

City of Calabasas Story Pole Procedures

Effective June 25, 2015

Amended September 28th, 2016

Amended September 23rd, 2020 (Draft)

Formatted: Font color: Text 1

Purpose

Story poles are used to depict the silhouette of a proposed structure or an addition to an existing building. Story poles are intended to help decision makers, staff, neighbors and other interested parties visualize the location, mass and/or height of a proposed building(s), as part of the review of the project's relationship to its surroundings. In addition to story poles, the City may also require other visual aids, such as photo simulations, models or renderings, to assist in illustrating the proposed final project.

Applicability

Unless determined otherwise by the Community Development Director (["CDD"](#)) or his/her designee, story poles shall be required to be installed for projects that are to be reviewed by the Planning Commission as follows:

- 1) All new projects and those with additions of 500s.f. or more on properties located within the Old Topanga,

Calabasas Highlands and Scenic Corridor Overlay Zones, or on a designated significant ridgeline.

2) All new freestanding commercial and multi-family residential projects throughout the City

3) All projects seeking an exception (increase) in building height by way of variance or development plan.

Exemptions

Story poles shall not be required for any proposed addition to an existing single-family residence, or for any proposed accessory building(s) on any previously developed residential property located on or near a mapped significant ridgeline, which proposed addition(s) and/or accessory structure(s) are exempt from the requirements for a ridgeline setback variance under Section 17.20.150 of the City of Calabasas Land Use and Development Code.

Duration

Story poles shall be erected at least four weeks prior to the Planning Commission hearing date and shall remain in place until such time the Planning Commission has rendered a final decision on the project. Story poles shall remain in place during the appeal period and through the appeal

process. Following the final decision or exhaustion of the appeal process, whichever is later (the “decision date”), the story poles shall be removed as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours following the decision date. If at any time the story poles become unsafe, they shall be repaired, immediately by the project applicant or removed and replaced with safe poles as soon as reasonably practicable. If any poles fall down prior to the hearing date, they shall be promptly replaced by the project applicant as soon as reasonably practicable.

Deleted: or removed

Deleted: tion

Deleted: .

Plan Components

A story pole plan must be submitted to staff for approval prior to installation. The story pole location must be plotted on the project's roof plan and each story pole location shall, indicate the maximum height of the pole. The project applicant, shall confer with City staff for precise pole locations for unusually shaped structures. The story pole plan shall, also include the contact information and license number for the licensed contractor, licensed surveyor, and licensed architect or licensed civil engineer installing the story poles.

Deleted: should

Deleted: Applicants

Deleted: should

Construction Method and Materials

Story poles shall be made of standard 2"x 4" lumber or similar material as determined by the CDD that is sturdy and avoids bending as much as possible. All story poles need to be erected safely and without putting the public at risk, and with as little bending or leaning as possible, so as to withstand weather. The story pole contractor shall install guy wires or other similar temporary support systems if necessary in his/her professional opinion to safely erect and maintain the story poles. Brightly colored construction netting, or other material as approved by the CDD such as ribbon or flags not larger than 3 feet wide shall be attached between poles to detail roof lines, and constructed in a way that is safe, durable, and creates visually crisp (non-sagging) rooflines.

Deleted: as determined by the City.

Deleted: without bending or leaning

Deleted: This can be accomplished by installing guy wires or other similar temporary support system.

Deleted: C

Deleted: ribbons or

Deleted: . [REVISIONS?]

Pole Locations

Story poles shall be erected at the most distant corners of the proposed structure or addition and at the maximum height of the roof ridge. The story pole locations shall achieve, a silhouette of the proposed structure or addition, clearly defining the maximum roof heights. The tallest story pole shall be painted with a clearly visible black paint at every one (1) foot increment. (Story poles for roof overhangs, eaves, chimneys, balconies and accessory buildings may also be required at the discretion of the CDD.)

Deleted: The idea is to achieve

Deleted: Community Development Director).

Certification

Story pole heights and locations must be certified in writing by a licensed surveyor, licensed contractor, licensed architect or licensed civil engineer and such certification shall be provided, along with the story pole plan, to the [City's](#) project planner a minimum of three weeks in advance of the hearing date. The height of each pole should be clearly marked on the base of each pole.

Story Pole Determination

The [CDD](#), shall evaluate the following factors in their determination, whether [it is feasible for the project applicant to install story poles at the project site.](#) These factors shall include:

- a) Safety, such as the presence of power lines, public right of ways, pedestrians, access and other security and welfare concerns;
- b) Stability, such as the structure height, materials, weather, anchoring or topographic conditions;
- c) [Accuracy of the](#) depiction of the proposed project due to land modifications, grading or other site conditions;

Deleted: Director

Deleted: of

Deleted: or not a site is suitable for story poles.

Deleted: Inaccurate

d) Impacts to trees, habitat, archeologic or biologic resources, or the need for land alterations in pole placement;

e) Site constraints, such as roadway re-alignments, utilities, easements and fire access requirements.

f) Potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact of designing, installing and maintaining story poles for the subject project.

Deleted: E

The CDD, shall, at the CDD's sole discretion, seek advice from the Architectural Review Panel and/or a professional story pole installer in arriving at a determination of pole installation feasibility.

Deleted: Director

Deleted: may also

Planning Commission Review

If the CDD, finds that at least 50% of the project mass cannot reasonably be depicted with story poles, the CDD shall issue a written report to the Planning Commission setting forth the CDD's finding and recommendation. The recommendation shall identify all factors which limit the feasibility of story pole placement on the subject site. The Planning Commission shall consider the CDD's finding and recommendation, and such other evidence as it deems necessary and proper, and shall make a determination

Deleted: Community Development Director

Deleted: may or should not

Deleted: and therefore recommends that no story poles shall be required,

Moved (insertion) [1]

Deleted: should

whether to require all story poles, reduce the number of required story poles, or waive the requirement of story poles. If the Planning Commission rejects the CDD's recommendation, it shall set forth its reasons for rejecting the recommendation and shall identify the extent to which story poles are required for the subject project. The Planning Commission shall also be the body to determine if story poles should be re-established in instances when vandalism has made the story poles no longer effective.

Notification

For commercial projects, the applicant shall erect a sign on-site displaying a rendering or photo simulation of the proposed project at the time that the story poles are installed. At the discretion of the CDD, other non-commercial projects, except for one single-family residence or an addition to an existing single-family residence, may also be required to erect a sign on-site displaying a rendering or photo simulation of the proposed project at the time that the story poles are installed. The sign shall include contact information for the City's project planner, and if applicable, any web site information prepared by the City and/or applicant.

For all projects requiring story poles, in which the project applicant proposes to install story poles which depict less

Deleted: , a report stating the basis of the Director's recommendation shall be submitted to the Planning Commission for their review and decision

Moved up [1]: The recommendation should identify all factors which limit the feasibility of story pole placement on the subject site.

Deleted: In such cases,

Deleted: the

Deleted: Planning Commission shall make the final decision

Deleted: on the extent of story poles to be erected.

Deleted: to the poles has occurred.

Deleted: [DOES THIS SECTION MEAN THAT IF THE CDD FINDS THAT 50% OR MORE OF THE MASS CAN BE DEPICTED BY STORY POLES, THEN THE CDD HAS THE DISCRETION TO DECIDE THE FINAL EXTENT OF THE STORY POLES FOR THE SUBJECT PROPERTY?] ¶

Deleted: case

Deleted: commercial

Deleted: projects

than 100% of the project mass, the applicant shall prepare a rendering or photo simulation which shall overlay, the location of the story poles that are proposed for the project.

The overlay is intended to assist the public and decision makers as to the relationship of the poles and the proposed project.

Any required City notices of a public hearing on a project shall also identify that story poles have been installed. For commercial projects, the notice should also include a project rendering or photo simulation.

The Planning Commission and the City Council shall be notified at the time that story poles are erected on the site.

Deleted: where less than 100% of the project is depicted with story poles, the rendering should be overlaid with

Deleted: have been erected.