



MINUTES
Town of Atherton
City Council
February 2, 2022
STUDY SESSION

Mayor DeGolia called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

STUDY SESSION

1. **ROLL CALL** - Hawkins-Manuelian, Polito, Lewis, Vice Mayor Widmer, Mayor DeGolia – All Present
2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – *None*
3. **DISCUSSION OF THE TOWN’S MUNICIPAL CODE REGULATIONS RELATIVE TO LANDSCAPE SCREENING AND POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS RELATIVE TO STRUCTURES ON HILLSIDE LOTS AND OTHER AREAS OF STUDY**

Principal Planner Davis made a presentation to Council on the Atherton Municipal Code with respect to Landscape Screening. She noted that the current ordinance does not have any distinction or specificity for a flat lot or hillside lot. She added that a potential change would require proposals to indicate slopes to allow staff to evaluate landscaping needs.

Davis added that a possible percentage for lots with an average cross slope greater than 19.9% would be considered “hillside lots” with different landscape screening requirements. She added that a lower percentage would reduce the number of lots that get included in any revisions.

Town Arborist Bentz raised additional topics related to landscape screening that centered around minimum plant sizes, planting locations, and types of plants.

Council discussed the topic including the hillside slope percentages, plant sizes and types, and requested that language be added to encourage a preference for drought tolerant plants and California native species. Council also raised the issue of downlighting which should be addressed by increased screening requirements.

Davis indicated that the 19.9% number was offered as a starting point for conversation. Davis discussed the concept of separate overlay zoning districts called “Hillside Overlay Districts”, which fall within 15-20%.

City Attorney Ebrahimi advised Council to provide direction offering objective measurables within the ordinance that will give some boundaries for staff reviews and approvals.

Davis continued to discuss landscape screening of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU’s) and

Towers. She noted challenges with these more constrained areas and indicated adding language to require 24-inch box size plants could address screening issues.

Council provided feedback and direction to staff. This will return to at a future Council meeting for further consideration.

4. RECEIVE AND FILE THE MID-YEAR BUDGET REPORT FOR FY 2021/22

Finance Director Barron III made the presentation to Council on the mid-year budget report.

With respect to the Financial Model, City Manager Rodericks concurred with Council that the Town will wait to get a complete picture after the completion of the Town Center project to strategize where to allocate funds.

Council discussed the property transfer tax increase, Vehicle License Fees (VLF), and the American Rescue Plan Reserve funds and its uses.

There was no action taken, this was informational only.

5. AFTER-ACTION REPORT ON THE ATHERTON DISASTER AND PREPAREDNESS (ADAPT) COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS DRILL

Chief of Police McCulley made a brief presentation to Council on the success of the recent communications drill.

Council suggested a comprehensive Emergency Operations Center drill once the Town Center project is completed and partnering with the Menlo Fire Protection District for activities related to emergency preparedness.

Public Comment:

- Tom Owen commented on the event.

There was no action taken, this was informational only.

6. COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMENTS – *None*

7. ADJOURN

Mayor DeGolia adjourned the meeting at 5:33 p.m.



Anthony Suber
City Clerk