

On May 7, the DRC met to continue their review of the Village at Squaw Valley Appendix B Design Guidelines. The general topic under discussion was Mass, Scale, and Heights.

Coming into this meeting, the Committee has agreed on two Design Standards

1. Building Shape

The buildings, if having more than 4 retail/residential floors above the ground level, must not appear as monolithic blocks – there must be variations in roofline with step downs and shorter sections (for example, at shoulders).

There must also be variation in exterior treatment to give 3 dimensionality.

2. Building Height Arrangement

Buildings shall be arranged in VC-C with generally shorter buildings to the North and taller ones to the South, with a one floor minimum difference in max height between “steps”.

The discussion then picked up with the question of height limits – should there be a height limit lower than 108 ft for any of the lots. While the discussion was lively, with opinions voiced on both sides of the question, the consensus was that, in the proper location, having buildings to 108 ft was acceptable. The rationale was that this puts the taller buildings closer to the mountains, and preserves the view line over them to be something similar to (actually slightly better than) the view line over the current IntraWest Village. The Committee then approved the following Design Standard (Caution: the final wording of the adopted Design Standards must wait on publication of the official minutes of the meeting. The wordings given here are very close, but perhaps not exact.)

3. Height Limits

The “steps” in Height Arrangement Standard for VC-C shall be arranged starting from nominally 72’ (or less) to the North and stepping to nominally 108’ (or less) to the South, with a one floor difference in max height between “steps”.

Step boundaries must be recognizable, but may be irregular

(A diagram was shown that gave an example of step boundaries. This diagram clearly showed that the Mountain Activity Center was clearly the outlier, with its 108 ft height being mostly in a 84 ft step. This was addressed a bit later.

The next item was Relationship/Compatibility to the Existing Village. There had been a statement about the height relationship between the current IntraWest Village/Red Wolf and the proposed new Village in the previous Specific Plan, but it was removed in this newest version. There are two places where the proposed Village comes close to the IntraWest Village or Red Wolf. The first is between the current Conference Center and Building 3 of the proposed Village. With the Conference Center at ~72 ft, Building 3 will rise about 14 ft higher, for a portion of its height, within a distance of 100 ft of the Conference Center. The second is between Red Wolf and Building 1A, but this distance exceeded 100 ft.

After discussion about architectural latitude, the committee approved the following Design Standard:

4. Relationship to Existing Village

Portions of new construction in VC-C within 100' of existing residential buildings (including IntraWest Village and Red Wolf Lodge) must not exceed the height of that existing building by more than 20 ft.

The next topic, while entitled First Visual Impact, focused on the MAC building, and its height and mass in relation to the other buildings around it. There is already in the Appendix B a design standard that reads...

B.5.3 Standard - Massing of any building should respond to the size, setting, and environmental characteristics of the site

Public Discussion agreed that the current location puts the MAC out of character with its surroundings, and suggestions were made to move it to the OVI area or more to the South within the VC-C. After discussion within the committee it was decided that no further Design Standards are needed regarding this topic - that the Height Arrangement and Height Limit Standards will suffice.

The next item raised was the impact on the view lines of the parking structure railings, for which there is a design objective

B-14: B.3.9 Elevated parking surfaces shall have perimeter rail and cladding at least five feet tall to minimize vehicle headlight spillage from the structure

The Sr Planner for the County explained that he has insisted on 42" of opaque cladding to block headlight glare from reaching the Village, and that there is code for the total height of the railing. After discussion, the Committee agreed on the following Design Standard to replace B.3.9

5. Parking Structure Railings

Elevated parking surfaces shall have perimeter rail no more than six feet tall, with the lower 42" of the railing being opaque.

The last topic taken up by the Committee was to look at the VC- Neighborhood and to decide how that area should be considered with regard to the Mass, Scale, and Heights Design Standards already adopted for VC-C. It was agreed that the Building Shape Standard and the Relationship Standard should apply pretty much as written. But concerned comments focused on Lot 13, which allows buildings up to 96 ft tall immediately as you come into the parking lot on the north side of Squaw Creek across the street from the Old Fire Station. While most lots in Appendix B have polygons showing the maximum footprint of the buildings, Lot 13 has none – meaning the buildings can be any size and be located anywhere.

In discussing the lower height limits of in lot 14, Chevis Hosea said that this was an accommodation for the residents of OVI.

After considerable discussion the Committee adopted the following Design Standards:

6. VC-N

Buildings in VC-N must abide by the Building Shape Design Standard.

The Height Arrangement Standard does not apply in VC-N except for Lot 13, which must have a step height arrangement going from 72 ft at the eastern edge of the lot to a maximum of 96 ft at the center.

It would be preferred if buildings in VC-N were 100' from the closest existing.

That concluded the Mass, Scale, and Heights section of the Appendix B review. The next session will focus on East Parcel. At the end of the meeting, one of the residents near this parcel asked if the County/SVSH would consider flipping the arrangement of dormitories and parking lot back to the way it was originally. This will be considered at the next meeting in June.

In July, SVSH has asked they have a chance to respond to all the Design Standard recommendations that SRC has made.