

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

Chris Johnson **Lisa Ketcham** **Dan Haggerty** **Erin Deinzer** **Dave Olson** **Laura Stein** **Claire Toutant**
Chair Vice-Chair Secretary Treasurer

August 24, 2016

President Tom Mattusch and Commissioners
San Mateo County Harbor Commission
-- via email --

Subject: Pillar Point Harbor West Shoreline Trail Erosion Protection

In recent years the Midcoast Community Council (MCC) has written several letters¹ to the Harbor Commission conveying strong community support for erosion protection for the West Shoreline Trail, and for beach nourishment with harbor dredged material. The July 27, 2016, MCC meeting included a presentation² and discussion with Harbor District General Manager Steve McGrath of design alternatives proposed for shoreline protection for the West Trail. Only two alternatives were proposed by District consultants GHD: sheet pile wall or riprap.

The 2012 GHD Coastal Engineering Analysis³ for the West Trail includes an alternative for shotcrete soil-nail wall colored and sculpted to blend with adjacent natural bedrock. Nearby sculpted wall projects include Highway 92 and Devil's Slide. Similar shoreline projects include Pleasure Point seawalls in Santa Cruz. The advantages of this alternative are:

- Aesthetics – mimics shape and color of on-site bedrock
- Minimal footprint – conforms to existing bank
- Least disruptive to shoreline and adjacent areas with relatively small equipment operating from existing trail
- No backfill required – less future backfill maintenance after storm wave impact
- Repaired with less difficulty than other alternatives
- Quick construction time
- Low to moderate cost depending on surface treatment

If beach nourishment is determined to be infeasible for West Shoreline Trail erosion protection, and hard armoring is deemed necessary, the Midcoast community prefers the contoured/colored shotcrete soil-nail wall alternative in this location.

The preferred trail surface is to remain DG (decomposed granite), which is ADA compliant, and consistent with community preference for a natural trail experience.

Thank you for your consideration.

MIDCOAST COMMUNITY COUNCIL
s/Chris Johnson, Chair

cc: Harbor District General Manager Steve McGrath
Supervisor Don Horsley
County Parks Director Marlene Finley
CCC staff Jeannine Manna and Renée Ananda

¹ Attachments: MCC letters 6/12/13, 9/10/13, 7/9/14

² www.midcoastcommunitycouncil.org/storage/mtgs-com2016/2016-07-26-WestTrail-slides.pdf

³ www.midcoastcommunitycouncil.org/storage/issues/harbor-shoreline/2012-04-WestTrail-FisherGeotech.pdf

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Bob Kline
Secretary

Len Erickson
Treasurer

Dan Haggerty

Bill Kehoe

June 12, 2013

President Jim Tucker and Members
San Mateo County Harbor District Board of Commissioners
(via email)

Subject: **Pillar Point Harbor dredging and shoreline erosion**

The Midcoast Community Council (MCC) agendized a special meeting in order to attend and participate in the 5/29/13 Pillar Point Harbor Shoreline Erosion meeting organized by Commissioner Brennan. Report of this well-attended community meeting is attached. We fully support this kind of outreach. There is clearly much interest in the community about harbor issues and a desire for public participation.

The MCC requests that the Harbor District act on the following two items which were agreed to by the participants of the 5/29 meeting:

- Bring the 2012 **West Shoreline Access Trail** erosion study forward for discussion of alternatives and a plan for action.
- Identify and gain approvals of new dredge disposal sites with priority given to beach nourishment where it is urgently needed.

To avoid unnecessary future inconvenience and urgency, either from sediment intrusion or shoreline erosion, we urge you to start this process immediately. It is a given that permitting is complex and time consuming, so best to begin the process now.

The **West Shoreline Trail** is already partially roped off, and may be only one big storm away from total closure, yet the project has been put on hold for over a year. Now that Coastal Commission staff has finally been made aware of it, they agree this project may be a good match for disposal of harbor dredging. A proactive dredge disposal and beach nourishment plan would be environmentally friendly, aesthetically pleasing, and well received by the public. Let's start active planning for repurposing this sediment resource and for better managing our shoreline.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

s/Laura Stein, Chair
Midcoast Community Council

Enc. 5/29/13 meeting report

Cc: Coastal Commission staff Nick Dreher and Madeleine Cavalieri

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September 10, 2013

President Bernardo and Members
San Mateo County Harbor District Board of Commissioners
Via email

Subject: **SMC Harbor District Strategy for Dredging, Erosion Control, and Dredged Material Reuse at Pillar Point Harbor** (per 7/18/13 District Manager Memo)

The Midcoast Community Council's 6/12/13 letter to your Board communicated the strong community consensus and urgency for beach nourishment with harbor dredged material to address coastal erosion that has been greatly exacerbated by the construction of the outer harbor breakwater.

The District strategic goal of "beneficial use" of dredged material includes many uses other than beach nourishment, including filling inner harbor beach and tidelands for development, or mitigating for that loss (Beneficial Reuse sites BR 4 & 5). Public comment at well-attended community meetings in 2011 was overwhelmingly opposed to bulkhead, fill and development of Perched Beach. The District goal to use dredged material to expand the inner harbor Perched Beach, as mitigation for paving over the existing beach, is not what the community would consider beneficial use. The inner harbor area proposed (BR5) for dredged material placement is sensitive habitat and is not eroding. A condition of the amended Coastal Permit 133-76-A for the inner harbor was to preserve the inner harbor beach, not to fill and pave it.

We recommend that beach nourishment and public access be given highest priority in the strategic plan, and that in weighing project cost effectiveness, consideration be given to the public fund of property taxes which is the source of over half of District revenues.

West Shoreline Trail, as discussed at the 8/17/13 dredging strategy public meeting:

It is encouraging that repair and protection of the West Shoreline Trail will now formally be discussed with Coastal Commission staff. It remains a concern that the 2012 engineering study did not consider a beach nourishment alternative. At the meeting, the Harbor District General Manager said that there is no beach at the eroded trail segment; hence beach nourishment was not likely a practical option. There is indeed a beach at this location – it is just covered with dislodged rocks and rubble.

Romeo Pier: At the 8/17/13 public meeting, the General Manager stated, "Romeo Pier is falling down." This had been pointed out by the public at Harbor Commission meetings earlier this year, with reference to last winter's boat wreck at Ross' Cove, and concern for a similar marine debris disaster when the pier inevitably collapses. It has been over 15 years since the pier was closed as unsafe, with many of its pilings rotted away and dangling in the water. Its sole purpose is as future mitigation for a replacement pier in another location, which remains only a long-term District goal. We urge the District to bring forward a work plan and timeline to address this hazard.

Thank you for your consideration.

s/Laura Stein, Chair
Midcoast Community Council

Cc: Madeleine Cavalieri, North Central Coast District Manager, CCC
SMC Supervisors Don Horsley and Carole Groom

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Lisa Ketcham **Dave Olson** **Chris Johnson** **Laura Stein** **Erin Deinzer** **Dan Haggerty** **Joel Janoe**
Chair Vice-Chair Secretary Treasurer

July 9, 2014

President Parravano and Members
San Mateo County Harbor District Board of Commissioners
(via email)

Subject: **Pillar Point Harbor Community Priorities for District Strategic Business Plan**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide community input on Pillar Point Harbor priorities for the District's Strategic Business Plan. In the surrounding Midcoast communities, there is clearly much interest in harbor issues and a desire for meaningful public participation in decisions on development, activities, and conditions at Pillar Point Harbor.

The Midcoast Community Council (MCC) would like to reiterate our 3/26/14 request for a place on the proposed Strategic Business Plan Advisory Committee that will help to build consensus and community ownership of the project. We have the following initial comments, and include as examples, issues we have previously brought to your attention.

1. Establish a consistent realistic vision and follow through.

Over the last 15-20 years the District record of permits and consulting contracts reveals harbor development projects repeatedly started and stalled that may not be supported by the community and/or that the District can't afford. Scarce resources are spent on planning, design, and permitting for projects that are not (and likely should not be) built.

District Admin Office – Follow through on the 2004 Board decision to return within 5 years to permanent office space to be purchased or built on the coast. The office location does not require shoreline access and should not impact public coastal access or ocean views in any way.

2. Focus on timely and efficient maintenance of existing harbor facilities.

Anticipate maintenance needs and lengthy permitting processes. Plan ahead to timely and efficiently address them, thus avoiding reactive emergency repair operations.

West Shoreline Trail – This critical and popular coastal access has been partially closed since 2011, risking the unacceptable loss of emergency vehicle access. During this inexplicable delay, the opportunity was missed in 2013 to use launch ramp dredged material for beach nourishment. More pro-active planning and public input could possibly have avoided the emergency armoring approach.

Romeo Pier – The deteriorated, unstable condition of the pier has long been known. This is a public safety and environmental protection issue. We risk a marine debris disaster in the next big storm, which volunteers will no doubt have to do their best to clean up, as occurred after the 2012 boat wreck at Ross' Cove.

3. Prioritize public coastal access/views, environmental protection, and responsiveness and cooperation with the surrounding community. Consider the public fund of property taxes which is the source of over half of District revenues in weighing priorities and project cost effectiveness.

Beach nourishment with harbor dredging – There is strong community consensus and urgency for beach nourishment to address coastal erosion that has been greatly exacerbated by the construction of the outer harbor breakwater. The District priority of fill or mitigate for development with dredged material is at odds with the public priority of sand nourishment for eroding beaches.

Harbor Parking Fees – Do not charge for public access day-use parking. Paid harbor parking will result in the same parking overflow into the surrounding area that is caused by paid parking at Surfers' Beach day-use lot. The lot remains mostly empty while beachgoers park along the highway, adding to traffic congestion and safety concerns.

RV Park Restroom – Reopen to public use or discontinue day-use parking fee.

1998 RV Park lease terms require:

- Vehicle parking area for day-use visitor parking only (4.1.1).
- Repair & extension of existing restrooms to acceptable health & safety standards (8.2.1).
- Construction of barbeques, water fountains, trash receptacles for day-use area (8.26).

If the lease requirement for those amenities is not enforced, then the \$10 day-use parking fee is not justified.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
s/Lisa Ketcham, Chair
Midcoast Community Council

cc: SMC Supervisor Don Horsley