

COMMITTEE FOR GREEN FOOTHILLS
Peninsula Conservation Center
2448 Watson Court, Palo Alto, California 94303
415/494-7158



Mary Griffin, President
Board of Supervisors
County Government Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

November 28, 1989

Dear President Griffin and Members of the Board,

The Committee for Green Foothills supports the position of the Concerned Citizens of the Coastside. Their proposed compromise is a reasonable one, which provides better protection of coastal views and scenic resources, while permitting the developer to go forward with a scaled back project.

As you know, the Committee was very involved with the development of the Local Coastal Program. I was personally privileged to vote, as a Coastal Commissioner, for certification of the County's LCP back in 1980. The LCP is an excellent document, if it is diligently applied.

The CCR zoning district requires a Conditional Use Permit for all new development. That means that no project is permitted "by right", only subject to a Use Permit and upon a finding that the entire project conforms to the policies and standards of the LCP, and further that it complies with CEQA.

We believe the project presently falls short of conforming to the LCP, and that the EIR is deficient. First, the gimmicky phony lighthouse tower exceeds the height restrictions of the CCR district. It needs to be eliminated for reasons of non-compliance, safety, and visual obtrusiveness.

Second, the massiveness of the hotel structure will block coastal views from Highway One. Various rationalizations have been offered by staff to minimize this concern. One of the rationalizations is that views of the coast should only be protected from the nearest public road parallelling the sea, namely Capistrano Road. This is clearly an erroneous interpretation by staff. The LCP as drafted by the County and submitted to the Coastal Commission in 1980, used the more narrow definition of coastal views in Policy 8.12(c):

"Locate and design new development and landscaping so that ocean views are not blocked from the nearest public road parallelling the sea."

In certifying the LCP in 1980, the Coastal Commission recommended a change to that definition, and the County concurred, so the policy now reads:

"Locate and design new development and landscaping so that ocean views are not blocked from public viewing points such as public roads and publicly-owned lands." (emphasis added)

This broader language applies to views along Highway One, which is a Scenic Highway. This language requires that this project not block ocean views. By moving the project further west, away from Highway One, scaling it back, eliminating the shopping mall, and placing an open-space easement on the portion of the property identified as Parcel D, these views can be more adequately protected.

The Committee for Green Foothills strongly urges your Board to remember that the voters of California enacted Proposition 20 because of concerns about overdevelopment of the coast. Those public concerns are stronger today. Here is a golden opportunity to demonstrate your Board's commitment to protection of our golden coast.

Sincerely,



Lennie Roberts, Legislative Advocate
Committee for Green Foothills
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