

July 25, 2017

Owen Lawlor
Moss Beach Associates, LLC
612 Spring Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Mr. Lawlor:

SUBJECT: Coastside Design Review
Vallemar Street at Juliana Avenue, Moss Beach
APNs 037-086-230,-240,-250,-260,-270,-280, and -290
County File No. PLN 2015-00380

At its meeting of July 13, 2017, the San Mateo County Coastside Design Review Committee (CDRC) considered your request for a Design Review recommendation for each of four new houses on four reconfigured lots as follows:

LOT 1 – A new 4,740 sq. ft., three-story single-family residence (includes a 408 sq. ft. third-story mezzanine area), with a 576 sq. ft. detached two-car garage, located on a (proposed) 23,473 sq. ft. parcel^{*}, including removal of one (1) significant (Monterey cypress) tree and associated grading (250 cubic (cu) yards (yds) of cut and 400 cu/yds of fill; net import 150 cu/yds).

LOT 2 – A new 4,859 sq. ft. three-story single-family residence (includes a 776 sq. ft. third-story mezzanine area), with a 585 sq. ft. attached two-car garage, located on a (proposed) 22,220 sq. ft. parcel^{*}, including removal of nine (9) significant and two (2) non-significant (Monterey cypress) trees and associated grading (300 cu/yds of cut and 500 cu/yds of fill; net import 200 cu/yds).

LOT 3 – A new 4,740 sq. ft. three-story single-family residence (includes a 408 sq. ft. third-story mezzanine area), with a 576 sq. ft. detached two-car garage, located on a (proposed) 24,211 sq. ft. parcel^{*}, including removal of nine (9) significant (Monterey cypress) trees and associated grading (0 cu/yds of cut and 1,100 cu/yds of fill; net import 1,100 cu/yds).

LOT 4 – A new 4,740 sq. ft. three-story single-family residence (includes a 408 sq. ft. third-story mezzanine area), with a 576 sq. ft. attached two-car garage, located on a

^{*} Via a proposed Lot Line Adjustment which will adjust the existing seven legal lots down to four lots.

(proposed) 32,324 sq. ft. parcel^{*}, including removal of 11 significant (Monterey cypress) trees and associated grading (50 cu/yds of cut and 1,100 cu/yds of fill; net import 1,050 cu/yds).

All four proposed residences are on a 2.48-acre site zoned: Resource Management-Coastal Zone/Design Review (RM-CZ/DR); located within a County Scenic Corridor, and are part of a broader project consisting of a Coastal Development Permit (CDP), a RM-CZ and a Grading Permit on four reconfigured parcels. A hearing before the Planning Commission for the entire project will take place at some point after the CDRC has made its recommendation regarding the Design Review Permit. The associated CDP is appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

The CDRC was unable to make the findings necessary for the Design Review recommendation based on certain design deficiencies. In order to resolve these deficiencies in the project's design, a more thorough review of the "Standards for Design for One-Family and Two-Family Residential Development In The Midcoast" manual is required, specifically on Section 6565.20, Subsections (B), (C), (D), (E) and (F), as further discussed below. The references to the Design Review standards below refer to all four property plans presented collectively on the four proposed lots, whose boundaries would be adjusted from the currently existing seven parcels

Application Submittal Deficiencies

- a. The total square footage submissions on the Application for Design Review Form are not consistent with plans. Please revise and resubmit a completed Design Review form.
- b. The project description on the drawings/plans submitted for review references five dwellings rather than four. Please correct this typographical error.

Inconsistencies with Cited Design Review Standards

Section 6565.20(B). NEIGHBORHOOD DEFINITION AND NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER. For the purpose of Design Standards (1. and 2.), the proposed project meets a few of the consistency qualities of this single-family residential neighborhood definition. While the planned structures are proportionate to each other, they are outside of the current aesthetics and size of the immediate neighborhood context.

Section 6565.20(C). SITE PLANNING AND STRUCTURE PLACEMENT. d. Ridgelines, Skylines and View Corridors: While the "low single-story entrance facades allow white water ocean view corridors between" houses, the heights of all four houses render a looming and massive appearance from viewing points from the open space bluff and trail. Structures should blend with existing landforms and tree canopy rather than create ridgeline silhouettes. The Design Standards "Discussion" Section cites that, in the Cabrillo Highway Scenic Corridor, the Local Coastal Program (LCP) may require the maximum building height

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for structures located on ridgelines (in this case, per LCP definition, the “ridgeline” is defined as the top of the Cypress tree canopy, looking easterly from the bluff top trail) to be lower than the maximum allowed by the Zoning Regulations.

Section 6565.20(C) e. RELATIONSHIP TO OPEN SPACES. The structures should harmonize with the natural setting with regard to massing and special attention should be paid to where residential and open space land uses meet.

Section 6565.20(D) ELEMENTS OF DESIGN: 1. Building Mass Shape and Scale: As submitted in comparative evidence by several residents, the average size home in the surrounding area and immediately adjacent properties is approximately 2,200 square feet. The scale of the proposed structures exceed this average by a minimum of 70% and are disproportional in size to the neighborhood. Standard (1): Although there is exterior wall articulation adding visual intrigue to the property, the proposed structures include third-story mezzanine areas that add excessive height.

Section 6565.20(D).1.c.(2) LOWERING THE EAVE LINE: Consider bringing some portions of the roof designs down to reduce the apparent mass of the buildings.

Section 6565.20(E) ADDITIONAL SITE PLANNING AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS: The project provides a “variable color scheme” by providing a colored panel insert, but the overall design of the structures is identical across the contiguous projects. The structures’ design style, exterior detail and roof height are repetitive in many respects, making the project appear isolated from other neighborhood structures and as a tract development (Standards 1.a-c).

Section 6565.20(F) LANDSCAPING, PAVED AREAS, FENCES, LIGHTING AND NOISE. 1. Landscaping: As has been recommended by the Midcoast Community Council, moving the structures closer to Vallemar Street (albeit requiring a variance application for setback relief) would mitigate damage to the coastal prairie landscape adjacent to the bluffs during construction and would ensure minimal disturbance of the sensitive habitat. 2. Paved Areas: Where possible, all hardscape should be permeable to improve site runoff and drainage; lawn areas shown on the plans shall be replaced with coastal prairie grass seed mix. 3. Fencing: All grape-stake fencing height at the bluff trail is at 18 inches; the fence type and height shall be indicated on the plans. 4. Lighting: All exterior lighting shall be darksky compliant and minimized.

Section 6565.20(H) SECOND UNITS. No second units are allowed in RM/CZ Zoning Districts

Requirements to be Applied to Each Proposed House Design

1. Eliminate the storage area over the garage and mezzanines to bring down roof lines and reduce square footage and mass/bulk.

2. Modify the current grading and incorporate stepping down of each project to reduce massing.
3. Consider reducing the 1:1 ratio of bedrooms to bathrooms to reduce square footage to a size comparable to neighborhood houses and compatible with adjoining open spaces areas.
4. Submit revised plans showing exterior lighting or other planned site lighting. Provide actual samples of exterior materials and colors, fixtures, confirm chimney material, and submit manufacturer cut sheets for garage doors, exterior doors and exterior lighting fixtures.
5. Non reflective bonderized roof should be dark in color with a larger sample provided at the next meeting.
6. Planning shall confirm with the biologist whether a barrier or fence is recommended or required along the conservation easement.
7. Proposed fencing between the houses shall be removed from plans and the remaining perimeter (front and rear) fencing location and height shall be confirmed, both by height and design; bluff trail fencing height shall be revised in the plans to reflect a height not to exceed 2 feet.
8. Consider set back revisions and variations between the Midcoast Community Council recommended 20 feet and proposed 50 feet (RM-CZ minimum required front setback) from Vallemar Street on all or some lots. However, any front setbacks proposed at less than 50 feet shall not result in: (1) an increase in the average measured height of any of the houses or in any increase in absolute height of any westerly outfacing walls, as measured from the ground to the top immediately above; (2) any additional tree removal of significant-sized trees; or (3) the loss of any of the on-site visitor parking or adequate turnaround in the motor court areas.
9. Reduce the size of the motor court hardscape areas.
10. Change the “condiment” palette to one that better represents the natural setting.
11. Plant drought-tolerant native grasses as an alternative in all “lawn” areas as shown on site plan, identify such grasses on the landscape plan.
12. Reconsider Eastern Redbud trees as they are not known to be tolerant of drought or exposed marine environments.

At the meeting, you were presented with the following available options at the end of the CDRC’s deliberation of the project: (1) request for a recommendation from the CDRC on the plans presented, or (2) request that the project be considered at the next meeting to provide you with ample time to consider and incorporate the elements recommended for project

redesign. You chose the second option, and the CDRC directed staff to schedule your project for consideration at a later date.

Please contact Dave Holbrook, Design Review Officer, at 650/363-1837, if you have any questions.

To provide feedback, please visit the Department's Customer Survey at the following link: <http://planning.smcgov.org/survey>.

Sincerely,

Dennis P. Aguirre
Design Review Officer

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cc: Stuart Grunow, Member Architect
Melanie Hohnbaum, Moss Beach Community Representative
Beverly Garrity, Montara Community Representative
Lisa Ketcham, Midcoast Community Council
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