

Planning & Zoning Committee of the MidCoast Community Council

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FAX: 3 Pages

To: Damon DiDonato

San Mateo County Planning and Building Division

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re: **PLN2000-00173:** Lot Merger, Coastal Development Permit, Resource Management District Permit, Grading Permit, Coastside Design Review and conversion of an existing agricultural well to domestic use to build a 3-story, 4203 sf. single-family residence with attached 3-car garage and a detached 2-story 2096 sf. garage/storage/personal office structure on a 35,142 sf. parcel on Alta Loma in the RM/CZ district in Montara. APN(s) 036-142-030, 020, & 110.

Damon:

Sorry for the delays on these. On 1/31/01, the Planning and Zoning Committee of the MidCoast Community Council reviewed the above referenced application. There were numerous issues that arose – enough that we felt it necessary to continue this item until further information could be obtained. We identified the following as needing further research:

1. We would like to have the ownership history of the parcels researched to ascertain that a merger could not have occurred to bring this parcel nearer to the recommended 5 acre standard for the RM/CZ district, and that this is indeed a legal parcel. As you may know, this is already an issue with other proposed developments in this district, specifically in the Portola Heights subdivision and other areas around Montara.
2. We would like clarification & verification of the Septic Exemption claimed by the applicant. If the surrounding property owners have granted an exemption to the 50' property line setback requirement, and considering the configuration, topography, and size of the neighboring parcels, they may have given up future development possibilities with the granting of this exemption. This could result in at least two scenarios:
 - a. Pressure will be brought in the future to allow further exemptions on these properties to allow development,
 - b. With the loss of development potential, they should become quite affordable and we would suggest that the applicant for this parcel purchase the appropriate amount of these lands so that an exemption would not be necessary.

3. With the issue of visibility, we would like to know where the ridgeline is in this case and from what vantage point that is being determined. At the time of our review, the road to the parcel was not passable so it was not feasible to get to the project site to begin figuring any potential visual impact.
4. The committee felt a completed landscape plan would be necessary for further review of this project to proceed, especially considering the large size and potential visibility of the proposed house. We were particularly concerned with the effects of the retaining wall foundation as seen in the rear and left elevations of the presented plans. Other projects in this area have come under intense criticism because of their visibility from the communities below and lack of any predetermined landscaping and visual shielding plans.
5. The road that is proposed in this project would worsen an existing flooding problem on Cedar Street below and cause excessive erosion and environmental damage to the surrounding area (especially the public lands of the CalTrans Right-of-Way that it passes through) if a proper drainage retention and control system is not designed to handle the runoff from the road.
6. The design as presented would seem to present an obvious opportunity for a second unit over the detached garage. We would like to see either an application for a second unit or this building or else some sort of modification of the design or inclusion of enforceable conditions to prohibit this use.
7. In the supplied applications for the project, we found a number of errors and points of contention:
 - a. For Grading in particular, and other areas in general, the work for the road should be clearly delineated from the work for the proposed structures.
 - b. On the CDP application, the box indicating whether a permit had been previously applied for (#2 – Basic Information) is checked “No.” We believe there was an earlier application for this property one or two years ago, and that the box should be checked “Yes.”
 - c. On the same form, (#4 – Project Information), items b, c, and t are checked “No.” – We believe that in the case of b & c (vicinity of wetlands and creeks), there needs to be a proper investigation into the area that the road passes through to verify that this is the case. Identified seasonal historic creeks originate up in this area, and their drainages may lie along the path of this road or at the project site.
 - d. On the Environmental Information form, items c, d, e, f, h, & k are checked “No” – we feel that c through f should certainly be “Yes” and that issues raised above about location of the ridgeline and the effect on future development of surrounding properties should be fully investigated regarding h & k.

Because of these outstanding issues, we did not examine the design or siting of the actual residence very closely yet, and have decided to continue our review to a future meeting.

Please let me know at your earliest convenience when further information might be available so that we can reschedule this application and not delay its processing any more than necessary. Thank you for your help, and please keep us informed of any further redesigns, developments, approvals, or appeals concerning this application.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Kozak". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "C".

Chuck Kozak
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