

Midcoast Community Council

An elected Municipal Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors

Serving 12,000 coastal residents

Post Office Box 248, Moss Beach, CA 94038-0064

<http://mcc.sanmateo.org>

Neil Merrilees
Chair

Len Erickson
Vice-Chair

Leonard Woren
Secretary

Deborah Lardie
Treasurer

David Vespremi

April 12, 2010

President Rich Gordon and Members,
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

Re: Board of Supervisors Meeting of April 13, 2010
Item 11: Consideration of the Midcoast Local Coastal Program (LCP) Update

Dear President Gordon and Members of the Board,

The Midcoast Community Council (MCC) thanks the Board of Supervisors for the opportunity to comment on the final amendment process for the LCP update. We acknowledge the considerable effort put in over several years by current and past members of your board, current and past members of our council and the staffs of both the County and the California Coastal Commission. We also acknowledge members of the public and countless other interested groups, private and public, who have given their time to this effort.

In this spirit we want to open our comments by noting that two of the four options proposed by county staff, rejecting of the proposed changes and starting an alternative LCP update are not in the best interests of the community. They should be removed from consideration.

The MCC's position is that the amendments provide strong support to maintaining the quality and character of our area. Consequently we recommend the adoption of the amendments, the first option proposed in the staff report. This position is aligned with the purposes the MCC adopted to fulfill its charter from the Board of Supervisors. Key elements include the preservation of the rural small-town character of the Midcoast by protecting the existence of agricultural lands, commercial fishing activities and the natural marine environment; maintaining the coastal protections afforded by the County Local Coastal Plan; and seeking to manage growth in a manner consistent with the **present character** (emphasis added) of our area.

The MCC recognizes that the complexities involved in the extended LCP update process leads to points that will require additional analysis and fine tuning. We note the following points for consideration. We believe that these points can be reviewed and

submitted as minor LCP amendments following formal approval and adoption of the amendments as approved by the Coastal Commission.

The MCC recommends:

1. Clarifying that the lot retirement requirement does not apply when issuing a Conditional Certificate of Compliance to legalize an existing, albeit not-legally-created, lot.
2. Maintaining support for coastal priority development and the proposed residential cap. In addition, weight should be given to non-priority commercial development. This type of development is important and beneficial to the community, both in providing needed services and in lowering traffic impact.
3. Continue reviewing the public works process, because in places as defined by the commission, it appears too cumbersome and interdependent to be an effective model for actual planning and growth of diverse and interconnected elements. Further clarification and flexibility is needed.
4. Reviewing wells and water is complex and the mention of a new report that has not been reviewed makes final comment difficult. Until such a report is finalized and accepted, we feel it is appropriate to not allow further residential development relying on private wells. The commission-approved language does this. That said the board should push staff for release of a comprehensive, accurate report on water supply to provide a sound basis to judge the efforts of the responsible agencies, and to determine which areas of the Midcoast, if any, can safely support additional private residential wells during extended periods of drought.
5. The re-zoning of the bypass lands is appropriate. The Commission should provide clear objectives and look to the County to provide and manage the plan

We acknowledge that this effort will require more serious discussion. We expect that other similar considerations, motivated by the goal of achieving a best result, may be brought forward. In fact individual members of the MCC will individually present further considerations. For this reason, if your Board chooses not to approve the Coastal Commission approved modifications as we recommend above, we support consideration of an additional time extension (no more than 4 – 6 months) to work out these issues. If this route is taken staff should be given very specific guidance, to bring closure to this matter within the tenure of the current board.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

s/Neil Merrilees
Chair, Midcoast Community Council