

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

August 15, 2005

FAX/Email

**Farhad Mortazavi & Matt Seubert and the
Coastside Design Review Committee**
San Mateo County Planning and Building Division
Mail Drop PLN122, 455 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063
650.363.1841 - FAX: 650.363.4849

**RE: PLN2005-00233: CDP, DR & Variance for
new 2356 s/f SFD including a 455 s/f garage on a
6258 s/f parcel at 360 Vallejo Ave, El Granada which is bisected by an identified
creek. 15 trees to be removed. The variance is for a 15 ft rear setback where 20
ft is required. APN: 047-104-220.**

Dear Farhad & Matt:

The Planning and Zoning Committee of the MidCoast Community Council reviewed the above-referenced project on July 20, 2005 without the applicant in attendance because this was an initial review of this complicated application.

First, we would like some additional information, so if you would please send us copies of the following:

- The biological report.
- The structural report for the bridge over the creek.

Second, we agree with and strongly support the comments on the On-line permit center: *06/14/2005 WJC - Item #1 must be resolved at this stage, remaining items at the time of application for a building permit. 1. This property is located in a floodplain as per FIRM Map Panel 333. Applicant must demonstrate that project will comply with FEMA flood regulations. An elevation certificate must be submitted before this application can be approved as project may be required to be elevated higher than presently proposed. 2. Prior to pouring any concrete for foundations, written verification from a licensed surveyor will be required confirming that the setbacks, as shown on the approved plans, have been maintained. ...5. A site drainage plan will be required that will demonstrate how roof drainage and site run off will be directed to an approved location. Discharge of drainage cannot be directly to the creek. Discharge must enter a bio-filter to remove or reduce possible contaminants. 6. Sediment and erosion control measures must be installed prior to beginning any site work and maintained throughout the term of the permit. Failure to install or maintain these measures will result in stoppage of construction until the corrections have been made and fees paid for staff enforcement time.*

Third, we have the following initial comments:

Creek:

- The creek that runs through this parcel is called "Deer Creek." It is part of a two stream system that provides drainage for approximately half of El Granada.

- This creek is a year-around stream although it has no apparent riparian corridor, so we appreciate the applicant's willingness to respect the twenty foot setback from the high-water mark of this creek.
- We recognize that existing houses in this area are built directly on top of this creek so it is even more imperative that care is taken with the remaining portion of the creek that has not been built upon.
- The creek must be protected during construction and the channel must not be disturbed during construction. All necessary protections must be in place and strongly enforced to ensure the creek and channel are not impacted by construction.
- Proposed landscape plans should take into account preservation and enhancement of native creekside plant communities as specified in the County's "Guide to Creekside Planting".

Drainage:

This project does involve impervious surface coverage within 200 feet of a creek and according to the "San Mateo County wide Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program, Checklist For Permanent Stormwater Quality Controls" this qualifies this project as being in a "sensitive area":

"A Project is located in a *sensitive area* if the limit of impervious area will be located less than 200 feet away from a water quality resource, including a wetland, stream, pond, lake, river or bay."

Drainage, erosion and sediment control shall be subject to at least the following requirements and whatever others may be necessary to successfully mitigate negative drainage and erosion impacts from the project both during construction and after completion:

- Because of this "sensitive area" designation, we request that Best Management Practices be implemented with the highest level of stormwater pollution prevention to ensure that the applicant's proposed drainage control will ensure that the finished development will not effect the rate and amount of run-off from this parcel.
- Prior to the beginning of any construction, the applicant shall submit to the Planning Division for review and approval a drainage, erosion and sediment control plan, which shows how the transport and discharge of soil and pollutants from the project site will be minimized. The goal is to prevent sediment and other pollutants from leaving the project site and to protect all exposed earth surfaces from erosive forces.
- The approved erosion and drainage control plan shall be implemented prior to the commencement of construction.

Variance:

In order to grant the variance, the county "must make all" the required findings in Chapter 25 of the Zoning Regulations, section 6534.1 which provides as follows:

SECTION 6534.1 VARIANCE FINDINGS. In order to approve an application for a variance, the approving authority must make all of the following findings in writing:

- (1) The parcel's location, size, shape, topography and/or other physical conditions vary substantially from those of other parcels in the same zoning district or vicinity.
 - (2) Without the variance, the landowner would be denied the rights and privileges that are enjoyed by other landowners in the same zoning district or vicinity.
 - (3) The variance does not grant the landowner a special privilege which is inconsistent with the restrictions placed on other parcels in the same zoning district or vicinity.
 - (4) The variance authorizes only uses or activities which are permitted by the zoning district.
 - (5) The variance is consistent with the objectives of the General Plan, the Local Coastal Program (LCP) and the Zoning Regulations.
- The project does not meet the required findings for granting a variance because item (2) is not met. If the applicant is not granted the variance they can easily build a 1600-1800 s/f home. There is nothing inappropriate or unduly restrictive about a 1800 s/f home and thus the landowner will not be "denied the same rights and privileges that are enjoyed by other landowners in the same zoning district or vicinity."
 - The project would not conform with the objectives of the General Plan and the LCP in the limited yard space and excessive house size for the reduced building area due to the location of the creek, a naturally occurring coastal resource that needs as much consideration as any constraint on building design. Because of this, the project does not meet finding #5.

Trees:

- The applicant's plans remove every single tree on this parcel. This is overkill. The eucalyptus trees that are not within or close to the footprint of the house should be preserved and their canopy trimmed as necessary for healthy retention.
- Removing all the eucalyptus trees on this parcel would be unwise considering the amount of water that these trees consume on a parcel that is designated as being in a flood zone. Removing all these trees will result in flooding issues downstream and will worsen the potential flooding on this parcel.
- Replacement trees should be at least a 1:1 ratio with replacement trees growing to a similar height & stature as those being removed.

House:

- The house does not meet Design Review criteria from it's lack of articulation and second story setback.

Again, this was just an initial review of this project and after receiving copies of the biological report and bridge structural report we will submit additional comments.

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 and Zoning Committee