

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO  
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT  
CURRENT PLANNING SECTION**

**Exemptions from Design Review for Districts with a  
Coastside Design Review Committee**

Date: September 24, 2015

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The Design Review Ordinance allows the Design Review Administrator to exempt items from Design Review that are minor in nature and will not have an adverse effect on compliance with the Design Review standards, or Zoning Regulations applicable to the property.

**Exemptions from the Design Review Committee's review do not exempt development from any applicable Design Review standards.**

Listed below are guidelines for exempting projects from the formal Design Review process for residential development in Miramar, El Granada, Moss Beach, and Montara. Should you have any questions, please see Dennis Aguirre, the Design Review Officer.

**I. PROJECTS WHICH MAY BE EXEMPTED BY COUNTER STAFF**

- A. The following Design Review Exemptions (DRX) may be processed over the counter by staff at the time the building permit is processed. No Design Review application or fee is required.

**EXEMPTED ITEMS  
(RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT)**

**QUALIFYING CRITERIA**

1. Doors/Windows

Replacement (only) of doors or windows where size does not change and framing style matches that of surrounding existing doors/windows.

2. Decks

Decks equal to or less than 18" are always exempt; decks made of wood and equal to 24" from existing grade, setbacks maintained (see Zoning Regulations, Section 6406.c).

EXEMPTED ITEMS  
(RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT)

QUALIFYING CRITERIA

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| 3. Detached Accessory Structures   | Prefabricated, less than 100 sq. ft., setbacks and regulations maintained, not visible from the front street.   |
| 4. Hot Tubs  | Exterior siding made of wood.   |
| 5. In-Ground Pools, Spas   | All features must be in-ground or less than 18" above ground, setbacks maintained, follow policy for mechanical equipment structures (see Policy Book, p. 58). Structures large enough for mechanical equipment <u>only</u> are exempt. |
| 6. Relocation Revisions of Minor Structures  | Relocation of approved plans, follow any applicable policy and regulation.  |
| 7. Remove/Replace Exterior Siding  | Replacing original stucco or wood, or replacing stucco with wood.   |
| 8. Reroofs   | Non-reflective colors.  |
| 9. Retaining Walls (Wood Only; Natural Stone O.K., Check with Design Review Officer) | Follow fence height limits within setbacks (see Zoning Regulations, Section 6412).  |
| 10. Stairs/Landings  | Made of wood, uncovered, setbacks maintained (see Zoning Regulations, Section 6406.c), and avoid unenclosed spaces beneath structures.  |
| 11. Skylights  | No architectural features.  |
| 12. Underground Utilities  | --  |
| 13. Wood Burning Stoves  | Exterior pipe non-reflective (anodized).  |
| 14. Satellite Dishes   | 18" or less, not visible from street, and not exceed height requirement.  |
| 15. Solar Panels   | Roof mounted panels only.   |

EXEMPTED ITEMS  
(COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT)

QUALIFYING CRITERIA

*Minor remodeling to existing development that is visible from a public way.*

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| 1. Reroofs               | <i>Non-reflective colors.</i>   |
| 2. Skylights             | <i>No architectural features; does not extend beyond roof plane over 18".</i> |
| 3. Underground Utilities | --  |

**II. PROJECTS WHICH ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE EXEMPTION PROCESS**

A. The following projects are eligible for the formal Design Review Exemption process. Although these projects may be minor in nature, the Design Review Committee requires the Design Review exemption process because these projects have the potential for creating a significant visual, privacy, or noise impact. If any of these projects involve issues that may affect conformance with the Design Review standards, a standard hearing with the Design Review Committee may be required.

ELIGIBLE ITEMS FOR EXEMPTION FROM DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS (RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT)

QUALIFYING CRITERIA

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| 1. Bay/Greenhouse Windows  | Setbacks maintained (see Policy Book, pp. 108-108a).   |
| 2. Doors/Windows   | Addition of doors or windows or replacement where doors/windows change in size. Style and design shall match or be compatible with surrounding existing doors/windows.   |
| 3. Remove/Replace Existing Siding                                    | Replacing original wood siding to stucco (replacing a colored wood siding to a natural wood siding requires no formal DRX).  |
| 4. Additions Attached to the Main Residence:<br><br>First Floor Only | Maximum of 150 sq. ft., with no additional exterior access, colors, materials and roofline match existing residence, setbacks maintained. Additions and detached buildings beyond footprint shall be reviewed by the Design Review Officer to determine exempt status. |
| 5. Satellite Dishes  | Follow Policy Book, p. 176.  |

ELIGIBLE ITEMS FOR EXEMPTION  
FROM DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS  
(RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT)

QUALIFYING CRITERIA

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| 6. Trellises, Gazebos   | Lot coverage and setbacks maintained, complies with Design Review standards.                                     |
| 7. Decks Under 24", or Replacement of Existing Legal Decks, or Decks of up to 150 sq. ft. | Setbacks maintained, unenclosed areas addressed, screening may be required.                                      |
| 8. Retaining Walls (Not Wood)   | Must be stone or interlocking rough stone-like materials. Case-by-case review under the Design Review standards. |