

Agoura Hills

Story Pole Procedures

(Adopted March 14, 2018 - City Council Resolution No. 18-1862)

Purpose

Story poles demonstrate the height and location of proposed development, and are intended to help decision makers, staff, and the public at large to visualize the mass of the proposed structures in relationship to their surroundings.

Applicability

Story poles shall be installed by the applicant for development projects that require a discretionary permit or other entitlement that must be approved by the Planning Commission and/or City Council and meet one of the following criteria:

- 1) All projects in the Agoura Village Specific Plan area;
- 2) All commercial, office, industrial, multi-family or mixed-use projects on vacant lots;
- 3) All commercial, office, industrial, multi-family or mixed-use projects either: (a) requiring a building height or yard/setback Variance; (b) requesting an increase in the height of an existing building; or (c) requesting an increase in the footprint of an existing building;
- 4) All commercial, office, industrial, multi-family or mixed-use projects on hillside lots (10% or greater average topographic slope);
- 5) All commercial, office, industrial, multi-family or mixed-use projects on lots with unique topographic features (e.g., knoll, creek, significant oak tree cover, etc.), as determined by the Planning Director; or
- 6) All single-family residential projects requiring a building height or yard/setback Variance, at the discretion of the Planning Director.

Plan Submittal

Prior to installation of story poles, the project applicant shall consult with the case planner to prepare the story pole plan. The plan is subject to the following criteria:

Plan Size and Scale - The story pole plan shall be shown on the project roof plan, at the same scale, showing all locations at which the poles will be placed.

Location - The number of required story poles will vary with each specific project. The case planner shall review proposed story pole locations to ensure that the plan adequately demonstrates the proposed height, mass, and bulk of the structures under

review. The plan should be kept as simple as possible in order to minimize visual clutter in potential view areas, but must accurately reflect the proposed development outline.

Indication of Story Pole Height - The elevations of the height of each story pole and the natural and finished grades shall be indicated on the plan. If requested by the case planner, the applicant shall also provide a detail on the plans showing the elevation of a typical story pole.

Markings - The story pole plan shall include the following plan note:

“The top one foot of the story poles shall be painted with a clearly visible black paint. Markings shall also be made at 18 feet above finished or natural grade, whichever results in a lower building height, and at one-foot increments above 18 feet. Bright orange mesh, or colored ribbons, between one foot and three feet in width, shall be attached between poles to show all proposed roof lines.”

Safety Provisions - All story poles shall be placed in a secure manner to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the public. The story pole plan shall include the following plan note:

“If at any time the story poles become unsafe, they shall be repaired and reset immediately. The story poles shall be removed immediately if determined by the City to be a public safety risk.”

Contact Information - The plan shall include the contact information and license number for the licensed contractor, licensed surveyor, licensed architect or licensed civil engineer responsible for installing the story poles.

Waiver of Risk - The applicant must sign and submit a waiver absolving, indemnifying, and holding harmless the City of any liability associated with construction of, or damage by or to the story poles. The waiver form will be provided by the case planner and shall be copied on the story pole plan. The applicant shall not install the story poles until the waiver form is completed in full and submitted to the City.

Duration

Story poles shall be erected at least three (3) weeks prior to the Planning Commission and/or City Council hearing date, whichever occurs first, and shall remain in place until such time the Planning Commission and/or City Council has rendered a final decision on the project. Story poles shall remain in place during the appeal period and, if appealed through the conclusion of the first appeal hearing, and thereafter at the discretion of the City Council. The story poles shall be removed no later than seven (7) calendar days following the final decision on the project. If any story poles fall down or are damaged while required to remain in place, they shall be promptly replaced or repaired.

Construction Method and Materials

Story poles shall be made of standard 2" x 4" lumber or other material that is sturdy and avoids bending as determined by the City. All story poles need to be erected safely and without putting the public at risk, without bending or leaning, so as to withstand inclement weather. This can be accomplished by installing guy wires or other similar temporary support system.

Certification

Once the story poles are placed, a licensed surveyor, civil engineer, or architect must certify that the story poles have been placed in accordance with the approved story pole plan. The property owner may not certify the story pole height or position. After receiving the certification, the case planner will visit the site to verify and photograph the story poles. Public notification shall not begin until certification is complete and the case planner verifies the placement of the story poles.

Waiver from Story Pole Installation

The Planning Director is authorized to consider a request for a waiver of or a modification to the story pole requirement for particular projects in the following very limited circumstances:

1) The Planning Director may grant a waiver request only if the story pole installation poses a health or safety risk; or

2) The Planning Director may modify the length of time the story poles must remain on a property if unique site constraints exist, and in the case of such modification, the applicant shall be subject to conditions of approval as determined by the Planning Director.

The Planning Director's decision on a story pole waiver or modification request is final.

Notification

For all projects subject to story pole installation, the applicant shall erect an on-site sign displaying a rendering or photo simulation of the proposed project at the time the story poles are installed. The rendering or photo simulation, shall be approved by the Planning Director for use on the sign. The sign shall include contact information for the applicant, available web site information prepared by applicant, and any other information requested by the applicant and approved by the Planning Director. The sign shall be of a size large enough to convey the required information. The Planning Director shall approve the sign size and location prior to installation.

For projects where less than 100% of the project is depicted with story poles, the rendering should be overlaid with the location of the story poles that have been erected. The overlay is intended to assist the public and decision makers as to the relationship of the poles and the proposed project.

The Planning Commission and the City Council will be notified by City staff at the time the story poles are erected on site. If members of the Planning Commission or City Council make site visits to observe the story poles, then members shall state for the record that they did so during the public hearing for the project.

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