

CALIFORNIA COASTAL ZONE CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
1540 Market Street, San Francisco 94102 - (415) 557-1001

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

APPEAL NO. 133-76  
(Pillar Point)  
60th Day: Waived

DECISION OF  
REGIONAL  
COMMISSION:

Permit denied by Central Coast Regional Commission

PERMIT  
APPLICANT:

San Mateo County Harbor District

APPELLANT:

San Mateo County Harbor District

DEVELOPMENT  
LOCATION:

Pillar Point Harbor, El Granada, north of Half Moon Bay, San Mateo County (Exhibits 1 and 2)

DEVELOPMENT  
DESCRIPTION:

Construction of rubble-mound breakwaters and dredging of approx. 33,000 cu. yds. of bottom materials and its disposal. Installation of docks, comfort stations, gates, headwalks, 440 boat slips, 3 lane launching ramp, parking for 550 cars, and utilities. Creation of 4 lease parcels (Exhibit 3)

PUBLIC HEARING: Held July 7, 1976, in Los Angeles

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIREMENT: The staff recommends that a two-thirds vote requirement be adopted under Pub. Res. Code Section 27401 (a), (b), (c), and (d). The placement of approximately 116,500 cubic yards of fill and the grading and paving of 50 linear feet of beach constitutes "filling or otherwise altering any bay" and "would reduce the size of any beach" (Subsections (a) and (c)). In addition, the construction of the the riprap breakwaters and anchored floating breakwaters would cover approximately 5.8 acres of open water and submerged tidelands so the project "would reduce or impose restrictions upon public access to tidal and submerged lands" and "would adversely affect...existing areas of open water free of visible structures" (Subsections (c) and (e)).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution:

I. Approval with Conditions

The Commission hereby approves a permit for the proposed development subject to the conditions below on the grounds that, as conditioned, the development will not have any substantial adverse environmental or ecological effect and will be consistent with the findings, declarations, and objectives of the California Coastal Zone Conservation Act of 1972.

II. Conditions

The permit is subject to the following conditions:

-2-  
A. Prior to the commencement of any construction under this permit (as defined in Pub. Res. Code Section 27103), the following shall be submitted to the Executive Director of the State Coastal Commission for his review and approval or modification to assure consistency with the intent of the conditions, findings, and declarations of this permit:

1. Final plans shall be prepared consistent with the revised master plan submitted to the Commission (Exhibit 4) providing for the following:
  - a. No dredging.
  - b. Provision of up to 440 single tie slips constructed so as to place shorter slips nearest the shoreline and designating one-half of all slips for the exclusive use of active commercial fishing boats.
  - c. At least 800 linear feet of shoreline within the project area shall be sand beach and the use of riprap or other means of shore protection shall be limited to no more than 850 linear feet.
  - d. Grading shall be minimized and shall, in conjunction with the storm drain system, minimize the discharge of pollutants into the harbor.
  - e. Provision of facilities for berthing U. S. Coast Guard vessels and adequate sanitary pumpout facilities for all boats.
  - f. Adequate circulation and parking including adequate facilities and space for bus and bicycle access and parking in addition to boat trailers, fishermen and the general public.
  - g. Public walkways and facilities on the new breakwaters and along the shoreline.
  - h. Any leased area for boat repair and a storage yard shall be located adjacent to the proposed west breakwater.
1. Landscaping that maximizes the use of native vegetation and adequately screens the parking lots from public view from Highway 1.

Notice shall be sent to the interested parties of the submission of the plans.

2. A berthing and mooring allocation system providing for the equitable determination of active commercial fishing status and enforcement of the provisions of 1 (b) above.
3. A scenic easement shall be offered over all lands owned by the San Mateo Harbor District above mean lower low water mark west of Dennison Creek to San Mateo County. Such offer shall remain in effect for at least 10 years, may reserve rights of access to the existing west breakwater for repair and maintenance to the Harbor District or its successors, and the offer may expire if not accepted within 10 years of the effective date of this permit. If the offer is not accepted by the County within the 10 years, it shall be offered to the State of California and the Coastal Commission.

No development shall commence until the Executive Director has approved the above plans and documents and all development and operation of the facilities shall take place in accordance with the approved plans and documents.

B. Prior to the operation of the boat launching ramps or any restaurant within the Harbor District boundaries, evidence of the following shall be submitted to the Executive Director of the State Coastal Commission:

1. Completion of signalization and widening of Highway 1 at Capistrano Road.

ORIGINAL DECISION

Exhibit A

Page 1 of 10



- 2. Operation of U. S. Coast Guard Patrol craft and marine safety facility within the harbor.
- 3. Removal of Cease and Desist Order from the Granada Sanitary District by the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board.

C. Any development of the areas designated as Lease Parcels A and B on the revised Master Plan shall be limited to the following:

- 1. Lease Parcel A; a dinner restaurant with a maximum square footage of 6,000 sq.ft. and a chandlery, with a maximum square footage of 3,000 sq.ft.
- 2. Lease Parcel B; boat repair and dry stack storage facility and appurtenances.

Providing, however, that nothing in this permit shall be construed as authorizing such development and separate permits shall be required for such developments.

III. Findings and Declarations

The Commission finds and declares as follows:

1. Project Area. Pillar Point Harbor is located at the north end of Half Moon Bay in an unincorporated area of San Mateo County. It is a semi-protected embayment backed by a low-bluff, alluvial plain with sandy beach at the eastern portion. The proposal is contained within an existing rock breakwater built by the Corps of Engineers in 1960. Existing improvements within the harbor are a public pier, a leased commercial pier, restroom, office, concession building, and a public launch ramp. No boat slips exist because of inadequate protection afforded by the existing breakwater. However, many boats moor within the harbor and temporarily tie up at the existing pier. To the east of the harbor district lands is the unincorporated town of El Granada composed almost entirely of residential structures. The community of Princeton is to the north and consists of mixed commercial, marine industrial and residential uses on an old small lot subdivision. North of Princeton is the Half Moon Bay airport. West of the harbor is an Air Force tracking station on Pillar Point itself (Exhibit 2).

2. Related Permits. Prior to the applicant's return to the Regional Commission with the modified proposal, several permits were granted for "non-controversial" improvements in the harbor area (Exhibit 3). The remnants of a storm damaged marina were removed to improve a beach. Two permits were issued to improve the existing pier. A concrete float was permitted to widen the pier and improve moorings, and a fish receiving facility was allowed on a new extension of the pier. Also, the Regional Commission granted the Dept. of Transportation a permit to install a traffic signal on Highway 1 at the entrance to the harbor and improve turn lanes. This permit would have expired but was recently extended by the Central Coast Commission.

3. Comparison of Denied Project with Conditioned Project. Opponents of the Harbor District's original project raised many objections to the proposal before the Regional Commission and the Central Coast Commission denied the project. That proposal, without the above conditions would be inconsistent with the Coastal Act in that substantial adverse environmental impacts would occur and irreversible and irretrievable commitments of coastal resources would be made without assuring the balanced and orderly development of the coastal zone. The original project would have created a predominantly recreational boat marina with extensive shoreline development in a

relatively rural portion of the San Mateo coastline. It would have serious growth inducing impacts, eliminate over 1,000 linear feet of recreational beach, adversely affect habitat areas and would not assure adequate facilities for commercial and sports fisheries. The following chart and impact analysis, however, show that the project can be modified to improve its design while providing coastal dependent recreational and fisheries facilities for many segments of the population at a reduced cost.

PROJECT ELEMENT	ORIGINAL DENIED PROJECT	MODIFIED PROJECT
Boat Berths	180 Single Tie 240 Double Tie	440 Single Tie
Marine Protective Device	Rip-Rap Breakwater and Anchored Floating Breakwater	Same with Public Walkway and Benches on East and West Breakwaters
Dredging	Dredging to 8 feet Total of 33,000 cubic yards	No Dredging
Commercial Fishing Facilities	180 Slips Intended for Commercially Licenced Boats	220 Slips Reserved for Active Commercial Fishing Boats
Fill	± 150,000 cubic yards	± 120,000 cubic yards
Loss of Recreational Beach	1,140 linear feet	50 linear feet
Embankment (Rip-Rap)	1,400 linear feet	800 linear feet
Intended Additional Development (Separate Permits Required)	2 Restaurants, several specialty shops, boat repair and storage area, expansion of Harbor Master's Office	1 Restaurant, 1 Chandlery, boat repair and storage area with boat hoist, expansion of Harbor Master's Office

Exhibit A

Page 20 of 10



4. Environmental Effects of Modified Project. The original project required the destruction of approximately 1,200 linear feet of beach as well as the adverse impacts of 33,000 cubic yards of dredging on water quality. By reallocating the slip sizes so as to place shallow draft boats closest to the shoreline, no dredging is required and none will be allowed.

The riprapping of the shoreline and paving of the beach will be minimized by the reorientation of the onshore development. This will have a beneficial effect not only on the recreational potential of the project, but will provide a better marina design. Wave reflection off a riprap shoreline will be reduced by the beachfront with its superior ability to absorb wave energy. The destruction of this protected beach will have particularly severe impacts because the construction of the existing harbor breakwater has eliminated recreational beaches to the south. The following excerpt from a paper by John Tinsley of the U. S. Geologic Survey explains this problem:

"Erosion Rates: A breakwater, constructed in 1959-61 to shield Pillar Point Harbor from southwest swell, has profoundly disturbed the equilibrium conditions in Half Moon Bay. Waves whose energy was formerly refracted into and dissipated in the northern end of Half Moon Bay are now reflected from the breakwater into the shoreline immediately south of the breakwater's southern terminus. Net southward longshore transport of sand has been interrupted, and the beach south of the breakwater has no source of replenishment except terrace deposit cannibalism. The result has been rapid erosion of terrace deposit south of the breakwater, including destruction of Mirada Road, part of which is shown in Figure 10. Sand buildup can be seen behind the breakwater within Pillar Point Harbor...."

However, the breakwater construction and increase in activity along the shoreline will have an adverse effect on the area's habitat value. Although the existing habitat values of the site are not substantial because of the existing development and harbor activities, the increase in activity will further limit the habitat resources of the site. By requiring the Harbor District to grant a scenic easement over the more pristine area of their jurisdiction west of Dennison Creek, an area of higher habitat value can be permanently protected. This area is intended to become part of San Mateo County's Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. The County has prepared an EIR on this project and intends to manage an expanded Marine Reserve near the project (Exhibit 5). Therefore, the Commission can find that, as conditioned, this project will not have any substantial adverse environmental or ecological effect.

5. Traffic Impacts. The future development of the San Mateo Mid-Coastside is the subject of many efforts in addition to the Coastal Commission. The Association of Bay Area Governments and The Metropolitan Transportation Commission have jointly studied this corridor and made recommendations to their Executive Boards. The County of San Mateo and the City of Half Moon Bay are both revising their General Plans for this area. In all these studies and plans, the level of development and the provision of recreational access to the coast is tied to the capacities of Highway 1 along the coast and Highway 92 from the bay side of San Mateo County. These routes are presently dangerous and congested at peak recreational travel times and there are no major improvements scheduled in the near future. As the area grows, more and more of the capacity of these roads is being used by residential and commute traffic.

The Regional Commission staff prepared the following calculations to assess the traffic generation caused by the original project:

"If the restaurant-generated traffic and 2/3 of the retail-generated traffic are not included (since these facilities are not part of the project now), the following results:

"Peak traffic: Summer, single peak day 955  
May-October, weekend days 762  
Winter week day (lowest peak) 284

"Annual traffic: 164,000

"Average daily traffic: 449

"The traffic generators breakdown as follows:

	Percent of Annual flow	Percent of summer Weekend day
"Recreational berthed boats	12.1%	22.3%
"Launch ramp	6.1%	15.0%
"Marina-related facilities	10.1%	2.5%
"Commercial fishing boats	29.8%	5.2%
"Pier fishing, sightseeing	24.4%	35.3%
"Sportfishing	13.7%	14.2%

The project's EIR and the applicant's consultants project the impact of the original project's full development to be roughly twice this increase (Exhibit 6). This level of traffic generation is the equivalent of two years of normal growth in annual traffic volume stemming from local and regional traffic projected by the Department of Transportation. The applicant contends that this growth is inevitable and will occur without this project. The EIR states: "In future years, as traffic on Highway 1 increases, problems would occur in accommodating traffic to and from Pillar Point Harbor when there is a steady stream of vehicles on the main highway." No mention is made of the special problems of cars towing boat trailers on winding access roads.

These impacts can only be mitigated to a limited degree as part of this project. By requiring that the State Dept. of Transportation complete the signalization and widening of Highway 1 at Capistrano Road (for which a Regional Commission permit has been issued) prior to operation of the boat launching ramp, congestion caused by towed boats will be minimized. Also, the provision of dry stack storage of boats will allow boaters to keep their boats at the harbor rather than tow them to the coast.

Additional traffic generation will be reduced by eliminating the specialty shops and one restaurant from the Harbor District's plans. Thus, the only remaining commercial facilities that will increase traffic will be one restaurant and a chandlery, uses reasonably related to the harbor. The additional fishing, boating and recreational traffic induced by this project is the coastal recreation and ocean fisheries oriented traffic for which the Commission has consistently reserved highway capacity. Thus, if combined with limiting residential and noncoastally oriented traffic, approval of this project is consistent with the Coastal Act's mandate for orderly and balanced coastal development.

6. Growth Inducing Impacts. In addition to the increased traffic that this project will induce, there are other secondary impacts of the project. The applicant's consultants have extensively analyzed the growth inducing impact of the proposal on the water and sewage systems of the area. The present sewer system serving the harbor is under a cease and desist order from the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Thus there is no service available to meet the needs of the project at the present time. It is anticipated that the system will be able to provide service by the time that the harbor improvements are completed. According to the applicant, the project is the equivalent of approximately 110 single-family homes in terms of its demand for water and sewage.

Exhibit A  
Page 3 of 10



By requiring that the cease and desist order be lifted prior to use of those facilities that can be expected to generate significant increases in use, no significant adverse effects on water quality will occur from inadequate sewage facilities. The use of both water and sewage capacity can be justified in that the project will provide the public with ocean related facilities. Thus, approval of this project, in conjunction with limiting private noncoastally related developments, would not constitute an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of coastal zone resources.

The future development of the Harbor District's lands are explicitly controlled by the conditions of this permit. Shoreside development is limited to one restaurant, one chandlery, a boat repair yard and a dry stack storage facility. These facilities are concentrated in the northwest portion of the harbor area that is already developed. The area immediately along the shoreline to the west of the project site will be covered by a scenic easement, thus prohibiting additional harbor development.

7. Appropriateness of the Development. The opposition to the project contends that Pillar Point is not the proper location for a small craft marina. They do not oppose the provision of facilities for commercial fishermen and the improvement of the safety aspects of the harbor as a "harbor of refuge." They assert that this ocean location is unsafe for pleasure boats and cite recreational boaters' preference for protected waters such as San Francisco and Monterey Bays. The conditions, however, reorient the project to provide more facilities for commercial fishing and ocean sports fishing. For example, the modified project provides for only single tie berths, which are sufficient for commercial boats and provide lower cost, minimal facilities for other boats.

The Pillar Point Harbor is well suited for commercial and sports fishing but is located far from the more densely populated areas of San Mateo County where the demand for purely recreational boating is greater. Thus, the limited space that will be available at the harbor will be oriented toward those boaters that require such a location and less opulent facilities. The Harbor District's current plans also envision placing greater emphasis on providing recreational berthing space in such populated areas as the bay side of San Mateo County. The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission is also considering such facilities (Exhibit 7), and the County Planning Dept. has prepared an estimate of the possible recreational berthings on the bay side of the County:

INVENTORY OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED BERTHING FACILITIES IN SAN MATEO COUNTY

	Present Capacity 1976	Planned Additions	Total
Brisbane Marina	—	810	810
Coyote Point	475	740	1,215
Oyster Point	283	320	603
Redwood City Municipal	200	—	200
Redwood Marina (Docktown)	110	10	120
Pete's Harbor	250	50	300
Poster City	—	450	450

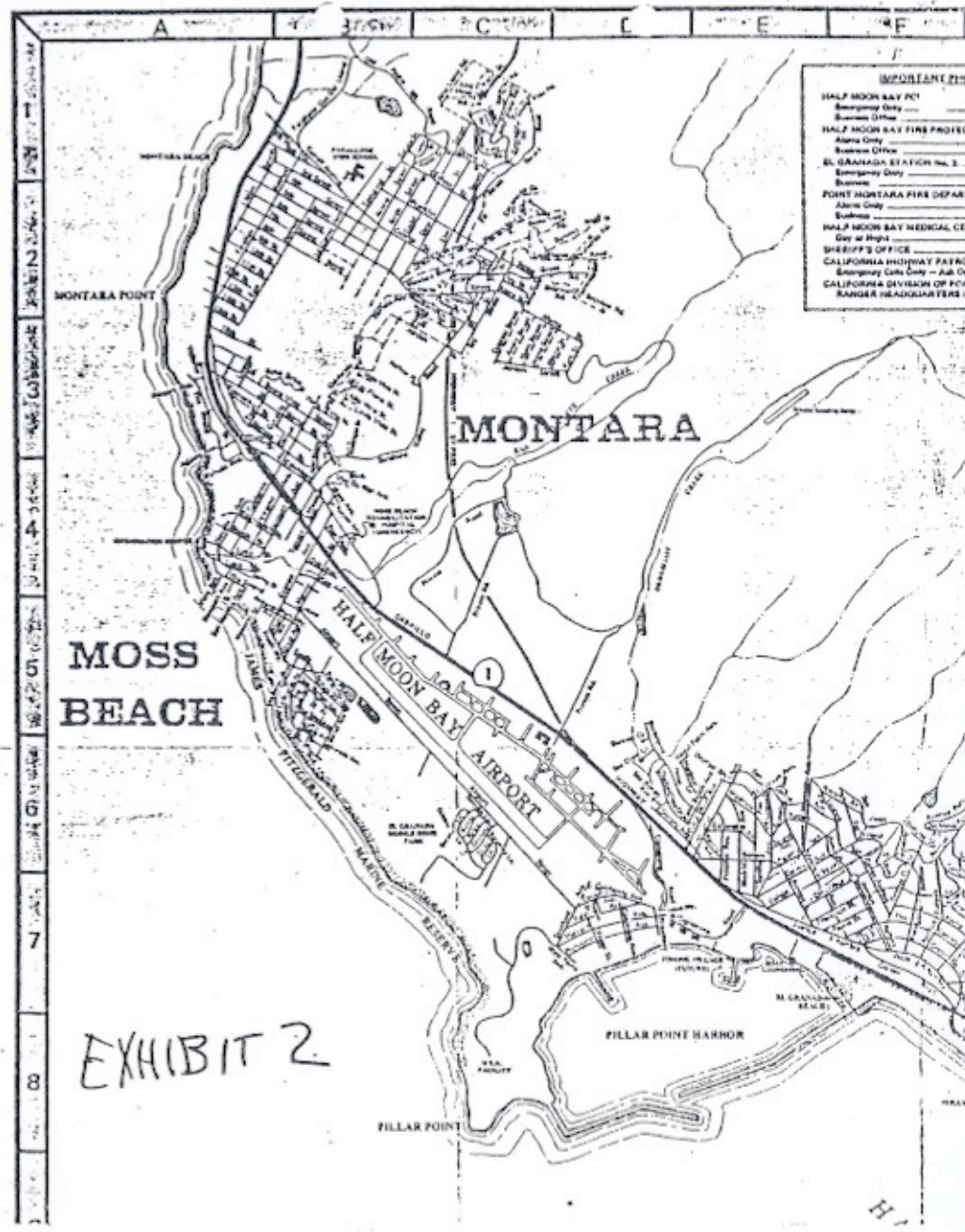
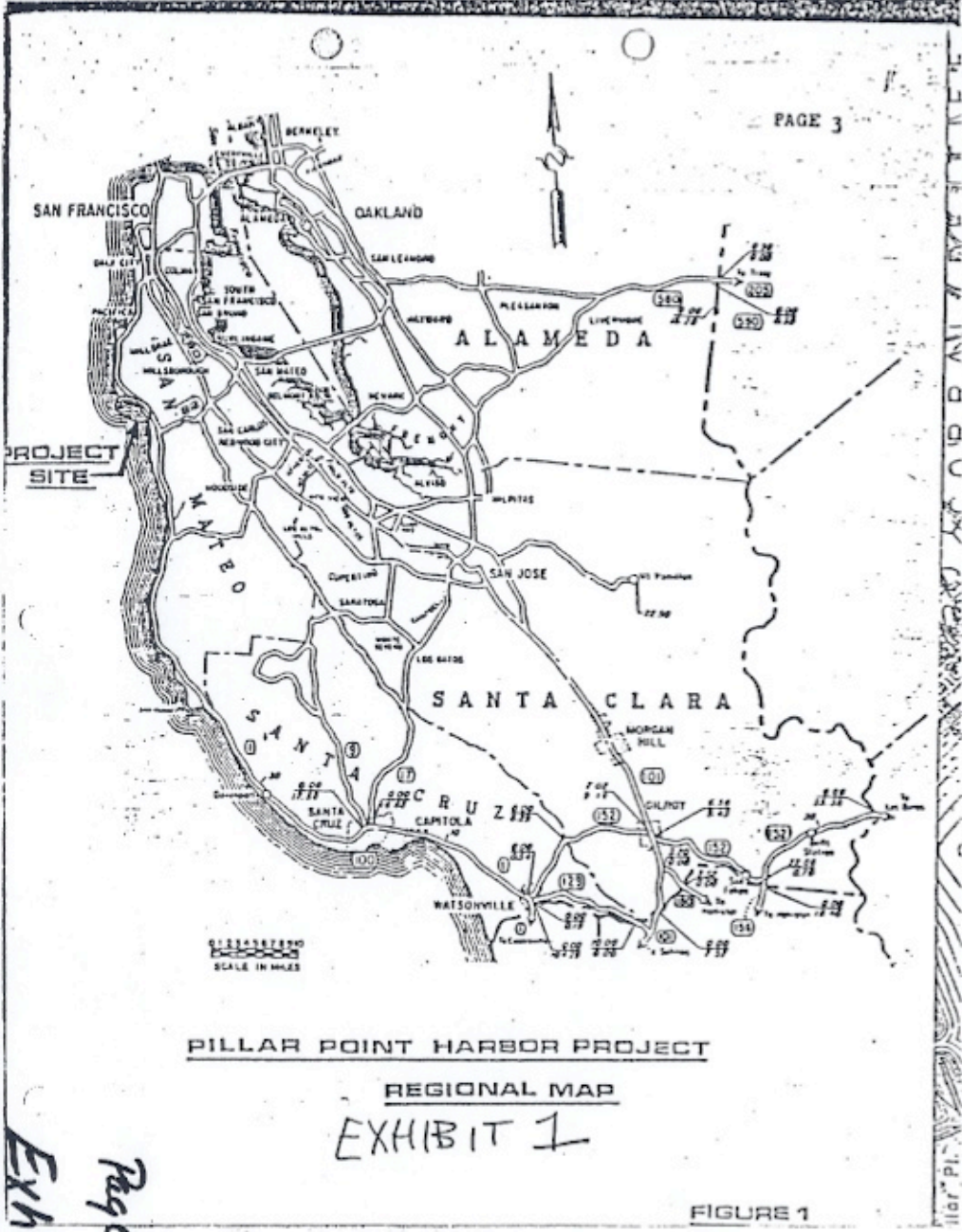
(Source: Draft EIR for Dissolution of San Mateo Harbor District and LAFCO Sphere of Influence Study, July, 1976)

Thus, it appears that the demand for primarily recreational boating can be better satisfied at locations closer to population concentrations without preempting one of the few sites available on the coast for commercial fishing. The continued use of Pillar Point Harbor as a commercial harbor shall be encouraged and maintained.

8. Administrative and Economic Concerns. Although much discussion took place at the Regional Commission over economic and tax issues involved in this project, such concerns are relevant only insofar as they affect the resources of the coastal zone. As conditioned, the facilities at the harbor cannot be expanded and the effect on coastal resources will therefore not be significant even if the facility is not financially self-sufficient. The Commission makes no finding as to the economic feasibility of the project as administered by the Harbor District nor takes any position in the controversy over the dissolution of the Harbor District.

Exhibit A  
Page 4 of 10

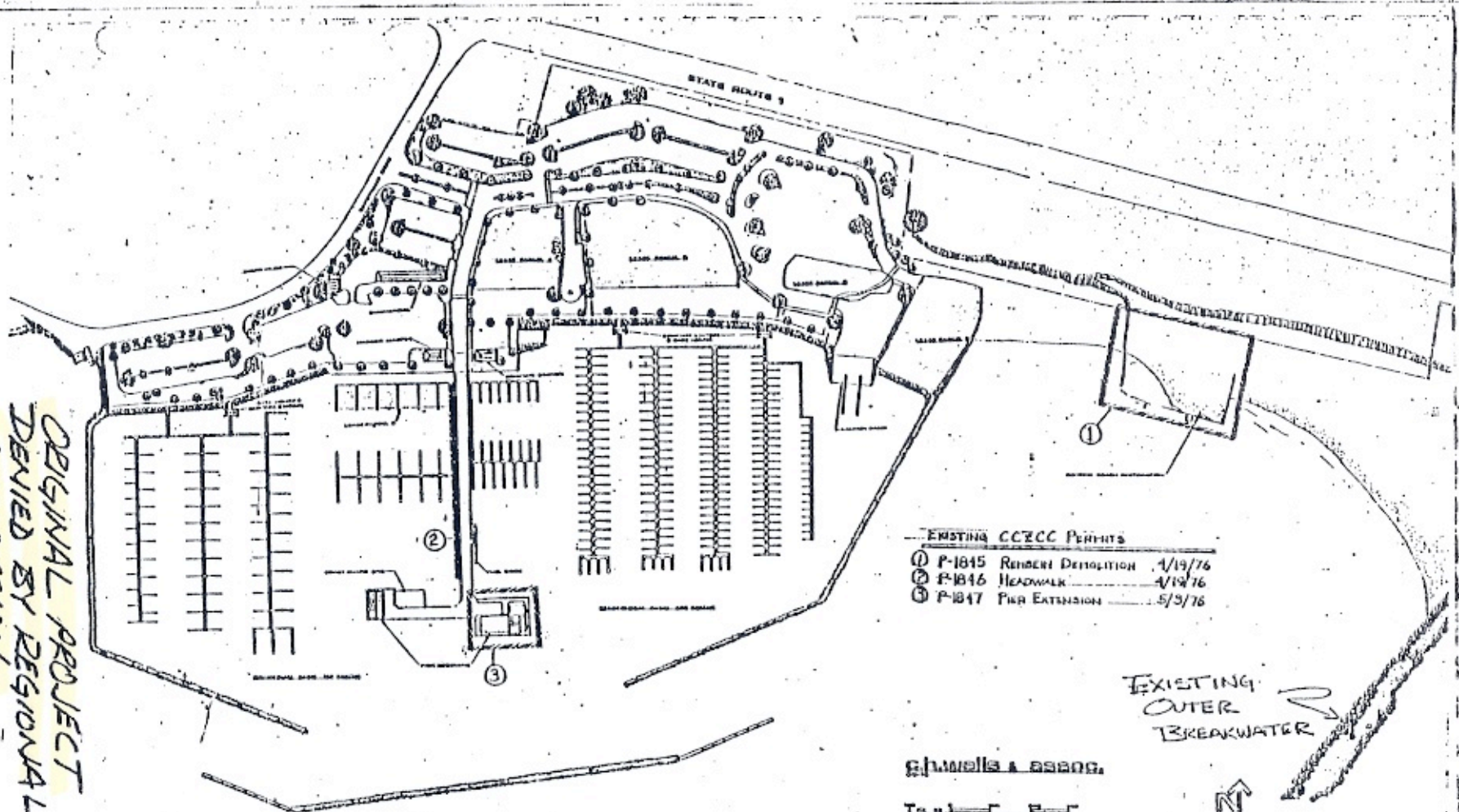




Exhibits  
 Page 5 of 10



ORIGINAL PROJECT  
DENIED BY REGIONAL  
COMMISSION

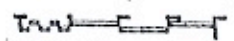


EXISTING CCZCC PERMITS

①	P-1815	REINERT DETENTION	4/19/76
②	P-1816	HEADWALK	4/19/76
③	P-1817	PIER EXTENSION	5/3/76

EXISTING  
OUTER  
BREAKWATER

SHAW & ASSOC.



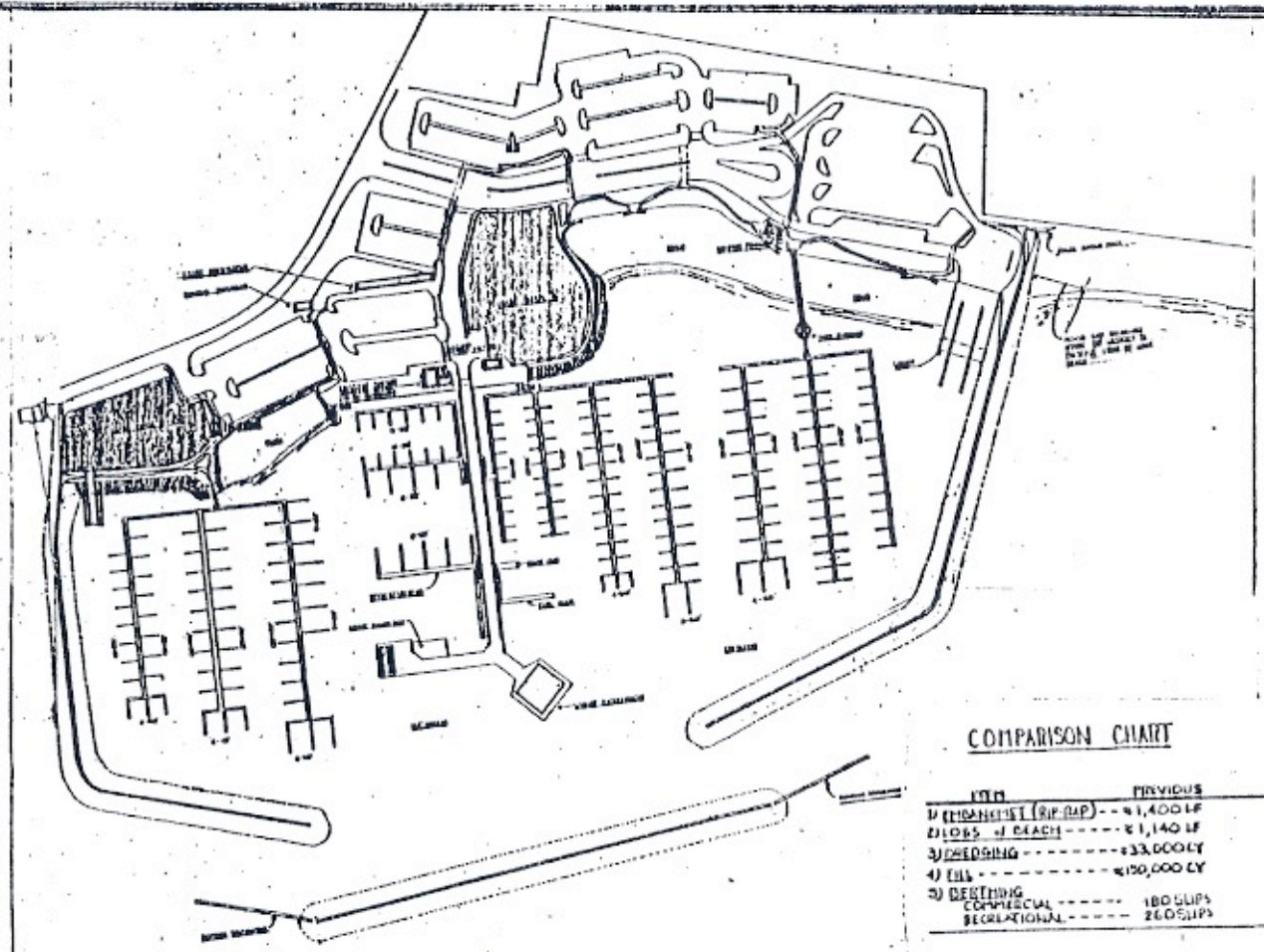
MASTER PLAN-PILLAR POINT MARINA - CCZCC # P-708

EXHIBIT 3

DATE: 11/19/76

Exhibit A  
Page 0071

Modified Project



COMPARISON CHART

ITEM	PREVIOUS	PRESENT
1) PIERHEAD (SIP, DWP) -----	\$1,400 LF	\$ 800 LF
2) DOGS OF BEACH -----	\$1,140 LF	\$ 50 LF
3) PIERDGING -----	\$33,000 CY	-0-
4) FILL -----	\$120,000 CY	\$120,000 CY
5) BERTHING		
COMMERCIAL -----	180 SLIPS	220 SLIPS
RECREATIONAL -----	260 SLIPS	320 SLIPS

EXHIBIT 4



EXHIBIT 4  
Page 70 of 10  
Exhibit A



FITZGERALD MARINE RESERVE

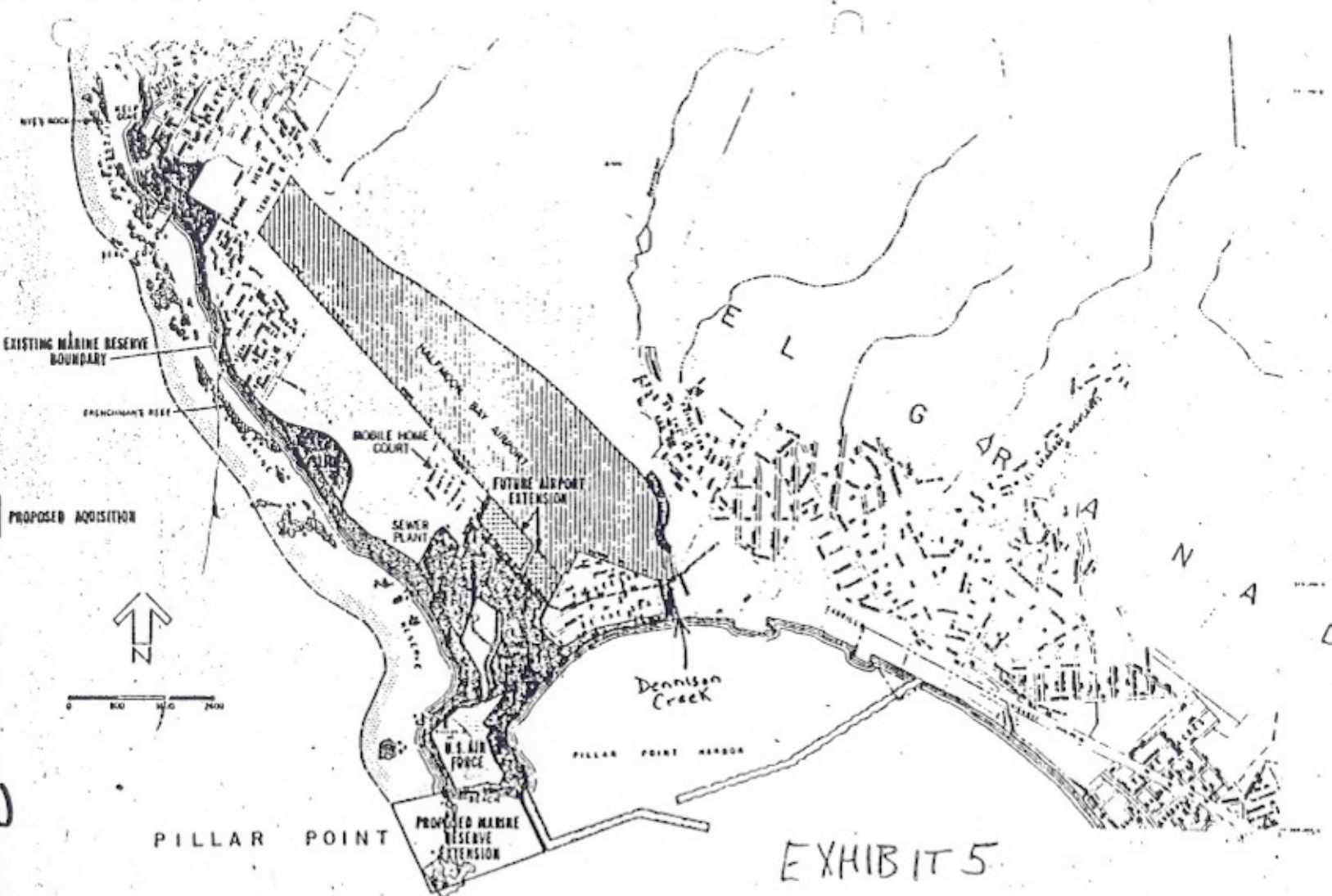


EXHIBIT 5

EXHIBIT A  
EXHIBITS  
Page 8 of 10



Table 16  
SUMMARY OF TRAFFIC FLOWS TO PILLAR POINT HARBOR  
AT FULL DEVELOPMENT

	Summer Season (May-October)		Winter Season (November-April)		Peak Season Peak Day	
	Weekend Day	Week Day	Weekend Day	Week Day	Number	Percent
<u>Average Daily Traffic (Automobiles)</u>						
Recreational Berthed Boats	170	45	68	13	224	15.3
Launch Ramp	114	19	20	3	171	10.1
Marine Related Facilities	19	56	19	56	19	1.1
Commercial Fishing Boats	40	200	20	150	40	2.4
Pier Fishing, Sightsceing, etc.	269	92	192	31	325	19.1
Sport fishing	108	77	65	26	125	7.4
Restaurants (average)	462	371	462	371	630	37.3
Retail Specialty Shops	126	36	108	14	158	9.3
Total	1,308	896	954	664	1,600	100.0
Days per Period	52	131	52	130	365	
<u>Total Annual Traffic (Automobiles 000's)</u>						
Recreational Berthed Boats	8.8	5.9	3.5	1.7	19.9	6.2
Launch Ramp	5.9	2.6	1.0	.5	10.0	3.1
Marine Related Facilities	1.0	7.3	1.0	7.3	16.6	5.2
Commercial Fishing Boats	2.1	26.2	1.0	19.5	48.8	15.2
Pier Fishing, Sightsceing, etc.	14.0	12.0	10.0	4.0	40.9	12.4
Sportfishing	5.6	10.1	3.4	3.4	22.5	7.0
Restaurants (average)	24.0	48.6	24.0	48.3	144.9	45.1
Retail Specialty Shops	6.6	4.7	5.6	1.8	13.7	4.3
Total	63.0	117.4	49.5	86.5	321.4	100.0

Source: Tables 6 through 14; Williams-Kuebelbeck and Associates, Inc.

EXHIBIT 6

23

EXHIBIT 6 P-700

Page 9 of 10

EXHIBIT A



## SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

30 VAN NESS AVENUE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102  
PHONE: 557-3484



August 16, 1976

RECEIVED  
AUG 18 1976

CALIF. COASTAL ZONE  
CONSERVATION COMM.

Mr. Donald B. Neuwirth  
California Coastal Zone Conservation Commission  
1540 Market Street, 2nd Floor  
San Francisco, California 94102

Dear Don:

Many thanks for our letter of July 22, 1976; I hope we can respond adequately to your questions.

Unfortunately, we have no information on the relative demand for Bay versus ocean recreational boating. However, it seems to stand to reason that with most of the population of San Mateo County concentrated along the Bay east of the mountains, the demand for recreational boating in the County would be primarily oriented toward Bay boating. This is not to say there is no demand whatever for ocean boating; many people, particularly fishermen, prefer to be able to drive to the coast to be able to reach the ocean without having to endure the long, and sometimes uncomfortable, trip through the Golden Gate.

To some extent, the demand for Bay boating appears to be borne out by the Bay Plan findings and policies on Recreation (pages 23-24). They estimate a Bay Area demand by 2020 for 70,000 boat berths in 200 marinas. While only 77 of these are shown on the Bay Plan Maps, others can be permitted "provided they would not preempt land or water areas needed for other priority uses and provided they would be feasible from an engineering standpoint."

Along the shoreline of San Mateo County, there are numerous proposals for new marinas or expansions of existing marinas. These include public developments at Sierra Point, Oyster Point, and Coyote Point; public and private developments at Foster City and Redwood City; and a private development at Redwood Shores. Of these, the expansions of the existing marinas at Oyster Point and Coyote Point are either underway or are expected to be shortly. In addition, the proposed public developments at Sierra Point, Foster City (if that is the best location for a marina at Belmont Slough), and Redwood City all appear to be feasible, although more information is needed and a final determination would have to await preparation of an environmental impact report and the submission of a permit application. At present, we are not in a position to make any judgments on the proposed private facilities.

Mr. Donald B. Neuwirth  
August 16, 1976  
Page Two

The only current proposed improvement to Fisherman's Wharf we know of is a proposal for a breakwater to reduce the surge in the Fisherman's Wharf basin. As of December, 1975, the Corps of Engineers was considering a number of alternatives, including one version to create fishing craft harbor only and another to create a harbor for both recreational and commercial fishing vessels. I believe the degree to which a harbor improvement, such as a breakwater, is to be used for recreational boats makes a difference in the degree to which the Corps can participate in its construction.

The Port of San Francisco would be the local sponsor of any Corps-constructed improvements at Fisherman's Wharf, and I think the Port recently held a public hearing on one of the proposed alternatives. If you need further information, I would suggest you contact the Port directly.

Cordially,

*Michael B. Wilmar*  
MICHAEL B. WILMAR  
Deputy Director

MEW/mm

EXHIBIT 7 (CONT'D)

EXHIBIT 7

Page 10 of 10

Exhibit A