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DATE: May 3, 2006  
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
FROM: Planning Division  
SUBJECT: **ADOPTION OF CITY COUNCIL POLICY 300-26 REGARDING THE USE OF STORY POLES IN THE COASTAL ZONE**

**SYNOPSIS**

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt City Council Policy 300-26 regarding the use of story poles for development projects located in the Coastal Zone.

**BACKGROUND**

At their July 6, 2005, meeting, the City Council directed staff to develop a story pole policy for the City of Oceanside to assist decision-makers, community members, and staff in reviewing development projects.

Staff reviewed existing and similar story pole policies of other North San Diego County coastal communities. Following review of similar jurisdictional policies, staff prepared the attached policy for development projects within the City of Oceanside that require processing of a Regular Coastal Permit. If adopted, the policy as written would be limited to development projects in the Coastal Zone west of Interstate 5.

**ANALYSIS**

Of the five North San Diego County coastal cities, the City of Oceanside and the City of Carlsbad currently do not require story poles. Staff researched other jurisdictions and crafted a proposed policy suitable for City Council's consideration.

In developing the story pole policy, staff believes that the most sensible and feasible part of the City in which to implement such an ordinance would be the Coastal Zone west of Interstate 5. The City Council may wish to review this policy in 6-12 months to consider its usefulness and whether to apply it to other geographic areas of the City.

Generally, the proposed policy requires that the silhouette of buildings and architectural projections be illustrated as part of the story pole certification process. All applicants requiring a Regular Coastal Permit for new construction will be required to erect story poles no less than 30 days prior to a noticed public hearing.

This policy will become effective upon City Council's adoption, and the required information within the policy will become a submittal requirement that will be overseen

by the City Planner. Once the policy is approved, all pending Regular Coastal Permit applications currently on file that have not yet been deemed complete will be subject to the requirement. There are approximately 20 such applications currently on file in the Planning Division.

The proposed policy gives the City Planner discretion to waive the story pole requirement if it is demonstrated that no visual impact will occur or construction of story poles would be impractical. A similar provision exists in the Encinitas policy and it is anticipated that its use will be limited.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The implementation of the story pole policy will have minor staffing impacts in the implementation and the review time necessary to certify story poles.

**COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT**

Does not apply.

**CITY ATTORNEY'S ANALYSIS**

The referenced documents have been reviewed by the City Attorney and approved as to form.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt City Council Policy 300-26 regarding the use of story poles for development projects located in the Coastal Zone.

**PREPARED BY:**

  
Jerry Hittleman  
Acting City Planner

**SUBMITTED BY:**

  
Steven R. Jepsen  
City Manager

**REVIEWED BY:**

Michelle Skaggs Lawrence, Assistant to the City Manager  
Mike Blessing, Deputy City Manager



- ATTACHMENTS:**
1. Draft City Council Policy 300-26
  2. Coastal Zone Map
  3. Policies for Encinitas, Solana Beach, Del Mar

## Story Poles

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It is the policy of the City Council of the City of Oceanside that development requiring a Regular Coastal Permit in all zones within the Coastal Zone and west of the Interstate 5 Freeway shall be required to erect story poles prior to and during the public hearing process. The City Planner shall approve, conditionally approve, or deny story pole plans and certifications, as outlined herein.

### Purpose

Story poles are used to depict the elevations and silhouette of a proposed structure or an addition to an existing structure. They are intended to aid neighbors, decision-makers, and staff in their evaluation of a proposed project.

### Projects Requiring Story Poles

All projects required to process a Regular Coastal Permit west of the Interstate 5 Freeway are required to have story poles.

### Exceptions

In some instances, the City Planner may waive the story pole requirement should it be clearly illustrated by the applicant that visual impacts will not be created and/or story poles are not feasible. Prior to waiving the requirement, the project applicant shall first provide a cross-sectional analysis to the satisfaction of the City Planner. The analysis shall illustrate immediate and surrounding structures on adjacent properties and shall be at a minimum 1/8-inch = 1-foot scale to be stamped by a registered engineer or licensed land surveyor.

At the discretion of the City Planner, proposed projects in excess of 35 feet in height and as measured from existing grade, can use alternate methods such as a combination of poles and/or balloons, or any other method that is deemed feasible to illustrate the proposed height and silhouette of the proposed structure and/or addition to an existing structure.

## PROCEDURES

### Installation, Duration, and Materials (Step 1)

When story poles are required they shall be erected no less than 30 days prior to any hearing date. Story poles shall remain until all City-specific and/or Coastal Commission jurisdictional appeal periods have ended, or as directed by the City

Planner. Projects not appealed shall remove story poles immediately following the 10-day project appeal period.

Staff recommends that for projects requiring story poles, a minimum of 2- by 4-inch lumber, PVC, or other substantial material be used in combination with 1.5-inch orange or red ribbon to depict the uppermost roofline (see Attachment 1). Material used shall not create unnecessary noise impacts on adjacent properties.

### Story Pole Plan Submittal

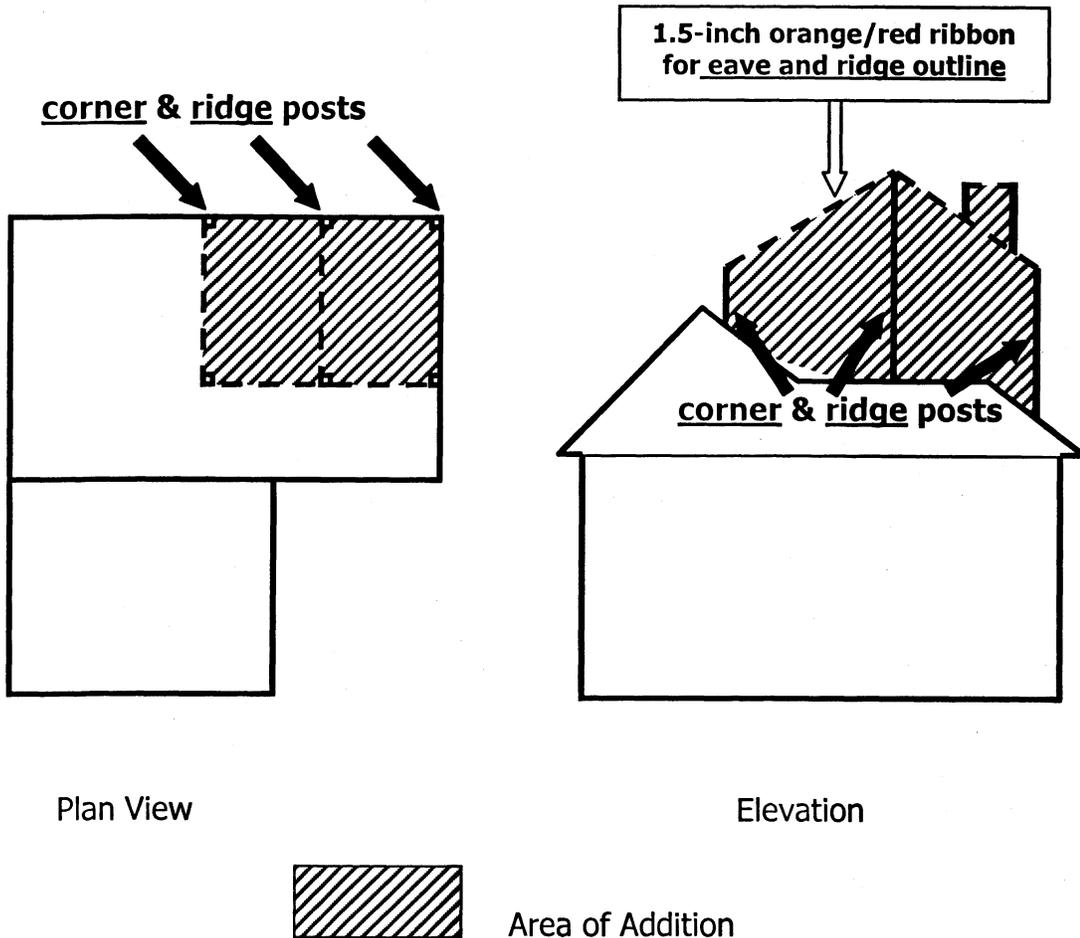
Within three (3) days after the poles are erected, three (3) complete story pole certification plan sets to include the certification form (Attachment 2), a story pole plan that includes a site plan illustrating a roof plan detail, elevation datum points, and elevation(s) must be submitted to staff for review. Items to also include are:

1. On the story pole plan set, the licensed architect shall provide the dimensioned location of the story poles in relation to lot lines and the proposed development, as well as the height of each pole. All plans shall be drawn to a minimum  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch = 1-foot scale. If maximum elevations are used, a standard City of Oceanside benchmark must be identified.
2. A signed statement by a licensed engineer or land surveyor about the story pole plan, stating that the location and height of the poles are true and accurate per the story pole plan set prepared by the licensed architect. The property owner, architect, and/or project applicant/developer may not certify story pole height.
3. Applicants shall provide a photographic survey to include a total of four (4) photos clearly showing the story poles, adjacent properties and structures on adjacent properties. The photos shall be taken only from the north, south, east and west directions and labeled accordingly prior to submittal.
4. Applicants shall use the minimum materials necessary to effectively illustrate project silhouette and rooflines. Materials to be used for posts and other specifics shall be minimized to the extent feasible in order to reduce the visual impact and/or other impacts when story poles are required.

### Removal of Story Poles

At no time shall story poles remain seven (7) calendar days following the end of the appeal period, or after seven (7) calendar days following the appeal hearing.

**STORY POLE ILLUSTRATION**



\*projects in excess of 35 feet in height as measured from existing grade may request an alternate method such as balloons or any other method that is deemed feasible to illustrate the proposed height and silhouette of the proposed structure and/or addition to an existing structure.

\*\*Story poles shall include architectural projections referenced by Zoning Ordinance section 3018, including, but not limited to, towers, spires, cupolas, chimneys, elevator penthouses, and water tanks, or as required by the City Planner.

**ATTACHMENT 2**

STORY POLE HEIGHT CERTIFICATION

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Project No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Assessor's Parcel No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Site Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Owner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) the story poles located on the above-referenced site were surveyed by the undersigned, and found to be in conformance with the attached story pole plot plan. In addition, the following measurements were found:

- 1) Highest point of the story poles: \_\_\_\_\_ (M.S.L.)\*
- 2) Lower of natural grade **or** finished grade elevation: \_\_\_\_\_ (M.S.L.)\*
- 3) Finished floor elevation: \_\_\_\_\_ (M.S.L.)\*

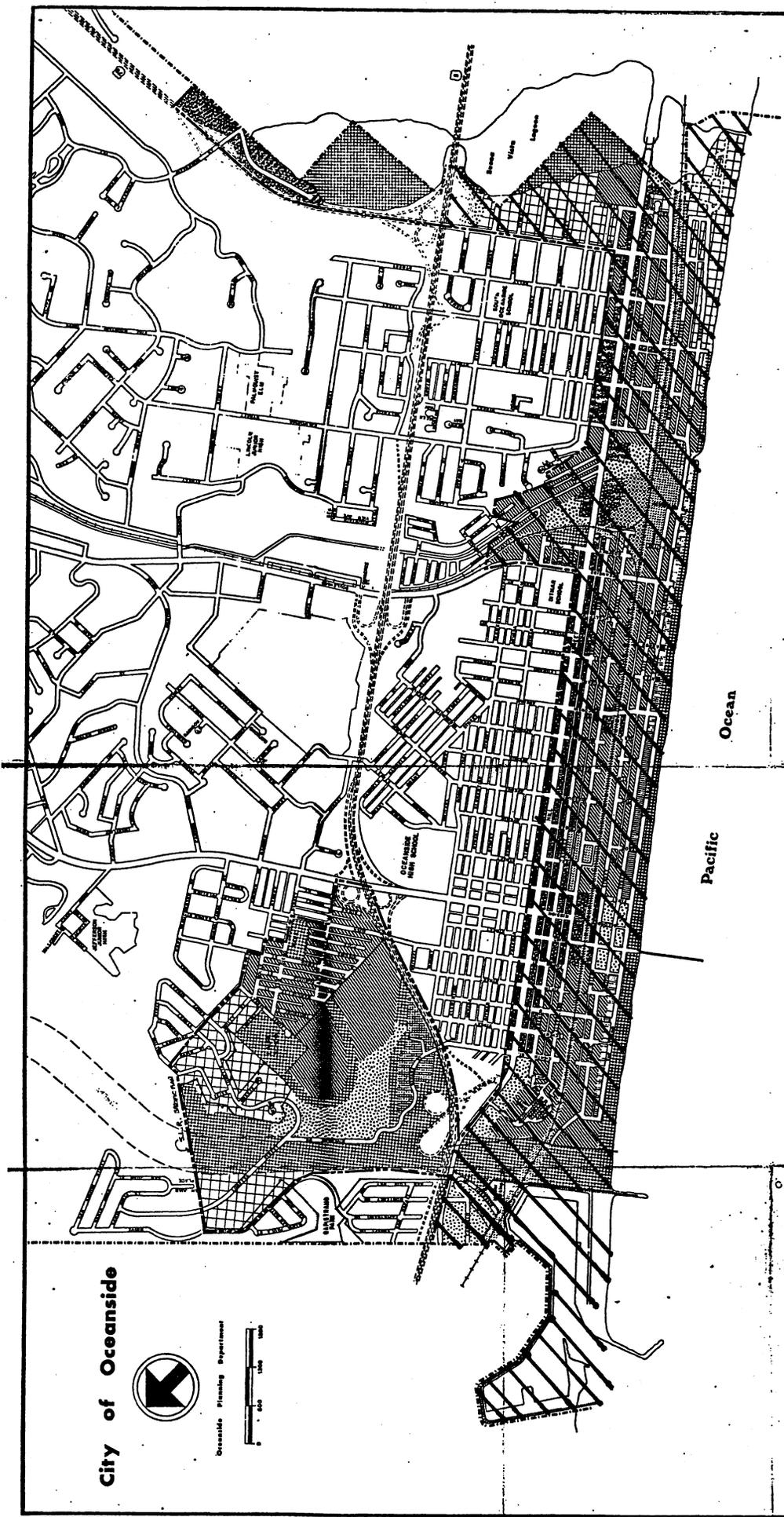
TOTAL MAXIMUM HEIGHT: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE NOTE: Top of story poles must depict the finished surface of roofing materials.** At the roofing nailing inspection, a height certification will be required which must be in exact conformance with the maximum height shown on this Story Pole Height Certification.

For additional information, please contact me at: \_\_\_\_\_ (phone number)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Registered Civil Engineer/  
Licensed Land Surveyor  
*Seal of Registration:*

\*Mean Sea Level – all measurements must use a City of Oceanside benchmark established off-site that will not change over the course of the project. City of Oceanside benchmark datum points are available at the Community Development Department.



City of Oceanside



Oceanside Planning Department



City of Oceanside  
LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM

**Study Area**



**CITY OF ENCINITAS**  
Community Development Department  
505 South Vulcan Avenue  
Encinitas, Ca. 92024-3633  
(760) 633-2722

RECEIVED  
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Planning Depart...

## STORY POLE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURE

### Purpose

Story poles are used to depict the elevations and silhouette of a proposed structure or an addition to an existing building. They are intended to aid neighbors, decision-makers, and staff in their evaluation of a proposed project. Story poles may be required for all projects requesting a Design Review Permit for Authority to Exceed the Standard Height Envelope in accordance with Encinitas Municipal Code Section 30.16.010 B7(d). In some instances, where significant view impacts are not likely to occur, the Community Development Director may waive the story pole requirement upon submittal of a line-of-sight diagram, the specific contents of which are also described in Section 30.16.010 B7(d). Notwithstanding the above Code requirement, the applicant may be requested to erect poles by staff or by the Planning Commission at an advertised public hearing, which is then continued to give the Commission time to review the proposed project as represented by the story poles.

### Procedure

#### Step 1 - Story Pole Installation

Poles shall be erected at least 20 days prior to the hearing date, and shall remain until the appeal period has expired (15 calendar days following the decision) and, if the project is appealed, until the decision of the appellate agency becomes final. Staff recommends that 2" x 4" lumber or other substantial material be utilized, in combination with 1.25"-1.5" orange/ red ribbon, to depict roof lines.

The attached sketch illustrates a typical story pole installation. Wooden posts are shown erected at all corners of the proposed addition and at roof ridges. Their purpose is to show the structure's outline and roof and deck elevations. Orange/red ribbon is then strung between these posts to indicate locations and heights and to facilitate accurate viewing of the outline of the proposed structure.

#### Step 2 - Story Pole Plan Submittal

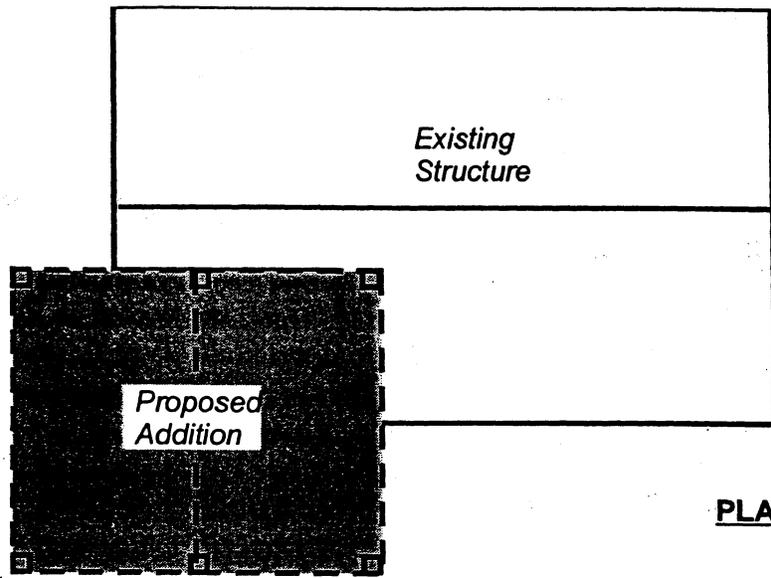
Within 3<sup>+</sup> days after the poles are erected, eight (8) copies of a roof plan and elevation(s) must be submitted to staff and shall include the following:

1. The dimensioned location of the story poles in relation to lot lines and the proposed development, as well as the height of each pole. All plans shall be drawn to a minimum 1/8"=1' scale. If maximum elevations are used, a standard surveyed benchmark must be identified.
2. A signed statement by a licensed architect, engineer or surveyor on the story pole site plan, stating that the location and height of the poles are true and accurate. The property owner or project applicant/developer may not certify story pole height.

#### Step 3 - Story Pole Removal

Story poles shall be removed within seven calendar days after the 15-day appeal period expires, or within seven calendar days after the final appeal hearing.

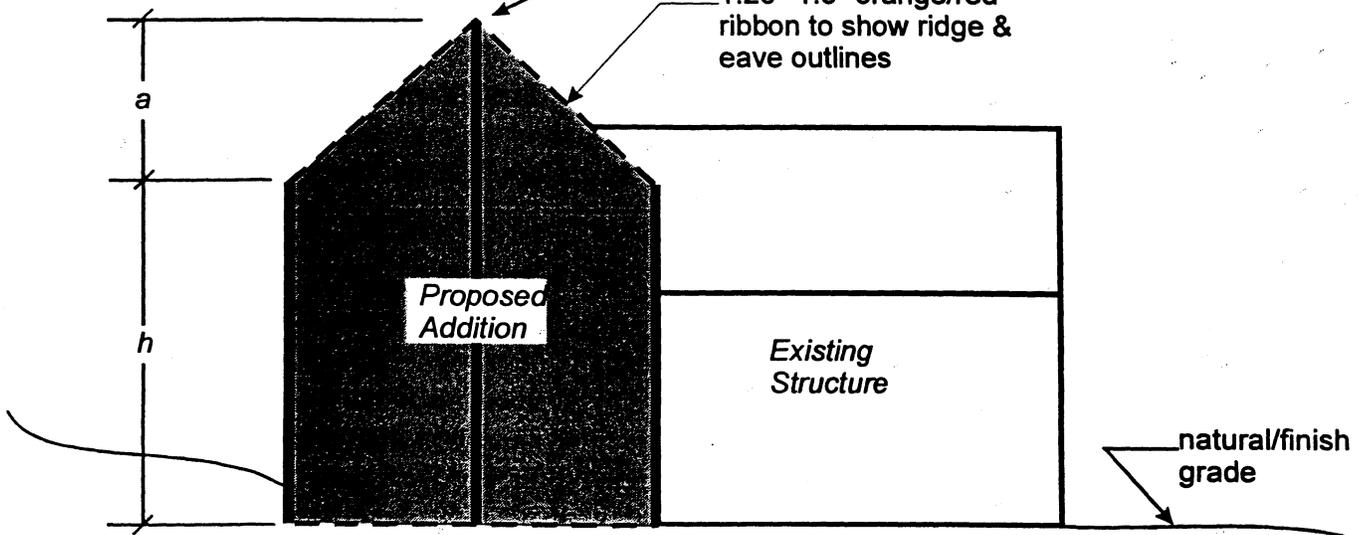
# STORY POLE ILLUSTRATION



**PLAN VIEW**

2" x 4" corner & ridge posts

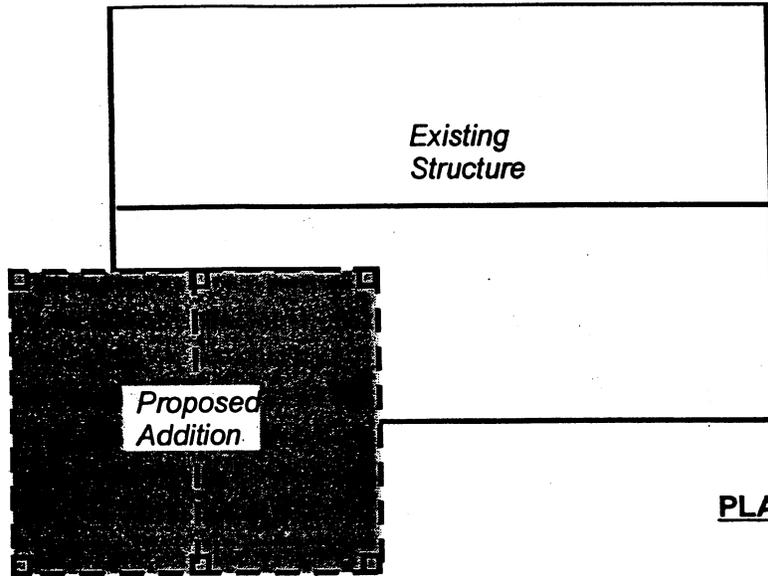
1.25"-1.5" orange/red ribbon to show ridge & eave outlines



**ELEVATION**

**Standard Height Envelope**  
 $h = 22'$  where avg. lot slope  $\leq 10\%$  or  
 $12'$  above uphill PL or ROW where  
 avg. lot slope  $> 10\%$   
 $a = 4'$  max. architectural projection  
 Height measured to lower of finish  
 or natural grade

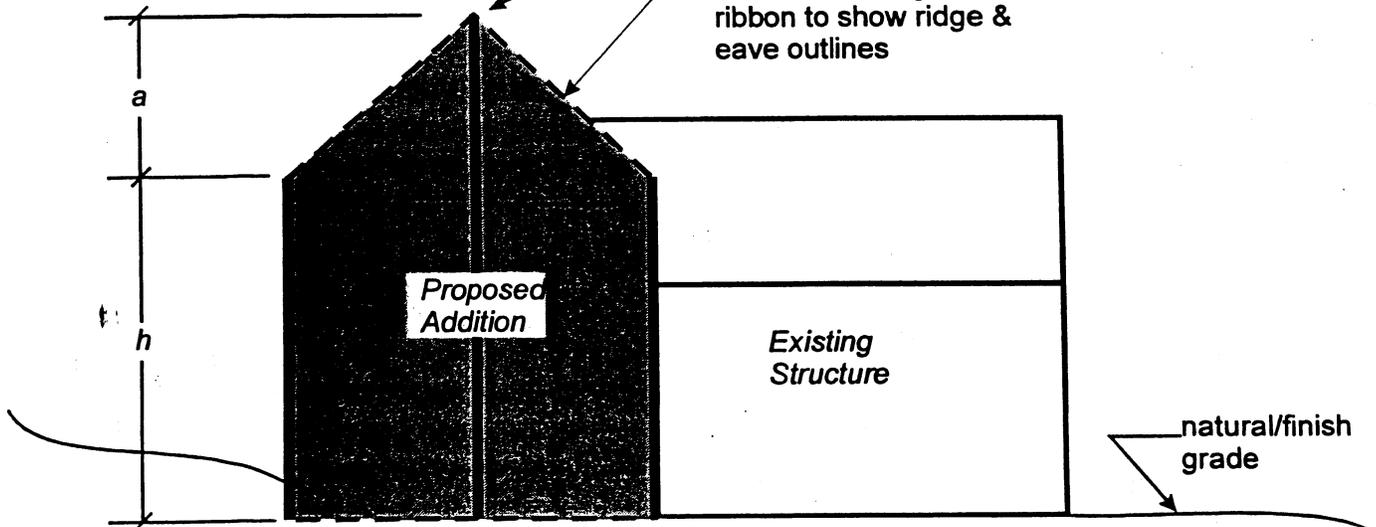
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 $12'$  above uphill PL or ROW where  
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 $a = 4'$  max. architectural projection  
 Height measured to lower of finish  
 or natural grade



*City of  
Encinitas*

City of Encinitas  
Community Development Department  
505 S. Vulcan Ave.  
Encinitas, CA 92024

Plan Check #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Site Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Owner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Assessor's Parcel Number: \_\_\_\_\_

This is to affirm that on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) the structure being constructed on the site was surveyed by, or under the direction of, the undersigned. The height from the lower of natural or finished grade to the highest finished point of the roof ridge elevation, or any part of the structure immediately above, was found to be in conformance with the approved plans.

Highest point surveyed (top of roof sheathing) above lower of natural or finished grade elevation, pursuant to Section 30.16.010 (B7e) of the Encinitas Municipal Code : \_\_\_\_\_

Total thickness of roofing materials (i.e. felt and roofing) to be installed after sheathing inspection, not to exceed: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Height (not to exceed): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Surveyed height of chimney above lower of natural or finished grade below (if checked): \_\_\_\_\_

For additional information, please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_ (Phone No.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Registered Civil Engineer, Structural Engineer, or Licensed Land Surveyor

Seal of Registration

NOTE: Property owner or project applicant/developer may not certify building height.



## **CITY OF SOLANA BEACH**

635 SOUTH HIGHWAY 101 • SOLANA BEACH • CALIFORNIA 92075-2215 • (858) 720-2400

### USE OF STORY POLES

#### BACKGROUND:

Story poles are used to show the elevations and silhouette of a proposed building or an addition to an existing building.

Story poles are intended to aid neighbors, Staff personnel, and members of decision-making bodies in their evaluation of a proposed project.

#### USE OF STORY POLES:

The City of Solana Beach requires applicants to erect story poles upon submittal of an application for any structure which exceeds 16 feet in height as measured from pre-existing or finished grade, whichever is lower, to the top of the proposed structure, including roofing materials. The accuracy of the structural outline established by the story poles shall be verified by a signed statement of a licensed surveyor on a story pole plot plan. The applicant may request that the story pole requirement be waived if he/she feels there is no potential for view blockage.

A site plan must be submitted to staff that indicates the following:

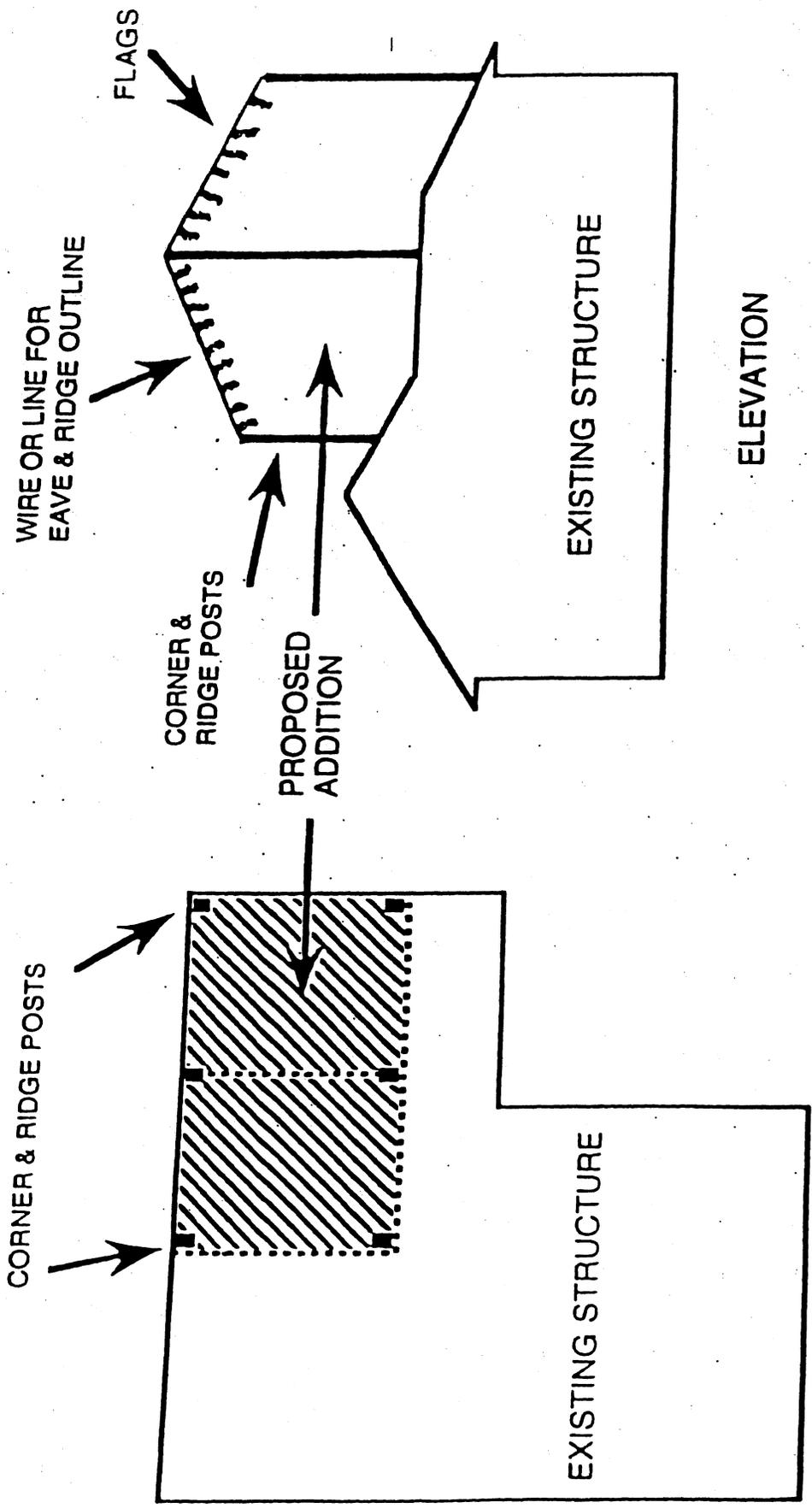
1. A site plan showing the dimensioned location of the story poles in relation to lot lines and the proposed development, as well as the height of each pole.
2. A signed statement by a Licensed Surveyor stating that the location and height of the poles is true and accurate.

#### INSTALLATION:

Staff recommends that 2' x 4" lumber be utilized, in combination with wire or line, to show roof lines. PVC type tubing large enough such that bending does not occur may also work.

The attached sketch illustrates a typical story pole installation. Wooden posts are shown erected at all corners of the proposed addition and at roof ridges, provide bracing as required. Wire or line is then strung between these posts to indicate locations and heights. Small pieces of brightly colored cloth are tied around the wire or line to facilitate accurate viewing of the proposed structure.

# STORY POLE ILLUSTRATION



OVERHEAD VIEW

ELEVATION



# CITY OF SOLANA BEACH

635 SOUTH HIGHWAY 101 • SOLANA BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92075-2215 • (858) 720-2400  
www.ci.solana-beach.ca.us FAX (858) 792-6513 / (858) 755-1782

## STORY POLE HEIGHT CERTIFICATION

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessor's Parcel No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Site Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that on \_\_\_\_\_ the story poles located on the above referenced site were surveyed by the undersigned, and found to be in conformance with the attached story pole plot plan. In addition, the following measurements were found:

Highest point of the story poles: \_\_\_\_\_ (M.S.L.)\*

Natural grade elevation: \_\_\_\_\_ (M.S.L.)\*

Finished grade elevation: \_\_\_\_\_ (M.S.L.)\*

Finished floor elevation: \_\_\_\_\_ (M.S.L.)\*

**TOTAL MAXIMUM HEIGHT:** \_\_\_\_\_

➔ **PLEASE NOTE: The story poles must show and the total height must include roofing materials.** At framing inspection, a **Height Certification** will be required which must be in exact conformance with the maximum height shown on this Story Pole Height Certification.

For additional information, please contact me at: \_\_\_\_\_ (ph. number)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Licensed Land Surveyor

Seal of Registration:

\* Mean Sea Level – all measurements must utilize a benchmark established off-site that will not change over the course of the project

## ***STORY POLES***

### ***An applicant's guide to the process***

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*The following information is intended to provide information on the City of Del Mar's process for story poles. Please contact the Planning Department to obtain any additional information.*

#### **PURPOSE**

Story poles are used to depict the elevations and silhouette of a proposed structure or an addition to an existing building. They are intended to aid neighbors, staff personnel, and members of the decision-making bodies in their evaluation of a project application. Story poles are required for projects that involve a new structure, a second-story addition to an existing structure, or any addition which, in the estimation of staff or the Design Review Board, may cause concerns about inappropriate bulk and mass, or view blockage. Story poles are also required for projects located in the Open Space Overlay Zone. In the event that required story poles are not erected or are incorrectly installed, an application may be continued from its scheduled hearing date to a subsequent meeting so that the story pole requirements can be fully met.

#### **PROCESS**

##### **Step 1 - Story pole installation**

Story poles shall be erected at least fifteen (15) days prior to the hearing date, and shall remain in place until the Design Review Board (or Planning Commission, as applicable) has taken action and the appeal period has expired.

Staff recommends that the poles be made of 2" x 4" lumber with brightly-colored ribbon and/or twine strung between them to show roof lines. The attached sketch illustrates a typical story pole installation. Wooden posts are shown erected at all corners of the proposed addition and at roof ridges. Again, their purpose is to show the structure's outline and roof and deck height elevations.

While the story poles are not required to depict eave overhangs, balcony railings, or chimneys, they are recommended in cases where such improvements would likely be the source of concern by members of the public or the DRB. In fact, where such aspects of a proposal are of concern, the hearing body may continue the item to a subsequent meeting and direct the applicant to place additional story poles. Staff can assist applicants in determining any special story pole considerations for a project.

##### **Step 2 - Story pole plan submittal**

Within five (5) days after the poles are erected, eight (8) copies of a story pole plan must be submitted to staff. The plan is usually based on the roof plan for the project with the following additional information provided:

1. The dimensioned location of the story poles in relation to lot lines and the proposed development, as well as the height of each pole. Story pole plans shall be at least 1/8"=1' scale. As with other aspects of project plans, the roof height elevations on story pole plans should be tied to a City of Del Mar benchmark.
2. A signed statement by a licensed engineer or surveyor (not the project architect) on the story pole site plan, stating that the location and height of the poles is true and accurate.

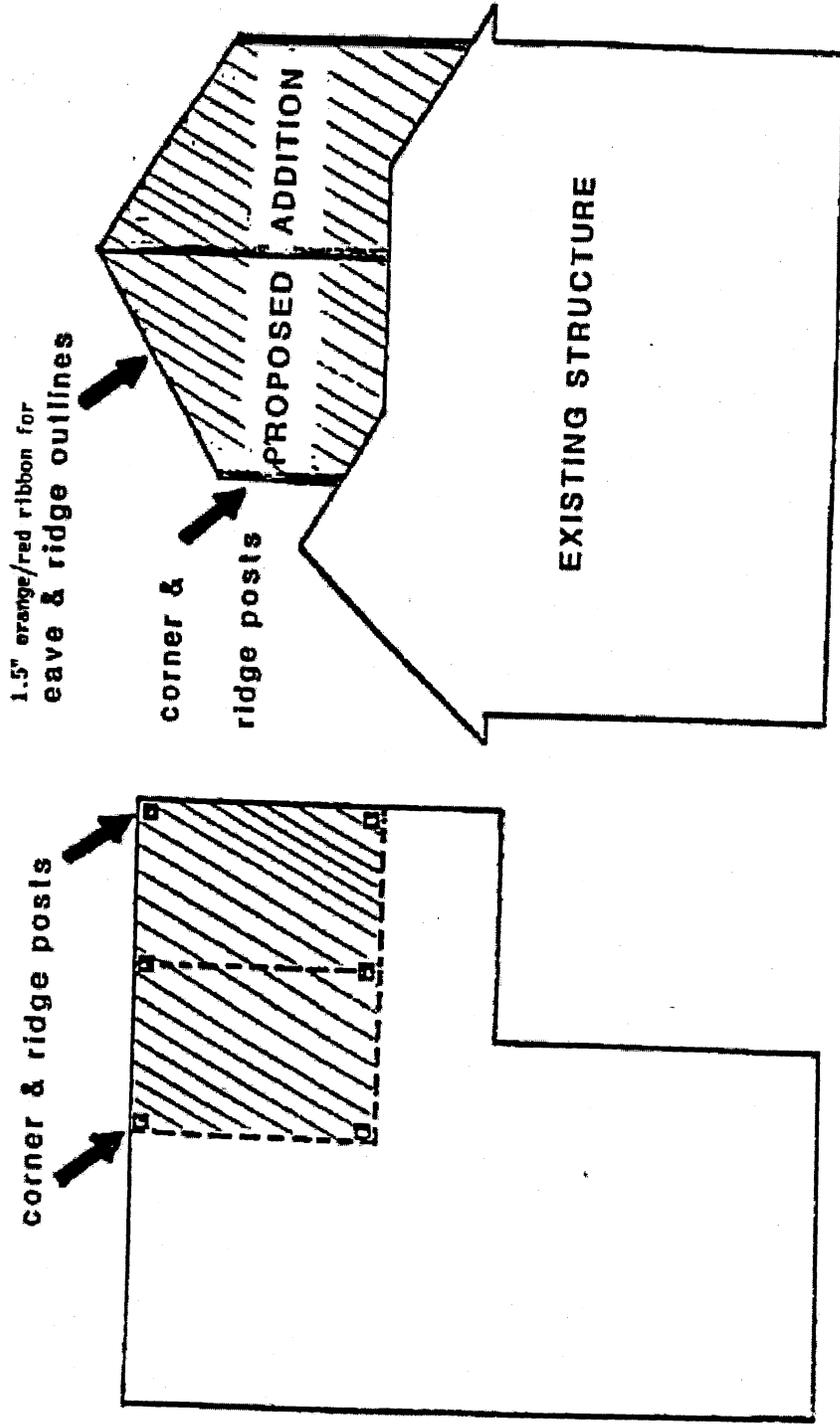
Step 3 - Removal of story poles

Story poles shall be removed within seven (7) calendar days after the ten-day DRB appeal period expires, or within seven (7) calendar days after the final appeal and hearing.

Story poles associated with a formal application, which has been inactive for three (3) months, shall be removed until the application review returns to an "active" status.

Informal story poles may be placed as part of a pre-application "evaluation phase", however, they may be in place for only a maximum of 30 days.

# STORY POLE ILLUSTRATION



OVERHEAD VIEW

ELEVATION

# CLS

STORY POLE CERTIFICATION

date \_\_\_\_\_

CSP \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OF DEL MAR  
REVIEW BOARD  
1050 CAMINO DEL MAR  
DEL MAR, CA 92014

RE: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please be advised that on \_\_\_\_\_, The Mapsmith surveyed the story poles at the above referenced site and found that they were in conformance both horizontally and vertically to the plans prepared by \_\_\_\_\_.

The benchmark used for this project is the City of Del Mar benchmark \_\_\_\_\_, elevation \_\_\_\_\_.

Respectfully,