

ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE CONTROL COMMISSION

April 25, 2016

Special ASCC Field Meeting, 1260 Westridge Drive, Second Preliminary Architectural Review and Site Development Permit review for development on three parcels, Carano Residences

Vice Chair Breen called the special site meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

ASCC: Sill, Wilson, Breen and Ross

ASCC absent: Koch

Planning Commission Liaison: Judith Hasko

Town Council Liaison: Jeff Aalfs

Town Staff: Planning Director Pedro and Planner Richardson

Others present relative to the proposal for 1260 Westridge Drive

Tom Taylor, project architect

Tom Klope, project landscape architect

Jeff Lea, project engineer

Judy Murphy, Conservation Committee

Cynthia Richardson, project planner presented the report and explained the changes the applicant made to the plans in response to comments received at the last preliminary review meeting.

Several neighbors attended the site meeting and asked questions of the applicant. The group walked the site and viewed the adjusted story poles.

After the site discussions, ASCC members agreed that they would offer comments on the proposal at the regular evening ASCC meeting. Members thanked the applicants and neighbors for participation in the site meeting. Thereafter, the ASCC proceeded to the second field meeting at 900 Portola Road.

Special Joint ASCC/Planning Commission Field Meeting, 900 Portola Road, Preliminary review for a General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Conditional Use Permit, Architectural Review and Site Development Permit for the Windmill School and Family Education Center Master Plan. File #32-2015.

Chair Ross called the special joint site meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

ASCC: Koch, Sill, Wilson, Breen and Ross

ASCC absent: None

Planning Commission: Von Feldt, Gilbert, Hasko

Planning Commission absent: McKitterick, Targ

Town Council Liaison: Jeff Aalfs and Ann Wengert

Town Staff: Planning Director Pedro and Planner Richardson

Others present relative to the proposal for 900 Portola Road

Carter Warr, project architect

Karen Tate, applicant

Monika Cheney, applicant

Jodi Cocconi, applicant

Cynthia Richardson, project planner presented the report. Project architect Carter Warr gave a presentation explaining the various elements of the project. He explained that the rear neighbor on Wyndham had concerns for shading on their property and that the acoustic fence was brought down to 8 feet to accommodate their concerns. He also indicated that the same neighbor wanted some trees to be removed. He noted that the front fence will be a 4' tall horse fence and it will be the same type of fence between the play yards. They intend to keep the fence between the church and the redwood grove the same.

Jodi Cocconi, Director of Windmill School, said that there will be no climbing play structures in the yards, only loose materials such as logs, sand and rocks.

Commissioner Von Feldt asked whether the property will be connected to sewer. Staff confirmed that the proposal indicates the project will be connecting to sewer.

Commissioner Koch asked if there will be any school bells or fire drills. Ms. Cocconi said there will be none. She asked for clarification on staff parking and the traffic flow.

Monika Cheney, applicant, said that there will be 41 parking spaces and 10-12 staff members. There will be 3 classes with 21 students each.

Commissioner Wilson asked if there will be any housing unit on site. Ms. Cocconi said no because they polled their teachers and found that they did not want to live in the same place where they work.

Commissioner Von Feldt asked about the student enrollment. Ms. Cheney said about 80-90% of the students are from Portola Valley or its sphere of influence.

The group proceeded to walk around the project site and viewed the areas adjacent to rear yards of the single family homes on Wyndham Drive.

The special field meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:00 p.m.

(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: Commissioners Koch, Sill, and Wilson; and Vice Chair Breen, Chair Ross
Absent: None
Planning Commission Liaison: Judith Hasko
Town Council Liaison: Jeff Aalfs
Town Staff: Planning Director Debbie Pedro and Planner Cynthia Richardson

(3) ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

(4) OLD BUSINESS

(a) **Continued Architectural Review and Site Development Permit Review for a New Residence, Second Unit and Swimming Pool, File #02-2016, 185 Meadowood Drive, Bochnowski Residence.**

Planning Director Pedro presented the staff report the proposed new residence, second unit, and swimming pool at 185 Meadowood Drive. The plans had been revised in response to the comments made at the ASCC's preliminary review of March 14, 2016. She said the applicant modified the driveway and Geo-Grid material to an area at the rear of the property. She said the applicant had removed a total of 12 lights, eliminated the five swan hill olive trees, and proposes to replace them with one 15-gallon coast live oak. She said neighbors have expressed concern regarding the amount of hardscape in the front yard and the need for additional landscape screening. Ms. Pedro asked the ASCC to review the location of the in-ground sewer grinder pump at the front of the property, which is required by the Westbay Sanitary Sewer District.

Chair Ross called for questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Koch asked for further clarification regarding the gravel access for the sewer grinder pump. Ms. Pedro said Westbay typically requires a driveway access to service the facility. Commissioner Koch asked if this was a trend the Town would be seeing in the future. Ms. Pedro said there are 40 to 50 such facilities already existing in Town.

With no further questions from the Commission, Chair Ross called for comments from the applicant.

James Stoecker, project architect; the property owners Tom and Lauren Bochnowski; and Rich Laureta, civil engineer, were present. Mr. Stoecker said the grinder pump is required by Westbay to be located at the lowest end of the property. Mr. Laureta said that Westbay will be able to service the pump from the street and no driveway access will be needed in this case.

Mr. Stoecker further described the key points as detailed in the applicant's response letter to the ASCC preliminary hearing comments.

Chair Ross called for questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Wilson asked the project architect to comment on the siting of the project for the benefit of the neighbors present. Mr. Stoecker said an important exterior program goal for the owners was some private backyard space for their family. He said the close proximity and elevation of the neighboring house at 191 Meadowood created challenges. He said influencing factors in the siting of the residence included preserving the neighbor's view of Windy Hill while also creating some privacy for the property owners; not disturbing the live oak forest that takes up about 8,000 square feet at the back of the property; technical reasons such as grading, drainage, and geology; and visibility of the residence from Meadowood. He said the house is set back 100 feet and if it was set back further on the lot, there would actually be more visibility issues from the street and less screening opportunities.

Vice Chair Breen asked the project architect if there was any irrigation behind the pool area or along the street frontage. Mr. Stoecker said there was none behind the pool area and the perimeter shrubs will have a drip system.

Commissioner Sill said there have been many concerns voiced by nearby residents regarding what this project would look like from the road and suggested it may be helpful for the applicant to provide a rendering showing the proposed screening. The project architect said the original application provided modeling perspectives from the road, but only included the trees and not the proposed shrubs. He said they have not done updated renderings of the front of the property. Commissioner Sill suggested a perspective view would be helpful to alleviate the neighbors' concerns.

With no further questions, Chair Ross opened the public hearing.

Elaine Raitt, 188 Meadowood. She said while she understands the proposed building is set back farther than required, and the houses over the hill on Meadowood are closer to the street, she noted those houses are not as large and do not have the same impact. She said at the last meeting the applicants said moving the house back would require more excavation and a higher retaining wall. She suggested moving the house back but raising the swimming pool, resulting in less excavation. She said one of the neighbors was particularly concerned about the driveway entrance and suggested that if the house were moved farther back, it would be easier to move the driveway. Ms. Raitt provided a photograph taken from Meadowood Drive showing an area with an open view of the new house.

Chair Ross asked the project architect to look at the photographs and identify what might be planted in the area of concern. Mr. Stoecker identified the trees in the photographs and said the planting plan was an effort to get some variation rather than a hedge of live oaks.

Julia Shepardson, 180 Meadowood Drive. She expressed appreciation for the time spent in the effort to preserve the character of Portola Valley. She said the defining character of this part of Meadowood is that all of the houses are set back with all of the front yards being open meadow, rural, and woods. She said she is concerned about the large part of meadow being dedicated to a sweeping driveway and extra parking spaces. She suggested moving the driveway to the front of the garage, so the front of the property could be landscaped and the vehicle lights would not come in through her windows. She suggested eliminating the extra parking areas to preserve the meadow and screening the view of the house that is much larger than other neighborhood houses.

Don Coluzzi, 15 Navajo. Mr. Coluzzi said he has been a resident of Portola Valley for 41 years. He said after looking at the story poles, he is not convinced the house fits with the rest of the houses in neighborhood and that it looks too big and too tall.

Judith Murphy, Chair, Conservation Committee, said they appreciate that the owner is maintaining the open natural oak grove on the property.

Ms. Raitt asked for an explanation of the drainage system. Mr. Laureta, the project civil engineer, explained the project's drainage design. Chair Ross clarified that there are currently significant water flow across the road during heavy storm events, and this development will help moderate the water flow and mitigate the problem that already exists. The project architect said the civil engineer analyzed the offsite water flow onto the property. He said this project is unusual in that all four adjacent parcels sheet flow onto the subject property. He said the proposed use of landscaped-based retention basin is a voluntary decision made by the property owners to try to handle the drainage in an environmentally friendly manner, versus using buried pipes, a distribution box, or a rock pit.

Chair Ross closed the public hearing and brought the subject back to the Commission for discussion.

Commissioner Sill was supportive of the project. He said the change to the driveway and adding the permeable surface is an improvement. With regard to the neighbors' concerns about screening, he said he does not see a problem and that the proposed planting plan appears adequate. He said the fence should be a condition of approval. He would prefer less landscaping with less water consumption.

Commissioner Koch was supportive of the project. She was satisfied with the lighting changes and the landscape changes. She said the applicant is very close to satisfying the neighbors with regard to the front of the property and believes it can be worked out. She said this is a one-acre site, the applicants have set back the house considerably more than required, and she is confident they will do a good job to blend the project in with the neighborhood.

Commissioner Wilson was supportive of the project. She expressed appreciation to the applicants for their efforts to address the Commission's recommendations. She agreed with Commissioner Koch that because this has been a vacant site, people will have reservations about its development, but said that the applicants have done a good job with the plans and have clearly and satisfactorily explained their reasons for the design.

Vice Chair Breen was supportive of the project. She said it was a challenging site and the applicants have done a great job with the design. She said that over landscaping is a mistake and there needs to be a good balance of evergreens and deciduous. She does not want to see a 20-foot oak hedge in front of the property. She said that while it may help solve the problem for some individual neighbors, it diminishes the experience for Portola Valley residents in general and that some vistas to the land should be kept open, which is why the Town is reluctant to hedge off newly constructed houses. She said the proposed valley oak, which should be a 36-inch box, can be moved to the fetuca rubra meadow so that it sits up higher, has a better relationship with the house, and will do a better job screening. She was also supportive of the lighting changes.

Chair Ross said one of the proposed staff conditions is a final landscape plan for review by a designated ASCC member which appears to be the only remaining topic of discussion regarding

this well-developed project. He acknowledged that it is not unusual for people to be resistant to change. He said the design guidelines do not provide a guarantee that a new structure is not visible from anywhere. He is supportive of the proposed siting of the house for the reasons articulated by the project architect. He said that raising the elevation of the pool and pool house would put those structures directly into the view of the neighbors at 191 Meadowood. He said the project architect has done the best job possible in balancing all of the concerns. Chair Ross said he is supportive of the project. He said the landscape plan needs some fine tuning and cautioned against overplanting. He suggested that Condition #3 include providing renderings of how the project will look after the new trees and shrubs are planted.

In response to Vice Chair Breen's question, Chair Ross said he supported a change to Condition #2 regarding the fence, replacing "a minimum of" with "approximately."

Commissioner Koch moved to approve the proposed project with Condition #2 to be amended to change "minimum" to "approximate" with the understanding the applicant can submit a new fence proposal sometime in the future; and with Condition #3 to be amended to include the submission of renderings of the proposed landscape plan. Seconded by Vice Chair Breen, the motion carried 5-0.

- (b) **Second Preliminary Architectural Review and Site Development Permit Review for development on three parcels located at 1260 Westridge Drive, Carano Residences. Parcel A: New residence, pool, detached garage, and second unit, File #26-2015; Parcel B: New residence and detached garage, File #27-2015; Parcel C: New residence, detached garage, and tennis court, File #28-2015.**

Planner Richardson presented the staff report describing the revised plans for the proposed project, addressing the comments expressed at the ASCC preliminary meeting held on February 22, 2016. She said the applicant is currently working on their conditions of approval for the tentative subdivision map and meeting the PUD statement conditions. She said the applicant has asked for early preliminary review of the three homes prior to recording the map, with no formal approvals to be made until the subdivision map has been recorded.

Planner Richardson said Lot A, the pool house lot, has had the most substantial revisions. The applicant is proposing to construct a 2,098-square-foot, one-story, Tuscan style house with a detached 988-square-foot garage. A new addition to this lot is a 751-square-foot second unit. The wall that was originally proposed around the auto court in front of the garage has been eliminated. The floor area of this lot has been reduced 3,500 square feet. The pool house and residence on this lot have been completely redesigned, resulting in a much smaller footprint and massing.

Planner Richardson said Lot B contains the main residence, which has not been changed. The driveway has been modified and the paths have been reduced. The originally proposed second unit has been removed entirely. The bedroom wing rooflines have been lowered.

Planner Richardson said Lot C, the entertainment house, has been reduced from 6,193 square feet to 5,639 square feet. The originally proposed 2,924-square-foot basement has been entirely removed. The detached garage/equipment barn has been slightly increased from 560 square feet to 700 square feet. The tennis court pavilion was eliminated, the rear covered loggia was removed, and the kitchen plate height was lowered.

Planner Richardson said a site visit with the ASCC was held today, with several neighbors in attendance. She said the overall concerns expressed were regarding the height and visibility of the structures.

Chair Ross called for questions from the Commission. With no questions from the Commission, Chair Ross called for comments from the applicant.

Project Architect Tom Taylor said they believed they had addressed all of the comments made in the first preliminary review for this project. He said they had reduced square footage, mass, and impermeable surfaces. He said the project team has met with neighbors to discuss concerns regarding screening and visibility of the structures, which is an ongoing effort. He said they are still working on the lighting plan, which will be presented at the actual project review. Mr. Taylor presented and described the revised materials board.

Chair Ross asked for questions from the Commissioners. With no questions from the Commission, Chair Ross opened the public hearing.

Rob Wagner, 40 Possum Lane. He said he appreciated the project architect coming to their home and looking at the story poles from their viewpoint. He asked what Mr. Taylor meant regarding his comment that discussion with the neighbors is an ongoing effort. Mr. Taylor said he meant there are more neighbors to meet with and all comments and concerns will be gathered and considered in the development of their planting plans. Mr. Wagner asked what the hours of construction would be. Planning Director Pedro said the allowable construction hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with no construction allowed on weekends or holidays. Mr. Wagner requested the applicants be sensitive regarding noise in the early hours. He said the lighting plan is also a sensitive issue and asked when they could see the lighting plan. Chair Ross said the lighting plan would be available when the applicants come back to the Commission with a request for action.

John Dissmeyer, 20 Possum Lane. He said his concern, along with most of the neighbors on Possum, is the road access to the project. He said the landscaping screening is very important for cars that will be coming onto the property because the proposed driveway is a main path that looks into his backyard. He said he understands that the Town prefers native plantings, but said there is some existing landscaping behind 10 and 20 Possum Lane that is not native but serves as an effective screen and he does not want to see that removed. Chair Ross said the issue of the planting along the Possum side of the entrance road was addressed in the subdivision plan. Planning Director Pedro confirmed that there is an approved landscape plan with the subdivision. Chair Ross advised Mr. Dissmeyer to contact staff to view that plan.

James Herrington, 50 Possum Lane. He commended the applicant on making changes to the original plan. He said he was dismayed to learn that while the size of the building on Parcel A was reduced, there was the addition of a second unit on that parcel.

Laure Woods, 1240 Westridge Drive. She said she has two properties and her fence line runs along all three sites of the proposed project. She said her biggest concern is the heights of the structures and close proximity to her fence line. She acknowledged the efforts made to reduce the sizes of the buildings, but said there was no effort to reduce the roof heights. She said she would like to be kept regularly informed regarding the construction schedule in consideration of her horses, which are kept in her backyard where the main house of the proposed project will be built.

Tom Robertson, 10 Possum Lane. He said the existing non native screen hedge that Mr. Dissmeyer described is very important.

Project Architect Tom Taylor said that the architectural style requires a certain scale that would not be correct at a lower building height. He said the present design has tried to create more varied roof shapes in the project. He said the building at Lot A is actually lower than the existing house that is there now.

Jeff Aalfs, Councilmember, said the entrance to this site is on Westridge which is a very busy thoroughfare during morning commute hours. He suggested the construction operation plan address the timing of major deliveries, entries, and exits from that site to minimize traffic issues.

Judith Murphy, Conservation Committee. She said the road is too close to the creek and she is concerned about the oaks on the property.

Chair Ross closed the public hearing and brought the subject back to the Commission for discussion.

Vice Chair Breen said she appreciated the changes and the direction in which the project is headed. She suggested the project team explore the possibility of bringing down the height of the structure on Lot A. She said the lighting plan will be important. She said she was dismayed to see the siting of the guest house because it reduces the spirit of wildness on the property with the meadow. She was concerned about the proximity of the garage to the oaks on lot C and suggested eliminating one of the garage bays to get farther from the trees. She expressed appreciation for the reduction in massing and was supportive of the materials selections.

Commissioner Wilson agreed with Vice Chair Breen regarding a preference for preserving the open aspect of the meadow. She said she remained concerned regarding the height of the buildings on Lot C and the proximity to the neighbor. She was supportive of the changes made to Lot B. She was supportive of the reduction of the wall on Lot A.

Commissioner Sill said the project is on the right track. He remained concerned regarding the heights of the buildings on Lots A and C. He appreciated that the project team was working with the neighbors. He said it appeared they would be able to satisfy the residents on Possum, but that it would likely be more challenging with the Mapache and Westridge neighbors and may require more screening work or lowering the structures on Lot A and Lot C. He was very supportive of the materials selections.

Commissioner Koch said she was appreciative of the changes in the auto court on Lot A, and the smaller footprint and massing. She agreed that the guest house creates an end point stopping at that building, which detracts from the enchantment of the expanse of the meadow. She emphasized the importance for a master switch for the lighting. She was supportive of the materials selections and said the team was moving in the right direction.

Chair Ross said he appreciated the reduction in scale. He was supportive of the siting of the guest house and said it created a demarcation between the developed area and the woods. He was supportive of the siting of the structures and the layout of Lot A. He liked that the garage was no longer a central feature. He said that because this was a very private compound, with the exception of a few neighbors with some views, it is the owners' experience that matters the most. He said the scale of the buildings matched well to the scale of the property. He said the attached garage on Lot C could be lowered without diminishing the experience of the villa

theme. He was very supportive of the materials palette. He said the design called for a certain formality with regard to the exterior lighting on the buildings and suggested that not all of the sconces need to be lamped and can just be decorative.

(5) NEW BUSINESS

(a) **Preliminary review for a General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Conditional Use Permit, Architectural Review and Site Development Permit for the Windmill School and Family Education Center Master Plan. File #32-2015.**

Planner Cynthia Richardson presented the staff report regarding the proposed Windmill School project located on a 1.67-acre parcel at 900 Portola Road, which was previously Al's Nursery.

Chair Ross called for questions from the Commissioners.

Chair Ross questioned how 72 students and staff would generate more than 500 additional trips on Portola Road. Project Architect Carter Warr said the traffic report estimates 267 new daily trips. Planner Cynthia Richardson said the report needs to be modified because it appears the traffic consultant may not have had all the correct information.

With no further questions, Chair Ross invited the applicant to comment.

Project Architect Carter Warr said that Windmill School has been in Town for a very long time and it is important to acknowledge it as a community asset. He said their design approach is to under-improve the property from a building standpoint and over-improve the property from a landscape standpoint, congruous with the General Plan. He asked the ASCC to provide comments and recommendations on all aspects of the project including the change in zoning in the General Plan and conditional use permit, as well as the site, building, and landscape design.

Chair Ross called for questions for the applicant.

Commissioner Koch asked the applicant to provide more information about the Windmill Farm.

Jodi Cocconi, Director of Windmill School, said the children love to play and explore outside and the rear farm area will have small animals such as chickens and bunnies. She said the school emphasize nature and organic living and the land will give them the opportunity to teach children responsibility and how to care for the animals, composting, etc.

Commissioner Koch asked about the summer schedule for the preschool. Ms. Cocconi said they have a six-week summer program for three- and four-year-olds from 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. She said the seventh week is for the children moving on to Kindergarten and they are there from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. In addition, with the extra space at the new site, they might add some special programs in the future.

With no further questions, Chair Ross opened the public hearing.

Bud Eisberg, 233 Wyndham. He said he supports the project. He said he appreciated that the applicants asked for the neighbors' input about the project from the very beginning and they have been open and transparent with the neighborhood.

Louis Ebner, 255 Wyndham. He agreed with Mr. Eisberg and said this was the product of a long conversation. He said the reason most of the neighbors on Wyndham are supportive is because the conversation is ongoing and they feel confident that if there are any concerns from the neighbors, they will be addressed.

Judith Murphy, Conservation Committee. She said the site design is well thought out and she appreciates the preservation of the redwood grove.

Chair Ross closed the public hearing and brought the subject back to the Commission for comment and discussion.

Commissioner Wilson expressed concern regarding the adequacy of the parking lot and the single entrance. She was disappointed there was no plan for affordable housing on the property for teachers. She said she serves on a school board and knows that teachers are leaving the area because they cannot find accommodations within their budgets. She said having a housing unit would also be a good caretaking opportunity for the property, especially if there will be animals there at night.

Commissioner Koch was supportive of the project. She said she was confident that the applicant would figure out the parking situation and was supportive of the singular entrance. She was happy to see the neighbors so supportive of the project.

Vice Chair Breen said she was thrilled that this neglected site will be used again. She said the site visit helped her to understand and be supportive of the parking lot in the front. She said it is imperative that the parking situation and traffic study are resolved so that cars do not back up onto Portola Road. She commended the project team for their outreach efforts and receiving the support from the Wyndham neighbors. She said the front fencing along Portola Road must be changed and all the non native plants must be removed. She said the parking lot lighting should be greatly reduced. Mr. Warr said the lighting is necessary for safety. He said the poles are approximately 36 feet apart and 12 feet tall and still have significant dark spots between them because the span for that size pole was actually supposed to be less. He said the control on those lights would ensure the lights would never be on when the site was not used. Vice Chair Breen asked if there was a sign for the school. Carter Warr said the sign is on the water wheel and there will not be a sign on the street.

Commissioner Sill was supportive of the project and said it is a good fit for the location. He was supportive of changing the zoning and the conditional use permit. He said he would like to see the applicants work with Our Lady of the Wayside Church on the adjacent property so that when they have a big event at the school, something would be worked out for overflow parking. He said he did not like what appeared to be an oak hedge along the south and southeast borders.

Chair Ross was supportive of the project including the zoning change and the conditional use permit. He said he thought the sound wall might be too high considering the sound source. Chair Ross liked that the wall was broken up and looked like a garden feature but suggested they revisit whether it needed to be so tall and whether there would plants on it so that it is ornamental.

(6) COMMISSION AND STAFF REPORTS:

Vice Chair Breen said she visited the Wookey residence on Shawnee Pass where the owner requested a reduction in landscaping due to budgetary reasons. She advised the property

owners to landscape the front and not the rear yard.

Commissioner Koch reported on a residence on Bow and Westridge regarding redwoods that were not on the approved landscape plan being planted along the property line. Planning Director Pedro said staff has contacted the property owner and the redwoods have been removed.

Chair Ross said he reviewed lighting revisions for the new residence project at 40 Antonio.

(7) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April 11, 2016. Vice Chair Breen moved to approve the April 11, 2016, minutes as submitted. Seconded by Commissioner Sill, the motion passed 3-0. Commissioners Koch and Wilson abstained.

(8) ADJOURNMENT [10:02 p.m.]