

ART JURY CORNER

Story Poles

As you travel around the Ranch you may notice wood or plastic poles with strings and ribbons strung between them located on various properties. You probably know by now that these are "story poles" required by the Art Jury for new construction. Although the poles are not pretty while they are on a property they do serve an important purpose not only for the Art Jury, but for applicants and neighbors as well.

Story poles are required for new construction of over 1500 square feet (sometimes less). Plans for the construction are submitted to the association, and through experience the Art Jury members develop skill in reading and interpreting the designer's plans. The story poles are not intended to show the exact, detailed appearance of the building(s) but rather to depict, on the property, the project's prominence on the site. The Art Jury continually strives to maintain Rancho Santa Fe's traditionally understated appearance, by limiting a project's visual prominence as viewed from both the road and neighboring properties. The only, truly accurate way to determine a project's visibility from various vantage points is to view the story poles in the field. It is better for the community, if the Art Jury can know exactly what a project's prominence is (or isn't) before any decisions are made.

In addition to being a tool for the Art Jury to use in its decision making process, the story poles have been a great aid to neighbors to let them be aware of a project's proximity and prominence from their home. The Association frequently receives calls from members in response to story poles being erected on a neighboring property. For this reason alone, the story poles are a great service to the membership.

The story poles are also a benefit to the applicants themselves, most of whom are not accustomed to reviewing architectural plans. Occasionally, applicants will have their architect revise plans after seeing the poles erected on their property. Owners may see that the home is situated differently on a lot than they previously imagined or they may determine that the home needs to be revised to take better advantage of a view.

It is the Art Jury's hope that by explaining the benefits of the story poles for the various involved parties as well as for the community as a whole that there will be greater understanding, and perhaps patience with, the story poles located in the Ranch. The Art Jury requests that after a project has received an approval that the owners be considerate of the community and remove the poles from the property. Occasionally, an owner will forget to remove the story poles and the Association must remind them to do so. If you think you see a set of story poles that has been up longer than necessary, please call the Association to bring it to the staff's attention, it is not the Art Jury's intent to have these helpful tools become a community nuisance.