

Amending Zoning

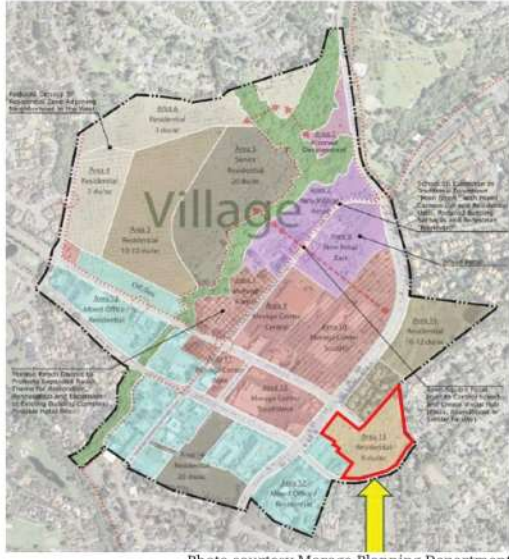


Photo courtesy Moraga Planning Department

Yellow arrow points to Area 15

... continued from Page 1

The Town adopted a new MCSP Implementation Program in 2020, in which the R-6 zone included objective standards specifically designed for small-lot development and multi-family housing. The following year, which included the Housing Element process, it was realized that the MCSP R-6 standards couldn't accommodate the narrow lots and reduced setbacks associated with smaller single family home developments. The Housing Element's Program 4(b) directs the Town to address the zoning code issues by the end of 2024, to modify a variety of housing types consistent with state mandates.

What will not be changing, according to the Aug. 28 staff report by Community Development Director Afshan Hamid, Consultant Barry Miller, and Associate Planner Mio Mendez, is the purpose of the zoning district; the list of permitted uses in the existing district; the list of conditionally permitted uses in the existing district; the allowable density range in the district will remain four to six units per acre; and the standards for landscaped areas, building design, and maximum aggregate building height are being carried forward from the existing code.

However, there will

be changes in the existing standards that cover three different residential product types -- (1) compact single-family homes, (2) conventional single-family detached homes, and (3) multi-unit housing (more than one dwelling per lot).

Additional changes include: minimum allowable lot size is reduced from 3,600 square feet to 3,500 square feet to provide more flexibility in site planning, though the density range of four to six units per acre still applies to the overall site; the standard for maximum allowable lot area is eliminated to provide more flexibility in site planning (four to six units per acre still applies); minimum lot width is reduced from 50 feet to 45 feet to accommodate slightly narrower lots; the front yard and rear yard setback requirements are reduced from 15 feet to 10 feet; and the side yard setback of five feet is retained (however, the side yard requirement for corner lots is reduced from ten feet to five feet).

Also, the "minimum separation requirements" for multiple buildings on the same lot have been eliminated, since separation between buildings is governed by building and fire codes and would be determined on a project-by-project basis; the Floor Area Ratio requirement is eliminated, but the lot coverage limit

of 60% and the height limit of 35 feet are both retained (the 5,000 square foot "cap" on home size continues to apply); and lastly, the two-story height limit is removed, as a 35-foot limit already governs building height in this zone.

The Planning Commission's June 18 public hearing elicited comments from several residents with regards to the proposed changes. Wild-fire safety and evacuation issues associated with more housing units; concern over removing the two-story height limit for single family homes; concern that the elimination of the two-story limit might set a precedent for other single-family zones; the need to reduce width and setback standards; giving adequate notice of the public hearing meeting; potential increased fire risk of denser housing; concern of more units on the site; and reference to Housing Element Program 4(b) being unclear and needs to be more accessible. While three of the commissioners supported staff's height recommendations, two felt that the existing single-family height standards should remain as is.

Moraga Center property owner David Bruzzone had a few comments to make before the Town Council's vote. "I'm excited that we're at this point. From my perspective, it's been years coming. None of these issues that we're talking about are new. We're finally getting around to implementing these -- making the required corrections."

Bruzzone continued, "I do support what staff is recommending and what is before you now. I'm hoping that we can get this done. Stay the course. Get something approved here, because it has been a long time. I want to get some vibrancy into the downtown. I want to get some action going, and I think this is a great first step, and I'm happy that we're here right now, and I'm hoping we can get it approved, and we can get a project in front of you

and then get it built."

The ordinance was approved with a vote of 3-1-0. Vice Mayor Steve Woehleke voted against due to concerns about home sizes and setbacks, and Council Member David Shapiro was absent.

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Moraga Community Service Day, October 4-6

Our 3rd Year with Exciting New Volunteer Opportunities !

The Town of Moraga has a rich history of community service, residents rolling up their sleeves to help people in need and to make Moraga and its extended community a better place. Of these ideals was born the Moraga Community Service Day project, with the singular goal of bringing the townsfolk together to assist those in need, and help beautify our schools and town. This is your opportunity to help Moraga; to care, give and connect.

This project is sponsored and led by a Steering Committee of Moraga Community groups; including Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, Garden Club, Moraga School District, Campolindo High School, Saint Mary's College, Chamber of Commerce and iKind.

Highlights of our projects include;

- Letters of love and kindness with heartfelt messages to Kids/Families in Ukraine
- Moraga School District Beautification at; Los Perales, Don Rheem and Camino Pablo
- Lady Bug Bags helping Homeless Woman; Community Violence Solutions for Sexual Victims
- Painting pots and rocks with warm, creative images/messages which are donated to local seniors
- Campolindo Service Students to lead or participate in projects
- Assembling Eyeglasses for the visually impaired in Developing Nations internationally
- Knit some Love with Caps & Scarves for unhoused and at risk adults/children
- Beautify Rheem Gateway with gardening, Painting at Rancho Laguna Park.
- Saint Mary's and Campolindo schools improving their Sustainable Gardens

-And several more!
Help us to help the less fortunate, those in need and our schools by volunteering 1-2 hours!

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<http://moragaserviceday.org/>

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