

Midcoast Community Council

*An elected Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
representing Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton, and Miramar*
P.O. Box 248, Moss Beach, CA 94038-0248 - www.MidcoastCommunityCouncil.org

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Chair Vice-Chair Secretary Treasurer

Date: August 26, 2015
To: SMC Planning Dept: Erica Adams, Camille Leung
Cc: Coastal Commission staff Renée Ananda, Nancy Cave, Jo Ginsberg
From: Midcoast Community Council/ Dave Olson, Chair

Subject: **PLN2015-00297 – La Costanera restaurant, 8150 Cabrillo Highway, Montara**
Project Description: *After-the-fact Use Permit Amendment (UP20-77) & Design Review Permit for the following changes to La Costanera restaurant: Use of two outdoor patios while maintaining the same number of seats (189) at the restaurant. In order for the Use Permit amendment to go into effect, a Coastal Development Permit is required under the permit authority of the CA Coastal Commission.*

Code Violations: Prior to allowing use of the outdoor patios, the applicant must fully address the long-standing, repeated code violations most recently described in correspondence from the County on July 10 and Coastal Commission on July 13. Undeterred, applicant's July 22 letter schedules future violations of their Use Permit and public access provisions of the Coastal Act on four weekends this fall. The same letter promised that trim paint (PLN2015-00179) would be restored to approved earth-tone color by August 10, but as of this date, roof vents, gutters, and downspouts, remain bright white. Stored items in the trash enclosure area should not extend above the screening wall, where a bright green tarp has been added that is visible from the scenic highway. Wet paving and puddles observed in the afternoon of August 20 indicate that washdown water at the trash enclosure area continues to be directed to the stormwater drain.

Upper patio construction included a wood retaining wall and fill to level the slope, which does not appear to have a building permit. How was drainage addressed? After-the-fact construction detail shows concrete pavers laid over a sand base. The pavers are individually sinking and tilted in places, particularly near the retaining wall, creating trip hazards and indication of further failure to come. The glass windbreak supports are attached to the retaining wall and at least one is visibly out of plumb. It is not clear whether it was constructed that way or the wall has started to lean. Before opening the upper deck to the public, these issues should be assessed and addressed with appropriate geotechnical review to ensure stability.

Appropriate outdoor lighting will be key for these patios overlooking the beach. Lighting must be downward directed and well shielded so as not to shine any direct rays off the patios. The lighting plan included in the planning referral includes roof-mounted floodlights for the parking lots which would shine outward across the parking lot and off the property, blinding pedestrians in the lot and motorists on the highway and adding light pollution to the surrounding area. There remain several floodlights in the landscaping around the building directed up at the sky or the building. It should be noted that the adjacent streetlight fixtures on PG&E poles (2 at north lot, 1 at south lot) are private fixtures billed directly to the property owner, and should be included in the lighting plan. These should be shielded downward-directed fixtures also. A good example of well-shielded and dispersed parking lot lighting is found at Sam's Chowderhouse on Highway 1 in El Granada.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these initial comments on the application.