

**Carmel-  
by-the-Sea**

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**City Council June 30th - Consent Topic #4 FireZone Maps Approval - empty handed.****Nancy Twomey**

Sun, Jun 29, 2025 at 6:12 AM

To: City of Carmel-by-the-Sea <cityclerk@ci.carmel.ca.us>, Anna Ginette <aginette@ci.carmel.ca.us>, Andrew Miller <miller@monterey.org>, kwyssocki@ci.carmel.ca.us

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I understand that these maps, for various reasons, must be approved by Council on June 30th. I also understand that given major fires throughout our state in recent years - that there is urgency in taking aggressive preventative steps in any populated area - to save lives and property.

If I could attend this Monday City Council meeting I would PULL this item to publicly express my continued concerns on the guidance gaps for this Fire Prevention implementation as we also need to preserve our Village and its character. Please accept the following as my virtual "public comments" on this agenda item.

- As property owners - we've received the Monterey Fire notice to do a "self-assessment" checklist, do the steps and sign and return the form - without any specific guidance other than reaching out to our forestry department regarding trees. What is the guidance from the city on what we should be doing with these and what is asked of us?
- As locals, in the City's Social Media/Facebook notices about Monterey Fire conducting Village "inspections" to all property in the High and Very High areas are already underway between now and September. This is great. But we've not heard from our City on any pointers on how to respond to an inspection and the findings. Please advise.
- As prior City Council meetings some generalized guidance on 5ft Defensible Space and Home Hardening has been provided - but nothing specific to preserving our Village look/feel. What are we to expect now or next?
- We do not have specific guidance that protects our Forest/Trees - on Public or Private property. Trees are not our enemy - they benefit us all - but they require maintenance to thrive.
  - What is the City going to do regarding Public trees - that may or may not go beyond the existing plans?
  - How to preserve our precious (and at risk) forest - that is essential to our community - while we respond to these Fire Prevention steps?
  - What do residents do on their Private trees (beyond the minimal removal of branches next to chimneys). Be specific on what requires permitting or does not require permitting, please.
  - When, if ever are we going to educate homeowners on their responsibility tied to their trees? This really must be a routine effort (as ownership changes are also routine).
  - Will the upcoming Updated Forest Master Plan take into account any new guidance with regard to Fire/WildFire prevention?
  - Of course, there are added efforts needed surrounding Forest Hill Park, Mission Train Nature Preserve and other heavily forested areas of our Village. Where/how do you anticipate addressing these needs?
- We do not have specific guidance on 5 ft defensible space that will protect our village charm (current asks are to remove vegetation within 5ft, remove wood chip ground cover etc).
  - Do we assume that pebbles are an immediate OK ground cover replacement for wood chips with or without permitting?
  - Should we be removing shrubs next to our homes on our own? (or with the assistance of our landscaping service - if we have it)
  - Is there going to be a new/updated landscaping ordinance (if yes, then when is it expected?) and if/when will a landscaping plan and permitting be required?
- Will other fire prevention home hardening items including non flammable fencing touching your homes, fire resistant siding, encasing eaves, ember resistant vents be expected to be covered in other ordinances, guidelines or otherwise?

Please excuse some of the redundancy and stating the obvious. As previously requested in emails, many of these fit a longer term plan, but some are relevant NOW. And no doubt our City (Staff & Council) resources are spread thin, but more must be done on the communications front to guide our Village on these Fire Prevention efforts. We appropriately are being pushed to take action now by our Monterey Fire teams. Can this be a standing report in each City Council, or what is possible? Our Village has questions but few answers from our City Hall.

Thank you for your consideration and for everything you do.

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**Nancy Ann Twomey**