

**BUSINESS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF HALF MOON BAY**

AGENDA REPORT

For meeting of: **May 26, 2020**

TO: Honorable Chair and Planning Commissioners

FROM: Jill Ekas, Community Development Director
Scott Phillips, Associate Planner

TITLE: Coastal Development Permit and Architectural Review File No. PDP-17-055 for
2800 Champs Elysee Boulevard

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Resolution P-20-__ approving PDP-17-055 an application for a Coastal Development Permit and Architectural Review to allow the construction of a new 6,438 square-foot, single-family residence on a 31,699 square-foot site at 2800 Champs Elysee Boulevard, based upon the Findings and Evidence contained in Exhibit A of the Draft Resolution, and subject to the Conditions of Approval in Exhibit B.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Summary of Project	
File Number	PDP-17-055
Requested Permits/Approvals	Coastal Development Permit and Architectural Review
Site Location	2800 Champs Elysee Blvd., APN: 048-133-060
Applicant/Property Owner	Chris Ridgeway Architect Inc. / John Vidovich
Project Planner	Scott Phillips; (650) 726-8299 Phone; sphillips@hmbcity.com E-mail
Zoning District	Planned Unit Development
LCP Land Use Plan Designation	Planned Development District (Stoloski / Gonzalez)
Water Service	1, 3/4" Non-priority water service is assigned to the property
Sewer Service (Granada Community Services District)	Sewer connection permit required through Granada Community Services District
Street Improvements	Frontage improvements constructed through subdivision improvements
Environmental Determination	Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program adopted with Tentative Parcel Map approval; categorically exempt pursuant to California Code

	of Regulations, Section 15303(a) – construction of one single-family residence.		
Heritage Trees	Tree Protection Measures Required		
Story Poles	Required	Yes	Site is within a PUD (Visual Resource Area)
		No	Variance or Exception required?
		No	Located in a largely undeveloped area
Right of Appeal	Any aggrieved person may appeal the Planning Commission’s decision to the City Council within ten (10) working days of the decision.		
	The project is located within the Coastal Commission Appeals Jurisdiction; therefore, final City action can be appealed to the California Coastal Commission.		

Previous Review

This project was previously reviewed at the April 9, 2019 Planning Commission meeting (Attachment #2). At that meeting, the Planning Commission received a presentation, conducted a public hearing, and held a discussion. Public comment and Planning Commission discussion centered around concerns about the incompatibility of the mass and bulk of the proposed home with the surrounding residences. Concern about seasonal flooding was also discussed. Comments are referenced in the adopted minutes (Attachment #3). The Commission continued the item to a date uncertain and directed staff to work with the architect on ways to reduce the mass and bulk of the house to be more compatible with neighborhood. The Commission also requested that the applicant reach out to neighboring property owners to better assess their concerns about compatibility.

Revised Project Description

Per the Planning Commission’s direction, revisions have been made to the project to reduce the mass and bulk of the home. The western wing and breezeway connection to the garage have been eliminated, creating two distinct buildings. An elevated open patio has also been added to the southwestern side of house. These changes minimally reduce the overall lot coverage by 69 square feet; noting however that a substantial portion of lot coverage is now attributed to unenclosed spaces such as light wells and the elevated patio. A large basement (2,055 square feet) has been added underneath the two-story home to a total square footage of 6,438 square feet. Although the new design equates to a net increase in floor area, the visual prominence of both the northern and southern facade has been reduced. Figure 1 shows the revised story poles reflecting the new design.



Figure 1. Site Photo with revised story poles, facing west, taken 5/18/20

Other changes to note include more fully developed landscape and grading and drainage plans. The new landscape plan includes plant species common to coastal riparian areas. Both the 30-foot riparian buffer and the “Further Restriction Area” have been respected.¹ With the added basement, the applicant prepared an updated geotechnical report (Attachment #5) for review by the City Engineer. This report, along with the grading and drainage plan were found to be acceptable by Engineering staff to allow for the construction of the two-story house and basement.

ANALYSIS

The revised project must be evaluated for conformance with the General Plan/Local Coastal Land Use Plan, conformance with the Zoning Code/LCP Implementation Plan, and design compatibility with surrounding development.

Conformance with the Zoning Code

The proposed single-family residential use is an allowed use identified within the adopted development standards for this planned unit development (PUD). As indicated in Table 1 below, the revised project conforms to the approved final parcel map and the development standards of the Stoloski/Gonzalez PUD. The project also conforms to the residential uses associated with the previously approved use permit. Additionally, Chapter 18.38 of the zoning code contains buffer requirements applicable to riparian corridors. In the absence of riparian

¹ The “Further Restricted Area” is the western most 150 feet of the subject property and is required to remain in its existing and currently undeveloped state.

vegetation, a 30-foot buffer from the centerline of Pullman watercourse applies to this property.

Table 1. Project Conformance with PUD Development Standards

Development Standards	Zoning Requirements	Proposed
Min. Site Area	31,699 SF (as subdivided)	31,699 SF (existing)
Min. Front Setback	20 FT	20 FT
Min. Side Setback	6 FT	30 FT (riparian buffer north side) 16.5 FT (south side)
Min. Rear Setback	20 FT	20+ FT
Max. Height	28 FT	27+ FT
Max. Lot Coverage	6,000 SF	4,069 SF
Min. Parking Spaces	2 garage spaces, 2 additional uncovered spaces	2 garage spaces, 2 additional uncovered spaces

Visual Resource Area

Specific landscape requirements are included in the Zoning Code’s Visual Resource Protection Standards, Section 18.37.050, requiring low lying landscaping that is designed to be compatible with the environment. A more detailed landscape plan was included in the revised plan set. The landscaping planting plan includes species native to Half Moon Bay compatible with the intermittent stream corridor habitat. Split rail fencing has also been sited along the edge of the 30-foot riparian buffer on the north side of the site. The split rail fence requirement is a standard landscape practice to delineate habitat buffers.

Broad ocean views across the site from Highway 1 and Champs Elysee are currently blocked by the existing mature Cypress trees along the property lines. Note that a tree protection plan was included with the original submittal. All existing mature trees will remain and be protected during construction. Visual Resource Protection Standards require that new plants be low lying and not interfere with public views of the ocean. Due to their low-lying nature, the selected plant palette will not block views from public lands, or interfere with views that may open up over time. Story poles have been installed to represent the revised project design. They indicate that the proposed home would not block public views from the Champs Elysee Blvd or Cabrillo Highway. The eastern façade of the home would be the most visible side from the public right of way. This side is narrower than the north and south elevations and includes the main entrance and front porch. The eastern side reflects building massing that is consistent with the existing homes to the north. The new home recently constructed at 2801 Champs Elysee also partially screens the proposed home from Cabrillo Highway.

Drainage and Grading

The grading and drainage plans have been modified to allow for the new basement. Several drywells equipped with submersible pumps are shown along the low points of the basement. Outflow from the drywells are directed toward detention basins on site to avoid the Pullman watercourse. Drainage calculations included with the plan submittal indicate that the detention basins are sufficient to accommodate the stormwater runoff from the additional impervious surface created by the new house and other hardscape surface areas and also account for the change in drainage patterns resulting from development of the basement.

Anticipated excavation for the basement and stormwater management improvements is approximately 900 cubic yards. The applicant proposes that excavated soils would be evenly applied to agricultural lands and horse stable properties directly to the south of the subject property. This approach retains these soils, which are likely prime agricultural soils as are typical in the area, for agricultural use. It also eliminates the need for off-hauling through the neighborhood to the north, as well as what would otherwise be higher levels of emissions from construction trucks and equipment. Proposed conditions of approval require a grading permit as is typical for the project, as well as soils testing to ensure that the soils excavated for the basement are suitable to be added to the high quality agricultural soils to the south of the site. Any alternate receiving site for the excavated soil within the Coastal Zone may require review and approval of a Coastal Development Permit.

To further verify the feasibility of the new basement, an updated geotechnical report was prepared for the revised project (Attachment #5). Engineering staff reviewed both the grading and drainage plans and revised geotechnical report and found that the design will exceed required standards. Final grading and drainage plans, as well as the revised geotechnical report, will be submitted with an application for the building permit. Given the size of the lot, staff is confident that the design of the drainage improvements will be more than sufficient to detain the runoff from a ten-year frequency storm of two hour duration, which is the City's design standard.

Design Compatibility

The Single Family Residential Design Guidelines (RDG) encourage flexibility in architectural design to reflect the community's eclectic character and seek to achieve compatible design within existing neighborhoods. The revised project maintains the architectural design, exterior colors and materials that were previously presented to the Planning Commission. No appreciable change has been made to the front elevation facing Champs Elysee Blvd. The substantive design change is the elimination of the western portion of the home, as well as the breezeway connecting the home to the garage. This revision effectively reduces the massing when viewed from both the north and south. The project now contains two distinct buildings with approximately 40 feet separating the two. The revised design intends to be responsive to the bulk and massing compatibility concerns that were brought forward during the previous review of this project.

The modifications to the above grade portion of the project reduce the formerly long building expanses of the north and south elevations. This was done without a significant reduction in overall above-grade floor area, further described here. The square footage is modestly reduced when compared to the previous design for above-grade space. Table 2 presents the above grade building size of the previous design and the current design.

Table 2. Above Grade Building Area – Previous and Current Designs

Portion of Proposed Home	Previous Design (SF) (4/09/19 Meeting)	Current Design (SF)	Change (SF/%)
1st Floor	2,468	2,204	264 reduction
1st Floor Guest House	366	eliminated	366 reduction
Garage	535	570	35 increase
2nd Floor	1,286	1,609	323 increase
Total	4,655	4,383	272 SF / 6% Net reduction

Lot coverage for the revised residence has been reduced slightly. However, the proposed light wells and elevated patio meet the definition of lot coverage but are much less visible compared to buildings. Table 3 shows a comparison of building and architectural features included in the revised project.

Table 3. Lot Coverage – Building Coverage and Architectural Features

Portion of Proposed Home	Building Lot Coverage (SF)	Architectural Feature Lot Coverage (SF)	Total Lot Coverage (SF)
1st Floor	2,204		
Garage	570		
Entry Porch	311		
Exterior Stairs	76		
Light Wells		367	
Elevated Patio		470	
2nd Story Balcony Overhang		71	
Total	3,161 SF	908 SF	4,069 SF

The previous design included a guest house and a larger above-grade main house footprint with a total lot coverage of 4,142 square feet. No elevated patio or light wells were included in the previous design. When comparing the proposed building lot coverage to the previous design (not including architectural features), the lot coverage has been reduced by 910 square feet.

Noticing and Public Input

Following the redesign of the project, the applicant approached many of the surrounding neighbors to solicit feedback on the design. Staff has received several general inquiries on the project. In addition, a letter from the applicant's representative was received on May 11, 2020 (Attachment 6). The letter provides responses to many of the concerns brought up at the previous meeting.

Conclusion

Based on the above analysis, staff concludes that the revised project is consistent with the General Plan/Local Coastal Land Use Plan, the Zoning Code/LCP Implementation Plan, and the Residential Design Guidelines; is generally compatible with surrounding development; and although large, it is within scale to the much larger site. It also conforms to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act. Staff recommends approval of the project based on the findings and conditions of approval (Exhibits A and B of the attached Draft Resolution).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Resolution with Findings and Evidence, Exhibit A and Conditions of Approval, Exhibit B.
2. Planning Commission Staff Report, April 9, 2019 without attachments
3. Planning Commission Minutes, April 9, 2019
4. Project Plans
5. Updated Geotechnical Report
6. Letter from Mark Massara, May 11, 2020