

Technical Memorandum

To: John Roberto Associates

From: Paul Curfman, RLA #3043

Date: August 8, 2017

Subject: Accuracy of Easton Point Visual Simulation

Enclosure: (1) Viewpoint 3 Visual Simulation from Paradise Drive
(2) Viewpoint 3 Before Photo from Paradise Drive

Reference:(a) Peterson Associates, Personal communications August 2-8, 2017

The purpose of this memo is to convey the accuracy of Enclosure (1), a visual simulation¹ of two potential homes on lots 19 and 20 in the proposed Easton Point development in Tiburon, California. This memo reviews the methods used in producing the visual simulation, as provided through reference (a), as production methods are the strongest determinant of a simulation's accuracy.

The existing conditions photo, Enclosure (2) is the 'before' photo, showing the hillside without the two structures. The 'before' photo is identified as Viewpoint 3 is from the Visual Quality section of the 2008 Easton Point Residential Development Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIR). Trees have grown in the nine years since the original photo was taken, otherwise the hillside conditions remain the same. It appears the Viewpoint 3 photo was taken using a telephoto lens² from near 2460 Paradise Drive at a distance of about 1,000 feet to the top of the visible ridgeline, as shown in Figure 1.

The most recent development plan, dated August 4, 2017 as shown on an air photo in Figure 1 was used to create the simulation. The updated plan shows development envelopes for lots 19 and 20 pushed downslope from previous versions, away from the ridge line to avoid sky-lining, or silhouetting of the homes above the ridge. In the simulation, the proposed homes visible on lots 19 and 20 are theoretical designs and not necessarily the homes that would be constructed on the sites. Each of the homes portrayed in the simulation was conceptually designed to fit into the site as much as possible.

¹ Visual simulations are graphic depictions of future conditions and vary in accuracy depending on the methods used in their creation. Some renderings are only visual impressions of a future condition, like a painting. Others may be produced using computer aided design (CAD) drawings to produce highly accurate three-dimensional models of the proposed structure including views from the same distance and angle as selected viewpoint.

² Simulation photography typically uses a 50 mm lens to reproduce a view more typical of human vision, rather than a telephoto. The telephoto lens in this case does provide the opportunity to see more detail in the distance.



Figure 1: Viewpoint 3 Photo Location and Cone of View. Distance to the proposed visible homes (in white) is about 1,000'. The proposed ridgeline access road enters from the top left corner. A driveway and retaining wall would be behind the proposed structures. Grading and landscaping would be visible at the base of the new structures. Homes to the right on lots 40-43 are not within the cone of view and the most distant home would not be visible as it would be behind the ridgeline.

A three-dimensional model of each home concept was created in Sketch-up software and then placed into Google Earth, for viewing from Viewpoint 3, as shown in Plan view above. A photograph of the models from Viewpoint 3 was then inserted into the existing conditions photo, using identifiable reference points as guides.

Each home is approximately 6,300 square feet (including garage), divided between two stories. The homes would be graded into the hillside to keep the overall profile low, below the 18-foot allowable maximum, and the graded/ landscaped area on the front side (facing Paradise Drive) would be minimized. The design features include driveway access from behind, so as not to be visible from Paradise Drive. The driveway access would require construction of retaining walls between the

homes and the cul-de-sac above. The low profile design may also contribute to keeping the third house (on lot 18) behind the ridgeline and out of view.

The simulation from Viewpoint 3 shows the homes with minor naturalized landscaping in front, as if the homes had been in place for years. There is no evidence of disturbed soil, grading or formalized landscaping in front. In the simulations, the residences block the view of the retaining walls. The cul-de-sac above is not visible in the simulation, and grading for the ridgeline road is just out of view. If the road remains unscreened, for example by low shrubs near the roadway, then cars traveling (particularly at night with headlights) or parked on the Ridge Road are very likely to be visible on the ridgeline.

It should be noted that lots 40 – 43 will be visible at a much closer distance from Paradise Drive. At the very bottom of the Viewpoint 3 simulation, the driveway leading to these four lots would briefly be visible. These lots do not affect views of the ridgeline, but the driveway would be visible at the end of bottom of this view from Paradise Drive. This relationship is more evident in Figure 1, showing the cone of view included in Viewpoint 3.



Figure 2: Google photo from approximate Viewpoint 3 photo location. The red box shows the area of the telephoto cone view within the neighborhood setting.

Summary: The simulation from Viewpoint 3 is a relatively accurate portrayal of a design intended to minimize visual impacts from this location. The design features incorporated into the design are successful at keeping the appearance of homes away from the ridgeline. The visual effect is that the homes are subordinate to the ridgeline which is positive, particularly in contrast to a potentially dominant condition. The darker colors selected for the structure avoid contrast, generally blending with the hillside, further reinforcing the subordinate condition. The visual effect of grading a new road on the ridgeline and future cars accessing the 27 sites (out of view to the left) above the two visible sites is not portrayed in the simulation and those impacts are likely to be visible, particularly at night. Night lighting, and particularly perimeter lighting, if allowed, would also be visible.



Source: Vallier Design Associates, 2009

Enclosure 1: Viewpoint 3 Visual Simulation of Proposed View from Paradise Drive



Source: Vallier Design Associates, 2009

Enclosure 2: Viewpoint 3 Existing View from Paradise Drive