

From: [Uma Dorn](#)
To: [Dylan Parker](#)
Cc: [Luis Topete](#); [Dominic Dorn](#); [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Re: Application for Appeal - DORN
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2026 9:11:26 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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Our response to Agenda #4 of the Planning Commission Hearing, File number: PLN2024-00131; Assessor's Parcel No.: 037-259-200

We are the owners and residents of 847 San Ramon Ave in Moss Beach and submit these written comments in strong opposition to the proposed new residential construction at the adjacent vacant lot at 845 San Ramon Ave. We respectfully ask the Planning Commission to reject the staff recommendation and require a redesign or alternative siting analysis before any approval is granted.

The CDRC recommended approval of this project on April 9, 2026. We are asking the Planning Commission to take a different view based on the legal deficiencies in the CDRC findings and the staff report set out below.

The Core Issue: Siting and Scale

The proposed structure will permanently eliminate our ocean view from our primary living and dining space. This is not a question of building height — it is the placement and scale of the building on the lot. Key facts from the approved plans:

Proposed structure: 2,726 sq ft, two stories, 26 ft 4.5 in tall

Our home at 847 San Ramon Ave: 1,800 sq ft — the proposed structure is 51% larger

Lot sizes: Nearly identical — 845 is 5,147 sq ft; 847 is 5,148 sq ft

Building width: 46 ft 6 in across a 51 ft 6 in wide lot — spanning 90% of the lot

Left side setback (facing our property): 5 ft 6 in — just 6 inches above the minimum required

Floor area ratio: 53% — the maximum permitted under zoning

A structure of this scale, placed at the minimum setback on our shared property line and spanning 90% of the lot width, leaves no room for the siting adjustment that would minimize view impact on our property.

Neighborhood Precedent: Story Poles and Voluntary Setback

We raised two specific requests at the preliminary meeting that were denied. The photographs below document both points for the record.

Exhibit A — Story Poles Are Standard Practice in Moss Beach

We requested story poles prior to any decision. The Committee denied this request. The photograph below, taken in our neighborhood on August 11, 2026, shows story poles installed on a comparable vacant Moss Beach lot — demonstrating that story poles are entirely standard and feasible in this community. The County's own Demonstration of Scale Policy identifies story poles

as the preferred method for allowing neighbors to assess visual impact from their properties. We were denied that opportunity.



Exhibit B — Voluntary Setback by Adjacent Neighbor Demonstrates Feasibility

The home on the opposite side of the proposed home was built with a voluntary setback specifically to preserve our ocean view. This demonstrates that siting consideration for neighboring view corridors is not only possible in Moss Beach — it has already been done on our own street. The applicant at 845 has not been asked to make any equivalent showing.



Critical Deficiencies in the Staff Report and CDRC Findings

1. The Visual Resources findings are incomplete

The staff report's Visual Resources findings cite only LCP Policies 8.12 and 8.13(a). The following policy is absent from the staff analysis:

LUP Policy 8.5(a): Requires new development to be sited on the portion of the parcel that best preserves visual and open space qualities. No siting alternatives were evaluated.

The Planning Commission cannot make findings of LCP compliance on policies the staff report does not address.

2. The CDRC's view finding is conclusory and unsupported

The sole CDRC finding on view impact reads:

"Project has made a good effort to mitigate view disturbance throughout the neighborhood."

This finding contains no supporting analysis — no description of what mitigation effort was made, what alternatives were considered, or how the immediately adjacent property at 847 San Ramon Ave was specifically evaluated. A bare conclusion unaccompanied by supporting evidence does not constitute a finding under the Midcoast Design Standards.

3. The enforceable standard on page 10 of the Midcoast Design Standards was not met

Section 6565.20 of the Midcoast Design Standards includes the following enforceable standard:

"When designing a new home or an addition, an effort should be made to minimize the effect on views from neighboring houses."

No analysis was conducted of what specific effort was made to minimize view impact on our property. The structure is placed at minimum setback on our shared property line, spans 90% of the lot width, and is at maximum permitted floor area. The record contains no evidence that any alternative placement was considered.

4. Coastal Act Section 30251 — Visual Compatibility

Section 30251 independently requires that development be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas. The staff report makes no finding on this requirement. A 2,726 sq ft structure spanning 90% of a lot the same size as our home, placed 5 ft 6 in from our shared property line, is not compatible with the visual character of a neighborhood where our home — on an identical lot — is 1,800 sq ft.

5. The Ocean View Is a Documented Feature of Our Property

The MLS listing for 847 San Ramon Ave, sold in July 2025, documents the ocean view as a material and documented feature of this property. Because no story poles have been installed and no view impact analysis has been conducted from inside our home, we do not yet know the precise extent of the view loss we will suffer. What we do know is that the proposed structure — spanning 90% of the lot width and placed 5 feet 6 inches from our shared property line — will directly obstruct the ocean view corridor from our primary dining space.

The financial impact of that loss is equally unquantified. Ocean views are a recognized value driver in coastal real estate. A structure of this scale placed immediately adjacent to our home on an identical lot has the potential to materially reduce our property's value — but without a view impact study or story poles, neither we nor the Commission can assess the full extent of that impact. That uncertainty is itself an argument for requiring story poles and a proper view analysis before any final decision is made.

Requested Relief

1. Reject the staff recommendation for approval and require written findings addressing LUP Policies 8.5(a) and 8.20 before any approval is granted.
2. Require the applicant to demonstrate what specific effort was made to minimize view impacts on 847 San Ramon Ave, as required by Midcoast Design Standards Section 6565.20, page 10.
3. Require the applicant to present an alternative siting analysis showing whether alternative building placements or footprint reductions would reduce view impacts on the adjacent property.
4. Require installation of story poles prior to any final decision so that the impact on neighboring properties can be properly evaluated.

This lot has never had a structure on it. Once built, the loss of our ocean view will be permanent and irreversible. The Planning Commission has the opportunity and the obligation under the LCP,

to ensure that the record supports the findings required before approval is granted.

Respectfully submitted,
Dominic & Uma P. Dorn
847 San Ramon Ave, Moss Beach, CA
August 12, 2026

On Tue, Apr 21, 2026 at 11:22 AM Uma Dorn <updorn@gmail.com> wrote:

Thanks for the information Dylan and for now we would like our original public comments that were sent in for the initial hearing (4/9). We would like to hold this document for the appeals only if needed.

Thanks!

Uma

On Tue, Apr 21, 2026, 9:34 AM Dylan Parker <jparker1@smcgov.org> wrote:

Dear Uma and Dominic,

As Luis mentioned, once the Planning Commission renders a decision on the project an appeal can be filed. Thus, I can include the appeal letter (not the appeal form) as public comment for the Planning Commission hearing if you wish. Also, please note that appeals do have a fee of \$2,021 to be paid by the appellant.

As for the scheduled Planning Commission hearing, I am targeting the June 24th hearing date. I will circle back when this is confirmed.

Regards,



Dylan Parker, AICP (he/him/his)

Planner III

County of San Mateo

Planning & Building Department

[455 County Center](#) 2nd Floor

Redwood City, CA 94063

(628) 204-4820

www.smcgov.org/planning

From: Uma Dorn <updorn@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2026 6:48 AM

To: Luis Topete <ltopete@smcgov.org>

Cc: Dominic Dorn <dominicqb12@gmail.com>; Planning_Commission
<Planning_Commission@smcgov.org>; Dylan Parker <dparker1@smcgov.org>

Subject: Re: Application for Appeal - DORN

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Hi Luis,

Thanks for the info and update. We will be on the lookout for the hearing.

Uma & Dominic

On Mon, Apr 20, 2026, 11:08 AM Luis Topete <ltopete@smcgov.org> wrote:

Hi Uma,

The decision of the CDRC on April 9 was only a recommendation to the Planning Commission; no final decision has been made on the project at this time. I have cc'd the project planner, Dylan Parker, who can keep you informed about when the item will be scheduled for a Planning Commission hearing.

Luis Topete

Planner III

From: Planning_Commission <planning_commission@smcgov.org>

Sent: Monday, April 20, 2026 10:45 AM

To: Uma Dorn <updorn@gmail.com>

Cc: Dominic Dorn <dominicqb12@gmail.com>; Luis Topete <ltopete@smcgov.org>

Subject: RE: Application for Appeal - DORN

Hello Uma and Dominic,

The instructions to appeal a Design Review decision are outlined in the published agenda:
[4/9/2026 CDRC Agenda](#)

Please reach out to Luis Topete regarding this appeal as it seems a decision has not been made until it reaches the Planning Commission.

Regards,

Angela

Angela Montes Cardenas

Executive Secretary | Planning Commission Secretary

to Director of Planning & Building, Steve Monowitz

County of San Mateo

Planning & Building Department

[455 County Center, 2nd Floor](#)

[Redwood City, CA 94063](#)

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amontescardenas@smcgov.org

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From: Uma Dorn <updorn@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2026 6:39 AM
To: Planning_Commission <planning_commission@smcgov.org>
Cc: Dominic Dorn <dominicqb12@gmail.com>
Subject: Application for Appeal - DORN

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Hello,

Please see the attached appeal. I was also unable to find any information regarding the appeal fee or instructions for submitting it. Could you please clarify how to proceed?

Uma & Dominic Dorn

[847 San Ramon Ave, Moss Beach, CA 94038](http://847%20San%20Ramon%20Ave,%20Moss%20Beach,%20CA%2094038)

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