

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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Via Fax & Email: 3 Pages

To: Supervisor Rich Gordon
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

cc: Senior Planner George Bergman
Environmental Services Director Marcia Raines

Dear Supervisor Gordon and Members of the Board,

After deliberation at a series of our meetings in May and June of 2002, at our regular meeting of June 12, 2002, the MidCoast Community passed a resolution by a 6-1 vote to ask the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors for a process that will allow the community to have a binding vote on alternatives at the end of the current LCP review update process.

We are grateful for the effort and care being applied to this process by Senior Planner George Bergman and others on County Staff, but we also acknowledge the enormity and complexity of this project, and the need for it to truly reflect the basic concept behind the process of regular LCP reviews – to continue and strengthen coastal resource protections and learn from and improve upon existing LCP policies and regulations.

We would hope for a timely response to this request, so that we can further consider the options and possibilities for this process. Our concerns that led to this decision are detailed as follows:

How the pieces get put together after the public meeting process:

We are, of course, concerned as to how this will all be put together in the end of the workshop process, and how it will be presented to the Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, and ultimately the Coastal Commission. We recognize the interdependence of the individually defined tasks, and the potential for losing track of the details and consistency to make them all work together in a cohesive planning document.

The MCC is working throughout this process to assemble our own set of alternatives and recommendations on the individual tasks, which we understand will be included in the

initial presentation to the Planning Commission. It is our desire to work with the County now rather than having to battle over these issues later.

However this process works out in the end, there will be a rather large amount of information to distribute throughout our community as we move through the hearing and approval processes. With that in mind, we wish to clarify the possibility of a binding vote option so we can focus on how to best get this information to our community.

Representation at the public workshops:

Public attendance at the workshops has often tended to be skewed towards those with vested financial interests in the outcome, which is not unexpected and is in fact a necessary opportunity for their voices to be fairly heard. That has often left the members of the MidCoast Community Council to represent the remainder of the community (who, with many demands on their time cannot make it to many meetings) by our attendance and participation.

There is concern that the "straw votes" and preference tallies from the workshops may be unfairly represented or misinterpreted if not weighted to take into account the representation of publicly-elected officials in attendance. And there is always concern about manipulation of any legislative hearing process by an vested minority.

We believe that most of our constituents are expecting us to represent them in this process, and in doing so we are seeking a more thorough and fair method of determining what the final product of the LCP Review will be. We believe that asking for a binding vote in this process is an extension of the ongoing process, and is in accordance with our establishing charter to represent the voice of the MidCoast Community to the County Board of Supervisors.

Maintaining the overall goal of the LCP update process

We agree that the underlying purpose of the LCP review process is the furthering protection of coastal resources, and that the purpose of periodic review is to incorporate new information and experience from problems with our current LCP.

The MCC is only entity outside of County staff that has been fully tracking this process. This is the single most significant issue for our community at this time – a defining issue of concern with direct effect on all of our residents, their quality of life, their families, their transportation, schooling, development, recreation and employment futures.

Education and Involvement of the MidCoast Community

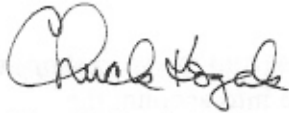
We feel that everyone should be able to have input to this process and that the community we represent have a say in what form of final update is to be adopted. This will require the distribution of quite a bit of information that will need to be presented in an understandable and hopefully not-too-overwhelming manner.

This may require more feedback and alternatives from the workshops, or presentations of the deltas and differences of the presented plans and alternatives, but we need to craft a process to allow the public to fairly decide on what their coastal plan is going to be.

Need for a Clear Representation of the Desires of the MidCoast Community

The issues of voting on something like this are complex – advisory votes or surveys are subject to falsification and interpretation, but the complexity of presenting these issues to the community will need to be addressed, as will the need to determine what the MidCoast Communities want. We look forward to the County's response to this request and its continued assistance and partnership in the LCP Review process.

Sincerely,



Chuck Kozak, Chair
MidCoast Community Council
650-728-8239