

SMC Design Review Committee

What is the Design Review Committee?



The Design Review Committee was established by County ordinance to review the building plans for new development in certain unincorporated communities of the County which are zoned Design Review (DR).

- ◆ On the bayside, these communities are Emerald Lake Hills, Palomar Park, Devonshire and the Middlefield Road area in North Fair Oaks.
- ◆ On the coastside, these communities are El Granada, Miramar, Moss Beach, and Montara

The committee consists of three members appointed by the County Board of Supervisors: two professional architects and a community representative. The Committee is staffed by the County Planning and Building Division, including the Design Review Officer who reviews applications and attends the hearings in an advisory capacity.

What is the purpose of the Design Review Committee?

The Design Review Committee was appointed by the Board of Supervisors to ensure that new development is compatible with the physical setting of the site surrounding development, and the visual character of the community. Specific design standards for each community have been

adopted by the County (contained in the Design Review (DR) Zoning Ordinance) which is used by the Committee to evaluate and take action on each application. Copies of the DR Ordinance are available at the Planning counter, at the Planning Division office.

What is a Design Review Public Hearing?



A Design Review Committee public hearing is a formally announced meeting where the Committee reviews the Design Review applications on the agenda, takes public testimony, and acts to approve or deny the application. At the public hearing any interested party may express support or opposition or concerns about a proposal which is before the Committee. A study session is held for the Committee and staff to review items in advance of a public hearing. The public is welcome to attend study sessions, but public testimony is not taken.

- ◆ On the bayside, the Committee holds public hearings on the first Wednesday of each month, beginning at 3:00 p.m.. Meetings are held in Room 101 of the County Office Building, 455 County Center, Redwood City. The study sessions are held at 1:30 p.m. on the same day of the meeting at the same location.
- ◆ On the coastside, the Committee holds public hearings on the second Thursday of each month, beginning at 3:00 p.m.. Meetings are held at the Sheriff's Substation, 500 California Ave., Moss Beach. The study sessions are held at 1:30 p.m. on the same day of the meeting at the same location.

Meeting times and places may sometimes change as indicated on the agenda.

Do all building permits which require Design Review go to a public hearing?



No. The Design Review Committee has approved a list of minor developments that may be processed by staff for an exemption to design review. This list is available at the Planning counter. However, the Committee has directed that all major construction be considered at a public hearing.

How do I address the Committee at a Public Hearing?

Fill out a speaker's slip (available inside the hearing room), being sure to note the name of the item on which you wish to speak, and give the slip to the Design Review Officer. You will be called when it is your turn to address the Committee. To make written comments on a project, please write the Committee c/o the Design Review Officer at the address listed on this brochure.

What is the Consent Agenda?



The purpose of the consent agenda is to expedite the approval process for non-controversial projects which are not expected to impact the neighborhood. There is no public testimony or discussion of consent agenda items. Consent items are approved as a group. If you wish to address the Committee on an item on the consent agenda, notify the Chairperson or Design Review Officer prior to the meeting. The item will be moved to the regular agenda for hearing.

What are the Regular Agenda Items?

Regular agenda items are heard after approval of the consent agenda.

The Committee reviews the plans and then the applicant and any concerned party may address the Committee.

How do I get a written notice of the Design Review Committee's Decision?



To receive a copy of the letter of decision on a specific item, please fill out completely the "Speakers Request Form" found on the table inside the hearing room. Indicate that you wish to receive a letter of decision by checking the appropriate box at the bottom of the form and hand it to the Design Review Officer.

How can I appeal a Design Review Committee decision?



If you are not satisfied with a decision, you may appeal any decision of the Committee within **ten calendar days** of the hearing date. Appeal forms are available at the Planning counter on the second floor at 455 County Center, Redwood City. Upon submittal of the form with your reasons for appeal and an appeal fee, the item will be prepared for hearing by the Planning Commission. Please refer to the agenda for the current appeal fee.

How can I get more information?

For additional information about the requirements and procedures for submitting an application to the Design Review Committee or an item on the Committee's agenda, call the Design Review Officer at (650) 363-1831.

To remain informed of projects considered by the Design Review Committee, you may subscribe to receive regular copies of the agenda.

San Mateo County
Planning and Building Division

San Mateo County Design Review Committee

Planning and Building Division

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