



June 25, 2001

Laura Stein, Chair  
Midcoast Community Council  
P.O. Box 64  
Moss Beach, CA 94038

Dear Ms. Stein:

SUBJECT: Planning Commission meetings on the Coastside

Thank you for your March 16 letter requesting that the Planning Commission hold regular, frequent meetings on the Midcoast. I have discussed your request with Planning staff, Planning Commissioners, County management and members of the Board of Supervisors. We agree that planning matters are of high interest to residents of the Midcoast and that those persons should have accessible means of input to the decision-making process. But, as your letter acknowledges, there are also serious logistical issues presented by your request.

When we received your letter we were embarking on a project to close our building on Fridays to provide optimal energy conservation. I held my response until we had time to assess the impact of this change on delivery of services and staff workload.

First, let me assure you that both Planning staff and the Planning Commission are committed to meeting on the Coastside when issues of broad local importance are before the Commission. Examples include last year's scoping sessions for the Midcoast LCP update, the several major project pre-application public workshops which have been held on the Midcoast in the past year, field trips by the Commission to permit sites and the upcoming Commission hearings on the proposed confined animal regulations, one of which will be held on the Coastside in the evening. And we certainly anticipate that the Commission will hold several evening hearings on the Midcoast as part of the LCP update.

On the other hand, the logistical problems in holding routine meetings on the Coast, especially for permit items which are more localized in nature, are real. Our planners are assigned as case managers. We expect them to manage all aspects of the cases assigned to them, including presentations to the Commission. This is important to their professional growth and development and they have the expertise on their cases and need to understand clearly the actions taken on them. For those reasons, they need to be present when their items go before the Commission. Cases involve more than the project planner, however. Other County staff and informational resources may be required as part of the Commission's

**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES  
AGENCY**

1410  
Agricultural  
Commissioner/ Sealer of  
Weights & Measures

Animal Control

Cooperative Extension

Fire Protection

LAFCo

Library

Parks & Recreation

Planning & Building

Laura Stein, Chair  
Midcoast Community Council  
June 25, 2001  
Page 2

consideration of an item. And, we have adjusted our meeting logistics, particularly graphic aids, to take full advantage of the new technology in the remodeled Board Chambers. Taking this show on the road for routine general purpose meetings would be challenging and would spread resources here thinner than they already are. So, I regret to inform you that we are not able to do that.

Where does this leave residents of the Midcoast who want to learn more about or have input on our projects? We think that need is being met to a great extent by the Midcoast Community Council and its Planning and Zoning Committee, which is why we have attempted to accommodate the Council's various requests over the years for additional and more timely information about permit applications and other projects in process here. I know the transition toward more involvement has not always been smooth, but I believe we have an increasingly effective communication process with the Council and the Planning and Zoning Committee.

My understanding is that the Planning and Zoning Committee holds regular public meetings to review permit applications and other items and that the Council occasionally does the same to consider recommendations of the Committee on more significant items. Assembling and transmitting local input on planning matters falls squarely within the Council's role as an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors and its various subordinate functions. This provides convenience for the local community and efficiency for decision-makers here, in that the Council or the Planning and Zoning Committee generally consolidate, evaluate and summarize input received from the public. I believe planning staff reports now routinely summarize the Council's input and generally include as attachments any correspondence from the Council or the Planning and Zoning Committee.

Rather than commit to holding routine meetings of the Planning Commission on the Coastside, which I cannot do, I would prefer continuing to work with you to improve communication with the Council on Planning items and issues. This might include steps to assist you in fulfilling your advisory role. I have asked our Planning Administrator, Terry Burnes, to evaluate with your Planning and Zoning Committee the possible reimbursement of the Committee for the reasonable out-of-pocket expenses it incurs in obtaining and providing public input on permit applications and other planning issues. This might include photocopying, faxing, mailing and similar logistical costs. And, we remain committed to providing the Committee the information it needs to evaluate the projects referred to it.

Laura Stein, Chair  
Midcoast Community Council  
June 25, 2001  
Page 3

I realize that this is not fully responsive to your request, but feel it the most we can do at this point. I look forward to working with you to strengthen our partnership in providing the residents of the Midcoast full involvement in the planning process.

Sincerely,



Marcia Raines  
Director of Environmental Services

MR:kdr/Mlrl2090\_wkrm.doc

cc: Supervisor Rich Gordon  
Members, San Mateo County Planning Commission  
John Maltbie, County Manager  
Terry Burnes, Planning Administrator  
Chuck Kozak, Chair, Midcoast Council Planning and Zoning Committee

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
DIVISION OF THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

REPORT OF THE  
COMMISSION ON THE ORGANIZATION  
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

FOR THE  
FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY  
AND THE DIVISION OF THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO