

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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5 June 2000

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Richard Gordon, President
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
400 County Government Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

re: **Moss Beach Highlands Affordable Housing Project, PLN 1999-00452**

Dear Supervisor Gordon,

The Midcoast Community Council considered this project at our meeting on May 24 and voted unanimously to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that you *deny this project as proposed*.

The Council strongly supports the affordable housing objectives set forth in the Local Coastal Program (LCP), which were developed with significant community participation, certified by the California Coastal Commission as in compliance with the requirements of the Coastal Act of 1976, and amended to permit multi-family housing on this site.

The Council urges the current applicant, or another qualified affordable housing developer (including non-profits or County agencies), to *submit a project proposal that conforms* to the requirements and objectives of the LCP, the Coastal Act, the Montara – Moss Beach – El Granada Community Plan, and the San Mateo County General Plan. We reject the approach taken by the current project proponent. That approach is to put forth a proposal that manifestly *does not conform* to the existing law, and then to request the County (and the Coastal Commission) to make whatever changes are necessary to allow their particular vision of a project to go forward.

These are the Council's specific recommendations to the Board of Supervisors:

Regarding the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), *we recommend against certifying the document* until adequate base-line studies of water quality in San Vicente Creek are completed, so that the impact of the project can be properly evaluated. The applicants have had more than 15 years in which to gather appropriate background studies. We find that the FEIR is inadequate because it failed to consider as an alternative to the project a proposal that could be built within the existing zoning, land use, and LCP regulations (i.e., a conforming project), and only examined non-conforming projects.

The Council's previous communications regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Report and the FEIR are attached in support of our recommendation for further study. The Council feels that the responses to our comments on the DEIR were inadequate.

Regarding the Statement of Overriding Consideration, *we recommend against adopting the statement*, based on the finding that the project, as proposed, fails to meet General Plan and LCP objectives to provide affordable housing to low and moderate income households, fails to locate senior housing near adequate services, and fails to provide housing opportunities for persons already working in the Coastal Zone (as required by various LCP policies).

Standing Committees

Parks and Recreation

Paul Perkovic, Chair

Planning and Zoning

Chuck Kozak, Chair

Public Works

(to be appointed), Chair

Regarding the proposed LCP Amendment, *we recommend against adopting the amendment*, making the finding that the LCP already has carefully evaluated the need for affordable housing and determined that there is a need for low and moderate income housing, especially for workers in Coastal industries, and that it is contrary to public policy to amend the LCP to delete the requirement for moderate income housing and also contrary to public policy to limit all affordable housing opportunities to senior citizens.

Regarding the Zoning Map and Text Amendments, *we recommend against the proposed rezoning to PUD*, making the findings that the history of the Coastal Commission action on this parcel and background staff reports, as well as the Concept Plan approved in 1985, clearly demonstrate that this parcel was intended to be developed as indicated by the zoning, i.e., as Multi-Family Affordable Housing, and not as a single-family (R-1) equivalent project with a small bit of senior apartments thrown in for political acceptability. The findings required for approval directly contradict the findings made by your honorable Board on December 7, 1999, in which the Board found "that the potential for oversized development allowed by the existing zoning regulations represents a current and immediate threat to the welfare of the Mid-Coast community by: (a) disrupting prevailing community scale and character, (b) adversely affecting privacy and available sunlight on neighboring properties, and (c) blocking ocean views."

Regarding the Vesting Tentative Map, *we recommend against approving the map*, making the findings that the proposed subdivision violates important LCP policies (including Policy 8.7), is grossly out of character with the surrounding community, does not maintain the scale of the surrounding community (as required by the Mid-Coast Plan), and does not serve as an appropriate model for further development in the community.

Regarding the Coastal Development Permit, *we recommend denial* on the grounds that the project, as proposed, is contrary to various LCP provisions, requires exceptions to important LCP requirements on rate of development, and places traffic impacts on the community that are beyond the capacity of the current road system.

Regarding the Grading Permit, *we recommend denial* on the grounds that the LCP requires development to conform to the topography, not to massively regrade it, and that this project involves excessive grading.

In addition, County staff have made explicit reference to a 1985 Concept Plan, CP 85-1, and at least one Planning Commissioner based his vote in favor of the current project on that prior approval, and so stated at the April 12, 2000, Planning Commission hearing. The 1985 Concept Plan was for a different project, on a differently shaped parcel, and cannot reasonably be used as the basis for approval of this project.

Sincerely yours,



April Vargas, Chair

Midcoast Community Council

cc: California Coastal Commission

Attachment