

Planning & Zoning Committee of the MidCoast Community Council

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Fax: 3 Pages

To: **Mr. Farhad Mortazavi**
San Mateo County Planning and Building Division
Mail Drop PLN122, 455 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063
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re: **PLN2001-00313:** Coastal Development Exemption and Coastside Design Review for a new 1707 sq. ft. single-family residence including garage and a domestic well on a non-conforming 4000 sq. ft. parcel on the northwest corner of 6th and East streets in Montara. APN 036-021-010

Farhad:

At our meeting of 8/29/01, the Planning & Zoning Committee of the MidCoast Community Council reviewed the above referenced application. The applicants did not attend. We had the following comments:

The committee was very concerned about the placement of the well, as this lot is only 40' wide. This placement, because of the 50' separation requirement on wells, in addition to the existence of the well on the lot to the north, would push any well on the parcel to the west (APN 036-021-020) to the front and middle of its parcel, possibly rendering it un-developable. It is also not clear what other restrictions (sewer lines, still other wells, etc.) might exist that would affect the other parcel's well placement.

We were also informed by representatives of the Montara Sanitary District that the District has a sewer-line easement along East St., which this well placement would violate.

The committee felt that allowing this well without the full investigation of its impacts would be detrimental to the planned development of the area and would only be conducive to further variances & exceptions, weakening of regulations and erosion of safety standards.

The committee also felt that the well and the individual development of this parcel is detrimental to the overall planned density and existing scale and character of the surrounding community. Most of the lots in the area are 5,000 sq. ft., many are larger. Existing houses in the neighborhood would appear to have much smaller Floor-Area-Ratios (FARs) than the proposed project, especially the small cottages immediately to the west and south of the subject property.

The project as proposed has an actual FAR of 60% - far larger than most in the area and larger than any other building that will be built in the future. The Planning Commission recently ruled, and was upheld through appeal to the Board of Supervisors, that a house with a 58% FAR at 2nd and Farallone Streets on a 5,000 sq. ft. lot was out of scale and character with the neighborhood – this is only a few blocks away from the project.

The owner of the 4000' sq. ft. parcel immediately to the west (APN 036-021-020) has communicated his interest in selling the parcel or buying the subject property. We would encourage the applicants to acquire the neighboring property, sell theirs to that owner, or enter into a joint development of the two properties as one – any of these options for a reasonably sized house on the resultant 8,000 sq. ft. lot.

The committee found the design of the house too looming and un-articulated, especially for its prominently visible corner lot location. The full height wall along East St. (east elevation) would need to be broken up, preferably by inseting the second floor by 5' or more. The west elevation presents similar problems in a massive wall presented to the neighborhood at this time, and to any potential neighboring structure in the future.

The drawings as supplied are inaccurate & inconsistent – the Front & Rear Elevations show the decks and the chimney structure on the what should be the west elevation, yet the two Side Elevations show the decks and the chimney to be on opposite sides of the house, as do the floor plans. The floor plans also show the fireplace on the first level, yet the chimney structure as shown in the West Elevation does not extend below the floor of the second level. There would also be a 7 foot drop in elevation from the front of the lot to the rear of the house (from elevation 98' to 91') – this would result in a difference in grade at the sides (with one end either elevated above or below grade) that is not shown on the side elevations. The plans also indicate on the first page a difference of 4 feet between the garage (96') and first floor (92') elevations, yet the plans show no stepping of the structure inside or outside to compensate for this difference. This same page also indicates a ridge height at 123', which would be 31' above the indicated finished first floor elevation, 3' beyond the allowed height limit, yet the elevations would indicate that the height from the finished first floor to the ridge to be less than 24'. There is no indication of what the height from grade would actually be. All these are critical to determining how high the building will be, what the sides will look like, and how it will be situated on the parcel.

The survey plot in the supplied plans show the parcel to be 4000 sq. ft., (40x100) yet the applications indicate it is 4200 sq. ft.

The committee felt that no consideration of site-sensitive design, as shown in the Community Design Manual, was given to this project. The house proposed is identical to ones built in the Miramar area a few years ago, and is more conducive

to a higher-density row-house like area than one with the open feel of this part of Montara. This area has a gentle upslope to the south, and many of the houses in the area are either single-story or mixed 1 & 2-story, either of which give a better feel to the slope of the land than the larger, boxier 2-story houses that were built mostly in the 70's. The lot is in a very prominent location: 6th St. is a major east-west artery through Montara, and everyone in town will be looking at what gets built here for a long time to come.

With the above comments, the committee finds that the project as presented does not meet the zoning regulations, design review criteria, and land use designations of its area. We would encourage the owners to seek other designs and development options that would be more in keeping with the scale & character of the community and the letter & spirit of the regulations. We would be happy to review this project again with the applicants present if they so desire. Thank you for your help, and please keep us informed of any further developments, redesigns, hearings, approvals or appeals concerning this application.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chuck Kozak". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "K".

Chuck Kozak, MCC Planning and Zoning Committee Chair

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