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Midcoast Community Council
P.O. Box 64
Moss Beach, CA 94038

An elected Municipal Advisory Council of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
Serving 12,000 Coastal Residents

May 15, 2000

San Mateo County Planning Commission
455 County Government Center
Planning and Building Division
Redwood City, Ca 94063

Dear Commission President Bomberger and Planning Commissioners,

At our meeting of May 10, 2000, the Midcoast Community Council, after much deliberation, voted 6-0 to send the following recommendation to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors regarding the MidCoast Zoning Ordinance. Councilmembers Bassler, Gore, Kozak, Lohman, Perkovic and Vargas were present. Items 2 through 6 were adopted directly from the MCC Planning and Zoning Committee recommendation, drafted at the request of the Council at our April 26, 2000 meeting. Those items marked with a star (*) are different or in addition to the Draft Staff Proposal.

While the Draft Staff Proposal did receive significant support, the vote to adopt it as presented was a deadlocked 3 votes aye and 3 votes no. Much discussion followed this failed motion and the following considerations contributed to the Floor Area Ratio component in the proposal we are presenting to you.

- (1) Most Council members found the garage credit confusing, and inconsistent (especially on smaller parcels) with the concept of portionality of structure size to parcel.
- (2) Most believed the FAR numbers of both the Draft Staff Proposal and the Planning and Zoning Committee proposal to be in a range that is appropriate. 53% was chosen because this is what the Staff Proposal recommended for a 5,000 sq. ft. lot.
- (3) There is a continuing desire to provide a dis-incentive for development of nonconforming lots, but also concern that the FAR be reasonable.
- (4) The proposal identifies an FAR which all six Council members present could agree upon.

The issue of an upper limit (6200 sq. ft. in the proposals) was not addressed. This is not meant to imply that such an upper limit would not be acceptable to the Council. We will consider this at our special meeting on May 17, 2000 and will relay our decision to you in a subsequent piece of correspondence.

1. Floor-Area-Ratio:

(*) For all residential (R-1) districts, an FAR of 53% for all conforming parcels within their zoning district. For nonconforming parcels, an FAR of 48%.

Example: In the S-17 district, parcels less than 5,000 sq. ft. would have an FAR of 48%. Similar for the S-9 (10,000 sq. ft.) and the S-10 (20,000 sq. ft.) districts.

Parcels less than 3500 sq. ft. would have the requirement for covered parking removed.

2. (*) Home Improvement Exceptions:

HIE would NOT allow a structure to exceed the FAR.

3. Height:

28 ft. in all R-1 districts except the section of the S-9 district east of Highway 1, measured as the vertical distance from any point on the natural grade to the topmost point of the building immediately above.

(*) For the S-9 district **east** of Highway 1, the height limit of 32 ft would be established for parcels 10,000 sf or greater. Parcels less than 10,000 sf, and the S-9 district **west** of Highway 1 would have a height limit of 28 ft.

Limited Height Exemption For Steep Building Sites with 30% slope or greater: In cases where steep localized terrain presents architectural and design difficulties, the Design Review Committee may grant an exemption to allow 33 ft. maximum building height for

(*) a. any portion of the house that is within the appropriate center percentage (40%) of the length or width, (*) **or:**

b. The downslope wall.

4. Daylight Plane:

Daylight plane **or** facade articulation (as approved by the Design Review Committee) is required. New homes would be designed to conform to a daylight plane **or** include facade articulation features to the satisfaction of the Design Review Committee.

The applicant would choose whether to include daylight plane **or** facade articulation to fulfill this requirement.

The daylight plane is established by measuring either (1) along the front and rear setback lines, or (2) along the side setback lines, as determined by the applicant, a vertical distance of 20 ft. from the natural grade, and then inward at an angle of 45 degrees until maximum building height is reached.

(*) The DRC shall have approval on the applicant's choice of either front/rear or side daylight plane usage.

Architectural features, including dormers and gables may extend into the 45 degree angled portion of the daylight plane, provided that:

(*) Dormers and Gables Located within the center 60% of the building length or width:

The combined length of such features on each building side does not exceed 40% of the side on which they are present and height from natural grade does not exceed 24 ft. or;

The combined length of such features on each building side does not exceed 30% of the side on which they are present and height from natural grade does not exceed 28 ft.

Cornices, eaves, roof overhangs, chimneys, stairways, decks and similar features may extend up to two feet into the daylight plane.

Chimneys, pipes, mechanical equipment, antennae and other similar features may extend into the daylight plane up to 36 ft. as required for safety and efficient operation.

The Design Review Committee would approve the choice of facade articulation upon finding that: (1) all building facades will be well articulated and proportioned, and (2) each building wall will be broken up so as not to appear sheer, blank, looming or massive to neighboring properties. Facade articulation can be achieved through the placement of decks, bays, windows, balconies, porches, overhangs, cantilevered features, and other projecting or recessing architectural details.

5. Design Review Committee

All new development would be subject to design review by a design review committee. The design review committee process would be similar to the corresponding committee processes in effect on the Bayside. The three member committee would be appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Two members shall be licensed architects who reside in San Mateo County. The third member shall be a resident of the unincorporated community in which the project being reviewed is located. Four persons could be appointed to serve as the third member, i.e. one each representing Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, and Miramar, respectively.

(*) The third member(s) shall be appointed by the Board from candidates recommended by the MidCoast Community Council

(*) Initial design review criteria shall be existing policies and guidelines in the LCP, General Plan, Community Design Manual and any other applicable documents for the MidCoast Area, as well as the basic principles defined by the Zoning Ordinance Study group.

Revised design review criteria and standards would be developed as a component of the Mid-Coast LCP Update Project. The project is currently scheduled to begin with scoping sessions to be held in July, 2000.

(*) Input from members of the new DRC, by benefit of their continuing experience with review of designs submitted in the coastal area, shall be an integral part of the process in developing the revised criteria and standards.

6. Staffing and support:

The P&Z Committee also recommends that the Council write a letter to Supervisor Rich Gordon asking that he carry a proposal through the budget process which would add a new MidCoast planner position in the Planning Department. This new planner would focus solely on MidCoast issues and would help satisfy the need for additional staff which will be created by the establishment of these new ordinances, the formation of the Coastside Design Review Committee, and the development of detailed Design Review Criteria through the upcoming LCP review process.

The Council is sincerely appreciative of the ongoing efforts of Planning Administrator Terry Burnes and Senior Planner George Bergman and staff to seek varying points of view on these important issues and accurately incorporate a spectrum of feedback within the Draft Staff Proposal. We also acknowledge the leadership of Supervisor Rich Gordon in addressing the need for these regulations and working to implement an equitable solution.

After you have reviewed the Midcoast Community Council's proposal please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or comments which you may have.

Thank you for your careful consideration of the information presented.

Sincerely,



April Vargas
Chair, Midcoast Community Council
650-728-5215
april@montara.com