

From: [Alec Hogg](#)
To: [Summer Burlison](#)
Cc: rpangiao@smcgov.org
Subject: Submission for September 9 Hearing meeting
Date: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:52:06 AM

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September 7, 2021

Summer Burlison
County of San Mateo
Planning and Building Department

SUBJECT: Coastside Design Review Continuance
1120 Columbus Drive, El Granada
APN 047-275-050; County File No. PLN 2017-00296

Dear Summer:

My wife and I are owners of the house and property at 727 Francisco Avenue which is located behind 1120 Columbus Drive. Due to the grade of the hill, our property sits directly below the house being built at 1120 Columbus and as a result is directly impacted in a variety of ways.

We are sending this letter to ask questions and register concerns about the proposed landscaping and construction behind the building under construction at 1120 Columbus Drive in El Granada.

Questions/Requests for clarification

1.

The most recent design proposal for the yard behind the 1120 Columbus house proposes raising the rear yard ground elevation 4 to 6 feet involving an additional 240 cubic yards of grading. It also proposes replacing the existing grade of the yard with four levels of terraces. Raising the elevation 4 to 6 feet will considerably change the appearance of the new house from the houses below. It could also dramatically change the drainage of rain water, which can be considerable in the rainy season. Additionally, in the March 2, 2019 meeting, the Planning and Building Department approved the grading permit because the project would not adversely affect the neighboring properties. Raising the elevation of the property could have a number of adverse effects on the adjoining properties. Has this been considered by the Building Department?

2. After reviewing the most recent design drawings, it is not clear to us how the new retaining walls will be constructed. The plans indicate that Lyngso freestanding wall rock will be used. This seems potentially dangerous considering the natural grade of the land. Unanchored walls supporting a large amount of new soil are likely to slide down the existing grade over time.
3. The original plans included detailed drainage plans for the backyard (Item4_PLN2017-00296_Planset.pdf; Page 15). The plans proposing the addition of 4-6 feet ground elevation, do not include drainage plans. What are the plans for managing drainage?
4. Will the lowest of the four retaining walls be located with a setback on the 1120 Columbus Drive property? Or will it sit on the property line with the parcels below? In the drawing it appears to be placed in the sewer district easement at the rear of the property.
5. It looks like Eucalyptus trees are proposed as one of the types of trees in the new landscaping. The County is currently spending considerable funds to remove this invasive and highly flammable tree from many properties. Is there a reason the Department is recommending or approving the planting of this invasive and non-native species?

Comment

Overall, we believe that the proposed terraces could be acceptable. We preferred the original plans that maintained the existing natural grade. However, the addition of 4 to 6 feet of elevation has an adverse effect upon our property from a practical and aesthetic perspective. If the proposal for terraces are approved, they should not require raising the elevation nor adding the 240 cubic yards of soil. (As I understand it, 240 cubic yards of soil is equivalent to about 24 large dump trucks).

Please let me know if you would like to discuss our questions.

In the meantime, please register our letter to be included as part of the September 9 hearing. We will attend the meeting and would like to comment.

Thank you,

Michelle and Alec Hogg

