

From: Kathy Hemingway
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2020 5:25 PM
To: Jocelyn Shoopman <jshoopman@losgatosca.gov>
Subject: Comments in Regards to the Fire Prevention Section of the Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines

Dear Ms. Shoopman,

Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines comments for inclusion in the Planning Commission Staff Report/Addendum/Desk Item for the meeting on September 23 regarding the fire prevention standards for the Town of Los Gatos:

My comment is in regards to the Fire Prevention section of the Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines. In light of the recent and ongoing fires, I believe that fire is one of the biggest concerns in the rural, hillside areas. Just recently, the Planning Commission approved the installation of 4 fire pits on a property in our vicinity. Two were located in the backyard of the home but the other two were spaced in two separate areas along the hillside. At least the two in the backyard are visible by someone who might be in the home but the other two cannot be seen from the home. The flames are around 2 feet high and can be heard from a distance. Several times the fire pits have been left burning with no one around. I would like to propose that fire pits not be allowed in the rural areas or at least they must be installed within direct view and access from the home. And perhaps, for those homes with the fire pits already installed, the ordinance should disallow use of the fire pits during the annual fire season. There is nothing safe about fire where a combustible could find its way into the flames, catch fire, and then be blown to catch other combustibles. And if they are out of sight, out of mind, they are even more dangerous. I understand the appeal of sitting by the fire pit at night but unfortunately, the latest events have shown how truly vulnerable our rural areas are to any form of fire.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns,

Kathy Hemingway

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