

REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING. TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY, AUGUST 4, 2004.
TOWN CENTER, HISTORIC SCHOOLHOUSE, 765 PORTOLA ROAD, PORTOLA VALLEY, CA 94028

Chairman Breon called the meeting to order at 8:07 p.m. Ms. Lambert called the roll:

Present: Commissioners Elkind, McIntosh, Wengert and Zaffaroni, and Chairman Breon
Absent: None
Staff Present: George Mader, Town Planner
Richard Merk, Council Liaison
Leslie Lambert, Planning Manager

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

REGULAR AGENDA

(1) PUBLIC HEARING: Site Development Permit X9H-513, 150 Alamos Road, Koch

Town Planner Mader reviewed the staff report of 7/29/04 on the request for approximately 1,730 cubic yards of grading for residential development on the subject 2.51-acre Westridge parcel.

Responding to Commissioner Elkind, Steve Kellond (architect) confirmed that new drainfields for the septic system would be installed as shown on the revised plans. Responding to Commissioner Elkind, Bob Cleaver (landscape architect) said any areas disturbed by the new leachfield would be re-seeded in the fall with rye grass, which was there now. Using the grading plan, Mr. Kellond pointed out the leachfield area and septic tank locations.

Commissioner Zaffaroni asked about the discrepancy between the volume of grading referenced in the Cotton Shires report of 7/12/04 and the amount shown in the staff report. Responding, Carter Warr (architect) said the Town did not count the amount of cut for the basement. Mr. Kellond said both sets of numbers were identified in the grading plan/spreadsheet.

Chairman Breon opened the public hearing. Mr. Warr said he felt the field meeting had demonstrated well how the revisions to the design lowered the height of the house and preserved the view.

There were no other comments, and the hearing was closed.

By motion of Commissioner Zaffaroni, seconded by Commissioner McIntosh, the site development permit project was found to be categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303(a) of the CEQA guidelines by a vote of 5-0.

Commissioner Zaffaroni moved to approve the site development permit application as shown on the grading plans dated 6/4/04 by Cleaver Design Associates, subject to conditions "a" through "f" set forth in the staff report of 7/29/04. Commissioner McIntosh seconded, and the motion carried 5-0.

(2) Preliminary Review: Deviation Request, 12 Santa Maria Avenue, Toben

Town Planner Mader reviewed the request for a deviation to permit rebuilding of and additions to a 260 sf fire-damaged guesthouse on the subject Woodside Highlands property. Chairman Breon reviewed the purpose of a preliminary review.

Commissioner Zaffaroni said it would have been helpful to have the geotechnical report for the preliminary review. Ms. Lambert noted that cost was a factor, and the Town Geologist's report was not normally prepared for a preliminary review. Commissioner Wengert noted that this was a very minor deviation with few impacts.

Responding to Chairman Breon, Steve Toben (applicant) said he had no additional comments.

Chairman Breon said he had no objection to the request noting that it was well below the standards for what had been allowed in the past. Commissioner Elkind agreed and felt the request was consistent with the intent of the resolution. Commissioners McIntosh and Zaffaroni agreed.

(3) Preliminary Review: Lot Line Adjustment X6D-199, 15 & 25 Tagus Court, Sansbury

Town Planner Mader reviewed the staff report of 7/29/04 on the request for a lot line adjustment for the two subject Alpine Hills parcels on Tangus Court.

Chairman Breon asked why the increase in the amount of allowable floor area for the one lot was not equal to the decrease for the other lot. Ms. Lambert suggested that slope might be a factor. Town Planner Mader noted that when the slope density was first put together, floor areas could not be increased by gerrymandering; he said staff would check the numbers.

Responding to Commissioner Zaffaroni, Ms. Lambert said neighbors were not noticed for a preliminary review.

Commissioner Elkind asked if the lot line adjustment would result in a larger house; that would have a relatively larger impact on views and neighbors. Town Planner Mader said staff would need to verify the numbers and report back.

Referring to the staff report (p. 2, item #2), Commissioner Wengert asked if it was recommended that the asphalt connection to Golden Oak be removed. Town Planner Mader said he did not think there was a strong nexus for that with a lot line adjustment. Technically, the Town did not like dual access. Chairman Breon said there might be a nexus; the driveway extension could be removed in order to compensate for the increase in impervious surface. He suggested the ASCC consider whether that would be an appropriate condition. Town Planner Mader said that would need to be looked at in the context of the overall site design.

(4) Preliminary Review: Request for Amendment to Conditional Use Permit X7D-13, Alpine Hills Tennis & Swim Club

Town Planner Mader reviewed the staff report of 7/29/04 on the request for a CUP amendment to restructure the Club's membership. He said the fundamental issue was what amount of membership/usage was in balance with the facilities, parking and neighborhood. Questions that would need to be addressed included: 1) how many memberships the Club has now; 2) what are the current family sizes/ages for each membership; 3) what is the intensity of use relative to the facilities; 4) what classes of memberships is the club considering and what limits would be placed on the number of memberships by class; 5) whether the Club is working on some pro forma/projection of income; and 6) what data exists to evaluate parking on peak membership days (i.e., total spaces available and spaces occupied). If the membership was based only on the number of persons and only couples were members, the membership would increase from 600 families of 4.5 persons to 1,850 couples. That would have a potential for overloading the parking and other facilities. If only single persons were members, that would mean 2,700 persons. There would be some mix, but the trick would be to come up with a membership composition that was in balance with the facilities and would not have a maximum that exceeded the current limit. If there was some doubt as to the right limit to be placed, the Town might want to start with a lower number and allow some adjustments after experience was gained with the membership categories.

Responding to Chairman Breon, Commissioner McIntosh confirmed that he was no longer a member of the Club.

Chairman Breon said a lot more information was needed. From the Club's letter, the attempt was clearly to

get additional members for additional income. Describing what might have happened to membership over the years, he noted that it was also unknown how many guests used the facilities. A family might go often as a family whereby an individual member might be more likely to invite guests. Additionally, he felt that the site was pretty well built out. As with residential property, the Club should not necessarily be allowed to use all of the available space. Changing the membership structure might bring about a whole new set of requests for further expansion of the facilities.

Commissioner Wengert said the Priory had set the standard for the amount of data and analysis required for review of an amendment to a CUP. While it could be argued that that was excessive, the lack of data/analysis for the Club's request at this point was striking. Additionally, this request was being put forth prior to the revision of the Club's master plan that was indicated in their letter. She thought it made much more sense to understand what the Club's future plans were before trying to provide an opinion on the membership levels.

Commissioner Elkind said Town Planner Mader's questions addressed her concerns. Her major concern was what the impact of a 2,700 membership would be--especially in terms of car trips/traffic. Commissioner McIntosh agreed. Even if the population used to be 2,700 and was now 1,800, he thought that the number of cars per family had significantly increased the number of trips.

Commissioner Zaffaroni said it was frustrating that the Commission had recently spent a lot of time going through a review of the Club's master plan. Following their election, they now felt that was not actually what the membership wanted to pursue. She agreed that different categories of membership could yield different results in terms of parking needs and car trips. In developing new membership categories, there needed to be some way of assessing impacts.

Commissioners and staff discussed demographic changes since the Club was established. Town Planner Mader noted that the Club had expanded its facilities--even with the 600 cap. How that related to the membership over time would be interesting to know. Commissioners and staff discussed Club expansion and use of the pool, tennis courts, etc. With respect to the Club's comment that the membership had aged which put less demand on the facility, Commissioner Elkind felt that that cycled. Town Planner Mader added that the Club membership was not a cross section of the Town; the population that went to the Club was self-selecting. It would be very interesting to know what the composition of the membership was now (i.e., number of persons per family and ages). Commissioner McIntosh noted that there was now a waiting list for membership.

Dave Cardinal, President of Alpine Hills Board, said the Club was formed almost the same time as the Town by a group of families. It was and is a family club, and people did not join unless they had kids. The kids' tennis and swim programs were by far the largest use of the Club in terms of hours. Initially it was pretty well balanced, but the demographics had changed. Currently there were about 450 more-than-2-person families. They averaged 4.5 persons. Out of the remainder, there were about 110 couples and 40 individual memberships, which were seniors or divorced persons. The facility, much like the Town center, was aging; most of the buildings were 20-30 years old, and the locker room was on top of a fault. The Club was something of a microcosm of the Town. Over half of the families who were members were Portola Valley residents. The majority of the remainder came from Woodside or Menlo Park; about 60% came from Portola Valley. There were also some members who used to live in Town. There were 180 families on the waiting list with well over 100 of them from Portola Valley. If all of those families were driving to tennis and swim facilities outside of Portola Valley, that would mean a substantial traffic load. If they were going to the Club, they would not be tying up Alpine Road trying to get in and out of Town. People could also bicycle or walk to the Club. The Club would like to continue to serve the community. Additionally, he would like to be able to give a discount to seniors who didn't use the Club that much. But, 600 memberships were needed in order to drive forward with some of the things necessary to update the facilities. The proposal made by the last Board would have substantially increased dues and disenfranchised many of the long-term members. That was not in keeping with the Club's desires. It was inappropriate to manage the Club in a way that would solve the economic problems by forcing out long-term members and bringing in people that could afford the increased

dues. They would be families who could pay the \$250/month dues instead of \$150/month. The Club wanted to find a way to move forward economically, serve the community, but not disenfranchise existing members. Tennis was down, but swimming was popular. The Club would be asking for some more square feet for water. There were more than 100 Portola Valley kids on the swim team. He said surveys had been done about parking. There were three times during the year when the Club was totally "parked out": two swim meets and when the Portola Valley School Foundation held their charity event at the Club. The Club was also a polling place, and Corte Madera School used the tennis courts for their team. He thought it was fair to ask for more detail on traffic but re-iterated that people were driving out of Town to use other facilities. With respect to demographics, he said the advantage of doing a total person cap was that it took care of cycling. He added that not all of the specifics had been included in the Club's letter. The intent was to audit the number of people each quarter and make sure the cap was not exceeded. As more families started to come in, they would not be let in until the total number of people cycled out. The Club could adjust to the demographics of the local area without having to make different categories of memberships go up and down. Senior membership as well as junior membership was also being considered by the Board. It was expected that it would be a family-oriented club with the bulk of the members being families and the majority living in the Town.

Town Planner Mader said a lot of new information had just been presented. He said it would be helpful if that was put together in written form--plus anything else that supported these points. Mr. Cardinal added that there was not a lot of data available for when the Club was first formed. Data on membership today was available.

Responding to Commissioner McIntosh, Mr. Cardinal said the membership from Portola Valley had always been well over 50%; the waiting list was over 60%. He questioned whether the Town wanted to set quotas for membership; it was not impossible to do, but he would not want to start something like that. Responding to Commissioner McIntosh, he said membership of families versus couples and singles had been pretty stable in the last 5-8 years.

Since tennis was down, Commissioner Wengert asked if there had been any discussion about converting some of the courts to a different use. Mr. Cardinal noted that two of the extra courts that were in the master plan had been traded off. A lot of people still wanted to have them, but the courts were not full as often as they used to be. He introduced other representatives of the Club present.

Commissioner Zaffaroni asked if different ways of restructuring the membership had been considered other than what had been suggested. Going from 600 family memberships to a 2,700 persons membership cap seemed like quite a leap. Mr. Cardinal said there were about 2,300 individuals today; 2,700 was a 10-15% increase. Commissioner Zaffaroni said she did not think it computed to look at the overall individuals when there were family units. That translated into different car and parking needs. Mr. Cardinal said more would be learned from the traffic study. Anecdotally, the families with 2-4 kids were by far the heaviest load; the kids had different lesson times, team times, etc. Commissioner Zaffaroni said there would be one car involved per family since minors didn't drive. She did not think 4.5 individuals equaled a family with 4.5 people. Mr. Cardinal said the 600 membership number might be more amenable to the Town. He noted that he had held a number of discussions with Mr. Vlasic about the approach to the restructuring. Chairman Breon agreed that alternatives for restructuring membership should be looked at. He suggested that Club representatives meet with staff and determine what kind of information would be required. Mr. Cardinal discussed the Club's compliance with the CUP.

In further discussions, Councilmember Merk suggested it be clarified whether references to "Portola Valley" included the spheres of influence.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Zaffaroni submitted a change to the minutes of the June 16, 2004, meeting. By motion and second, the minutes were approved as amended by a vote of 4-0, with Commissioner McIntosh abstaining.

Commissioner McIntosh submitted a change to the minutes of the July 21, 2004, meeting. By motion and second, the minutes were approved as amended by a vote of 4-0, with Commissioner Zaffaroni abstaining.

COMMISSION, STAFF, COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Equestrian Center Field Meeting

Ms. Lambert said a field meeting had been tentatively scheduled at the Glen Oaks Equestrian Center at 7:00 p.m. on August 18. Commissioners agreed.

Departure of Chairman

Chairman Breon said he would be departing on his trip sometime between January and March of next year. He suggested he leave the Planning Commission in December. Councilmember Merk said December was not a good time for the Council to be interviewing candidates. He suggested interviews be scheduled for January.

Creek Study

Responding to Commissioner Elkind, Ms. Lambert said the project mapping had been completed as well as preliminary ideas about what should and should not be done along creeks. She anticipated a meeting would be held within the next two weeks with the project consultants. She discussed creek workshops proposed for the Fall. She added that the San Francisco Watershed Council had scheduled a creek day on August 14. People would be carpooling from Corte Madera School.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Craig Breon, Chair
Planning Commission

Leslie Lambert
Planning Manager