

# ***RICHARD GORDON***

Board of Supervisors  
County of San Mateo

May 30, 2001

Sarah J. Wan, Chair and Members of the Commission  
California Coastal Commission  
45 Fremont Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105-2219

Dear Chair Wan and Members of the Commission:

SUBJECT: San Mateo County LCP Amendment 3-00 - Mid-Coast House Size Limits

**The purpose of this letter is: (1) to endorse your staff's recommendation to certify the subject LCP amendment, and (2) to respond to the main points raised in letters from certain Half Moon Bay Council Members and the Granada Sanitary District Board President.**

## **Background**

In recent years, a number of Coastal Development Permit decisions have been appealed to the Coastal Commission for reasons related to house size. The Coastal Commission has in the past also requested that the County evaluate its policies governing residential development on non-conforming parcels.

In 1999, the Board of Supervisors authorized the Mid-Coast LCP Update Project. This project involves: (1) preparing more restrictive Mid-Coast house size limits, (2) revising Mid-Coast design standards, (3) updating LCP policies to avert future permit appeals, and (4) evaluate the role of non-conforming parcels in providing affordable housing.

In 2000, the County approved the subject house size amendments (1, above). This involved a lengthy participatory process that included adopting an urgency interim ordinance, convening a representative 12-member task force, and holding multiple public hearings of the Mid-Coast Community Council, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. The subject amendments reduce the building height limit and establish floor area controls that favor conforming parcel development. As indicated, the Coastal Commission staff recommends that you certify this LCP amendment request.

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The County considered the "proportionality rule" at each level of the legislative process, but instead favored the proposed amendment. The Half Moon Bay approach may be appropriate for that City. However, the locally elected Mid-Coast Community Council developed the proposal before you which (1) limits floor area more restrictively for non-conforming parcels than conforming parcels, (2) requires houses that are scaled to the size of their parcel, (3) resulted from an inclusive legislative process, and (4) is consistent with the Coastal Act.

Granada Sanitary District Letter

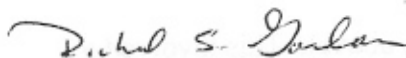
The Granada Sanitary District Board President asserts that the tract maps which created the substandard lots in the Mid-Coast may not be considered to have created legal parcels for land use planning purposes. The court case cited in the letter involves a subdivision that predated the State's first law regulating subdivision (1893). Unlike that pre-1893 subdivision, the Mid-Coast subdivisions were created between 1906 and 1910, in accordance with State subdivision laws then in effect. Also unlike the cited subdivision, the Mid-Coast communities shown on these maps have developed over the years, and the roads shown were dedicated and accepted by the County, and developed as public roads.

Most importantly, this issue is not germane to the subject LCP amendments under consideration. The proposal involves placing more restrictive development standards on parcels which do not meet the current minimum parcel size. The amendment does not address the issue of parcel legality.

**In closing, I urge your Coastal Commission to certify the subject LCP amendment as consistent with the Coastal Act.**

**The proposed house size limits are just a part of the County's broader commitment to protect the character of this coastal community, and future such amendments are expected as the Mid-Coast LCP update project proceeds.**

Sincerely,



Richard S. Gordon  
Supervisor, District 3

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