

**Planning & Zoning
Committee of the
MidCoast
Community Council**
PO Box 64, Moss Beach
CA 94038
Serving 12,000 residents

July 21, 2004

VIA FAX/Email

Farhad Mortazavi
San Mateo County Planning and Building Division
Mail Drop PLN122, 455 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063
650.363.1841 - FAX: 650.363.4849

RE: PLN2001-00576: Consideration of an
administrative CDR for a new 3,824 s/f, 3-story SFR at
119 Highland Ave., El Granada. APN: 047-161-100.

Dear Farhad:

The Planning and Zoning Committee of the MidCoast Community Council reviewed the above-referenced project on both July 7 and July 21, 2004. The applicant/owner was present at the first meeting, and he was invited to the second meeting which he was unable to attend. He did have a representative present at the July 21st meeting who videotaped part of the July 21st meeting for him.

We have the following comments:

1. There appears to have been the grading of a road within the past four months done without a permit. This involves approximately 300 feet of road with three significant trees being removed. Drainage from upper property now falls on this "road" and there are no retaining walls or other mitigation for drainage. This area does consist of all natural coastal scrub with no invasive plants. We recommend that this issue of illegal grading and tree removal be addressed prior to any continued development of this property. We further request that this be referred both to Code Enforcement and to the District Attorney for further investigation. (Letter dated July 7, 2004 sent to Gary Warren, Code Enforcement Officer regarding this violation.)
2. We received Dave Holbrook's email explaining the Interim Ordinance and height limits in the S-17 district. Dave's email does say that the extension of height to 36 feet is "an exception at the discretion of the Design Review Officer." We feel strongly that the 28 foot height limit should be maintained and this exception should not be allowed for several reasons:
 - First, it was the intention of the Interim Ordinance to limit the height in the S-17 district to 28 feet, and it is only due to oversight of old regulations that this has even become an issue.
 - Second, this house will be surrounded on either side by houses that are required to comply with a 28 foot height limit under the current Design Review criteria, so this house would be out of character with the immediate surrounding houses if allowed to be 36 feet tall.
 - Third, the house, as currently designed, is below the allowed FAR and lot coverage, and thus a house with the same square footage could be built on this same foundation and site, but be only 28 ft tall if the plans were changed to

expand the lot coverage and decrease the height. The shorter house would also be easier on the old foundation.

- Fourth, we need verification about whether this application is deemed complete or incomplete because if still incomplete, then the current Design Review Criteria should be applied. We would like definitive data on the completeness of this application.

3. There was a question of which side of the urban/rural boundary this property is on, but from our review it does appear to lie within the urban boundary.

Furthermore, we request the following additional information:

1. As mentioned above, definitive data on the completeness of this application.
2. A current site survey showing trees and vegetation. For example, there is a tree immediately adjacent to the front foundation piers and this tree is not included in the current plans.
3. A road plan which includes how Highland Avenue will be improved to reach this building site. We believe this plan will need to include a fire truck turnaround for this property. Moreover, because this is an undeveloped area, this road construction will impact the entire neighborhood as it grows, so this should be looked at by the county in terms of future building in this area and taken into consideration when planning this road construction.
4. A copy of the engineering report showing the foundation complies with current regulations. For example, recently with the project: DR approved case PLN2003-00191 Sep 03 followed by a Tree Removal Permit PLN2004-00324 and recently followed by a Stop Work Order because the house was torn down to the foundation SWN2004-00075, it was determined that the current foundation may not be adequate to support a rebuilding of the entire house (as opposed to a remodel that was originally approved.)
5. Clarification of the height of the current project as proposed because there is a comment in the On-line file that even if this project is allowed to go to 36 feet, that it still exceeds even this height limit.

After receiving the above requested information, we will then review this project again and provide further comments.

Please keep us informed of any future changes, re-designs, hearings, approvals or appeals of this project. Thank you for your attention to this project.

Sincerely,



Sara Bassler
Chair, MCC Planning and Zoning Committee