

Memo

To: San Mateo County Planning and Building Division
From: MidCoast Community Council
Date: 3/23/99
Re: Comments on CCWD's CDP Application for El Granada Pipeline Replacement Project – Northern Section

Recommendation:

Deny approval of Coastal Development Permit. The project does not comply with the policies of the Local Coastal Program. The project does not conform to the Coastal Act.

In addition, the applicant needs to document the status of the coordination of other required agency permits and reviews i.e. Army Corp. of Engineers, Fish & Game, etc. before any County decision is made on this project application.

“All development in the Coastal Zone requires either a Coastal Development Permit or an exemption from Coastal Permit requirements. For a permit to be issued, the development must comply with the policies of the Local Coastal Program and those ordinances adopted to implement the LCP”. (Terry Burnes, Planning Administrator, Introduction to Local Coastal Program Polices, San Mateo County)

Zoning Regulations Section 6328.12 Standards for Application Review

The officer, commission or board acting on a Coastal Development Permit shall review the project for compliance with: all applicable plans, policies, requirements and standards of the Local Coastal Program, as stated in Sections 6328.19 through 6328.30 of this Chapter; the County General Plan; requirements of the underlying district; and other provisions of this Part.

Zoning Regulations Section 6328.14

Approval of a Coastal Development Permit shall be conditioned as necessary to ensure conformance with and implementation of the Local Coastal Program

Zoning Regulations Section 6328.15

Findings. A Coastal Development Permit shall be approved only upon the making of the following findings:

- a.) That the project, as described in the application and accompanying materials required by Section 6328.7 and as conditioned in accordance with Section 6238.14, conforms with the plans, policies, requirements and standards of the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program
- b.) that the project conforms to specific findings required by policies of the San Mateo County Local Coastal Plan

(General Plan) pg. 10.44 C. Coordinating water supplies with land use plans

Ensuring the capacity of public water systems correspond to the level of development promoted in the land use plan is a key strategy in the Local Coastal Program. This coordinated approach supports land use decisions and allows for logical and orderly development.

How has the applicant demonstrated that the project complies with the LCP?

The main information being presented by CCWD is their reasons for expanding the pipeline: which includes leak reduction, increase of fire flow capacity, and operational flexibility in moving water up and down the Coastside. None of these reasons represents LCP compliance criteria or CDP acceptance criteria.

The County application gives no justification or reason for the replacement of the 10" pipe with one 156% larger. The claim that the pipeline expansion is needed to fix leaks conflicts with the fact that the most recent (3/98) CCWD water supply report indicates that system leakage is relatively insignificant (less than 5%). The County LCP allows for a 15% leakage loss on its numbers for Phase I and buildout capacity. The numbers used by CCWD are over-factoring supplying by 10%.

The claim that we have a fire flow problem conflicts with recent presentations, to the contrary, by the fire chief to the MCC. Chief Delgado stated for the record that no concern of fire fighting capacity exists at this time. He suggested that increased fire response capacity could be served simply by building larger holding tanks. The claim that expanding the main transmission pipeline is the quickest and most efficient way to handle any fire flow problem that may exist now or in the future, has not been seriously reviewed, or compared for effectiveness with what other districts do. The claim that the expanded pipe is needed to prevent the reserve tanks from emptying during several days of peak use was not related to the probability of the worst case scenario posed, or the fact that Coastside peak use is a relatively short weekend phenomenon.

LCP: Public Works Component (pg. 2.2)

*2.6 Capacity Limits

Limit development or expansion of public works facilities to a capacity which does not exceed that needed to serve buildout of the Local Coastal Program.

The project is titled, in writing, as a pipeline "replacement" project and thus has been misrepresented to the County, City of HMB, and to the public. The reality is that the expanded (16-inch diameter) pipeline has a flow area 2.6 times the existing (10-inch diameter) pipeline. The expansion is justified throughout the report by statements that the expansion is needed to "meet" buildout requirements", not maintenance requirements. Conformance of a project with the Coastal Act necessarily implies understanding of what the project consists of.

Capacity issues:

Current overall system transmission capability, even in drought conditions, is rated at 3,383 gpm in latest CCWD Water Supply Evaluation report (March, 1998 - Pg. II-3). In CCWD's calculations for sizing of the replacement pipeline (Appendix C of the Revised Environmental Study), the number used to for peak day usage at buildout for Half Moon Bay and the MidCoast is 3,331 gpm.

CCWD has stated that this pipeline would only deliver 54% of the water needed for current projected buildout in HMB and the MidCoast.

A system that currently has nearly the required capacity to support buildout is increasing its transmission capability by 156% (yet states that this will result in only 54% of the water it currently has? We would like clarification of this discrepancy.

The issue of the Frenchman's Creek pumping station also has contradictory reports: The Water Supply Evaluation report treats the imminent replacement of the pump as a standard part of the plan, while also mentioning the proposed 16" replacement pipeline. The studies in the Environmental Study talk about eliminating or minimizing the need for the pump. An important

consideration is that the replacement of the Frenchman's Creek Pump with a newer, higher capacity unit later would allow excessive amounts of water to be moved through the system if the 16" pipeline is installed.

Based on 3/98 CCWD Water Supply Evaluation Report and related reports: With current SFWD agreement and current CCWD transmission, treatment and distribution facilities, (1) the CCWD "safe yield" (reliable supply during drought) is 407 to 541 million gallons per year;
(2) the CCWD "normal yield" (avg. rain season) is 1066 million gallons per year;
(3) the CCWD projected demand for 1998 is 862 million gallons.

In short, development has already occurred beyond the safe yield.

2.12 Timing and Capacity of Later Phases (pg.2.4 – 2.5)

c. Establish the capacity by: (1) estimating the capacity needed to serve the land use plan at buildout, (2) considering the availability of related public works to establish whether capacity increases would overburden the existing and probable future capacity of other public works and (3) considering the availability of funds.

How does the applicant show that the project is being phased in accordance with the probable future capacities of other public works elements including highways (as required by LCP Policy 2.9 and 2.12, page 2.4)? Is this project part of a larger project? Why are they adding only a small section of line?

California Coastal Act, Section 30114, pg. 12

"Public works" means the following:

(b) All public transportation facilities, including streets, roads, highways, public parking lots and structures, ports, harbors, airports, railroads, and mass transit facilities and stations, bridges, trolley wires, and other related facilities...

By increasing the current 10-inch pipe to 16-inches, it will allow for servicing an increased number of residents, larger than our current highway infrastructure can tolerate.

"Especially during commute hours, SRs 1 and 92 have had high traffic volume to capacity (v/c) ratios since at least 1990, and are projected to have the highest v/c ratios in San Mateo County at LCP buildout. This translates into Caltrans Level of Service index F (prolonged gridlock ;average traffic speed for affected highway segment approaches zero ;SR 92 "F" segments up to 8 miles long)." [Ref. 1: 6/97 CCAG Traffic Modeling Study] See Coastside Capacity Report – Summary of Recent Countywide "Traffic Analysis" c

It is clear that we currently have no additional highway capacity – this dire situation will remain the same even with every foreseeable highway improvement taken into account. If we do not have the transportation capacity to service the current users of a 10-inch diameter pipe, how can our infrastructure accommodate the increased number of users being serviced by a sixteen-inch pipe?

How does this project conform to the California Coastal Act Section 3006.5? Is this project part of a larger project? What is the largest population this 16-inch pipeline is capable of serving? Is this part of the Phase II expansion project? If yes, what other parts are there? What are the cumulative impacts on growth of greatly expanded water transmission capabilities (even though obtaining additional water is not specifically included in this particular element of CCWD's buildout implementation plan)?

California Coastal Act, Section 3006.5 (pg.4)

The legislature further finds and declares that sound and timely scientific recommendations are necessary for many coastal planning, conservation, and development decisions and that the commission should, in addition to developing its own expertise in significant applicable fields of science, interact with members of the scientific and academic communities in the social, physical, and natural sciences so that the commission may receive technical advice and recommendations with regard to its decision making, especially with regard to issues such as coastal erosion and geology, marine biodiversity, wetland restoration, the question of sea level rise, desalination plants, and the cumulative impact of coastal zone developments.

“Piecemealing” : The project is not being presented in its full scope. There needs to be analysis of this entire project and how it relates to other proposed CCWD projects* and how they relate to growth patterns and infrastructure in the MidCoast and in Half Moon Bay.

CCWD is currently proposing a dual 10" transmission pipe line to the Moss Beach Highlands project at the north end of its district. Review of the capability of this line by an engineer of the Montara Sanitary showed a potential of service to a population far in excess of the 400 or so in this development - is the new transmission capacity of the replacement 16" pipe related to future service to the north of the existing district?

CCWD is proposing an increase in the storage capacity of Denniston reservoir. Is this increased capacity being considered in the project proposal? A reading of the reports and the negative declaration seems to indicate the pipeline replacement is not taking this increased generation and storage capacity in its analysis of water storage and supply.

The recent shutdown of two MTBE-contaminated wells operated by Citizens' Utilities, as well as Citizens' continuing shortage of water for the Montara-Moss Beach area has prompted discussion of a possible takeover of their water supply service by CCWD. Is the excessive capacity of the new pipe possibly planned for this purpose?

*Proposed CCWD projects:

- (1) Expansion of 3.5 mile El Granada Transmission Pipeline from 10 to 16 inch diameter (goes from 92 & 1 north) without an EIR;
- (2) Expansion of 2.5 mile Carter Hill West Pipeline from 12 to 24 inch diameter (goes from 92 & 1 south);
- (3) Planning to expand Denniston Creek Treatment Plant to the full capacity allowed by CCWD's state Water Rights Board permit
- (4) Planning to convert a 40 acre feet agricultural water storage pond (with a 10 foot high dam) east of the airport into a 500 acre feet storage reservoir with a 30 to 80 foot high dam;
- (5) Transferring the remaining "priority" water connections (~1000 unused ones left) into "non-priority" connections
- (6) An additional 305 connections of "non-priority" water connections
- (7) Studying "reclaimed" water (partially treated sewage) for agricultural and other non-residential uses which equals 100 million gallons per year

LCP: 2.13 Coordination with the City of Half Moon Bay (pg 2.5)

Coordinate with the City of Half Moon Bay's certified Local Coastal Program to take into consideration the policies of the City's LCP when determining (1) Phase I sewer capacity, and (2) when and how much to increase the capacity of all public works facilities after Phase I

How has the applicant demonstrated that there has been joint planning between the County, the City of Half Moon Bay, CCWD, and the other utility districts that serve the MidCoast? What communication has existed between the County and the city of HMB in ascertaining future water needs?

For example, there has been no recognition that since mid 1997, the HMB City Council has been engaged in an LCP revision process, which has already established a clear direction to significantly reduce the buildout target by at least 2500 houses; CCWD states they are using obsolete buildout numbers to size and justify the pipe expansion, "because that is all they have". According to HMB's city attorney, should a city or county take a set of consistent steps and direction to down zone they can start using the lower number even if it is not in the LCP as of yet.

The General Plan Review, in process in HMB, could very well result in slower growth rates and a reduced buildout number resulting in the shuffling of excess system capacity toward the Midcoast.

The issue of increasing the potential capacity for water, a critical step in enabling new development, needs to be considered and reviewed by a joint-planning session of the jurisdictions involved as recommended in the recent ABAG report: Coastside Subregional Planning Project (sponsored by the Association of Bay Area Governments)

How does this project meet the primary goals established by the Coastal Act? What information has been provided by the applicant to show how Coastal resources will be protected by the larger capacity the pipeline would provide? What are the cumulative impacts on growth of greatly expanded water transmission capabilities (even though obtaining additional water is not specifically included in this particular element of CCWD's buildout implementation plan)? What are the economic impacts on district resources and ratepayers, including cost, allocation and funding plans? How does this relate to the easement across the Mirada Surf property?

California Coastal Act Section 30001.5

The legislature further finds and declares that the basic goals of the state for the coastal zone are to:

- (a) Protect, maintain, and where feasible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the coastal zone environment and its natural and artificial resources.
- (b) Assure orderly, balanced utilization and conservation of coastal zone resources taking into account the social and economic needs of the people of the state....

Despite the request of HMB and MidCoast Citizens, HMB City Council and the Midcoast Community Council that an EIR be prepared, the CCWD declared a mitigated negative declaration. Compliance with the LCP is the only environmental review the MidCoast can use to review the environmental consequences of this major infrastructure expansion project.
See attached letter submitted to CCWD including Environmental Checklist and comments.

In particular, the environmental impacts of the County section of the project should be revisited in the Mirada Surf area, where the project would pass through an area that is currently under investigation regarding the extent of its wetlands (an area that is referred to as an "abandoned field" in the Negative Declaration). The earlier proposed Mirada Surf DEIR also brought out issues on the drainage problems inherent in the sections of El Granada this pipeline passes through, drainage problems not addressed in the CCWD Environmental document.

HMB's CDP for the Carter-Hill Pipeline is currently under appeal to the Coastal Commission, therefore it may be premature for the County to move ahead with approval of this CDP. CCWD and their engineer confirmed that if a segment of the pipe (of the entire project) was not increased in size, hydraulically, the project would not work.