



# County of Monterey

Item No.26

## Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: RES 25-113

July 08, 2025

Introduced: 7/1/2025

Current Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 1

Matter Type: BoS Resolution

### PLN240077 - SIGNAL HILL LLC

Public hearing to consider three appeals, one by Samuel Reeves, one by the Alliance of Monterey Area Preservationists (AMAP), and one by Massy Mehdipour, the applicant, from the April 30, 2025 Planning Commission decision approving the construction of an approximately 8,290 square foot two-story single family dwelling with an attached three car garage with light brown stucco exterior, black metal clad wood accents, and a gravel roof, an approximately 180 square foot stairwell, and approximately 695 square feet of terrace (identified as the "Reduced Project," Alternative 6 in the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the relocation of three Monterey Cypress trees.

**Project Location:** 1170 Signal Hill Road, Pebble Beach, Del Monte Forest Area Land Use Plan, Coastal Zone

**Proposed California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Action:** Consider a previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) (SCH#2015021054) for the Signal Hill LLC project and find the project consistent with the FEIR and that the design review does not warrant an addendum pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15162.

### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors adopt a resolution to:

- a) Partially uphold the appeals by Samuel Reeves and AMAP, from the April 30, 2025, Planning Commission decision approving the Design Approval;
- b) Uphold the appeal by Massy Mehdipour, Applicant, from the April 30, 2025, Planning Commission decision approving the Design Approval with Condition No. 10;
- c) Consider the previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) (SCH#2015021054) for the Signal Hill LLC project, and find that the Proposed Project is consistent with Alternative 6 of the FEIR and does not warrant an addendum pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15162;
- d) Approve a Design Approval for construction of an approximately 8,290 square foot two-story single family dwelling inclusive of a three car garage with colors and materials of light brown stucco body and black metal clad wood accents and a gravel roof with an approximately 180 square foot outdoor stair well with a modification to the design that eliminates or reduces the size of the rear deck such that it will not extend beyond the hardscape of the former Connell house (the "Reduced Project," Alternative 6 of the Final EIR);
- e) Amend Condition No. 23 of Board Resolution No. 23-237 to increase the area of the required Conservation and Scenic Easement to 1.67 acres, encompassing the project's dune restoration area (Condition No. 10 of this permit);
- f) Approve a Coastal Development Permit to allow the relocation of two Cypress trees; and
- g) Approve a Variance for structural development in the front setback.

**PROJECT INFORMATION:**

**Property Owner:** Massy Mehdipour

**Agent:** None

**APN:** 008-261-007-000

**Zoning:** Low Density Residential, 1.5 acres per unit with Design Control Overlay (Coastal Zone)

**Flagged and Staked:** Yes

**SUMMARY:**

The Mehdipour property is located at 1170 Signal Hill Road, Pebble Beach. The 2.2-acre property is zoned for low density single-family residential uses in the Coastal Zone. The property is in the Signal Hill enclave, which has sand dunes and residential development in the public viewshed of 17 Mile Drive and Fanshell Beach. The applicant proposes construction of a new single-family dwelling and relocation of three Cypress trees on the property.

There is an extensive history to this site and this project. On June 27, 2023, the Board certified an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and approved a Combined Development Permit for this property including a permit to allow the demolition of an historic property that had been damaged and was in disrepair (“the Connell house”). That action included approval of the construction of a new house at the site, in concept only, with the new house to be consistent with Alternative 6 of the EIR. Alternative 6 was the “Reduced Project Alternative” that the EIR described as allowing the demolition of the Connell house and new construction of a house that would stay within the developed footprint of the demolished house and be reduced in height to avoid “ridgeline development.” The alternative also included restoration of 1.67 acres of the site to native due habitat. In approving new construction, in concept, the Board required that a Design Approval for the subsequent project be heard by the Planning Commission as the final design was not reviewed or approved as part of the Board’s actions.

The Board’s conceptual approval of a new single-family dwelling meeting the Reduced Project Alternative was made based on two key provisions: stay within the footprint of the Connell House and reduce the height of the dwelling from the original proposal such that the structure will not be “ridgeline development” when viewed from 17 Mile Drive and Fanshell Beach.

The applicant has proposed a new home that is 25.5 feet tall at the tallest points (reduced from the 30 feet previously proposed), which does not meet the Title 20 or Del Monte Forest Land Use Plan (LUP) definition of ridgeline development. The applicant is also proposing a design that is not entirely within the previous footprint of the Connell house. Applicant asks that the Board allow an area of the footprint to be left undeveloped (the rear/northwest corner of the Connell house) in exchange for adding area in the front of the house that fills in the former courtyard of the U-shaped Connell house footprint. The height and footprint are both key issues of the appeals from AMAP and Reeves. Additional details about the appeals and staff’s analysis and response to the appeal contentions are provided in Attachment C-4.

On April 30, 2025, the Planning Commission considered a Design Approval for the proposed new residence on the property and decided unanimously in favor of a proposed project by a vote of 10 ayes, 0 noes (**Attachment I**). The Planning Commission’s decision was appealed by a neighbor

(**Attachment C1**), the Alliance of Monterey Area Preservations (AMAP) (**Attachment C2**), and (in part) by the applicant (**Attachment C3**).

The applicant's appeal focused on the Planning Commission's decision to adopt a condition (Condition 10) requiring a conservation easement over the entire remainder of the property; the boundary of the easement would come up to the new house footprint. The neighbor (Reeves) and AMAP appeals focus on the size of the proposed project, the alleged inconsistency of the proposed project with the EIR Alternative 6 and the Board's direction to remain in the footprint of the Connell house, inconsistencies with visual policies of the Del Monte Forest Land Use Plan, and inconsistencies with previously required tree replanting.

Staff has reviewed these contentions and found that each appeal has some merit. In response, staff is recommending that the Board reverse the Planning Commission decision with respect to:

- Condition 10 requiring an easement over the entire property and up to the new house footprint and instead require an easement consistent with the restoration and conservation area of 1.67 acres that the EIR recommended for the originally proposed project;
- Deny the request to relocate one Cypress tree located near the existing driveway that was required to be planted to resolve a previous violation for tree removal; and
- Require that the proposed design be modified to eliminate or reduce the size of the rear deck so that the deck does not protrude beyond the hardscape of the Connell House.

With these modifications, the project can be found consistent with both the Reduced Project Alternative and the Board's previous direction.

#### DISCUSSION:

A detailed discussion is provided in **Attachment A**. The appeal documents are attached as the first three items in **Attachment C**. Staff responses to the appeals are included as the fourth, or Attachment C-4.

#### CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA):

Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083 and CEQA Guidelines sections 15081, 15161, and 15200 et seq., Monterey County as Lead Agency prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the original project, which consisted of (1) demolition of the existing 4,125-square-foot, two-story, single-family residence, and removal of the approximately 2,825 square feet of asphalt driveway and concrete patios; (2) construction of a new 11,933-square-foot, two-story (over basement), single-family residence including an attached three-car garage, a 986 square foot entry court, 106 square feet of uncovered terraces, approximately 2,600 square feet of covered terraces, new driveway, and approximately 1,700 cubic yards of grading (1,200 cubic yards cut/500 cubic yards fill); (3) restoration of approximately 1.67 acres to native dune habitat within 750 feet of a known archaeological resource; and (4) the removal of three Cypress trees. In addition to the original project scope, this EIR also considered and analyzed eight alternative project scopes, as required by CEQA Guidelines section 15162.6. The Draft EIR identified potentially significant impacts to Aesthetics, Archaeological Resources, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases, Biological Resources, Geology, Seismicity, and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Historic Resources, Hydrology and

## Water Quality, and Noise.

The EIR proposed mitigation measures to reduce all but one of the identified impacts to a level of less than significant. Demolition of the existing historic house was identified as a potentially significant impact that could not be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. The Draft EIR was circulated for public review and comment from August 24 to October 12, 2018 (SCH No. 2015021054). Per Resolution No. 23-236 and 23-237, the Board of Supervisors certified this EIR and adopted a written Statement of Overriding Considerations relative to the project's unavoidable impact on a historical resource. As described above, the Board of Supervisors also approved, in concept, Final EIR Alternative 6.

The proposed Design Approval and Coastal Development Permit for relocation of three Cypress trees (PLN240077) involves the construction of a new single-family dwelling that is reduced in size and footprint (Alternative 6 of the EIR), which was approved in concept on June 27, 2023 when the Final EIR was certified by Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 23-036. The proposed project, consisting of the construction of an approximately 8,290 square foot two-story single family dwelling inclusive of a three car garage with colors and materials of light brown stucco body and black metal clad wood accents and a gravel roof, with approximately 695 square feet of terrace, represents a smaller dwelling of less height and bulk in the same location as the original project analyzed in the EIR. The removal of three Cypress trees were considered as part of the original project analyzed in the EIR.

Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15162, when an EIR has been certified, no subsequent EIR or negative declaration shall be prepared for the project unless the agency determines that substantial changes are proposed, or substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken. Here, no new information has been presented, no new circumstances exist, and no substantial changes are proposed that warrant further environmental review. The EIR contemplated residential development of the lot, including removal of trees and up to 10,008 square feet of structural and hardscape improvements. The project includes 7,900 square feet of structural and hardscape improvements. The EIR contemplated eight alternatives and one "no project" alternative to the original project and evaluated them separately for potential impacts. The proposed project conforms to the Reduced Project alternative, Alternative 6. There has been no change in the project alternative and no indication during review of the project, or in testimony from the public, that circumstances have changed since the EIR was certified. Circumstances of the conditions of the sand dune environment of Signal Hill, the historical status of the Connell house, and the conditions of the Signal Hill neighborhood's buildout within the context of the Pebble Beach planned residential and recreational uses remain the same. Therefore, none of the conditions described in Guidelines section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR or negative declaration have occurred.

## LUAC:

The proposed project was reviewed by the Del Monte Forest Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) on August 1, 2024. The LUAC voted unanimously (8 yeas, 0 noes) to recommend the project as proposed. (**Attachment H**).

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The following agencies have reviewed the project, have comments, and/or have recommended conditions:

Environmental Health Bureau  
Cypress Fire Protection District  
County Counsel  
California Coastal Commission

FINANCING:

Funding for staff time associated with this project is included in the FY2024-25 and FY2025-26 Adopted Budgets within HCD Unit 8543 Appropriation Unit HCD002.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

This action is administrative in nature and supports the County's commitment to providing appropriate processes for consideration of development by property owners and the public.

Check the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives:

☐ Well-Being and Quality of Life  
☐ Sustainable Infrastructure for the Present and Future  
☐ Safe and Resilient Communities  
☐ Diverse and Thriving Economy  
☐ Dynamic Organization and Employer of Choice  
☒ Administrative

Prepared by: Mary Israel, Supervising Planner, (831)755-5183

Reviewed and approved by: Craig Spencer, HCD Director

The following attachments are on file with the Clerk of the Board:

Attachment A - Discussion

Attachment B - Draft Resolution

- Draft Conditions of Approval
- Project Plans, Elevations, and Rendering

Attachment C - Appeals

- Samuel Reeves, c/o Anthony Lombardo, Esquire
- Alliance of Monterey Area Preservations (AMAP)
- Massy Mehdipour appeal of condition 10
- Staff responses to the three appeals

Attachment D - An Overlay of Connell House footprint and the proposed Design Approval footprint

Attachment E - Sketch of Applicant Requested Design Alternative

Attachment F - Board Resolution Certifying the Final EIR (#23-236)

- Link to Final EIR on the County HCD website

Attachment G - Board Resolution Approving Alternative 6 #23-237

Attachment H - LUAC minutes for August 1, 2024

Attachment I - Planning Commission Resolution No. 25-012

cc: Front Counter Copy; California Coastal Commission; Craig Spencer, HCD Director, Mary Israel, Project Planner; Engineering Services; Environmental Health Bureau; Environmental Services; Cypress Fire Protection District; Massy Mehdipour, Applicant/Owner and Appellant; Anthony Lombardo, agent for Appellant; Mimi Sheridan/AMAP, Appellant; The Open Monterey Project (Molly Erickson); Laborers International Union of North America (Lozeau Drury LLP); LandWatch (Director); INTERESTED PARTIES; Project File PLN240077.