

(1) CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ross called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Center Historic School House Meeting Room, 765 Portola Road.

(2) ROLL CALL

Present: ASCC: Breen, Clark, Sill, Ross
Absent: Koch
Planning Commission Liaison: Judith Hasko
Town Council Liaison: None
Town Staff: Interim Town Manager Debbie Pedro, Assistant Planner Carol Borck

(3) ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Interim Town Manager Pedro introduced the new Consultant Planner, Cynthia Richardson, who will be assisting the Town with both current planning and long-range planning projects.

Chair Ross introduced Al Sill, the new ASCC Commissioner. He said Commissioner Sill, who has an engineering background, is replacing Commissioner Iris Harrell, who has moved out of Town.

(4) OLD BUSINESS

(a) Architectural Review and Site Development Permit for a New Residence, Detached Garage with Attached Studio and Gym, and Swimming Pool, File #s: 09-2015 and X9H-691, 177 Goya Road, Donahoe Residence.

Assistant Planner Borck presented the staff report regarding the proposed project. She said that on September 14, the ASCC conducted a preliminary review of the project, which consists of a 5,340-square-foot partial two-story home with a 400-square-foot detached garage that includes a 918-square-foot attached gym and storage area and a 428-square-foot upper level studio, and a swimming pool. She said that the site grading involves 370 cubic yards of earthwork, which includes 55 cubic yards of cut and 315 cubic yards of fill.

She said that at the preliminary meeting a letter was received from the Crowns at 100 La Sandra expressing concerns over potential glazing reflectivity and light spill.

Ms. Borck advised that staff met today with the Wests, who are the property owners at 187 Goya on the north side of the property. She said the Wests expressed concerns regarding the views to the proposed studio from their master bedroom, noting that many of the screening trees between the two properties lose their leaves during the winter. The Wests were also concerned regarding potential light spill from the studio, as well as privacy impacts. She said the Wests requested that additional evergreen screening trees be planted between the two properties.

Mr. Donahoe advised that he had met with the Westridge Homeowners Association this morning and his project team are working on a design solution that will adequately responded to the

ASCC's direction, as well as, that of the Westridge HOA (WASC), neighbors, and the Conservation Committee. He stated that a single-story solution for the home was studied and that the two-story design balances the concerns and considerations from both Westridge and the ASCC. He advised that their meeting with WASC resulted in their decision to reduce the home's finish floor level by 2 feet and the garage/gym/studio's finished floor level by 4 feet. Mr. Donahoe stated that his civil engineer believed the modifications can be achieved without exceeding the 1,000 cubic yard grading threshold that would require Planning Commission review. Additionally, he advised that two blue oak trees would be proposed on the western hillside to help further mitigate potential glazing impacts. In response to the West's concerns with privacy and the proximity of the garage/studio, he advised that consideration is being given to designing a solid railing along the west elevation. He requested that the ASCC consider the current plans with these proposed modifications and grant approval of the project with the condition that the revised grading/site plan be submitted to a designated ASCC member for review.

Chair Ross called for questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Clark stated that he supports the additional grading and the lowering of the buildings.

In response to Commissioner Breen's question, Mr. Donahoe said the proposed blue oaks along Goya were to mitigate the removal of the eucalyptus trees, and that the proposed live oak was for screening towards the West's property. He advised that they discussed further screen planting with the Wests in the area of the garage and autocourt wall.

Chair Ross asked the applicant if there was an alternate plan in place should the proposed additional grading exceed the 1,000 cubic yard threshold. Mr. Donahoe advised that they were uncertain at this time.

With no further questions from the Commissioners, Chair Ross opened the public hearing and called for public comment.

Tom West, 187 Goya Road, expressed his privacy concerns with the proposed studio located above the garage. He said that the structure is approximately 165 feet from his master bedroom, and that it is at a higher elevation than his property. He said screening options have been explored, but he has not seen any detailed plans. He stated that he was concerned that the ASCC would approve the project without seeing final proposed plans that take into consideration his privacy concerns.

Chair Ross asked Mr. West if he considered the view towards the studio a primary or secondary view corridor. Mr. West said all of their living areas (the rear of his house) face south, which is the location of the proposed garage and studio area. He said they also have views to other parts of the proposed project and requested the applicant put in additional screening.

Rob Cheney, 158 Goya Road, said his family lives across the street from the subject property, and offered appreciation to the applicant for communicating and sharing the plans with them. He advised that he supported the project as well as the removal of the eucalyptus trees.

Rusty Day, WASC, said that WASC remains significantly concerned about the reflectivity of the glass and believes that looking at a sample is very important. He said, however, that a mock-up would not be a condition for their approval. He was supportive of lowering the elevation of the house, and said it was a critical aspect to their acceptance and approval of the project. He

advised that landscaping was another important element in their approval. He said that the proposed planting of two trees on the western hillside may not be enough. He stated that they have not yet reached an agreement on the types, location, or sizes of trees, and that they have not seen a specific plan. Mr. Day advised that, with regard to the one-story versus two-story designs, there was a fourth alternative discussed that was not presented tonight. He said they had discussed moving the study further west over the gym and sinking the gym further into the ground or designing a split level. He said the benefit to the Wests would be the lowering and moving of the structure further to the west where existing trees would further soften views to the structure. He said that the design solution was the applicant's decision and would need to be submitted to WASC for review. Mr. Day urged that the ASCC continue project review, rather than grant conditional approval tonight, so that a final, detailed plan could be considered. He advised that WASC was specifically anticipating design modifications that will lower the house finished floor by two feet, while maintaining the distance between the house and the pool.

Mr. Donahoe clarified that this morning they discussed sinking the gym 3 to 5 feet as well as sinking the whole property down. He advised that after reviewing renderings, they found that the design would not improve the West's situation, and decided instead to lower the entire garage/gym by 4 feet. Mr. Day said it was important for WASC to get specific plans.

With no further public comment, Chair Ross closed the public hearing and returned to the Commission for comment and possible action.

Commissioner Clark said the fourth alternative may be something the applicant would want to consider, but he said the proposed grading modifications to lower the home and garage's finish floors are strong positions to move this proposed project forward. He said the landscape plan should indicate protection of the very unique natural landscape on the southeast slope and include future measures for protection from invasives. He said if any additional screening is required on the north side, it should be reviewed by an ASCC member after the buildings are framed. He said the construction staging plan should consider the impacts on Goya Road, and the applicant should share with the neighbors and the Town an anticipated timeline for the project.

Commissioner Breen was supportive of the absence of fencing, gates, and lawn, the minimal landscaping, and the color palette. She said she would have preferred a one-story design, but said that lowering the house 2 feet was a good solution. She was supportive of the two blue oaks proposed along Goya Road, but did not support live oaks over the edge of the chaparral. She agreed with Commissioner Clark that the screening plan should be reviewed after framing and said there could be a good landscape solution to the screening on the West's side. She was supportive of moving the project forward and said the Commission needed to see the new grading plan.

Commissioner Sill was supportive of lowering the house and conditionally approving the project.

Chair Ross said the applicants were very responsive to neighbors' concerns and was supportive of the project. He expressed appreciation to the applicant for providing the photo documentation of the existing house and reusing/recycling as much of the existing materials as feasible. He suggested moving the pool lights to the west side of the pool. He said he was familiar with the glass the applicants had chosen and suggested, rather than providing a mockup, they could identify buildings that have this glass installed for people to view. He was supportive of the additional excavation, and reminded the applicant that exceeding the 1,000 yards of earthwork would require Planning Commission approval. He was supportive of adding the blue oaks along

Goya Road. He expressed concern for keeping the chaparral intact along the west side of the property, and noted that planting shrubby natives on the western hillside may provide more effective screening than blue oak trees. He advised that the final, detailed landscape plan would need to be reviewed by staff and a designated ASCC member before the building permit is issued. He was supportive of approving the project as it stands with the conditions discussed.

Chair Ross called for additional comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Clark said that WASC and the ASCC were in general agreement with the finish floor of the residence being lowered two feet, but that uncertainty remained regarding the final grading calculations. He said they also remain unsure as to what is the best solution for the detached garage with upstairs studio.

Chair Ross agreed with Commissioner Clark, but was supportive of the project moving forward.

Commissioner Clark said there should be a reduction of lighting on the east side of the driveway approach and elimination of all of the lighting on the street side. He agreed that the final, detailed landscape plan should come back to a designated ASCC member for review.

Commissioner Breen said she did not agree with changing the pool lights to the west side of the pool, but was supportive of eliminating the four lights on the driveway.

Chair Ross withdrew his request to move the pool lights.

In response to Mr. Donahoe's question regarding driveway lights and safety, the Commissioners advised him that additional lighting would not be approved.

Commissioner Clark moved to approve the project with the conditions as stated in the staff report with the addition of the following conditions:

1. The grading plan shall be revised to lower the house pad by two feet and to lower the detached garage/studio pad by four feet to the satisfaction of a designated ASCC member prior to building permit submittal.
2. The four lights proposed along the east side of the autocourt/driveway shall be eliminated.
3. A final, detailed landscape plan shall be submitted to the satisfaction of a designated ASCC member prior to building permit issuance. The plan shall identify screening trees or shrubs proposed along the southwestern hillside and along the north side of the driveway retaining wall and detached garage/studio. The plan shall include provisions for placement of the proposed screening materials along the southwestern hillside and at the north side of the garage, subject to the approval of a designated ASCC member at the time of rough framing inspection. The final plantings shall be inspected and approved by a designated ASCC member prior to final inspection.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Breen. The motion passed 4-0.

(b) Architectural Review and Site Development Permit for a New Residence, Detached Studio, Pool House, and Swimming Pool, File #s: 10-2015 and X9H-692, 20 Naranja Way, Roberts Residence.

Assistant Planner Borck presented the staff report regarding the proposed project. She said the project proposes a 6,381-square-foot, two-story modern farmhouse style residence with attached garage, a 1,630-square-foot basement, a 465-square-foot detached studio, a 638-square foot pool house with mechanical basement, and a swimming pool. The site development includes 1,695 cubic yards of grading that counts toward the site development permit, for which the Planning Commission is the approving body.

She said the project complies with all floor area, height, and setback regulations.

She said that at the preliminary meeting, the ASCC directed the applicant to lower the height of the new home by 1 to 2 feet using design solutions such as lowering roof pitch, lowering plate heights, and/or lowering the finished floor. She advised that the plans have been modified to reduce the overall maximum height of the structure from 34' to approximately 32'9". She stated that by lowering the overall roof pitch from 8:12 to 7:12 and lowering the northern wing's roof plate by approximately 6", the height of the structure over the area of the offices has been reduced from approximately 24.5' to about 23'. She said this was one of the areas of concern for the view from 137 Solana.

She said the central wing of the home has been modified to remove the proposed 41' long ridge skylight and to reduce the ridge height by approximately 2'6" to a height of 20 feet. She advised that this is the only section of roof that is at a 6:12 pitch. She said the lowering of this wing was found acceptable by WASC and that staff had been informed that a conditional letter of approval from WASC was forthcoming.

She said that while the architectural plans have responded to the ASCC direction to lower the height, the landscape plans appear to propose an excessive amount of screening trees. She stated that while some screening trees may be beneficial for softening views to the home from the 137 Solana property, Town planting guidelines call for random groupings, avoiding linear or hedge-forming plantings, and consideration of the future height of trees so as not to obstruct off-site views. She said the proposed olive and live oak trees along the driveway, while shown to meander, could create somewhat of a "screening wall", which is discouraged. Additionally, she said the maturity height of the trees should be considered. She noted that the Curtis's, 137 Solana, expressed concern over the future height of the screening trees that could potentially impact their views to the western hillsides. Based on review of the proposed locations of the trees and the grade elevations, she said it appears that the proposed live oaks could potentially encroach into these western views as they grow over time to maturity heights 30' and greater.

Bryan Roberts, applicant, said there has been much discussion regarding the existing and proposed trees on this project. He advised that the house is being designed around the 10 existing large oaks, and that since they moved there three years ago, they have removed many redwoods and oleanders. He said they are trying to complement the existing large oak trees with both live and blue oaks to mitigate the screening loss of the redwoods proposed for removal.

Chair Ross called for questions from the Commission.

In response to Commissioner Breen's question, noting that the most visible ridge appeared to be the one over the office, Mr. Roberts said the second floor plate height at the outside wall of the office was 4 feet.

With no further questions, Chair Ross invited members of the public to address the Commission

regarding the project.

Mark Curtis, 137 Solana Road, referred to a letter his wife, Jackie, had sent to the Commission. He asked that there be more discussion or guidance around creative ways to reduce the heights of the two end wings, the reflectiveness of the roof, and the number and height of the trees.

Bill Dewes, representing WASC, clarified that WASC never suggested raising any roof heights and said that all of their comments have been to reduce ridge heights, which Mr. Roberts has addressed satisfactorily.

Jackie Curtis, 137 Solana Road, referred to concerns she had detailed in a 30-plus page letter with photographs that she had previously emailed to the Commission. She brought additional photographs showing the glare impact in the afternoon on the story pole flags and the view impacts of the existing trees on the subject property.

Loverine Taylor, 35 Naranja Way, referenced her memo detailing her three concerns specific to this project – construction traffic and parking, drainage, and a timely construction schedule. Referring to projects in Portola Valley in general, she said people now build very large homes, and the amount of dirt being moved changes the contours and the neighborhoods of the Town. She requested that the ASCC consider the effect that these large-scale projects have on neighborhoods for the years that they take to complete.

Alex Curtis, 137 Solana Road, expressed his desire that future generations of his family can enjoy the same views to the western hillside that his family has always enjoyed at his home.

With no further public comments, Chair Ross closed the public hearing and returned to the Commissioners for comment and possible action.

Commissioner Sill said he did not find the height of the building to be objectionable, but was concerned about the effect over time that the growing trees would have on the view.

In response to Commissioner Clark's questions regarding the roof material, project architect, Ken Lindsteadt, said the actual specification for the zinc is pre-oxidized with a matte finish so there is no reflectance. He shared a sample for the Commissioners to view. Chair Ross said he had worked with this material and said it will gradually become grayer, duller, and less reflective. Commissioner Breen said she is supportive of the roof material.

Ms. Curtis said it would be important to see the roof material mocked-up at the site to accurately determine potential reflectivity impacts.

Commissioner Clark asked if there was a plan to eventually replace the remaining redwoods. Mr. Roberts said the problem with removing the redwoods along the rear property line, is that due to the height of the Blumenkranz home, new screening trees would need to be placed further up on the hill on the Blumenkranz property in order to be effective. Commissioner Clark suggested sequential, phased planting that would eliminate the redwoods by the end of the project. He said there should be some dialogue with the Blumenkranzes for a long-term solution.

Commissioner Clark said that along the 137 Solana side of the property, there may be a better solution for screen planting that is non-linear and will not reach a mature height that encroaches into the western hillside view corridor.

Bernard Trainor, project landscape architect, proposes to modify the planting plan to reduce the amount of screening trees and allowed for more natural groupings of the trees.

Commissioner Clark said he was supportive of no lights facing east, and he appreciated the minimal lighting on the second floor. He asked if there had been any further consideration on the roof slope reduction. He said there would also be benefits to lowering the finish floor. Mr. Roberts said it was his understanding that lowering the finish floor would be detrimental to the nearby oak trees. Commissioner Clark said studying the roof pitch and the finish floor height together is the most effective way of determining how to reduce the scale of the home.

Commissioner Breen said she was disappointed to see the ridge skylight removed because she thought it was architecturally compelling. She was supportive of the materials used and the zinc roof. She said she would prefer the two wings being lowered more, but that landscape trees could help to mitigate the view impacts. She expressed concern about the maturity height of the proposed oak trees, but she thought they were a viable option. She supported further reducing the scope of landscaping and appreciated the reduction in planting and tree removals at the driveway. She advised that it was ambitious to maintain the two acres of proposed native meadow. She suggested the landscape plan include provisions for the planting of screening oak trees along the rear property area so that the remaining redwoods could be removed in approximately five years once the oaks are established. She advised against trimming/topping of the large, existing oak tree near the Curtis property. She expressed support for a construction staging plan that does not include parking on Naranja Way.

Chair Ross said that the design modifications have substantially responded to the concerns expressed by the neighbors. He said the Curtis' western upward view would not be affected as their home is approximately one foot lower than the highest ridge of the proposed project. He said the change to the overall view will be minimal. He did not support a roof mock-up at the site, and said the material samples provided to the Commission were sufficient. He advised the applicant to minimize neighborhood disruptions caused by construction activity by restricting parking on Naranja Way. Chair Ross said he was supportive of the project and appreciated that the applicant has responded to comments and direction while still preserving the design intent. He supported minimal screen tree planting. He advised that he could support approval of the project subject to the conditions stated in the staff report and that the final landscape plan be submitted for review by a designated ASCC member with the requirement that the proposed screening trees be field-placed with the designated member at the time of framing inspection.

Commissioner Clark moved to approve the project subject to the conditions stated in the staff report with the addition of the following conditions:

A final, detailed landscape planting plan shall be submitted to the satisfaction of a designated ASCC member prior to building permit issuance. This plan shall include:

- a) Consideration of the remaining redwoods located along the rear (south) property line and identifying any additional redwoods that can be removed. The applicant shall discuss the trees and any additional screen planting to replace the redwoods with the neighbor at 20 Larguita (Blumenkranz). The landscape plan shall be revised to reflect these additional tree removals and any additionally proposed screen planting.
- b) The screening olive and oak trees proposed along the east side property line and driveway shall be reduced in quantity as shown on the revised Sheet L3.0, dated 10/7/15, and presented at the 10/12/15 ASCC meeting.

- c) The landscape plan shall be further reduced in scope.
- d) Provisions for placement of the proposed screening trees along the driveway with a designated ASCC member at the time of rough framing inspection.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Breen. The motion carried 4-0.

(5) NEW BUSINESS

- (a) **Architectural Review for a 260-square-foot ornamental garden structure within the front yard setback, modifications to the building exterior, and landscape and hardscape improvements, File #: 19-2015, 385 Golden Oak Drive, Jones Residence.**

Chair Ross noted that although this project is below the 400-square-foot threshold, because of the details of the project, and at the Planning Director's discretion, it is being brought before the ASCC for review and comments.

Interim Town Manager Pedro presented the staff report describing the proposed project and noted that the neighbor across the street expressed concern that two trees proposed at the corner of the house may block his view when they reach maturity. She noted that the applicant's building is approximately 25 feet lower than the building across the street.

Chair Ross called for questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Clark asked for clarification of the proposed landscaping at the front of the property. Chris Kurrle, project architect, said the landscaping would be minimal, with the project mainly addressing how the front façade of the building interacts with the street. He said the applicant has significant privacy concerns because of the home's close proximity to the street and that this has driven the proposed entry and façade design.

Commissioner Clark asked if they had considered developing a more native landscape theme to have some oaks and possibly some native chaparral in the planting plan to compliment the façade design.

In response to Commissioner Sill's question on whether the existing eucalyptus trees would conflict with the new oak trees. Mr. Kurrle advised that the applicant had removed three large pine trees, and that the oak trees are proposed to screen headlights from Golden Oak Drive.

Chair Ross noted that the eucalyptus trees appeared to be in the same drip line of the oak trees. Mr. Kurrle advised that the applicant would consider a phased removal the eucalyptus so that new trees could become established as replacement screening material.

Chair Ross asked Mr. Kurrle about reducing the amount of path lighting within the front setback area. Mr. Kurrle advised that they were not proposing to add any lighting on the house and were swapping out existing light fixtures. He said the applicant desired to keep all fixtures identified on the plans.

In response to Commissioner Clark's question, the applicant said the light source closest to the house is turned toward the street and the others are turned toward the house. Commissioner Clark suggested eliminating that light or putting it on the other side of the path so the light source will not be visible. He further suggested eliminating one or both lights at the driveway.

Commissioner Clark commented that the design was very contemporary, and that the louver system was a unique architectural solution. He asked if any other material was considered for the covered garden structure. The applicant said there is no other material option, and that the owners are striving for zero maintenance.

Chair Ross opened the public hearing. With no public comments, Chair Ross closed the public hearing and returned to the Commission for discussion and action.

Commissioner Clark was supportive of the ornamental garden structure trellis as proposed. He was also supportive of the additional roof height at the parapet to unify the entire front of the house. He also suggested rotating the one path light to face the house and elimination of the path lights at the autocourt. He also supported the landscape plan with the removal of the eucalyptus.

Commissioner Sills offered support for the project. He said the eucalyptus do not fit with the landscape plan and should be removed.

Commissioner Breen said the garden structure was a great solution. She said the only grass on the plan is *muhlenbergia rigens* and advised that it will create a very stylized kind of planting. She supported planting that was more rural and rustic in form and that will be planted in a non-linear fashion. She said she wanted to ensure that the new trees do not obscure views that have been opened up by removal of the pines. She suggested eliminating the path light facing the street as well as the path light on the right hand side at the beginning of the pathway. She said the existing invasive pampas grass, *stipa tenuissima*, and *pennisetum* need to be removed.

Chair Ross said this particular proposal was appropriate for the ornamental garden structure exception. He supported the proposed exterior finish material and modification of the building parapet. He offered support for the ornamental desert planting theme along the entry way and the quantity of path lights proposed. He supported rotating all path lights away from the street.

Mr. Kurrle advised that the path light at the southeast corner of the path from the autocourt would be turned 90 degrees so that it will not face Golden Oak Drive.

Commissioner Clark agreed with Commissioner Breen that the landscape plan needed to come back to a designated ASCC member for review, incorporating the comments and suggestions made this evening.

Commissioner Breen moved to approve the project with the changes to the lights as discussed and that the landscape plan, with consideration for eucalyptus removal, be submitted to the satisfaction of a designated ASCC member prior to building permit issuance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sill. The motion carried 4-0.

(6) COMMISSION AND STAFF REPORTS:

a. Alpine Road Retaining Wall Project Update.

Ms. Pedro said that Public Works Director Young advised that the project is complete, erosion control is installed, and the seeding and clean-up is complete. Commissioner Breen suggested that pre-emergent be applied to prevent *dittrichia*. She also advised that *dittrichia* is growing in the area of the recently upgraded AT&T cellular equipment site, and that this should be addressed immediately. Ms. Pedro said she would forward the suggestion to Mr. Young and

contact AT&T.

Commissioner Breen advised that she reviewed the revision to landscaping at 465 Golden Oak.

She also inquired about the installed roofing material for the project at 157 Westridge Drive that appeared very reflective. Ms. Pedro advised that staff would follow-up on the inquiry.

(7) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 28, 2015. Commissioner Breen moved to approve the September 28, 2015, minutes as submitted. Seconded by Commissioner Clark, the motion passed 2-0-2. (Chair Ross and Councilmember Sills abstained.)

(8) ADJOURNMENT 10:12 p.m.