

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 16, 2024

To: John Moren
San Mateo County Harbor District

From: Jeff Peters, Questa Principal
Margaret Henderson, ASLA

Subject: Use and Danger of Spread of Non-native Landscape Plants at Pillar Point RV Public Restroom and Greenspace Project.

This Memo is in response to email comments made by Chris Rogers (El Granada) to Melanie Hadden (San Mateo County Harbor District) dated July 13, 2024 regarding the use of non-native turf grass and shade trees at the Pillar Point Public Restroom Project and the danger of these spreading outside of the Project limits.

At the bottom of this Memo is the original recommendation from the California licensed Landscape Contractor (Catmex) on this subject. The original design called for *Delta No Mow Native Sod*, but the *West Coast Turf Hillside Fine Fescue* was requested and substituted by the Landscape Contractor due to availability, performance and durability in this coastal environment. They recommended this sod, which is used extensively by the City of San Francisco. The sod is a mix of three types of fescue, none of which appear on the Cal-IPC list. Other species recommended by the email author have been planted throughout the project.

The design directive since the beginning of this project was to have a grassy mound within the Greenspace project, and this has been the concept presented at public meetings and in illustrations since project inception. Recognizing that this area would be heavily used, including frequent foot traffic on the landscaped mound, durability and maintenance of the public space are critical components. This is a small, contained area intended for intense public use, and not a habitat restoration project. Small grass areas are consistent with MWELo guidelines.

The *Arbutus unedo* was substituted during construction due to a lack of availability of tree-form *Ceanothus* that was specified, and the need for shade-forming tree species for the site. Species substitutions are common in construction projects, especially when timely project completion is essential.

The risk or danger of spread of the non-native plants and turf that was installed at the project site to surrounding natural areas is very low for the following reasons:

- 1) The low maintenance fescue sod will be maintained by Harbor District staff before it reaches the seed head stage of growth. Spread through seed dispersal is the most likely means of having unwanted non-native grass becoming established in nearby natural areas.
- 2) The project site is not located near any natural areas with native coastal prairie grasslands that could be impacted from the use of non-native landscape plants. The project site is bounded by the Pillar Point RV Park with its paved areas and existing landscaping soon to be replaced with new native plant landscaping. This new landscaping will be intensely managed by the RV Park, who can remove an un-likely volunteer starts of non-native grasses and weeds. The Coastal Trail, Pillar Point breakwater, bay waters of Half Moon Bay, and Surfers Beach are located to the southwest, south and southeast respectively and do not provide suitable conditions for the unlikely spread of non-native fescue. The Cabrillo Highway, with a wide non-native and weedy landscape strip is to the immediate north. The urban area of Granada is located further to the north. None of these areas are at risk or in danger from the use of some non-native landscape plants.

Although Questa does not necessarily recommend this, If it is decided that it is appropriate to replace the non-native turf with a native low mow turf (or other landscape surface) and replace the 3 trees with native trees, then late fall (late October or early November) would be the best time to do this. This will be after the summer peak public users of the facility is over and when conditions are more suitable for re-planting.

The Landscape Contractor is responsible for landscape maintenance, including plant and irrigation system repair and replacement per the Harbor District contract for 180 days. The contract landscape terms would extend through the fall and early winter months and the work could be completed by them during this period, or by Harbor District staff at a later time.

Here is the email exchange with the Contractor on this subject:

From: Liam Moran-Minerva <liam@minervaconstructioninc.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2024 2:59:00 PM
To: Margaret Henderson
Cc: Jeffrey Peters; Noel-Minerva
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] 2178 Pillar Point - Submittal '32 90 00-001-001 - Fescue Turfgrass'

Hi Margaret,

I have highlighted that information from the document attached previously.
(<https://m.westcoastturf.com/>)

Features and Benefits

Color

- Beautiful deep green.

Texture

- The finest texture of all cool-season grasses.

Performance

- Slower growing and less invasive than other cool-season grasses.
- Slow growth means less fertilizer and mowing is required.
- Provides a native or natural look with infrequent or no mowing.
- Can be used in un-maintained areas as a very low- or no-maintenance grass.
- Can survive on less water and is less prone to dormancy during drought.
- Fares well under trees and won't compete for water and nutrients.

Climate

- Thrives in cool to warm climates, USDA zones 3 to 8.

Shade Tolerance

- Good shade tolerant.

Maintenance

- Low level of maintenance required.

Mowing

- 2" to unmowed.



Catmex believe this is a superior product to the Delta No Mow Sod and is used for all SF Rec and Park work as well as stadiums along the west coast.

Below is an image of sod after being newly installed and was received as seen. Catmex's vendor have warned about use of this sod due to many problems.



Best regards,

Liam.



Liam Moran | Minerva Construction, Inc.

LBE # CMD102116915 | SBE # 2010984

Cell: 415-991-1127

Main Office:

1485 Bayshore Blvd, # 151
San Francisco, CA 94124

From: Margaret Henderson <MHenderson@questaec.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2024 2:45 PM

To: Jeffrey Peters <JPeters@questaec.com>; Liam Moran-Minerva

<liam@minervaconstructioninc.com>; Noel-Minerva <noel@minervaconstructioninc.com>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] 2178 Pillar Point - Submittal '32 90 00-001-001 - Fescue Turfgrass'

The specs call out Delta Native Mow Free, which is a mix of native species. For substitution, can you provide information on relative durability, climate and water use of the proposed sod?

Thanks,

Margaret Henderson ASLA
Landscape Architect 1689

From: Jeffrey Peters

Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2024 2:33:18 PM

To: Margaret Henderson

Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] 2178 Pillar Point - Submittal '32 90 00-001-001 - Fescue Turfgrass'

From: Liam Moran-Minerva <liam@minervaconstructioninc.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2024 1:42 PM

To: John Q Ware <John@ware-associates.com>; cari@ware-associates.com; Jeffrey Peters

<JPeters@questaec.com>; Lilé Troncoso-Ovalle <Lile@ware-associates.com>

Cc: Colette Forwards <ccurran@questaec.com>; Noel-Minerva <noel@minervaconstructioninc.com>;

Carl Nelson <cnelson@questaec.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2178 Pillar Point - Submittal '32 90 00-001-001 - Fescue Turfgrass'

Hi all,

Please find the following submittal attached:

'32 90 00-001-001 - Fescue Turfgrass'

Best regards,
Liam.



Liam Moran | Minerva Construction, Inc.
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