

## Draft Minutes of the 08/22/01 Meeting of the MidCoast Community Council

Chair Laura Stein called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm. All members were present except Joe Gore.

### Public Comment and Announcements

There were no comments from the public. Paul announced that the California Public Utilities Commission will make final findings regarding the proposed capital improvements and sale of Citizens' Utilities. The matter will be on the PUC agenda for September 6. The Administrative Law Judge recommends fewer improvements and a smaller rate increase.

**Board of Supervisors Report and Committee Reports** were moved to follow **Regular Agenda** Item 1 to allow the Caltrans presentation to begin as quickly as possible.

1. Presentation by Skip Sowko and Gordon Marsh regarding the Devil's Slide Tunnel Project. Skip Sowko, Project Manager of the Devil's Slide Tunnels Project for Caltrans and Gordon Marsh of HNTB Design Consultants addressed the Council and approximately 50 audience members. Skip explained that Caltrans is seeking input on the aesthetics for the portal designs. Caltrans would like to work with a small group of local residents/elected officials to finalize the design. The entire project design should take two years and then construction will begin, possibly in 2003.

Gordon did a slide presentation illustrating the various design considerations for this project. Unity, magnitude, stability and function must all be factored into the final design. He showed a variety of portal treatments ranging from minimalist, as illustrated by the Superior Shore tunnel, to a more embellished design from Arizona. The north portal could require a large rock cut about 200 feet high. Other alternatives would be a minimal cut, a cut and cover approach and a minimal portal structure. The maintenance building will not be occupied and will be 14,000 square feet in size.

Skip continued that the proposed Aesthetics Review Committee will work with the Caltrans architect to develop a concept for the portal design. A Coastal Development Permit will be necessary for the project and the design must comply with the Local Coastal Program. The Committee will begin its work in October following the acceptance of the environmental document and the filing of the Record of Decision, hopefully in September. Skip hopes to have the Committee in place as soon as possible.

There was a 5 minute break to allow for closer inspection of the models of the Devil's Slide area which Caltrans created and brought to the meeting. After being asked for a brief history of the project, Skip recounted the events that lead to the current tunnel proposal including the feasibility study in 1996, the safety and economic concerns which lead to the double bore design, and the size of each bore: 30 feet with a 12 foot travel lane, one 8 foot shoulder or breakdown lane, one two foot shoulder and two 4 foot sidewalks.

The meeting was then open to public comment and questions. Chris Vogel of El Granada asked about the presence of bike lanes in the tunnels. Skip answered that some bike will probably travel through the tunnels but the bicycle facilities will be provided outside of the tunnels, along the abandoned alignment.

Lennie Roberts of Portola Valley stated that the Local Coastal Program should be used for the design guidelines for the project, that the visual resources component of the LCP should be followed and the project should fit in with the surrounding terrain. She also mentioned that some three dimensional interest be incorporated in the design.

Keith Mangold of El Granada stated that he had been involved with Devil's Slide since that days of the Marine Disposal Alternative. He favors the least impact and decreasing the cuts and fills as much as possible. The least intrusive design is the best. He is concerned about the size of the fills and where they will be positioned.

Kate Smit of Montara thanked Gordon Marsh for his clear and concise presentation and his description of the various design options. She recommended that April Vargas and Chuck Kozak be appointed by the MCC as their representatives to the Aesthetics Review Committee. She characterized April as being level-headed and Chuck as being an effective communicator within the community. She asked that the final design harmonize with the local environment as much as possible.

Cynthia Stern of Montara favored no bas relief or decorative design on the portals. She favors an "invisible and benign" look.

Ann Forrister of Montara also favored a minimalist approach. She prefers the option for no rock cut at all. Although it will add \$10 million to the total cost, she feels that as a part of a \$160 million project, the additional expense for the no cut option is not excessive. She asked about traffic impacts during construction and said that any delays will "enrage a politically hyperactive population."

Scott Boyd of Montara stated that the speed limit at the south portal should be lowered to be in keeping with the speed on the surrounding roadway. 55 mph is too fast. He favors a safe and sane speed and a minimalist gopher hole portal design. Skip interjected that the proposed speed limit in the tunnels is 50 mph. There will be no impacts to traffic during construction. Excavation will be minimized as much as possible. Reduction in speed limit won't reduce the cut sizes significantly. Revegetation programs do work but may take 5 to 10 years.

Arthur Hofmayer of Montara asked how many truckloads of fill will be taken out of the cuts. Gordon answered 200,000 cubic yards or 20,000 dump truck loads.

Eddie Corvino of Montara thanked everyone for their ongoing efforts to solve the Devil's Slide dilemma. He thinks that 55 mph is too fast a speed limit and supports a minimalist approach. He doesn't want a "Hoover Dam" sized project.

Marty Kingshill of El Granada recounted the different designs and bore configurations that had been considered over the past five years. The design with the least impact will receive the most public support. Think Gopher Hole.

Bill Katke of El Granada favors the minimalist approach. He thanked Caltrans for their ongoing efforts.

Keith Mangold of El Granada asked about the footprint of the fill. Gordon answered that it will be 10 acres or the equivalent of 10 football fields.

George Kelly of El Granada complained about increasing traffic congestion.

Don Johnson of Montara asked that the any proposal make the mountain itself the design consideration and do the minimum amount of damage. He supports the recommendations for April and Chuck to serve on the Aesthetics Review Committee.

Paul Perkovic thanked Caltrans for soliciting public comment before the final design was completed. Defacing the mountain was one of the strongest objections to the inland bypass. A 200 foot rock cut for the tunnels is not acceptable. The speed limit on some of the existing curves on

the road in the Devil's Slide area should be reduced to 40 mph. Speed limits should be equalized along the route.

Ric Lohman agreed that the speed limit needs to be reduced. He challenged Caltrans to act on the public's comments not just record them.

Chuck Kozak agreed with the comment made by audience members. He is familiar with the geography and the geology of the area and a creative design is possible.

Paul commented about a concrete tube running through the north portal area so that no excavation would be necessary.

Skip commented that digging will be necessary to reach competent material. There will be no vegetation on rock faces. The design will provide the contours of natural ground.

Bern Smith of El Granada asked how the soil for the revegetation will be provided. He also asked about bike access into the tunnel and onto the bicycle facilities outside the tunnel. Should the access to the abandoned alignment be included as part of the work of the Aesthetics Review Committee? He thanked Caltrans for the decades of good work that have kept the road open despite periodic closures.

Zoe Kersteen-Tucker thanked Supervisor Rich Gordon for his leadership on this issue.

Laura Stein asked about traffic analysis for the tunnels proposal. Skip answered that the project will not increase capacity but it will make the road more reliable and will ease road closures. The tunnel will be a straight line path, replacing many of the existing curves on the road. Laura favors a minimalist approach and asked who at Caltrans is responsible for long range planning and developing a master plan for Highway 1. Skip answered that Don Reynolds would be the person for Laura to contact. She then asked Skip if he understands what all the speakers meant by a non-intrusive approach to the tunnels design. He answered: tunnel bores with just the rim visible and full landscaping surrounding the areas.

April thanked Caltrans for their presentation and thanked the community for their ongoing advocacy for the tunnels project. Paul moved that April and Chuck be named the MCC participants on the Aesthetics Review Committee. Ric seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. When asked for Caltrans contact numbers, Skip suggested that the Committee members were the best contacts for the community. The Committee should meet in October after the cities of Half Moon Bay and Pacifica name their representatives.

There was a 10 minute break and the meeting was reconvened at 9:25 pm.

### **Board of Supervisors Report**

PK Diffenbaugh reported that the Board had taken the first step to securing the Mirada Surf property by allocating \$250,000 to enter into an exclusive right to negotiate for the purchase. The County has hired an appraiser. Public input will be solicited regarding the possible uses of the property once acquired. The Board reconfirmed support for the Residential Standards Amendment to the LCP. Chuck thanked the Board for the Mirada Surf allocation and the vote upholding the 2nd and Farallone appeal. Paul thanked Byers and McCracken, the Mirada Surf owners, as well.

### **Committee Reports**

**Treasurer's Report** The signature cards have been completed and the current balance in the checking account is \$291.37.

**Parks and Recreation Committee:** The next meeting will be on September 10. This may be the date of the next County Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Workshop. This has not yet been confirmed. Paul met with Gary Hider (spelling?) and Paul Weller of Callendar and Associates, the consultants on the Needs Assessment project.

**Planning and Zoning Committee:** The last meeting was held on August 15, 2001. Due to the large number of applications, there will be a meeting on August 29 at 3-0 Cafe and another on September 5. Lot line adjustments now require a Coastal Development Permit. Chuck had a meeting last week with Supervisor Gordon, Environmental Services Agency Director Marcia Raines, Planning Administrator Terry Burnes and Department of Public Works Director Neal Cullen to discuss MidCoast drainage issues in the Cedar, Date and Harte St. areas. The Council has been asked to assess improvement projects that are still pending and define priorities for public works projects. The Design Review Committee will be convened by October.

### **Consent Agenda**

The Minutes from the August 8 meeting were approved unanimously.

### **Regular Agenda (continued)**

2. MCC Participation in Annual Teddy Bear Clinic. Paul will represent the MCC at this community event on September 23 at Seton Medical Center Coastside.

3. Discussion of the Rental Cost of Off-Site Locations for Community Meetings Which the MCC Sponsors. Due to the raise in fees to use CUSD facilities, alternative locations need to be investigated. The Montara Lighthouse Hostel is more affordable but scheduling and parking issues may be problematic. The Council will work with the County to identify other sites.

4. Local Coastal Program Review. There is no report.

Update on Continuing Council Projects. The Secretary will distribute copies of the response letter from Supervisor Gordon regarding the Visioning Process.

### **Future Agenda**

September 26 Meeting

Candidates' Night to be held at the regular meeting place. Secure a moderator from the League of Women Voters.

September 12 Meeting

Consent Agenda

1. Approve August 22 Meeting Minutes

2. Letter to Board of Supervisors thanking them for their willingness to acquire the Mirada Surf property for a community park.

3. Letter to Board of Supervisors regarding well issues.

Regular Agenda

1. Comments on ABAG Study sponsored by Laura
2. Certificates of Compliance Legislation sponsored by Ric
3. LCP Review Update sponsored by Chuck

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 10:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary April Vargas.