

A regular meeting of the San Anselmo Planning Commission was called to order on August 18, 1986 at 8:23 p.m. by Chairman Kroot in the Council Chamber. Public Works/Planning Director Kottage, Planning Technician Wight, Planning Consultant Roberto and Engineering Consultant Bala were present.

#### ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Hayes, Manning, Zaharoff, Kroot

Commissioners Absent: Harle, Heubach, McPeak

#### SPECIAL MEETING

It was the consensus of the Commission to schedule a special meeting for September 8, 1986 to hear the public hearings continued from tonight's meeting.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of August 4, 1986 were continued to September 8, 1986 as only two members present this evening were present on August 4th.

#### OLD BUSINESS

SS-263 - Paul Tietjen, 1348 San Anselmo Avenue, A/P 7-051-07, two lot parcel split with exceptions and initial environmental review - CONTINUED TO 9-15-86.

AR-6 - Quarry Mountain, Incorporated, End of Tomohawk Drive, A/P Nos. 177-220-50, 177-220-40 and 177-220-41, master building envelope and landscape plan for entire subdivision and design review of homes on Lots 9 and 10.

Doug Elliott of Elliott & Associates and the project consultants were present.

The hearing on the master building envelope, landscape plan and design review of lots 9 and 10 was continued from the Commission meeting of August 4th. Since that meeting, the applicants withdrew the application for design review of the homes on lots 9 and 10. The only item before the Commission tonight was the landscape plan, which, under conditions of the Tentative Map, must be approved prior to submission of the Improvement Plan and Final map.

#### Staff

Planning Consultant Roberto reported that he and the Town's engineering consultant on this project, Stan Bala of Bala & Strangaard, reviewed the landscape plan for conformance with Conditions E-5, E-7, E-8 and E-9 of the Tentative Map. They found it to meet these requirements, the only conditions of approval applicable to the items before the Commission this evening. A landscape plan is not normally attached to a Tentative Map but the Town attached it because it was of great concern, specifically concerning the visual impacts of the property whether or not it is developed.

The specific items of review under the landscape plan include: grading plan, storm water drainage, house construction and feasible access, roadway network, trees and landscape.

Concerning grading, Mr. Roberto reported that no retaining walls over 3 feet high are proposed either for the subdivision improvements or for gaining access to the property; a 4 foot high catchment wall on the lower slopes behind the existing tree groves to protect property on Indian Rock is the only visual feature associated with the geotechnical recommendations. All cuts will be rounded to blend with the natural terrain, the only fill area which may be visually apparent off-site is to the west of the road on Lot 11, and the cut for the water tank will not be visible from homes on-site or downslope or cause landsliding or debris flows.

Mr. Roberto reported that the Town worked with the applicant to minimize the grading; furthermore, no trees will be removed although some trees will be pruned to create access. The fill area visible off-site will be treated with mulch, wildflowers and brush to effectively screen the hill area over a long period of time. There will be a minimal amount of earth disturbance of the slopes.

The V-ditch required under conditions of the Tentative Map was eliminated due to concern by Engineering Consultant Bala that it could further destabilize the slope; the V-ditch was also a visual problem, according to Mr. Roberto. Instead all storm water will feed into a subsurface drainage system.

The Master Landscape Plan calls for the public improvement landscaping, including the trees at street side and the water tank, to be planted concurrently with the public improvements at the onset of development. The landscaping between the homes on the lower slopes is proposed to be done by individual property owners. Staff recommended that more of the latter landscaping instead be done in the initial subdivision stage. Mr. Roberto noted that the public improvement landscaping and the drainage system are required to be done regardless of whether the property is developed. Mr. Bala added that under the subdivision agreement between the applicant and the Town, the public improvements are bonded. He noted that the landscaping cannot be changed on the public streets since it is part of the subdivision agreement.

#### Applicants

Doug Elliott said that the homes had to be clustered on the site of the old quarry in order to comply with the Town's approval. This quarry was a sloping mesa graded without any concept of slope stability and cannot stay in its current condition without threat of slippage. The soils and civil engineers designed the public improvements based on these conditions.

Mr. Elliott contrasted his project with those homes on Oak Springs Drive, saying that the driveway, garage and outside cars are highly visible from the road while landscaping will mitigate the views of the homes from the road in his project. He said they attempted to nestle the buildings as much as possible into the slope.

Concerning the landscape plan, John Roberts, project landscape architect, said it called for rehabilitation of the quarry site - changing it from a grassland to a woodland where after ten years more than one-half of each structure will be screened by trees. The agricultural quality of the soils will be amended on the slopes, 3 feet of fill will be added to the public right-of-way for the street landscaping, and the landscaping will be automatically irrigated. Any disturbed area will be hydromulched and seeded with a combination of native grasses, wildflowers and low growing evergreens for fire and erosion control.

At the entrance to the subdivision, large boulders set into the ground will be arranged in a rock outcropping. A sign for the Marin County Open Space area will be placed in the pedestrian accessway. There will be a pathway of soft decomposed granite after the concrete pathway ends, connecting with the Open Space pathway.

There will be a mix of cut and fills for development of the road; soil will be borrowed from the housing pads in the quarry to use on the road.

Joel Baldwin, engineering geologist, explained that the quarry in its present condition had uncontrolled drainage and the water needed to be conducted safely off the slope to avoid hazard to homes on Indian Rock Road. A gabion debris flow wall and a soldier beam wall were considered for the base of the slope across the property lines from lots 1, 2 and 3, and the latter type wall was preferred as it involves less grading. The V-ditch was removed as a means to control runoff due to maintenance and blockage problems.

Mr. Roberto noted that the soils report for the Open Space District recommends a gabion or catchment wall and drainage improvements even if the property is open space.

#### Public Comments

Mr. Bala noted that the drainage pattern on the property is now haphazard whereas it will now be defined into a closed, underground storm drain system from the uphill property to a town storm drain system.

Larry Stack, 10 Alice Way, said the Town did not require the homes to be clustered, they simply did not allow development on the north parcel, only the south parcel. He said the water tank is in the wrong location and does not conform to the location in condition Exhibit E, the wording on the signage is to be part of the approved landscape plan but no information has been submitted, the boulders and their location at the entrance was not part of the Tentative Map, the improvement plan does not conform to the Tentative Map, a landscape plan for the water tank and on-site pump station is not included as required under condition E-5, the landscape plan does not include the landscape density, and there should be 25 and 50 gallon trees.

Jonathan Braun, 479 Scenic, said he was disappointed in the lack of information available to the public until the afternoon of the meeting. He said the hillside density ordinance limits grading to a minimum, discourages changing vegetation in any way, and encourages designing homes to fit existing contours. He recommended the rooftops run contiguous with the slope of the ridge. Mr. Braun questioned how one can know if the landscape adequately screens the houses if one does not know what the homes will look like.

Mr. Braun continued that lots 1, 2, 11 and 12 are outside the quarry and there is no mechanism to screen these higher homes. He noted that it is integral to the success of the development that whatever landscaping is approved is maintained in perpetuity, and added that the plan provides unsuccessful screening of the water tank. He reported that the Marin County Open Space District recommended that 2,000 - 3,000 cubic yards of fill be removed and recompacted.

Mr. Baldwin responded that such removal was inappropriate due to the slope, in that it would destroy any integrity of the hillside. Since the principal mechanism for erosion is drainage, the intent is to improve the drainage on the hillside. This erosion control work will be done by hand rather than equipment which could jeopardize other slopes.

Mr. Braun stated that an alder tree is not appropriate for a hillside since it is native to streambeds.

Constantine Kanos, 46 Miwok, spoke in favor of a dirt or gravel pathway, instead of a concrete path, leading to the Open Space District property.

Jerry Draper, 295 Los Angeles Boulevard, said he did not have access to Planning Consultant Roberto's report in time to make a response, having seen it 10 minutes prior to the meeting. He asked whether the Tentative Map can be changed based on unmitigatable problems. He supported the idea of a gabion wall, instead of a soldier beam wall, stating that although the risk is higher the benefit is greater. Mr. Draper suggested removal of unit #3, questioning how it will be screened. He said people would not be walking on the pathway by the water tank because that trail is on private property, and that there is no guarantee the individual landscaping will be planted, particularly the trees which will block the views from the homes. He asked that the story poles previously placed on the site return to give the neighbors an opportunity to take photographs.

Mr. Draper recommended pulling the houses back into the quarry area where it is flat and building them smaller. He requested a diagram of the pad grading area for each unit. Mr. Draper concluded that while this area is cited as a conservation zone in the General Plan and was a major target of the hillside density ordinance, all the vigilance the public did was not good enough because this proposal is proceeding.

Carol Denton, 53 Miwok, expressed concern about the visual impact of the project, particularly the density and size of the trees, and requested a pedestrian bypass or dirt walkway.

Barry Spitz, 155 Los Angeles Blvd., said the sidewalk is not a pathway and expressed skepticism about the existence of the trees.

Phil Bundschu, 421 The Alameda, said he has attended meetings on development of this site for 25 years, this is the first meeting with so many experts, and that the design is going to be a real benefit to the community.

Carolyn Turner, Los Angeles Blvd., said the community has wanted that hill as open space, it should be a grassland and it is a waste of water to plant trees there.

Barrett Denton, 53 Miwok, spoke in favor of a path and was skeptical that some of the trees would survive due to drought, irrigations bills and their blockage of views.

Mr. Roberto said the R-1-H zoning does not allow the Town to require submission of building plans prior to or in conjunction with the landscap plan. The mechanism to insure the landscaping

is planted is an improvement bond, each property owner will have to go through design review of the individual landscaping - some of which could be jeopardized during construction - but preventing a property owner from cutting a tree in the future will be difficult.

Public Works/Planning Director Kottage reported that the Town is bound by the location of the pathway noted on the Tentative Map. Furthermore, an additional pathway at other locations presents a liability and maintenance costs for the Town. The steepness of the path dictates the nature of the path's surface; if it was not a hard surface, it would become eroded and unuseable. He suggested that appropriate signage could make the pathway and open space more appealing. He suggested the renderings on display for the meeting be kept at Town Hall.

In response to complaints on the access to documents, Mr. Elliott said his office at 1629 - 5th Avenue, San Rafael is open to the public for review of information anytime during business hours. He said they tried in vain to have a different pathway, he pointed to the Oak Springs development as an example of what should not happen, and he thought the design of the homes reviewed at the last meeting was a valid approach. He said the key stage in the growth of trees is the first two years - the smaller the specimen planted, the better it gets established and that is why a 25 to 50 gallon tree is not feasible. He added that the pump station is gone and the water tank is in the same location.

Irving Schwartz, project civil engineer, said the building envelopes are stable areas which will be improved with drainage systems and impact walls.

The Commission requested the following information:

1. The specific wording for the open space access sign.
2. The soils report prepared for the Open Space District.
3. Information on what the cut slopes will look like.
4. Information on the drip irrigation system.
5. A drawing of each lot showing the existing grade and how much will be graded to nestle in buildings.
6. Grading cross sections.

Landscape architect Roberts noted that the alder tree proposed is an Italian Alder, which is more tolerant. There will be a mix of fast and slow growing trees.

M/S, Hayes-Manning, to continue AR-6, Quarry Mountain, to a special meeting of August 25, 1986. Motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

SS-265 - Ulf Moren, 1316 San Anselmo Avenue, A/P 7-051-14, two lot parcel split with exceptions and the initial environmental review.

The applicant was present and submitted a revised drawing in response to staff's request for more information.

M/S, Hayes-Manning, to recommend acceptance of the notice of negative declaration prepared by staff dated August 12, 1986 subject to incorporation of conditions in letters from the Ross Valley Sanitary District, and the Ross Valley Fire Service, dated July 9, 1986. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Hayes, Manning, Kroot

ABSTAIN: Zaharoff

M/S, Hayes-Manning, to approve SS-265, Ulf Moren, 1316 San Anselmo Avenue, A/P 7-051-14, two lot parcel split with exceptions and the initial environmental review, on the grounds that it is necessary for the enjoyment of substantial property rights, and it is consistent with the General Plan, in reference to the revised plans submitted to the Town of San Anselmo, received tonight August 18, 1986. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Hayes, Manning, Kroot

ABSTAIN: Zaharoff

V-2134 - Charles and Susan Barstow, 15 Timothy Avenue, A/P 5-252-03, an eight foot frontyard variance to construct an open deck within six feet of the front property line.

The applicant was present.

The adjacent neighbor wrote a letter opposing the application but did not state the reason for the opposition.

M/S, Hayes-Manning, to approve V-2134, Charles and Susan Barstow, 15 Timothy Avenue, A/P 5-252-03, an eight foot frontyard variance to construct an open deck within six feet of the front property line, necessitated by the nature of the site, steepness and location of buildings on it and that this is the most logical location on the site. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Hayes, Manning, Kroot

ABSTAIN: Zaharoff

V-2136 - Stephen and Deborah Thompson, 26 Alder Avenue, A/P 7-041-32, a two foot south sideyard variance and a 3'8" rearyard variance to raise the roof four feet within six feet of the south side property line and 16'4" of the rear property line with a 2.5 foot roof overhang

The applicant was present.

M/S, Manning-Hayes, to approve V-2136, Stephen and Deborah Thompson, 26 Alder Avenue, a two foot south sideyard variance and a 3'8" rearyard variance to raise the roof four feet within six feet of the south side property line and 16'4" of the rear property line with a 2.5 foot roof overhang, in accordance with the plans submitted and received by the town July 24, 1986, pages 1-4, for reasons that strict application of the ordinance would result in a hardship, the granting of the variance is necessary for the substantial enjoyment of property rights, and it will not adversely affect the persons living in the neighborhood nor create a material detriment for activities or property in the neighborhood. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Hayes, Manning, Kroot

ABSTAIN: Zaharoff

U-613 - Safeway Stores, Inc., No. 723, 900 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, A/P 6-061-23, use permit to remain open 24 hours per day.

The applicant was not present.

M/S, Zaharoff-Hayes, to approve U-613, Safeway Stores, Inc. No. 723, 900 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, A/P 6-061-23, use permit to remain open 24 hours per day, on the grounds that it is not detrimental to existing businesses or persons in the neighborhood. Motion passed unanimously.

V-2135 - Mr. and Mrs. Ron Moore, 12 Entrata Avenue, A/P 6-241-25, a 20 foot frontyard variance and eight foot north sideyard variance to construct a two car garage and deck on top within zero feet to the front and north side property lines.

M/S, Hayes-Zaharoff, to continue this application to the meeting of August 25, 1986. Motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 1:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Calamar