose of this chapter that control of architectural character should be so rigidly enforced that individual initiative is stifled in the design of any particular structure, or substantial additional expense is required; rather, it is the intent of this chapter that any control exercised be the minimum necessary to achieve the overall objectives of this title.
- B. Good architectural character is based upon the suitability of a structure for its purposes; upon the appropriate use of sound materials; and upon the principles of harmony and proportion in the elements of the structure.
- C. Good architectural character is not, in itself, more expensive than poor architectural character, and is not dependent upon the particular style of architecture selected.
- D. The relationship of a structure to its surroundings is of greater importance than the quality of design of the individual structure.
- E. Nonresidential structures shall be compatible with the rural atmosphere of Portola Valley. Small, interesting shapes and groupings are preferred to large, simple, geometric forms of comparable size.
- F. When deemed warranted by the staff or the ASCC, an evaluation shall be made of the compatibility of the proposed project with existing off-site conditions and with potential future off-site conditions to the extent such conditions can reasonably be anticipated. This evaluation should demonstrate compatibility of the proposed height, bulk and mass with conditions in the area, including anticipated future development of adjoining properties, even if such compatibility requires adhering to standards that are more restrictive than the maximums set forth in this title.

*(Ord. 1995-285 § 1 Exh. A (part), 1995; Ord. 1986-210 § 3, 1986; Ord. 1979-166 § 25 (part), 1979; Ord. 1967-80 § 1 (6912.7), 1967)*

**18.64.060 - Review—Site development criteria.**

In addition to reviewing the proposed development in relation to specific requirements and conditions of this title; the architectural and site control commission shall consider such of the following as are applicable to the particular case. This may result in the necessity to reduce floor area, impervious surface or height and may require an increase in setbacks from property lines.

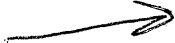
- A. Design of the structure so as to minimize disturbance to the natural terrain;
- B. Maximum possible preservation of existing vegetation;
- C. Design and location of the structure in relation to provision of adequate light and air to itself and its neighbors;
- D. Landscaping, screening, and fencing to preserve privacy and mitigate adverse effects on neighboring properties;
- E. Location of entrances and exits and layout of internal circulation in relation to traffic safety and ease and convenience of movement;
- F. Arrangement and intensity of night lighting in relation to public safety and effect on adjoining properties;

- G. Planting and site design as related to problems of drainage and soil erosion;
- H. Materials and colors shall be compatible with the rural setting of the town and the surrounding landscape and structures;
- I. Grading so as to minimize the apparent disturbance to the natural terrain;
- J. With respect to mobile homes certified under the National Mobile Home Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974, building design may be reviewed only in regard to roof material and color, roof overhang and siding material and color.

*(Ord. 1995-285 § 1 Exh. A (part), 1995: Ord. 1986-210 § 4, 1986: Ord. 1981-185 § 2, 1981; Ord. 1979-166 § 25 (part), 1979; Ord. 1967-80 § 1 (6912.8), 1967)*

# INTRODUCTION

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The purpose of the Design Guidelines is to illustrate key design principles that the Architectural and Site Control Commission (ASCC) apply in evaluating applications for development of properties within the Town. This booklet is provided to familiarize applicants with site design, architectural design and landscape design concepts encouraged by the Town. Review and approval of applications by the ASCC is guided by these principles that are based on the regulations established in Chapter 18.64 (Zoning Ordinance) of the Municipal Code (see “ASCC: Establishment and Purpose” in the Appendices). The Town recommends strong consideration of the principles as they relate to individual application proposals.

## **A Major Goal of the Town is:**

**“To assure all building sites and residences are developed in a manner minimizing disturbance to natural terrain and vegetation, and maximizing preservation of natural beauty and open space.”**  
(Portola Valley General Plan)

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The Town of Portola Valley recognizes the value and importance of good design in achieving the goals set forth in the General Plan. Implementation of design criteria set forth in these Design Guidelines is intended to accomplish the following:

- Implement broad policies and goals set forth in the General Plan.
- Supplement design provisions established in the Zoning Ordinance in order to promote development that is in the best interests of the public health, safety and welfare of the Town.
- Establish criteria that will encourage good design and site relationships that are compatible with the natural features of the Town.

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### **Other Major Community Goals:**

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**“To Conserve the ‘rural’ quality of Portola Valley and maintain the Town as an attractive, tranquil family-oriented community ...”** (Portola Valley General Plan)

**“Because the dominant features of the planning area are the natural land forms and vegetation, structures and land uses should be subordinated thereto ...”** (Portola Valley General Plan)

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Each site in Portola Valley presents specific constraints to development and also presents unique opportunities. Careful site selection and design allows for sensitive development consistent with Town policies, while satisfying most individual needs. Not every site can accommodate two-story structures or accessory uses such as swimming pools, tennis courts, or stables. Each site must be approached individually with careful consideration given to site conditions early in the development stage. Good site development must begin with a thorough analysis of:

- Soils and geology
- Drainage and water features
- Topography
- Existing vegetation
- Views from the site
- Views from other properties to the site
- Design relationships to adjoining parcels and development



**ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE CONTROL COMMISSION**  
**Regular Evening Meeting, 765 Portola Road**

**FEBRUARY 9, 2015**

(1) CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ross called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Center Historic School House Meeting Room, 765 Portola Road.

(2) ROLL CALL

Present: ASCC: Breen, Clark, Harrell, Ross  
Absent: Koch  
Planning Commission Liaison: Nate McKitterick  
Town Council Liaison: None  
Town Staff: Town Planner Debbie Pedro, Assistant Planner Carol Borck

(3) ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

(4) OLD BUSINESS

(a) **Architectural Review and Site Development Permit X9H-686 for a New Residence and Detached Workshop, 40 Minoca Road, Hanrahan/Maxwell Residence, File #51-2014**

The ASCC conducted a preliminary review of this project on January 12, 2015 and the project was continued from the January 26, 2015 ASCC meeting to tonight at the request of the applicant. Assistant Planner Borck said that the comments and feedback were generally supportive of the project, with most of the input focused on landscaping and screen planting adjustments and reconsideration of the clear-coat aluminum window and door frames.

Ms. Borck provided a summary of the project and noted that the neighbors at 406 Minoca Road (Mefferts) and 405 Minoca Road (Strobers), who were present at the January 12, 2015 review, expressed concerns about screening. Materials and plans in the Commissioner packets responded to the preliminary ASCC comments as well as presented some minor voluntary revisions. As discussed in the staff report, the site plan has been modified to eliminate the above-ground water tank and reconfigure the east patio off the two-story wing. The architectural plans for the workshop have been modified to eliminate the doors and windows from the southern elevation, facing Minoca Road, to add clerestory windows to the west elevation, and add a door to the east elevation that opens into the interior courtyard.

The lighting plan has been revised, shifting the exterior light fixtures around the home, adding two downlights in the deep overhang on the second-story wing, and now includes downlights on both sides of the workshop's double-doors. The revised landscape lighting plan has eliminated all wall and step lights in the auto court, added one light at the outdoor barbeque counter and one light in the spa. No pathlights or other landscape lighting is proposed.

The ASCC had requested a detailed plan for removal of existing redwoods and pines on the site. Taking into account the off-site visibility concerns of the neighbors at 405 and 406 Minoca, the applicant is proposing a phased tree removal and installation of 24-inch box oaks as replacement screening.

Also at the preliminary meeting, the ASCC directed the applicant to consider the window and door-framing color to meet the Town's 50% light reflectivity requirement (LRV). The applicant requests that the ASCC reconsider the clear-coat aluminum framing, stating that the frames will be minimally visible from off-site. If the ASCC does not approve the clear-coat frames, the applicant offers that their alternate choice would be to custom match the frames to the proposed gray metal roofing.

## DRAFT MINUTES

Ms. Maxwell said they talked to the neighbors about the trees and their concerns about screening. She said they were committed to removing the trees that shouldn't be there, but she thought it could be done over a period of time while planting oak trees that are big enough to get a head start in helping to screen. She said the neighbors seemed to be agreeable.

Chair Ross asked whether the Commission had any questions.

Vice Chair Harrell asked the height of a 24-inch box oak. Ms. Maxwell said from the photographs the landscape architect provided, the coast live oaks appeared to be approximately 12 to 15 feet tall.

Commissioner Breen expressed concern regarding the two proposed lights in the second story overhang. As lights were not proposed in this location previously, she wanted to confirm that no neighbors would be looking up into a light source. Mark Hoffman, project architect, said he did not believe those lights would be visible.

As there were no other questions, Chair Ross opened the public hearing.

Barbara Kimball-Lewis from 375 Golden Oak Drive showed a photograph of the current view of the vegetation and pine trees from inside the living room. She said their family has lived in the home since 1964 and valued the view of the hills and skyline. She also showed an old photograph that showed when the house at 40 Minoca was not visible at all. She said that now that the trees are gone, there is a clear view of the house. Ms. Kimball-Lewis said it is her understanding that the oaks only grow 2 feet per year, so it may take a long time for them to grow from 15 feet up to a height that would screen the applicant's house. She asked if they could consider temporary screening such as a native hedge that would grow faster. She said she would like the view of the neighbor's house for the next five years to be less prominent. She would also prefer the applicant's house not be all lit up. Ms. Kimball-Lewis said she just had the oleanders trimmed down to provide a better view of the hill, so she believes her house is also more visible now. Commissioner Clark asked if the view in the photograph was from the rear of her home and not the living room. Ms. Kimball-Lewis said her home was an L-shape, with the small part of the L being the living room.

With no other public speakers, Chair Ross closed the public hearing and brought it back to the Commission for discussion.

Commissioner Clark said the staging of the landscape and tree removal will be critical for this project. He is very supportive of the project and likes the lighting updates to the plan and the overall massing and development of the site.

Commissioner Breen thanked the applicants for the changes that were made. She said this house expresses itself in a tall way but it works for this site. She said the beautiful oaks that are there will perform better with the removal of the pines. She suggested removing the pines now and stage removal of redwoods as they decline. She understands the neighbors' concerns, but the pine trees shouldn't be there. Commissioner Breen said this is an opportunity for the land to be restored and when the pine trees come down, there will be a glorious valley view. She said appropriate screening for properties such as this have to come from multiple properties. Ms. Kimball-Lewis's oleanders will grow back and she will likely keep it managed, but she may have quite an extraordinary view when the pines come down. Commissioner Breen said trying to keep redwoods in chaparral is difficult. She said that removing the pines will give character to the slope, and that the one beautiful oak will become an identity for the place.

Ms. Maxwell said while she agreed with the removal of the pines being good for the oaks, she looked at the view from the neighbor's living room and those pine trees presently do a good job of at least screening the construction process, which she thinks is an important consideration. Commissioner Breen said she would support the pines being removed at the end of construction. She believes the ASCC should do the right thing for the land and the trees. The pine trees do a disservice to the experience of that chaparral and should be removed.

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Vice Chair Harrell stated she is satisfied with the clear-coat aluminum windows because it's not likely anyone will see the frames. She says it is great that the water tank is going underground. Vice Chair Harrell supports the other Commissioners' comments regarding the tree removal. She said the pine trees are limbed so high that they do not contribute to screening very much. The redwoods in the front are tall and perhaps screen distant views to the house, but she feels a 15- or 20-foot oak would screen the house more effectively. She agrees the pines should be removed no later than the end of construction when the oaks go are planted. Vice Chair Harrell said that while she realizes the applicant is trying to accommodate the neighbors, this is really the only time the ASCC has influence or control over correcting this. She advised Ms. Kimball-Lewis that she could let the oleanders grow, or install other planting to block the center section of the view that bothers her. Vice Chair Harrell stated she supported the proposed lighting.

Ms. Maxwell asked if the Commission would have any objection to them cutting down the two redwoods as soon as possible. Vice Chair Harrell had no objection.

Chair Ross was agreeable to all of the architectural changes and found them appropriate, thoughtful, and responsive. He particularly liked the idea of putting the water tank underground. He said he was becoming more agreeable to the aluminum window frames, but was concerned about the reflectivity of clear-coated aluminum at certain times of the day. Commissioner Breen suggested the possibility of creating a mock-up and sending two ASCC members to look at it.

Mr. Hoffman pointed out that the windows were not visible from most places, and it is a slim window, not a broad surface. Chair Ross said a sun angle that would reflect off of the aluminum would also reflect off the glass itself. Chair Ross noted that three trees on the left (southwest) corner are the ones more effective for screening views from the Kimball property since it was a steep upslope from the street at that corner location.

Commissioner Breen suggested mixing sizes, such as putting one 36-inch box, a couple of 24-inch boxes, and some 15 gallons so that there is some natural variation.

Chair Ross said he agreed with Commissioner Breen that mixing sizes of the trees would be appropriate. Chair Ross said he was supportive of this very nice project. Commissioner Breen asked the ASCC if they wanted the tree plan to be looked at by a designated member. She would like to see the different sizes and also see the tree removal plan. Ms. Pedro said that Condition #6 does specify that an ASCC member review the planting and tree removal.

Vice Chair Harrell moved to accept the revised proposal from Hanrahan/Maxwell for their new residence, with the conditions that were recommended in the staff report. Seconded by Commissioner Breen, the motion carried 4-0.

### (5) COMMISSION AND STAFF REPORTS

#### (a) **Alpine Road Retaining Wall Project**

Ms. Pedro presented the staff report regarding this capital improvement project. The project began in 2014 when the City Council and BP&TS approved the application for grant funding to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA) to do a shoulder widening project on Alpine Road. She said the project consists of widening the shoulder on the west side of Alpine, which spans approximately 500 linear feet, widening the shoulder from 2-1/2 feet to up to 6 feet to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Because the shoulder will be widened, the bank will have to be cut back and a retaining wall will need to be installed. The project is currently in the design phase and the proposed wood retaining wall will be very similar to the one on Portola Road with a strip of berm buffer in front to soften the wall.

Commissioner Breen asked if the ASCC had anything to say about the project because she thought the wall would look horrible. She said she loves the sandstone cliff outcroppings at that location and there

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are implications to widening a road in an urban area – such as speeding up traffic flow. She does not like the wood retaining wall on Portola Road and is very unhappy about this project.

Commissioner Clark asked about the genesis of this project. Ms. Pedro said the proposal came from the Bicycle, Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee (BP&TS) and also the Council. The Council discussed this item in January 2014 and asked staff to submit a grant application to the County. She said the purpose of the project is to try to make the road safer.

Commissioner Breen said it was good to widen the road for the cyclists; however, she can't think of anything uglier than a wood retaining wall at that location. Commissioner Clark said he was not objecting to the style of what's being proposed, but asked why this project was necessary. Commission Breen said the wall design needs to be looked at closely because this is the scenic corridor and a key entrance into Portola Valley. She said that to accommodate the wooden wall, the chaparral and the rock outcroppings will have to be removed.

Vice Chair Harrell asked if we could expand the lanes on the other side. Ms. Pedro said that one option is to maintain the slope and reconfigure the road, but then the creek banks on the east side would need to be graded or filled because the slope drops off. She noted that another reason for the project is to widen the shoulders so it is more consistent with the rest of the shoulder along Alpine Road because it narrows at this intersection.

Chair Ross said he is an avid cyclist and rides that stretch all the time. He said due to the narrow shoulder, it is a treacherous spot and he feels very vulnerable in that area when on his bicycle. In addition, he said there is a fair amount of erosion and rock fall that fills up that shoulder and cyclists would end up having to ride in the roadway.

Chair Ross asked what role the ASCC has in the process. Ms. Pedro said this is a status report to the ASCC and if the Commission has suggestions or recommendations on the design and materials of the wall, the information will be forwarded to the Public Works Director to be included in the project design.

Chair Ross said he would like the ASCC to review the design in its preliminary state before it is completed and put out to bid. He said the Commission may have some good suggestions to mitigate the aesthetic impacts and still be consistent with good engineering practices.

Planning Commissioner Nate McKitterick said he was sympathetic to Commissioner Breen's comment and he suspects the grant money is what influenced the decision to move forward. He thinks the decision has already been made to go ahead with the project but there may alternatives to the wall design that would be better aesthetically.

Commissioner Breen said just because the Town received grant money doesn't mean we should proceed with the project.

Ms. Pedro said this project is still in the design phase. The geology study has just been completed and a wood retaining wall is being proposed. This item can be brought back to the ASCC for review once the design is further developed.

Chair Ross said he would be interested to see the height of the retaining wall reduced. Commissioner Breen would like to know what alternatives to wood for the retaining wall have been considered. Commissioner Breen also asked if traffic studies were done. Chair Ross said the proposal came from the BP&TS Committee and not a result of a traffic study.

Commissioner Clark said his specific comment would be to reduce the width that's being proposed from 6 feet to 4 feet because that will lower the height of the wall. Ms. Pedro said the center portion of the wall would be about 4 to 4-1/2 feet and tapers down to grade at either end. She also asked for clarification of whether they would prefer a berm in front of the wall. Commissioner Clark said a berm is appropriate.

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Chair Ross said that many retaining walls in Portola Valley seem to be about twice as tall as necessary and would like to see the wall as low as possible. Chair Ross agrees with Commissioner Clark that if it is going to be built, the less visual impact the better. He would like it to be low enough to still see the sandstone outcroppings.

Mr. McKitterick said it is interesting that capital improvement projects like this one have not come before the ASCC in the past. Chair Ross said any built structure in Portola Valley, including Town projects, should be reviewed by the ASCC. Commissioner Breen concurred and would like to see some evidence that the proposed improvements are necessary. Chair Ross responded that he believes the area is one of the more treacherous locations along the main bicycle routes. Commissioner Breen said that the situation could get worse because wherever the road is wider, people tend to drive faster. Commissioner Clark agrees with Commissioner Breen and noted that there is a beautiful bike path off of Alpine Road along the creek that can serve as an alternate route for the cyclists.

Ms. Pedro said when the design is more developed, the item will be brought back before the ASCC for review and comments. She said she will forward the ASCC's design recommendations to Public Works Director Howard Young.

### **(b) Annual ASCC Report**

Ms. Pedro presented the Annual Report summarizing the ASCC's work in 2014. The ASCC held a total of 32 meetings in 2014 – 12 field meetings and 20 evening meetings. The majority of projects that came before the ASCC were architectural review of new residences, additions, gates, fences, landscaping, lot line adjustments, and variances. ASCC also looked at use permits and held study sessions for long-range planning projects such as the Portola Road Corridor Plan. She presented a chart with the number of architectural review projects that came before the ASCC between 2010-2014 which shows that development activity has gone up approximately 5 to 7 percent per year in the last five years.

Chair Ross asked staff what is in the pipeline now. He thinks that the number of additions or remodels may go down while the number of new home applications may rise. Ms. Pedro said it is still early in the year, but presently there are 28 to 30 projects in the pipeline, which includes current and long-range planning items. There are perhaps five new homes that are currently under review or anticipated to be submitted soon.

Commissioner Breen asked if the ASCC would be holding any special study sessions in 2015. Ms. Pedro said the Second Unit Ordinance as well as an ordinance to address ASCC review of smaller projects will be coming before the ASCC.

Chair Ross said he hopes there will be a discussion regarding an update to the Municipal Code in relation to exterior lighting. He said that current requirements only applies to fixtures mounted on the outside of a home, even though the greatest light source at night comes from larger windows which are not always mitigated by window coverings, particularly for high windows. He said most people around Town know they are not supposed to flood their site with lights, but the ordinance is unclear about the requirements for landscape and tree lighting.

Vice Chair Harrell said that Portola Valley Ranch is updating its design guidelines and while they would like to keep lights to a minimum, there are concerns regarding safety lighting, particularly for getting to and from the house and the car. Vice Chair Harrell said her concern is that if the requirements are too restrictive, lights will be installed after final inspections because not enough lights are allowed for safety.

Commissioner Breen asked about the new house on Golden Oak where excessive number of exterior lights have been installed. Commissioner Clark said that he and staff met with the applicant and identified the lights that must be modified or removed. However, the applicant did not appear to understand the reasons why the lights are required to be removed.

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Chair Ross concurred with Vice Chair Harrell that there are illegal light fixtures all over Town. Mr. McKitterick said a lot of things go in at the end of construction and is not caught because it's not being inspected at night, or it is put in after construction is done.

Chair Ross said that the urbanizing pressure on Portola Valley is taking away from some of the characteristics that are important to the Town. Chair Ross said he cannot recall many projects where the Commission found the lighting plan to be perfect. Instead, applicants are always asked to significantly reduce the proposed lighting. He recognizes there are safety concerns but want to control the amount of lighting where it serves its purpose but not more.

Vice Chair Harrell said it would behoove the Commission, when asking applicants to reduce the number of lights, to have safety in mind.

Commissioner Breen added that lighting affects not only humans, but migratory birds as well.

Chair Ross asked for any additional Commissioner reports on site visits or plan reviews.

Commissioner Breen reported that she reviewed the follow-up fencing and landscaping conditions for the Wookey project at 110 Shawnee Pass.

Vice Chair Harrell asked if the Portola Valley Ranch updated design guidelines should be forwarded to the ASCC. Ms. Pedro advised that the updated guidelines will need to be submitted to staff who will then coordinate the ASCC review.

Chair Ross suggested that the ASCC have a discussion on their scope of project review including architectural style, siting and massing. He questioned whether the review of architectural style was the purview of the ASCC. Commissioner Breen stated that the ASCC has never reviewed architectural style. Ms. Pedro will place the item on a future agenda for open discussion.

(6) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 26, 2015 Commissioner Breen moved to approve the January 26, 2015 minutes as submitted. Seconded by Vice Chair Harrell, the motion passed 4-0.

(8) ADJOURNMENT 8:50 p.m.