

Architectural and Site Control Commission
Special Field Meeting 320 Cervantes Road, Stringer/Harper, and
Regular Evening Meeting 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, California

February 13, 2006

Chair Chase called the special field meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. at 320 Cervantes Road.

Roll Call:

ASCC: Chase, Breen, Schilling, Gelpi

Absent: Warr

Town Staff: Deputy Town Planner Vlastic, Planning Manager Lambert,
Planning Technician Borck

Others present relative to the Stringer/Harper project:

Peter Duxbury, Duxbury Architects

Stephanie Lin, Duxbury Architects

Mike Sykes, 330 Cervantes Road

Architectural Review of plans for house additions and remodeling, detached garage, swimming pool and Site Development Permit X9H-549, 320 Cervantes Road, Stringer/Harper

Vlastic presented the February 9, 2006 staff report on this proposal for a number of modifications to the existing residential improvements on the subject 2.7 acre Arrowhead Meadows area property. He reviewed an annotated site plan and explained that the project includes demolition of an existing detached garage and part of the existing residence, house additions and a new detached garage with workshop. He also noted that grading is proposed, mainly for the garage and parking area improvements, and totals 435 cubic yards.

Peter Duxbury presented the project to the ASCC and reviewed the two sets of plans submitted in support of the proposal. It was noted that the first, reduced size set is mostly dated November 29, 2005 and includes five sheets that have been superseded by revised plans included with the second plan submittal. It was also noted that the second set of "full size" plans contains a February 8, 2006 revision date. (The plans included with each set as presented to the ASCC are listed below and, unless otherwise noted, were prepared by Duxbury Architects. The superseded sheets in the first set are so noted and identified with a ~~strikethrough~~.)

November 29, 2005 Plan Package:

~~Sheet G-001, Cover Sheet 12/2/05~~ (superseded)

Sheet 1, Topographic Survey, Lea & Sung Engineering, Inc., 5/17/05,

~~Sheet AS-101, Site Plan~~, (superseded)

~~Sheet AS-102, Outdoor Lighting Plan, 11/29/05~~, (superseded)

Sheet AS-101, Floor Plan

Sheet A-201, Exterior Elevations

Sheet A-202, Exterior Elevations

Sheet A-203, Garage Plan & Elevations

~~Sheet A-204, Cabana Plan & Elevation~~ (superseded)

~~Sheet XS-101, Floor Plan (calculations)~~, (superseded)

Sheet X-101, Floor Area Diagram

February 8, 2006 Plan Package (i.e., revised sheets):

Sheet G-001, Cover Sheet

Sheet AS-101, Site Plan

Sheet AS-102, Outdoor Lighting Plan

Sheet XS-101, Area Diagram

Sheet AS-201, Elevations (new sheet)

Duxbury explained that the reasons for the second submittal are that the project was modified to eliminate the originally planned poolside cabana, and the floor area calculations needed to be corrected to reflect the fact that the single story bonus was not available to the project.

In addition to the plan packages, Duxbury presented a colors and materials board dated December 2, 2005 and stated that, for the most part, exterior materials and finishes are to match existing improvements. Also presented was the "Tree Survey" dated November 2, 2005 and prepared by McClenahan Consulting, LLC.

After presentation of the proposal and discussion of property line setback, tree removal, drainage and other issues evaluated in the staff report, Duxbury led ASCC members and others present on an inspection of site conditions. Areas where grading is proposed were discussed, including the fill planned to accommodate construction of the new garage and parking areas. Issues associated with the existing drainage channel, and concerns of the town's public works director were explained and Duxbury presented possible drainage options prepared by the project engineer to address the concerns set forth in the 2/3/06 letter from the public works director. Two options were identified on 8.5 x 11 inch sheets dated 2/18/06, prepared by Lea & Sung Engineering. During the site inspection, Duxbury also offered the following clarifications:

- The project arborist has raised concern over the condition of the three eucalyptus trees located on the south side of the proposed garage site. It is likely that, at a minimum, they will be trimmed to reduce the hazards associated with their structure, and eventually they may need to be removed. Removal of the trees is, however, not planned at this time.
- It is likely that some improvements would be made as part of this project to accommodate future connection to the sanitary sewer system. This would be worked out with the final site grading and engineering plans.
- A revised lighting plan has been developed and includes some additional lights along the driveway. This plan will be presented at the evening ASCC meeting.
- A final, detailed landscaping plan has yet to be developed. The plan concepts are generally indicated on the site plan. The basic intent is to preserve the existing site conditions, including tree cover and general character of the drainage channel, much as they are today. The "lawn" designation on the site plan is actually meant to be an area of native meadow grasses and not a more formal lawn. In any case, a final landscape plan will be developed in concert with the final grading and drainage plans. Further, the

majority of the new driveway would be asphalt but, as shown on the site plan, some surface near the pool wall would be flagstone, and portions of the parking area would have a crushed stone surface. It was clarified that due to cost constraints, "distressed concrete" might be used instead of flagstone for some of the new surfacing.

- The plans for the house addition include some cutting at the base of the hill on the northwest side of the existing house. The house wall would be a retaining wall and the amount of cut has been kept to a minimum and is largely for removal of material below the daylight line of the cut slope constructed for the current house siting. Further, the proposed grading plan has been developed in line with the recommendations of the project arborists to ensure minimum potential for impact on the nearby oaks.

With respect to the eucalyptus trees, Vlastic pointed out that they are not considered significant trees under the provisions of the site development ordinance. He added that due to fire and other hazards associated with them, the town typically encourages removal of eucalyptus trees. Breen added that she had reviewed the evaluation of the trees in the arborists report and after seeing their structure also suggested that their removal be considered.

Mr. Sykes offered comments generally in support of the plans, but expressed reservations over removal of the eucalyptus trees. He stated a preference for their preservation because of the screening they provide between the neighboring properties.

At the conclusion of the site meeting ASCC members found the proposal generally acceptable but acknowledged that a number of grading and landscape details still needed to be developed. Further, it was noted that review of the lighting proposals was still needed. Members thanked the project architect for the opportunity to better understand site conditions and constraints and the neighbor for his input on the proposal. Further, members concluded that discussion of the project should continue at the regular evening ASCC meeting.

Adjournment

At approximately 4:46 p.m. the field meeting was adjourned.

Chair Chase called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m.

Roll Call:

ASCC: Chase, Breen, Gelpi, Schilling, Warr

Absent: None

Town Council Liaison: Merk

Planning Commission Liaison: McIntosh

Town Staff: Deputy Town Planner Vlastic, Planning Technician Borck

Oral Communications

Oral communications were requested, but none were offered.

Continued Architectural Review -- proposed residential development of Oak Hills Subdivision parcel and Site Development Permit X9H-548, 120 Golden Hills Drive, Corman

Vlastic presented the February 9, 2006 staff report on this proposal. He explained that on January 9, 2006, the ASCC initiated consideration of the project and identified a number of concerns and issues that needed additional study and resolution. He added that the project design team is revising the proposal, has yet to complete this effort and, as a result, the applicant has requested that project review be continued.

Public comments were requested, but none were offered. Thereafter, project review was continued to the February 27 meeting, to begin with a 4:00 p.m. site inspection.

Architectural Review for detached accessory "Well Tower" structure, 331 Portola Road, Mitchell

Vlastic presented the February 9, 2006 staff report on this proposal for the addition of a 162 sf, two story "well tower" accessory structure on the subject .66 acre Brookside Park property. He explained that the "well tower" is planned as an addition within the orchard area of the parcel and would be over an existing well and pump. ASCC members considered the staff report and the following application materials:

Sheet A1, Site Plan, Floor Plans, Elevations and Notes, Alton S. Lee and David A. Lee, Architects, 12/13/05

January 30, 2006 letter from applicant Kent Mitchell with color images of the site and proposed well tower, including Google air photo images of the subject property and photo simulations of the well tower.

February 2, 2006 e-mail from the applicant advising that the proposed plans have been shared with the "closest neighbors."

Vlastic explained that ASCC review of the project is required because it is on a parcel that is located along Portola Road and also due to the height of the proposed "well tower."

Applicant Kent Mitchell presented the plans to the ASCC and offered the following comments and clarifications:

- The well on this property and other wells in the area were dug in the 1930's by Nick Scrabo. The water is of good quality because there are no septic systems in the immediate area. It is "hard" mineral water but excellent for irrigation purposes. The water table in the area is about 8 feet below the ground surface, and the well depth is 26 feet. Overall, the well gets limited use.
- The well tower plans have been shared with all of the immediate neighbors and everyone seemed supportive of the proposal.
- In response to a question, it was noted that a tank on top of the well tower was not proposed because water storage was not a critical factor and that other measures would be needed to ensure adequate pressure if a storage tank were included in the project.
- Also in response to a question, it was clarified that there would be a "lower" window on the north elevation as reflected in the "elevation" plan, even though such a window was not shown on the floor plan.
- There is sufficient area within the parcel, including access from Portola Road to contain construction operations on site.
- The exterior of the well tower is to be wood, painted to match the medium tan color used on the adjacent shed. The roofing will also match the composition roofing of the shed.

Public comments were requested, but none offered. After brief discussion, Warr moved, seconded by Schilling and passed 5-0 approval of the plans as presented and clarified by the applicant subject to the following conditions to be addressed, unless otherwise noted, to the satisfaction of a designated ASCC member prior to issuance of a building permit:

1. A construction staging and landscape protection plan shall be prepared and once approved implemented to the satisfaction of planning staff.
2. If any exterior lighting is required to satisfy building code requirements, such lighting shall be specified on the final building permit plans and shall conform to the town's lighting policies and regulations.

Architectural Review of plans for house additions, 240 Nathhorst Avenue, Cassidy

Vlasic presented the February 9, 2006 staff report on this proposal for the addition of 778 sf of floor area to an existing 3,332 sf, single story residence on the subject 1.0 acre Nathhorst Triangle area property. He explained that the project includes master bedroom and bath additions at the west end of the house, a main, front entry extension on the south side and "bay" extensions to the kitchen and family room areas along the northwest side. He added that all additions would be single story and all exterior improvements would be in the

architectural character and finishes of the existing Ranch style residence. ASCC members considered the staff report and the following project plans unless otherwise noted dated November 22, 2005 and prepared by Studio Bergtraum Architects A.I.A.:

Sheet T.1, Site & Roof Plan, Sheet Index and Project Data (including "Planting and Outdoor Lighting " data and "Xeriscape Planting Concepts")
Topographic & Spot Elevation Map, Arcturus Surveys, 10/26/05
Sheet A.1, Existing and Proposed Floor Plans
Sheet A.2, (E) & (N) Elevations

Also considered was a two sheet "Colors and Materials Board," that proposes, for the most part, that all new finishes match existing conditions.

Alex Bergtraum, project architect, presented the proposal to the ASCC and offered the following comments and clarifications:

- Even though there is more impervious surface available to the project than originally assumed, there is no plan to add "back in" the pathway on the east side of the expanded master bedroom. Instead, this "existing" pathway area will be converted to garden that can be seen from the new entry.
- The roofing material presented on the proposed colors board is no longer manufactured. An alternative composition shake material was presented with a very similar appearance to the photo sample presented on the colors board. The alternative was found acceptable by the ASCC.
- In response to a question, it was noted that there would be no interior lighting high on the walls under the proposed skylights or within the skylight "wells." It was also noted that the eight proposed new wall mounted fixtures would be installed roughly seven feet above the adjacent ground or walkway surface.

Public comments were requested, but none offered. After brief discussion of lighting concerns, Warr moved, seconded by Schilling and passed 5-0 approval of the plans as presented, including the continued use of the existing color scheme, subject to the following conditions to be addressed, unless otherwise noted, to the satisfaction of a designated ASCC member:

1. A construction staging and vegetation protection plan shall be prepared and once approved implemented to the satisfaction of planning staff.
2. The proposed exterior lighting plan shall be revised as follows:
 - a. The two proposed fixtures on the southeast side of the master bedroom shall be eliminated.
 - b. Three of the four proposed west elevation light fixtures (i.e., outside of the tub, closet, and water heater cabinet) shall be mounted no higher than 18 inches above the adjacent pathway surface, or replaced with a similar height pathway light.

- c. The switching patterns for the new fixtures shall be described and shall be consistent with town lighting policies and regulations.
- c. All existing unshielded spotlights, lights on motion detectors and "up" decorative lighting shall be identified on the plan and noted for removal as part of this project.

Architectural Review of plans for house additions and remodeling, detached garage, swimming pool and Site Development Permit X9H-549, 320 Cervantes Road, Stringer/Harper

Vlasic presented the comments in the February 9, 2006 staff report on this proposal for a number of modifications to the existing residential improvements on the subject 2.7 acre Arrowhead Meadows area property. He discussed the events of the afternoon special site meeting on the project. (See above site meeting minutes, which include a complete listing of the proposed project plans and materials.) Vlasic also discussed some issues associated with the proposed site development permit, including the concerns of the public works director relative to drainage and the concepts for replacement and extension of the existing culvert to accommodate the proposed garage and parking area improvements.

Chris Stringer and Peter Duxbury presented the proposal to the ASCC and offered the following comments and clarifications:

- As noted at the site meeting, the project engineer has developed alternative plans to address the public works directors concerns with respect to the current proposal for the new drainage culvert to extend under the proposed garage. It is believed that the options can be implemented to the satisfaction of the public works director allowing the proposed garage to remain in essentially the position shown on the site plan.
- The proposed additions would match the California Mission or Spanish style architecture of the existing residence, which includes low pitch, red barrel tile roofs, stucco siding and dark wood beams, and stained wood detailing. Siding would be stucco, except for the use of cultured stone veneer to break up the apparent mass of the walls and provide some architectural distinction for the existing support walls that extend into the drainage course. The final color for the window trim has not been determined, but will be presented with the building permit plans.
- A two sheet revised lighting plan, dated 2/13/06 was presented. These plans were described and it was explained that they would supersede sheets G-001 and AS-102 of the previous submittal. It was further noted that the revised lighting reflects the applicants concerns for the need for lighting along the driveway and associated with the house addition areas. It was stressed that most of the lights would be under wide eave or porch extensions, or low mounted, shielded fixtures. It was suggested that due to topography and tree cover, most of the light fixtures as well as the lighted areas would not be visible from off site locations.
- In response to a question, it was noted that existing oleanders along the west side of the driveway would be removed to accommodate driveway widening. It was also noted that removal of the three eucalyptus trees was being considered, but no final decision

had been reached due to the concerns expressed by the neighbor at 330 Cervantes Road. It was pointed out that this matter would be considered further with development of final drainage and landscaping plans.

Public comments were requested, but none were offered.

ASCC members discussed the proposal and found the plans generally acceptable. Concerns were expressed, however, over the lack of final resolution to the drainage concerns of the public works director, the lack of a detailed landscape plan and the "late" submittal of the revised lighting plans. Members concurred that the revised plans appeared to include more lighting than needed for the proposed site improvements and encouraged a "significant reduction" in the scope of proposed exterior lighting. It was suggested that any purely decorative lighting be removed and that only one light fixture be considered at entry doors. Schilling also stressed that fixture B (i.e., style "A" noted on Sheet G-001) be replaced with a fixture that could not be angled out or be modified to a fixed design with light only directed down and not out.

Following discussion, Warr moved, seconded by Schilling and passed 5-0 approval of the architectural review and site development permit plans as proposed and revised, subject to the following conditions to be addressed, unless otherwise noted, to the satisfaction of the ASCC prior to issuance of a building permit or the commencement of any site earthwork:

1. A detailed construction staging, including construction parking, and vegetation protection plan shall be prepared and once approved implemented to the satisfaction of planning staff. The plan shall incorporate the project arborist's recommendations for measures to be taken for tree protection and to ensure long term tree health.
2. The conditions contained in the following site development committee review reports shall be addressed to the satisfaction of the respective committee member:

Public Works Director, 2/3/06
Town Geologist, 1/13/06
Health Officer, 1/9/06
Fire Marshal, 12/27/05

3. A final engineered grading plan shall be provided that conforms to the requirements of the site development committee members as set forth in condition 2.
4. The proposed exterior lighting plan shall be revised to address the concerns stated at the 2/13/06 ASCC meeting. The revised plan shall include proposed switching patterns for all exterior lighting that conforms to town lighting policies and regulations. The revised lighting plan shall also be consistent with the final landscaping plan demonstrating that the proposed lighting is intended for specific functions that are not purely decorative in nature.
5. A final detailed landscaping plan shall be provided that is consistent with the final engineered grading plan as well as the landscape concepts shown on the site plan, i.e., as clarified at the site and evening 2/13/06 ASCC meetings. The final plan shall, in particular, describe any changes relative to the current proposals for the three

eucalyptus trees located to the south of the proposed garage site. Also, final proposals for all new driveway surfaces shall be clarified on the final landscape plan.

Tracking of "Green Building" plans

Vlasic presented the comments in the February 9, 2006 staff report on Mayor Toben's desire to highlight and enhance town "encouragement" of increased use of green building practices in private and public projects in the town. ASCC members discussed the matter and the following reactions were provided for forwarding to Mayor Toben and town council members:

1. All ASCC members were supportive of including a discussion of green building proposals as part of the staff report and review of projects. It was understood this was for the purposes of encouraging consideration of green building practices and not to mandate them at this time. ASCC members were generally "excited" about the opportunity to use the architectural review process to begin a dialogue with applicants on green building possibilities and then tracking projects to see which green building elements were actually implemented.
2. Warr offered caution that in some cases building codes that are used locally actually include provisions that make some desirable green building practices difficult to pursue. It was noted that one result of the "tracking" and "dialogue" might be town identification of code modifications that should be considered to facilitate broader application of green building opportunities.
3. Warr noted that some green building elements or objectives might actually conflict with other town design or aesthetic goals. Some examples cited include significant removal or trimming of trees to obtain maximum solar access for panels, mounting solar panels on a highly visible slope, or canting them on a highly visible flat roof.
4. Warr also commented that the most effective "incentives" for green building would, however, likely be economic. These could include competitive prices for green building materials, quicker time frame for payback associated with any added cost, and reductions in local building fees for "green" projects.
5. Gelpi noted that many very effective green building elements may not be as "big" or "visible" as, for example, a large array of photovoltaic panels, but should be encouraged because of their cumulative, long term benefits.

ASCC members agreed that by providing for the suggested dialogue much can be gained and learned both by applicants and the town; and, in the long run, this knowledge could be significant in taking future actions to encouraging sustainable construction practices. ASCC members also offered praise for town planning department efforts to share the San Mateo County sustainable check list with all applicants and, particularly, for Carol Borck's efforts to develop effective handouts on specific sustainable building opportunities.

Town Council Referral -- consideration of a 7:30 p.m. or earlier meeting start time

After considering the request for comment on changing of meeting start times, all ASCC members agreed that they would prefer a 7:30 p.m. starting time to the current 8:00 p.m. regular meeting start time. Members indicated that they currently find the time between 7:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. is spent waiting for the meeting to start and they would prefer to "get on" with the meeting and hopefully be home a half-hour earlier than "usual."

Warr commented that he appreciated efforts made by staff to ensure that normal agendas could be managed within a three-hour maximum meeting period. He stressed that this is a fair time frame for both commissioners and applicants and that this should still be a target for meeting times even if they start a half-hour earlier.

Annual Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Warr moved, seconded by Breen and passed 5-0, reelection of Chase as chair and Schilling as vice chair. Both Chase and Schilling indicated that recent discussion of town policy on committee participation and setting of limits for committee members provided an opportunity for each of them to think about the length of time they have served on the ASCC. Both further indicated that they might elect to not seek reappointment after their current terms are completed.

Schilling also noted that he reviewed the recently revised policy statement and found some of the wording to be more negative than positive in nature, particularly the reference to "preventing" structures or additions of "unsightly or obnoxious appearance." He offered the following revised "objectives" statement, which was supported by all other ASCC members:

The objectives of ASCC plan review and approval are to promote the preservation of the visual character of Portola Valley, the stability of land values and investments, the public safety and general welfare by assuring that the erection of structures or additions or alterations thereto be sensitive to their sites, adjacent uses, and circulation in the vicinity, and by preventing the indiscriminate clearing of property, excessive grading, and the destruction of tress and shrubbery (reference: Municipal Code Section 2.16).

Vlasic stated this would be forwarded to town administrator with a recommendation that it be incorporated into a revised policy statement as soon as practical.

Approval of Minutes

Breen moved, seconded by Schilling and passed 4-0-1 (Warr) approval of the January 23, 2006 special site meeting minutes as drafted.

Schilling moved, seconded by Warr and passed 5-0 approval of the January 23, 2006 regular evening meeting minutes with the following correction:

On Page 9., in the first line of the first bullet item under "Gelpi" change "through" to "thorough."

Miscellaneous Comments

Warr expressed concern with the proliferation of lights on projects after ASCC approval and town "sign-off" of project approval. He wondered how the town might begin to address this problem. Vlastic noted that this would be one of the items to be included in the town council authorized ASCC "post construction" project review. He stated this project was likely to be initiated at the next regular ASCC meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

T. Vlastic