

PILLAR RIDGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
175 Culebra Ln., Moss Beach, CA 94038

May 18, 2009

San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

Re: Midcoast M-1 Zoning Request

Amend County Zoning District M-1 (light industrial) to lower the building height limit to 36 ft. for the Midcoast Update Project Area.

Dear Supervisors:

On the Midcoast, existing industrially-zoned land consists of:

1. Half Moon Bay Airport (345 acres) zoned M-1 (airport & light industrial)
2. West of Airport St. (47 acres) zoned M-1 (light industrial)
3. most of Princeton (39 acres), zoned W (marine-related manufacturing/service)

Photos and zoning map are attached and at <http://www.pillarridge.com/M1.html>.

The **Airport** is an essential facility on the isolated Coastside. This long stretch of open land has agricultural fields amidst its access roads and runway, allowing views of the ocean and coastal bluff from the Coast Highway. In recent years the lands bordering the Midcoast M-1 zone to the east and west have been purchased by POST and preserved as open space, Rancho Corral de Tierra to the east and Pillar Point Bluff preserve to the west.

West of Airport St. the M-1 zone is divided into two areas, with Pillar Ridge Manufactured Home Community in the middle. In the northern area, all the undeveloped land is now part of POST's Pillar Point Bluff preserve. Existing development at 850 & 860 Airport St. at the NE corner of Pillar Ridge Community has indoor light industrial uses in warehouse-style buildings less than 28 feet in height. An undetermined former industrial use on the property led to ground-water contamination affecting Pillar Ridge wells requiring an expensive water treatment system.

The southern M-1 area west of Airport St. is undeveloped. One parcel contains a bulk propane business which has been noted to be a hazardous use next to residential, though it is an essential supplier to rural areas on the Coastside. The other parcel is the site of the proposed Big Wave Office Park which contains wetlands and borders the County riparian and fresh water marsh that flows directly into Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, an Area of Special Biological Significance. The County's policy is that once a development project has been initiated, any zoning changes would not apply.

The **H-1 zone**, Limited Highway Frontage, allows **mobilehome parks**. Built in 1963, Pillar Ridge is now owned by a non-profit, has 227 single-story manufactured homes, and is the only developed affordable housing site on the unincorporated Midcoast. The original County LCP, adopted in 1981, designates the existing El Granada Mobile Home Park (its former name) as an affordable housing site and

prohibits its demolition or displacement. The tallest structure in the community is the 17-foot tall community center which sits on a grade 6 feet up the hillside which gives the building an apparent height of 23 feet when viewed from a distance.

The Pillar Ridge community is directly abutted on the north and south by M-1 zoning. On the east, only about half the community's width has frontage on Airport St. due to two M-1 parcels directly abutting Pillar Ridge on that side too.

Though this is a Medium High Density Residential, Designated Housing Site in the General Plan, the County did not consider H-1 zoning as residential when approving a new industrial building at adjoining 860 Airport St. in 2005. The County allowed the structure with less than 5 ft rear setback because, they noted, "M1 zoning has no rear setback requirement adjacent to zoning other than residential, and the rear property [*Pillar Ridge*] is zoned G-1" [*no such thing, must have meant H-1*].

The **M-1 zoning regulations** allow many uses that are outdated or unsuitable for the Coastsides, such as manufacturing steam engines or automobiles. Building standards include a 75-foot height limit and no setback requirements (except 3 ft side and 6 ft rear next to residential zones). Even these very limited setbacks do not help to protect the residents of Pillar Ridge because the community is not considered to be in a residential zone.

We ask for an M-1 zoning update specific for the Midcoast to protect the Pillar Ridge neighborhood from being walled off behind much taller buildings, to protect its residents from hazardous or disturbing neighboring uses, and to protect the vistas and sensitive environment of this long narrow strip of mostly undeveloped land.

- **We ask for a reduction in the maximum building height to 36 ft**, the same as allowed in the Princeton "W" waterfront zone.
- **We ask for a 28 foot height limit west of Airport St.**, and more generous **setback requirements** defined to include and protect the residents of Pillar Ridge. All existing development in the Coastsides M-1 zone is under 28 feet in height. The "CCR" Coastsides Commercial Recreation District allows 36 feet west of Denniston Creek in Princeton, but 28 feet east of the creek.
- **We ask that the POST Pillar Point Bluff portion of the M-1 be rezoned to RM-CZ** to reflect its open space status.

Sincerely,

Lisa Ketcham, President
Pillar Ridge Homeowners Association

enc. photos & zoning map (also at <http://www.pillarridge.com/M1.html>)

cc Ruby Pap, California Coastal Commission
Midcoast Community Council