

MCC Meeting Notes for 25 March 1998 at Seton Coastside Hospital

By Paul Perkovic [See disclaimer at end of notes; these are not official minutes.]

Introductions, Pledge of Allegiance; meeting started about 7:15 pm

Council Members present: Joe Gore, Mary Hobbs, Ric Lohman, Chris McComb, Paul Perkovic, David Spiselman (Chair), Laura Stein

Announcements and Public Comment

Barbara Mauz: Thinks there are big developments being planned that no one knows about. [Read her letter to the Half Moon Bay Review] Why is CCWD desperately seeking to match the 7,800 new sewer hookups with equivalent water hookups? What would that mean to existing homeowners? The entire Half Moon Bay City Council met on January 20, 1998, with CCWD to find out how much water is left. The 800 remaining Phase I water hookups are all taken. There are only 760 priority water hookups left. These are not meant for housing. We have been seeing people transferring priority water to housing. We know the past Half Moon Bay City Council and the Granada Sanitary District Board set up the current plant expansion. Research this issue and report to the existing coastside homeowners who would be directly affected by the development of 7,800 more houses. What is the real push for a stoplight at Coronado in El Granada? This is at an eroding blufftop, and right near an existing elementary school. This involved widening Highway 1 to four lanes. It appears that CalTrans wants to widen Highway 1 from Frenchman's Creek all the way down to Princeton. What is the real reason for their push on this? Is it to make way for all these houses and additional hotels? Additional expanded highways and additional cars do not solve the traffic problems. (3) What is the real reason for the plan to expand Highway 92 to four lanes within Half Moon Bay, at a cost of \$xxx million? Plans to picket if the Review doesn't publish her letter.

Chris McComb: Coastside Fireworks: the committee continues to work, there are two events coming up. The Moss Beach Pub is having a fundraiser on Friday, April 3, featuring the Worm Farm Band; contribution of \$10 at the door. At the Harbor House in Princeton on Sunday, May 3, there will be a wine tasting with a silent auction; contribution \$35 at the door.

David Spiselman: Daughters of Charity and Seton Medical Center Coastside have invited the Council to honor Josefina Enriquez, M.D., at a reception on Monday, April 16, 1998, from 4:30 to 6:30.

Joe Caruso (Aide to Supervisor Rich Gordon): Distributed business cards the Council had approved some weeks ago. Women in San Carlos offers a wooden jungle gym; if interested, call Joe at 599-1013.

Laura Stein: Mr. Al Hart has donated to the Mid-Coast Community Council a projection screen.

Paul Perkovic: Announced Montara Sanitary District workshops, first one on 26 March at District Office at 7:30 pm on issues related to the wastewater treatment plant expansion. Also announced gift of various CELSOC publications on land use planning and law.

Joe Gore: Dream Machines on April 26 at 10:00 am at Half Moon Bay Airport.

David Spiselman: Several other community meetings: There will be an Environmental Impact Report Scoping Session for the Mirada Surf project beginning at 7:30 pm on April 20, 1998, at El Granada Elementary School.
Ric Lohman: Thanks the many people who worked hard to get this EIR Scoping Session properly noticed and moved to another date, with plenty of advance warning.

Committee Reports

Mary Hobbs: Bank balance same as last meeting, \$660. Park and Recreation Committee held a meeting on Monday, March 16, and discussed the Master Plan for the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. A number of people in the community felt that they had not had enough notice. They identified a lot of issues that they thought needed to be addressed in the Master Plan. The County is willing to delay work on the Master Plan pending further community input. The Council will have this item on our agenda for April 22.

Laura Stein: Planning and Zoning Committee discussed Mirada Surf. They requested some documents from the County. At this time, the applicants have not turned in all the documents that are required. On the Moss Beach Highlands, they sent in additional comments that will go into the scoping. The Vallemar Bluffs group has appealed the approval of a test well to the Board of Supervisors. See notes from the March 18 meeting for further details. The next Planning and Zoning Committee meeting will be April 1 at 7:30 at Three Zero Cafe at Half Moon Bay Airport.

David Spiselman: There will be a meeting of the Form of Government Subcommittee on Tuesday, March 31 at the Council office.

Paul Perkovic: A delegation from the Council appeared before the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, March 24, to present the Council's position on substandard lots.

David Spiselman: Noted that there was a change from mean to median in computing the statistic showing whether actual building sites were conforming to the zoning minimums.

Joe Gore: Offered his compliments to Paul and Kathryn Slater-Carter for their efforts. Public Works and Traffic and Airport subjects are on the agenda for tonight.

Laura Stein: Noted that at the Board of Supervisors, the Planning staff gave their report about 25 to 30 minutes. When Kathryn and Paul gave their presentation, the Chair limited us to about 10 minutes. When a person who owns property got up to speak, there was no ending the time; the person was allowed to go on as long as he or she wanted. It was incredibly slanted.

Kathryn Slater-Carter: Had spoken to Tom Huening's aide, following up on the Council's request in our letter, and never had the courtesy of a response. To show the continuing bias of at least one of the members of the Board, David and Kathryn were each given about a minute and then asked to summarize. We need the involvement of the community to continue to reinforce to the Board that this issue is not dead. Particularly for the people who live in Miramar, the request was made several times to include Miramar, and our request was ignored. It is important for those who live in Miramar to let the Board know of your concerns.

Suggests that members of community appeal every application that involves a substandard lot.

Ric Lohman: Thinks that anything that is said at the day of a hearing is only satisfying our need to speak; usually, the decisions have already been made, and the Board is just going through the motions of letting the public speak. Being rational or eloquent or anything doesn't matter.

Mary Hobbs: We at least need to make personal phone calls to Supervisors in advance.

Regular Agenda

Half Moon Bay Airport Master Plan Environmental Impact Report Issues.

Chris McComb: Purpose of the agenda item is to present an update of the status of this project, not to look at additional alternatives or argue their merits at this time.

Gary Petersen (County Airport Manager): Environmental documentation addresses development on the airport. Issues of land use off the airport are within the scope of the Airport Land Use Committee (a part of the City / County Association of Governments). They work with David Carbone in the Planning Department, who is the County's airport planner. The goal of an airport master plan is to provide a balance for appropriate development to meet aviation needs consistent with the needs of the community. These should enhance safety and be economically viable. The process of achieving the balance follows: First, they convened a Planning Committee of 18 members, including FAA, HMB, Council member Chris McComb, aviation community, and members of the public. Noted number of meetings in the community, believes that this is an open public process. Final decision on what gets built and when remains with the Board of Supervisors. They are doing an Initial Study for either an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Report. Notice of Preparation has gone out to various agencies; thanked Chris McComb for response from Mid-Coast Community Council. Scoping session (on Tuesday, April 7) will focus on data gathering; members of the public are invited to present issues and concerns. All of this data gathering feeds into an Initial Study package, which will help determine what level of further study is needed. It could be as simple as a Negative Declaration (not likely), all the way up to a full Environmental Impact Report. This project falls under both the California Environmental Protection Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). After a decision on level of work is made, they will proceed to an Environmental Assessment / Environmental Impact Report. The draft EA / EIR will be circulated. Written comments will be taken until April 17. Unfortunately, it is the same night as a Half Moon Bay City Council meeting. There are now six development alternatives: the original 3, the community desired alternative, Alternative C without removing the displaced thresholds, and a "no project" alternative. Notices have gone widely to the community. The Master Plan is available at the Half Moon Bay library for review, or at the Half Moon Bay Airport. They are also doing the same process in parallel for San Carlos Airport. The work is being done by Coffman Associates in conjunction with Environmental Sciences Associates. They are also sharing information with Brady Associates, who are doing the environmental study for the Fitzgerald Marine

Reserve Master Plan. At the same time, Dave Carbone is working on the Airport Land Use Plan update. They hope to have everything seamlessly coordinated and completed in a consistent fashion.

Ric Lohman: Are the two airports one joint project, or completely separate?

Gary Petersen: They are two separate projects, and the communities are very different.

Lynn Fisher: Noticed that fuel tank project was already completed.

Gary Petersen: There will be an adaptation of the septic system during the summer; the leach fields that are currently used will be taken out of service.

Chris McComb: Did you say that the study will not look at the community outside the airport?

Gary Petersen: It does in terms of noise, but not off-airport impacts affecting land use.

Laura Stein: Asked for a copy of the list of agencies that got the Notice of Preparation. What part of this is land use, and what part of this isn't? Should the entire package come to the full Council from the Airport Committee?

Chris McComb: Thinks we need to see what comes out of this. The Airport Committee met and went through the checklist, decided which items were yes, no, or maybe; they also added a list of additional items that are included in the cover letter. What has the County contracted Coffman Associates to do?

Gary Petersen: The Initial Study is what they have contracted first; once they have found out whether they are preparing an Environmental Assessment or a full Environmental Impact Report, they will enter into a new agreement with Coffman Associates for that specific work.

Chris McComb: So if the conclusion of the various agencies differed on what environmental document is appropriate, would we be part of that discussion?

Paul Perkovic: Concerned about Airport Overlay for Approach Protection Zone moving further back into the Princeton Waterfront (W) zoning district. Are permits for new buildings being approved even though changes to the Airport Overlay might preclude those structures after the Master Plan is approved?

Gary Petersen: That is an important issue to raise on April 7. The County is not in the business of telling people who have already constructed buildings that they must change them.

Elizabeth Vespremi: Confused about Initial Study, Environmental Assessment, and Environmental Impact Report. Wonders about the time period for what is proceeding. How is the Coastal Commission involved?

Gary Petersen: We are in the Initial Study period. The Coastal Commission is one of the coordinating agencies; they may offer their comments for the scoping.

Discussion of Proposed Traffic Signal at Coronado and Highway 1 in El Granada

Joe Gore: Introduced Chief Delgado of the Half Moon Bay Fire Protection District, Sergeant xxx or Deputy Johnson from San Mateo County, and Sergeant McDermott from the California Highway Patrol. Requested people to ask the questions about accidents, fire equipment access, etc., at the beginning so that our guests can leave.

You will find that Coronado is by far the worst intersection we have, followed by Capistrano, and then California in Moss Beach.

Chris McComb: With fire trucks coming out of the fire station in El Granada, do you have an estimate of how many times you go north, and how many times you go south?

Chief Delgado: Represents both the Half Moon Bay Fire Protection District and the Point Montara Fire Protection District; he is the Chief of both. Only time they go north is when there is a call north of the station. Calls are about 4 to 1 to the south. There are three fire stations on the coast: One in Moss Beach, one in El Granada, and one in Half Moon Bay. Whenever there is a structure fire, all three stations respond. All future intersections will be equipped with an OptiCom device -- it has a sending device on the emergency vehicle, a receiving device on the signal -- so that the fire trucks can activate the light a half mile in advance, showing a green for the emergency vehicle. Same devices could be used for ambulances, Sheriff's Department, and Highway Patrol. He estimates that it takes an additional 20 to 30 seconds, even more when traffic is real heavy, to clear the Coronado intersection now compared to what would be possible with a signal.

David Spiselman: What other intersections do you have a problem with? Which other intersections do you consider dangerous?

Chief Delgado: That is the only problem intersection. There is no problem getting off of Highway 1, the problem is getting on the highway. Medio is a bad intersection (to enter Highway 1); or trying to get out from the Miramar Restaurant. From Moss Beach, it is difficult for an engine to get out on California (which is how they leave the Moss Beach station for calls to the south), or on Carlos (when they leave heading north).

Laura Stein: What has the District done to lobby for a light?

Chief Delgado: They are working with the City of Half Moon Bay on a resynchronization program to put the OptiCom devices on all existing lights, as well as working with Caltrans to make sure the device is on all new signals. It costs about \$10,000 per intersection, plus about \$1,000 per vehicle, for the OptiComs. Each signal also logs each use by an emergency vehicle in case of an accident, to protect the emergency services in the event of litigation.

Barbara Mauz: Wonders if the speed limit could be lowered, or enforced better -- the traffic is going way too fast.

Deputy Johnson: There is a blind spot for people entering from Coronado to go southbound on Highway 1, because traffic northbound slowing to make a right turn onto Coronado obstructs view of through traffic.

Chris McComb: At Coronado, the accident statistics show 52 accidents with 24 injuries and 1 fatality; yet at Capistrano there were 44 accidents with 23 injuries, and that is a signal-controlled intersection. Why are there almost as many accidents at the intersection with the light as at the Coronado intersection without one?

Joe Gore: There is more overall traffic at Capistrano.

Mary Hobbs: There were a lot of injuries at Capistrano as well as at Coronado. Do we have any sense of whether the level of injuries was worse at one location versus the other?

Deputy Johnson: Coronado tends to have higher-speed accidents; Capistrano has a lot of fender-benders.

Laura Stein: Half Moon Bay is putting in a signal at Mirada Road and Highway 1. What effect do you expect that to have on Coronado?

Deputy Johnson: There may be smaller breaks; even with a light at Mirada, which would interrupt Highway 1 northbound traffic, there would be entering traffic using the light that would then reach Coronado.

David Spiselman: Looking at the statistics, for all of Montara there are only about 40 accidents, and at Eighth and Tenth there are 9 and 7, respectively. Why does this justify the expense of the project?

Elizabeth Vespremi: There should be a complete study of the entire circulation plan for the community, not each intersection treated one by one. Wouldn't eliminating the left turn lane (from Highway 1 southbound into Coronado) help the situation here?

Deputy Johnson: This is one of only two entrances to El Granada. If you remove the left turn at Coronado, then all that traffic must go over local streets through the community, which presents other problems.

Leonard Woren: What happens if the right turn lane (from Highway 1 northbound into Coronado) is moved further east, to provide better visibility for traffic waiting on Coronado? The right turn lane is so short that you have to slow down from 50 mph to 15 mph or less, and traffic behind you whizzes past. Why wouldn't lengthening the right turn lane solve the problem? Let's also compare Capistrano with Coral Reef.

Deputy Johnson: Disagrees about Coral Reef; typically everybody is leaving (in the morning, for work), or everybody is going in. At Coronado, you have people going to work, and other people trying to get in to the schools that are located there.

Louis Bertolucci: In his seven years in the community, he has seen more accidents there. Caltrans will give us a light, we've got two elementary schools there, we've got Samtrans going in and out, this is a very heavily used intersection. A light is badly needed here. What's the objection to having a light?

Barbara Mauz: There are elementary schools here. With any stoplight installation, there is a widening of the highway. Teachers have said that they have to teach with their windows closed because of the traffic noise, and this project would bring the traffic closer (to the Wilkinson School). Wants a public hearing.

Lynn Fisher: Are there statistics that support that installation of a stoplight results in fewer accidents after the light is installed?

Sergeant McDermott: She is sure that a light does reduce the number of accidents, but doesn't have the statistics here.

Leonard Woren: If we need a signal for emergency traffic at Coronado, why don't we need a similar light at every other intersection the fire trucks need to go through?

Chief Delgado: Public safety responders are not the right people to ask the types of questions you are asking; we go out there after the accident occurs and take care of it. We know we would rather go through a green light, when we know the other traffic is stopped, rather than wondering if they would pull out in front of you.

Chris McComb: Would you rather have a traffic light at Coronado, or an extension of Avenue Portola?

Chief Delgado: He's not a traffic engineer, thinks we should ask those questions of the experts.

Joe Gore: After our last meeting with Caltrans, Laura Stein offered some questions for Bijan Sartipi. The first is, What is the rationale for the light? There are a list of ten situations that may warrant a signal, and Coronado meets at least one of them. The whole purpose of a light is to provide orderly movement, reduce the frequency of lights, provide continuous or nearly continuous movement of traffic, permit minor street traffic and pedestrians to cross. Quite a few years ago, this project was supposed to be funded, but instead the money went to Marin County. What is the proposed traffic light a part of? Bijan Sartipi says there is no grand plan. Who is paying for the light? Everyone in California, out of fuel taxes. If we don't want the light, the money will go to some other project where the community wants the light. Does it require a Coastal Development Permit? Bijan Sartipi thinks the answer is yes; they would apply to the County, it is probably appealable to the Coastal Commission.

Laura Stein: Thinks the really crucial issue here is to look at the whole situation, not each intersection in isolation. We can't do this in a piecemeal fashion. We have no plan for traffic here. The light at Coronado needs to be looked at in the context of the entire coast. She is requesting, once again, specific answers to the questions she provided to Joe. She will attempt to locate people further up the chain who do have answers to these questions. Where is the Circulation Element in the County's General Plan? What does it say about the coast? We need to look at that light in the complete context.

David Spiselman: Bijan Sartipi said that if any of the funding parties didn't participate in the project, then Caltrans will walk away from the project. Half Moon Bay has said they aren't going to participate in their portion of the light.

Joe Gore: You can ask him yourself -- I'll give you his phone number. Also, he was given a petition to present to the Council, it has about 400 persons who want the light.

John Plock: He is a registered civil engineer, years ago he practiced traffic engineering. He disagrees with Laura Stein; if you need a traffic light now, you need it; it doesn't matter whether or not there is an overall plan. The neighbors came to him when he heard of the desire of the Mid-Coast Community Council to delay this signal. This petition is addressed to the Board of Supervisors, not to the Council. It was one of the easiest petitions he has ever circulated.

Joe Gore: We are here to represent the interests of the community. No one person except Laura Stein has called him to issue a complaint about this light.

Laura Stein: Has issues with the process.

Mary Hobbs: Wants to know the cost of this project. She doesn't remember it being \$1 million for this light. Fully supports Laura Stein in wanting to do a complete circulation study; not sure that study needs to be done before this light goes in.

John Plock: The signal is estimated at \$250,000; half of that cost will be borne by the State. It was originally planned that the other half would be split 25% to the County and 25% to Half Moon Bay. Even if Half Moon Bay doesn't participate, it appears that the project may go forward (but without service on the fourth leg -- e.g., right turn

only coming from the west on the small segment of Mirada Road that hasn't eroded into the ocean).

Chris McComb: Wants to look at the process. At some point we have to stop studying and asking for more information, and instead take a position. Suggests that we look to the Public Works Committee to provide background and to help us form a recommendation.

Joe Gore: If I had people who were opposed to this light, I would have brought them here tonight.

Ric Lohman: There is the "stop the bleeding" group (don't wait for the X-rays); there is the ratchet theory group; there is the reasonable look at the alternatives group -- maybe a traffic light with two lanes, rather than four lanes. He doesn't like the argument that Caltrans is the professional traffic engineers, so we should just go along with what they say.

David Spiselman: Suggests tabling the issue tonight, bringing it back at the next meeting. Seems to be agreement to defer to April 22 meeting, with another Public Works Committee meeting before then.

Barbara Mauz: The minute you start putting traffic signals in, you start widening the highway. Pretty soon you don't have what you set out to protect. People didn't move here and invest all their life savings to have it turn out to be something like over the hill, with traffic noise, air pollution, congestion. It doesn't solve problems, it just encourages more traffic. Do this preliminary work before you allow whatever developers are pushing this to ruin our quality of life. Nobody is talking about the four-lane highway.

Louis Bertolucci: Those 400 people want a light, not tomorrow; yesterday they want it! We need action now. We're talking about a light, not a four-lane highway. We can't predict the future of the highway.

Joe Gore: Moves that the Council approve the light on Coronado; Chris McComb seconds.

Laura Stein: Offers requirements from Local Coastal Plan: All governmental bodies, including special districts, must submit a list of projects proposed during the coming fiscal year. Requires that the Planning Commission review these plans for conformance with the LCP. Requires each agency to provide a 5-year plan, etc. (See section 2.5.)

John Plock: The Council is an advisory group; you don't have to take a position, leave it up to the Board.

Peter Logan: Thinks the 20 to 30 second delay suggested by Chief Delgado is exaggerated.

Chuck Kozak: As a point of clarification, are you talking about the specific Caltrans proposal as presented at the prior meeting, or are you talking about the concept of a light at Coronado, without the specific details of the Caltrans proposal? [Answer is the first alternative.] Suggests amending the motion to vote on the concept of a light at that intersection, without approving the specific Caltrans proposal. Supports the concept of some type of traffic control happening at Coronado, but doesn't support the exact proposal put forth by Caltrans. They work by a set of design rules that are meant to be growth inducing -- they plan for expanded traffic flow.

Laura Stein: Doesn't think we have an accurate count of what public opinion is. She knows of many people in the community who don't want a light. She will be disappointed if the Council acts just to get this item off our agenda.

Mary Hobbs: Not sold on the idea that the highway needs to be widened there.

Would like to vote on something that gives us the option to look at other alternatives. She wants to support a light, not the Caltrans alternative.

Joe Gore: Willing to withdraw the motion, but will take some heat for this.

Continue to April 22.

Budget Discussion

Mary Hobbs: Summarized the Council's budget for the current fiscal year, and how it was spent. [See attachment.] Budget reduced by \$500 from \$3,500 this year to \$3,000 next year. Proposed budget continues copy machine, office supplies, and sound equipment at same level as last year; drops the contract office services (which was intended to provide filing, and wasn't used); and adds an allocation for meetings.

Laura Stein: There's no newsletter allocation, or resources for reference materials or documents.

Paul Perkovic: Would like to see a provision for professional development, e.g., the UCSC Extension Studies day-long seminars in Land Use.

Chris McComb: Moved the proposed budget; seconded by Paul Perkovic.

Kathryn Slater-Carter: Will donate a luggage cart she got at a garage sale for \$1, to avoid buying an expensive speaker set on wheels. We're looking at issues that will affect our community, and the LCP, for the significant future.

If we can get some experts in with technical knowledge of our issues, we won't be on the losing end so frequently.

Mary Hobbs: Suggests cutting sound equipment to \$900, and a new line item for \$100 for books and reference documents.

Vote: 6-0 (Ric Lohman absent).

Future Agenda Items

For the April 8 meeting: Incorporation / Annexation Study

Vallemar Bluffs development

For the April 22 meeting: Fitzgerald Marine Reserve

Caltrans proposed traffic light in El Granada and Montara intersection improvements

Future agendas:

Proposal to put Mirada Surf on the November ballot

Pre-Application Process (replacing Concept Plan) -- future meeting

County Parks General Plan for Marine Reserve and Pillar Point Marsh -- future meeting

Ocean View Farms -- future meeting

Adjourned at 11:05 pm.

[Disclaimer: These are preliminary, unreviewed notes taken in real-time by a

Council member and participant. They have NOT been augmented by viewing the broadcast of the meeting on Thursday, March 26, 1998. Although they attempt to be a neutral summary of points made by each speaker, they are neither a verbatim transcript nor official minutes. Additions, clarifications, and corrections from the community are welcomed.

As with the previous notes, these notes will be made generally available via hard copy and electronically on the Montara Web Site and via the MIDCOAST-L@LISTS.MONTARA.COM community distribution list server, to enable the Council and the community to keep a relatively clear and complete written summary of the discussions. Complete videotapes of meetings are broadcast by MCTV, cable Channel 6, following each meeting, and archived copies of these tapes may also be available for review, if appropriate. My apologies to the grammarians for mixing voice; the first person sentences were more-or-less direct quotations of statements made by the speaker, the third person sentences were my summary of what was said. Where you find bracketed ellipses, such as [?], it indicates that the speaker said something that was lost in the notes.]