

Midcoast Community Council

An elected Municipal Advisory Council to the
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
Serving 12,000 coastal residents

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24 November 1999

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Steve Scholl / Chris Kern
California Coastal Commission
45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000
San Francisco, CA 94103-2219

re: Coastal Commissioners' Field Trip – December 7, 1999 – San Mateo County

Dear Messrs. Scholl and Kern:

We are glad to see the Coastal Commissioners' interest in seeing controversial project areas within the San Mateo County and Half Moon Bay coastal zones. Numerous appeals and lawsuits involving the Coastal Commission, the County, and the City of Half Moon Bay are currently in progress. The issues surrounding each project are much clearer when viewed on site.

In order for the Commissioners to get a better visual understanding of the points now before them on appeals, we suggest that you include some or all of the following points of interest along the route of the proposed field trip scheduled for Tuesday, December 7, 1999.

Standing Committees

Parks and Recreation

Mary Hobbs, Chair

Planning and Zoning

Ric Lohman, Chair

Public Works

Joe Gore, Chair

Sites of significant importance occur along the route of the proposed Coastside County Water District El Granada Water Transmission Pipeline Replacement Project (on appeal; A-1-HMB-99-20 and corresponding County appeal). We suggesting viewing:

1. The Miramar community east and west of State Route 1 in the unincorporated Midcoast, currently being developed with closely-spaced, oversized houses, including some on substandard lots (less than 5,000 square feet) where the zoning minimum is 10,000 square feet. Nearby residents have reported recent apparent violations in the upper east side of the Miramar community involving non-permitted excavation and installation of pipe meant to drain an area included in the Mirada Surf Special Study Area.
2. Mirada Surf tree grove and associated wetlands areas. This area is in a County Scenic Corridor and is designated in the County's Land Use Plan component of the Local Coastal Program (LCP) as a Community Park. Finally, it is shown as a greenbelt separating the Miramar community from the Daniel Burnham historic community design of El Granada in the Montara – Moss Beach – El Granada Community Plan (which is included by reference into the County's LCP).
3. The site of a proposed single-family residence at 910 Ventura Street, which dramatically illustrates the problem of 25-foot wide substandard lots not only on the San Mateo Coastside, but also as a part of the antiquated 25-foot lot problem throughout the State of California. These lots were not counted separately when the LCP was certified and are not included in the buildout numbers. They do not conform to the County's zoning district minimum of 5,000 square feet. This project is the subject of litigation against the Coastal Commission.

The Commission may also want to visit these additional sites:

1. A "bed and breakfast" at 445 Mirada Road in Miramar, approved by the Commission based on geotechnical representations that the site would remain stable for the 50-year economic life of the project. Before construction was even completed, severe winter storms caused significant erosion along the creek banks (as the appellants to the Coastal Commission had predicted), and the owner placed rip-rap without seeking any permits. The County has subsequently required the illegal rip-rap to be removed. The Coastal Commission should not be placed in the position of approving coastal fortification to protect a project that was approved only because the owners represented that it would not need such fortification.
2. Pillar Point Harbor, where it is my understanding that a lawsuit has been filed regarding the recent Commission approval of the abalone aquaculture project. This is also the location of a project in the unincorporated Princeton community under appeal (by Commissioner Sara Wan) because of the inclusion of rip-rap in another waterfront development.
3. While driving south from Pacifica along State Route 1, the Commission will pass the vicinity of the proposed Devil's Slide tunnel project, where there are wetlands issues. This project may come before the Commission in the near future; no stop is necessary, but the proposed tunnel location can be identified during the journey as background information.
4. The Commission may also note significant continued agricultural use along Highway 1 outside of urbanized areas. The County of San Mateo is facing development proposals to convert these agricultural lands into min-ranchettes or even denser residential uses, taking agricultural land out of production. Again, there is no project currently on appeal, this would be a background item.

One or more members of the Midcoast Community Council, who are elected by the residents in the unincorporated coastal communities, would be pleased to accompany the Commission during the Field Trip to help answer questions that might arise about local conditions. These itinerary suggestions are mine as Chair, and have not been discussed by the full Council, but they reflect projects of significant concern.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Perkovic, Chair

via FAX