

November 12, 2005

FAX/Email

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

**Steve Ross**

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: PLN2005-00516: Tree Removal Permit**  
application to remove a grouping of 3 eucalyptus  
trees (each approx 20" dia) at 506 Isabella Rd, El  
Granada. APN: 047-191-190

I recently received the above referenced application for a tree removal, and we have the following comments:

**Removal Request**

The trees are, as described, pushing over the retaining wall. Although we have no issue with their removal, we ask that this permit not be approved until the required replanting plan is on file with the county (see below), and we have had the opportunity to comment on the proposed replacement trees.

**Replacement Trees**

No replacement trees were specified in the materials we received. The removed trees should be replaced in a 1:1 ratio with trees that (at maturity) are of a similar size and stature as the Eucalyptus trees being removed. We recommend this type of replacement because these coastal trees are a designated resource (in the findings of the significant tree ordinance, {attached}) for their habitat and environmental value, and their removal should be mitigated with replacement in kind.

Page 3 of the Application for a tree removal permit does contain a list of recommended replacement trees for the coastside, item #4. These should be planted in the 15-gallon size.

**Posting Requirements**

There were two very conspicuous signs posted visible to the public, one on the garage and one on the fence near the trees, but the trees to be removed were not individually marked as required by the Significant Tree Ordinance. The San Mateo County Ordinance Code, §12.021.2 requires that a notice "be posted on each tree for which a permit is required and in at least two conspicuous locations clearly visible to the public,..."

I did see in the On-Line Permit Center that the planner did post a notice on the trees after we visited the site, and we do appreciate the compliance with the posting requirements of the Ordinance.

### **Completeness of Application**

As a procedural note, all tree removal permit applications are required to have a replacement planting plan with replacement species indicated and a professional evaluation of their health and condition. Section 12,021 of the Tree Ordinance lists the requirements for information required for filing:

“Such application shall be accompanied by such drawings, written material, photographs and other information as are necessary to provide data concerning trees within the affected area, which shall include: ... (f) Description of tree planting or replacement program.... (i) General health of tree to be trimmed, cut down or removed, as documented by a licensed tree surgeon or arborist.”

Based on the Dave Holbrooks' email, apparently the county has not been requiring arborist's reports when the health of the tree is not an issue, we will be discussing this practice at a future MCC P&Z meeting and providing our comments regarding this.

The replanting plan, however, should not be subject to discretionary omission, and thus we again request that this permit not be approved until a replanting plan specifying the number and type of replacement trees is on file with the County. Once you have this information, then we would like to have the opportunity to comment on the appropriateness of the proposed replacement trees.

We strongly encourage the County to stop accepting incomplete applications. Section 12,021 of the Tree Ordinance is very specific in the mandatory requirements for an application to be deemed complete, and we again request that this be followed in its entirety.

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

For the MidCoast Community Council Planning & Zoning Committee,



Sara Bassler  
Chair, MCC Planning and Zoning Committee