

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

April 22, 2005

To: Farhad Mortazavi and the Coastside Design Review Committee

San Mateo County Planning and Building Division
Mail Drop PLN122, 455 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063
650.363.1831 - FAX: 650.363.4849

Re: PLN2005-00087: consideration of CDR & CDX for a new 2700 s/f SFR including a 405 s/f garage on a 5200 s/f parcel on the 400 block of Virginia Ave, Moss Beach between two existing houses. No trees to be removed. APN: 037-132-210.

Farhad:

The Planning and Zoning Committee of the MidCoast Community Council reviewed the above-referenced project on April 20, 2005 with the applicant in attendance. The applicant did bring his revised plans to the meeting and we really appreciate his willingness to work with the Committee and listen to our suggestions.

First, we would just like confirmation that this project does not need a CDP because of its location on the west side of highway 1. The Committee is unclear on exactly where the cut-off line is from the ocean for requiring a CDP.

Second, the applicant reports he is changing the metal roof, and we fully support this change.

Third, the applicant needs landscaping and exterior lighting plans.

Fourth, after leaving our meeting, the applicant returned later and said that he was thinking of revising his plans to build a one-story home. **We would fully support a one-story home in this location and would have no additional design comments.** However should this revision not occur, we do have the following design review comments.

IF THIS PROJECT REMAINS A TWO-STORY HOME

We have included these design review comments because we think these items deserve emphasis, but we do not intend this list to be construed as covering all the design issues for this project. By our comments we do not intend to imply that these are the only design issues or the most important design issues for this project. We leave that determination to CDRC. We have the following recommendations and concerns:

This home will be built between a one-story home and a modest two-story home, so it is important that the Design Standards are followed in terms of Neighborhood Scale (6565.20(D)1b.(1)).

- (1) New and enlarged homes should respect the scale of the neighborhood through building dimensions, shape and form, façade articulation, or architectural details that appear proportional and complementary to other homes in the neighborhood.

In the context of the definition of neighborhood in the Design Standards (6565.20(B)1.a.:

A neighborhood generally has two components: (1) the immediate context, or how a house relates to adjacent houses and natural features, and (2) the neighborhood context, or how a house relates to the visual character and scale of other houses and natural features in the vicinity.

To help this two-story house design meet the Design Standards we suggested to the applicant that he articulate the second story and lower the eave line as required by the Design Standards:

c. Second Stories (6565.20 (D) 1c)

Most homes built today are two-story homes, and a common way to increase the size of existing homes is to add a second story. This presents a challenge, when the parcel being built on is surrounded primarily by one-story homes, or where a new two-story home or second-story addition has the potential to impact the privacy and views of existing homes. The following sections describe how two-story homes and second-story additions can be designed to be compatible with, and have minimal impact on, existing homes.

(1) Second –Story Location

Standards:

- (a) Locate the primary portion of the second stories towards the center of the first story and away from property lines whenever feasible;
- (b) Avoid locating second stories only over the garage.
- (c) One story designs are strongly encouraged in areas where one-story homes are predominant. If a two-story design is chosen, minimize the size of the second story.
- (d) Where new homes or additions are to be located between one and two-story homes, consider split level designs with the two-story portion of the home oriented toward other two-story homes;

(2) Lowering the Eave Line (6565.20(D)1.c.(2))

Discussion:

One way to make a two story home more compatible with its single-story neighbors is to lower the eave line of the second-story roof. Lowering the eave line also ties the two stories of a house together. Setting second-stories back into the area of rooflines is often a solution for meeting Daylight Plane requirements, and it generally will lower the apparent height of the home. Lowering the eave line of the second story roof can also reduce the apparent building mass, which may result in the scale of the building being more compatible with its neighborhood.

Standard:

Consider bringing some portions of the roof down to the gutter or eave line of the first-story roof to reduce the apparent mass of the building.

The applicant was open to our suggestions, but as mentioned above, may be redesigning this house to be one-story.

OTHER ISSUES:

First, the On-line permit Center had the following comment regarding the side-yard setbacks for the initial design of this project:

"Side setbacks requirement regulation indicates 'combined total of 15 feet with a minimum of 5 feet on any side. This means one side of at least 5 ft. with the other with at least 10 ft. The project includes a mix and match of side yard setbacks. The applicant need to pick one side for 5 ft. and another for 10 ft'"

We actually think this comment mischaracterizes the side setback requirement. The requirement is a "combined total of 15 feet with a minimum of 5 feet on any side," but we do not think this means that the applicant has to have one side of 5 ft and the other of 10ft. We think an applicant could use any combination of feet to meet the 15 foot requirement as long as no side is less than 5 ft. For example, the applicant could have 7 ft on one side and 8 ft on the other. A project may also include a mix and match of side yard setbacks but only so long as the setbacks add up to 15 ft at each point of the house (which they did not in the original design).

Second, during the meeting we gave the applicant a copy of the Design Standards for the Midcoast, and he reported that he did not receive these Standards from the County.

Thank you for your help. We request that you keep us informed of any further developments, redesigns, hearings, approvals or appeals concerning this application.

For the MidCoast Community Council Planning & Zoning Committee,



Sara Bassler
Chair, MCC Planning & Zoning Committee

cc: Karen Wilson, Coastside Design Review Committee