

CITY OF PETALUMA, CALIFORNIA  
MEMORANDUM

---

*Community Development Department, 11 English Street, Petaluma, CA 94952  
(707) 778-4301 Fax (707) 778-4498 E-mail: cdd@ci.petaluma.ca.us*

---

DATE: January 11, 2008

TO: Development Code Advisory Committee

FROM: Community Development Staff

SUBJECT: Summary Highlights of Development Code Sub-Committees

---

The following is a summary of discussions to date by the five current Development Code Sub-Committees: Mandatory Green Building, Development Standards, Hillside Protection, Tree Preservation and Roles and Responsibilities:

**Mandatory Green Building:**

- December 20, 2007 Meeting
  - Discussed the difference between the Implementing Ordinance and the Development Code
  - Staff provided an overview of Green Building and Petaluma's Existing Voluntary Residential Green Building Program
  - The Committee discussed the 2025 Draft General Plan Green Building/Sustainability Goals, Policies and Programs as well as the Greenhouse Gas Section of the General Plan and DEIR
- January 10, 2007 Meeting
  - Discussed the City, County, State and United Nations Green House Gas Emission Targets
  - Reviewed a Matrix of 7 Mandatory Green Building Programs in the Bay Area
  - Staff provided an overview of process that Santa Rosa is undertaking to move from a voluntary program to a mandatory program.
  - Mandatory programs which require projects to exceed Title 24 must be approved by the State Energy Commission (SEC). This process will take 60-90 days once application is submitted to SEC.
  - Santa Rosa's process from voluntary to mandatory will take approximately one year.
  - Committee discussed how high to set the "Green Bar" for:

- new residential and commercial
  - residential remodels and commercial tenant improvements
  - and existing buildings (i.e. point of sale)
- Next Steps
    - Using Architecture 2030 as the “measuring stick” for the mandatory program.
    - Look at the time and costs for to achieve various levels of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) for commercial projects.
    - Examine more closely the steps required for approval from the State Energy Commission.

### **Development Standards:**

- **Implementing Ordinance**
  - The subcommittee is reviewing the draft glossary, use tables, and development standards that were provided to the full committee at the November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. The glossary was reviewed at the last meeting and the subcommittee discussed modifications to be considered as part of the Implementing Ordinance and the future Development Code.
- **Development Code**
  - While reviewing the draft glossary, development standards, and use tables, the subcommittee is beginning to compile a list of items to be addressed as part of the Development Code.
- **Meeting Schedule**
  - The Development Standards Subcommittee was able to meet twice since the last meeting of the Development Code Advisory Committee (December 10<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>).
  - The Development Standards Subcommittee will schedule its next meeting at the January 15<sup>th</sup> DCAC meeting.

### **Hillside Protection:**

- **Draft General Plan**
  - The subcommittee is using the Draft General Plan goals and policies related to hillsides as the framework for the Hillside Ordinance. A table of the General Plan goals and policies related to hillsides and ridgelines has been created in order to ensure that the Implementing Ordinance and Development Code will be consistent with the direction provided by the Draft General Plan.

## ○ **Research**

- The subcommittee is currently reviewing the Hillside Ordinances from Los Gatos, Tiburon, and San Rafael. Each ordinance was selected for different reasons. The Los Gatos ordinance appears to be one of the most comprehensive and includes information on the purpose of the ordinance, the difference between standards and guidelines, the various types of projects and the process for each, appropriate site planning, etc. The Tiburon ordinance provides numerous graphics that identify what “should” and “should not” be done when developing a hillside parcel. The San Rafael ordinance is brief and primarily text based.
- The subcommittee has conducted several site visits in order to better understand the physical environment, existing hillside development within the City, the areas that would likely be subject to a hillside ordinance, and to identify potential hillside areas and ridgelines.

## ○ **Hillside Ordinance**

- As part of the review of the selected ordinances, the subcommittee intends to prepare a list of items to recommend for inclusion in the Implementing Ordinance. A separate list will be created for items that may take more time to fully develop and would be included as part of the Development Code.
- The subcommittee is working on a glossary of terms for the hillside ordinance, including definitions of hillside and height.
- The subcommittee has discussed that different requirements specific to the type of project (subdivision into more than 4 parcels; subdivision into 4 or fewer parcels; construction of a new residence; addition to an existing building) may be necessary.

## ○ **Meeting Schedule**

- The Hillside Subcommittee was able to meet 3 times since the last meeting of the Development Code Advisory Committee (December 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> and January 3<sup>rd</sup>).
- The Hillside Subcommittee has established regular meetings on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month.

## **Tree Preservation:**

The Tree Subcommittee met two times, on December 7, 2007 and January 4, 2008. In addition to the designated Tree Subcommittee members, the meeting included two representatives of the Petaluma Tree Advisory Committee (TAC), Tamara Norman and Rod Scaccalosi. Mike Fitzpatrick of Pinnacle Homes attended one meeting as an interested member of the public.

The first meeting focused the policies contained in Draft General Plan related to tree preservation and on the work completed by TAC thus far. Tamara Norman reviewed the materials that had been compiled from various jurisdictions including the cities of Palo Alto, Windsor and Sonoma and commented on interactions with City staff from several of those jurisdictions. Copies of these materials were provided to the subcommittee members to review before the second

meeting (Note: These materials are available to any interested members of the DCAC). The second meeting was mainly devoted to reviewing and discussing the previously provided materials from other jurisdictions as well as discussing the general protocol in drafting regulations for the City of Petaluma.

Through the course of the two meetings it became clear that that the basic components of the new tree regulations fell into three general areas as follows:

- Street trees - This included ideas about a city wide or focused street tree inventory, possibly funded by grant money and increased City responsibility for street tree maintenance, removal and replacement.
- Tree preservation related to new development - This included establishing City adopted regulations and procedures regarding tree preservation and best management practices related to large development applications and the possibility of tying these, or similar, regulations to relatively small projects such as residential remodels and additions, new decks and pools etc.
- Tree removal/pruning on private property not associated with development applications - While there was not unanimous consensus on this issue and some trepidation about the controversy that was likely to ensue by actually instituting such regulations on private property at this time, the majority of the subcommittee members ultimately believed that some regulation of mature tree removal/pruning should be in place. This could be limited to regulating native species, riparian trees or other unspecified significant trees that are part of the urban forest.

In addition, several areas of concern or issues that required further study or discussion were identified:

- The relationship between guidelines and regulations and whether regulations were actually needed or desired
- The ongoing need for outreach and education both before and after Tree Regulations are adopted
- The need (and concern about the lack of) qualified staff (i.e. a certified arborist) to implement the new regulations as well as concerns generally about the City's ability to provide adequate staff resources and funding to support tree preservation in Petaluma
- Time constraints related to the Council's direction to complete the tree regulations prior to the adoption of the new General Plan and the feeling that more time was needed to do a thorough job in drafting regulations, procedures and guidelines.
- Whether or not doing an abbreviated or simplified version of the tree regulations would be effective or whether working on more comprehensive regulations as part of the larger Development Code process would be more prudent

The subcommittee felt that the Tree Regulations and associated tree technical manual recently adopted by the City of Windsor could be good models for Petaluma's effort.

The Committee is scheduled to meet again on February 1.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

An engaging discussion and impressive attendance were two highlights of the Subcommittee's December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

In considering the roles and responsibilities of the (H-) SPARC, PC, and CC, the Subcommittee identified the following three main topics as those most needing to be addressed:

○ **Improving the decision making flow**

- Major Subdivision projects were identified as the project type where the current system is least successful. Two ideas were:
  - Considering requiring formal site plan review prior to Planning Commission's review and architectural review only after Council's approval.
  - Considering the City of Santa Rosa's process (recommended by some who have been involved with it for major subdivision type projects). It was described as a more "front loaded" process that includes mandatory community meetings before project submittal and three levels of design review: conceptual, preliminary, and formal review
- Historic SPARC (role, composition, separate from SPARC)
- Use of a Zoning Administrator

Generally, the subcommittee was interested in identifying a system that is

- User-friendly for developers
- Keeps the public in the process
- Has sufficient staff to be involved at all levels
- Addresses the types of mixed-use and infill development projects that are now the norm.

Our Next Meeting is January 31, 8:30am

At this meeting, we will discuss the Roles and Responsibilities Matrix and consider how various application types would proceed within each alternative. Additionally, staff will report back what they have learned about Santa Rosa's decision-making process.