



CITY of CALABASAS
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: OCTOBER 4, 2021

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS

FROM: GLENN MICHITSCH, SENIOR PLANNER

SUBJECT: AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY'S ADOPTED STORY POLES PROCEDURES

MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 13, 2021

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council approve by minute action the amended Story Pole Procedures.

BACKGROUND:

The City's Story Pole Procedures were originally adopted by the City Council on June 24, 2015. Story poles depict the silhouette of a proposed structure with the intention of aiding decision makers, staff, the public and other interested parties in visualizing the location, mass and height of the structure in relationship to its surroundings. Story poles also act as another form of public noticing because their presence alerts members of the public to an upcoming public hearing for certain critical development projects, such as commercial and multi-family projects, projects located in critical areas such as scenic corridors and on ridgelines, and projects seeking exceptions to the City's height requirements via a variance or development plan.

The Story Pole Procedures were amended by City Council on September 28, 2016 to exempt from its requirements additions to existing single-family residences and construction of residential accessory structures on existing developed residential properties located on significant ridgelines. That amendment was adopted in concert with the adoption of Ordinance 2016-340, which exempted the same

residential improvements on ridgeline properties from ridgeline setback variance requirements.

The new proposed amendments to the City's Story Pole Procedures as discussed in this report are now before the City Council for consideration. The Planning Commission discussed various potential amendments to the Story Pole Procedures at meetings held on June 18, 2020 and September 10, 2020. The Commission discussion focused on an intent to improve the procedures to require materials and methods that will more clearly portray a proposed structure's silhouette. On March 4, 2021, the Planning Commission approved recommendations for amending the City's Story Pole Procedures. Attachments A (clean copy) and B (redline copy) contain the Planning Commission's proposed amendments.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

A concern brought up by one of the Planning Commissioners, based on personal observations, was that the use of colored ribbons and/or flags to depict the roofline of proposed structures was not as visually effective as the use of a bright orange mesh netting material or something similar. Although the discussion began with this topic, the Planning Commission effectively re-evaluated the entire policy, including considering oral and written testimony from the public. The resulting proposed amendments include, in summary, the following:

- 1) A substantive change in the procedures **requiring** the use of bright orange mesh netting, 1 foot wide, to depict a structure's roofline, unless the Community Development Director, through consultation with licensed professionals, determines the use of mesh netting poses a safety risk based on the pole heights, expected seasonal weather conditions, or the amount of time the poles are expected to be erected and maintained (see Attachment B, p.2, "Construction Method and Materials" Section); and
- 2) A substantive change in the procedures requiring placement of a sign displaying a rendering or photo simulation of the proposed project on-site at the time the story poles are erected for **all** projects requiring story poles (previously required for only commercial development proposals). In tandem with this change, **all** structures that cannot depict 100% of the project mass with story poles would also need to show the story pole locations overlain onto the notification sign's project rendering or photo simulation (see Attachment B, p.4, "Notification" Section).
- 3) All other proposed amendments did not substantively change the Story Pole Procedures, and are proposed to improve the clarity and readability of the document.

FISCAL IMPACT/SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Modifications to the story pole policy, as recommended, will not create any fiscal impacts to the City. All costs will be borne by property owners seeking planning project entitlements and approvals for which story poles are required. Costs per project to erect story poles vary depending on size and complexity of story pole construction and site security. If the recommended amendments to the Story Pole Procedures are approved, property owners that are subject to story pole requirements will bear the added costs of a notification sign in addition to the costs associated with placement of story poles.

REQUESTED ACTION:

That the City Council approve by minute action the updated Story Pole Procedures.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A:** Amended Story Pole Procedures – Clean Copy
- Attachment B:** Amended Story Pole Procedures – Redline Copy
- Attachment C:** The City of Calabasas’s Current Story Pole Procedures
- Attachment D:** Planning Commission Agenda Reports from the June 18, 2020, September 10, 2020 and March 4, 2021 Planning Commission meetings
- Attachment E:** Minutes from the June 18, 2020, September 10, 2020 and March 4, 2021 Planning Commission Meetings
- Attachment F:** Compiled Public Correspondence submitted for the Planning Commission meetings