

MidCoast Community Council
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December 10, 1996

Planning Commission
County of San Mateo
c/o Terry Burnes, Planning Department

re: agenda item #8, Planning Commission meeting, 12/11/96

Summary

The MidCoast Community Council (MCCC) asks that the Planning Commission delay reaching a final decision on this matter until we have had a chance to fully assess the proposed ordinances, and gather comments from the community. Further, we offer some initial reactions for your consideration.

Preliminary Assessment

The MCCC received its copy of this agenda item report on 12/7/96; we have not had the time to conduct a thorough analysis, nor have we been able to present the proposed ordinances to the community. Since the proposed ordinances could result in the levying of possibly significant fines on midcoast residents, we believe it would be appropriate to review such issues in a public hearing.

Given this disclaimer, here are the preliminary comments of our Planning and Zoning Subcommittee; the majority of MCCC members have not yet seen the report.

1. We understand the rationale for establishing a schedule for fines. We urge caution, however, in the way fines might be assessed: it is not out of the question that the threat or imposition of fines could be used by feuding neighbors as a form of intimidation.
2. Page 3 of the staff report discusses the Grand Jury finding that "code enforcement efforts (are) given to the most serious cases where health and safety are involved. At times, attention is focused on cases where complaints are received at the expense of other cases equally serious." One possible conclusion of these findings is that there is not adequate staff to handle all of the code enforcement efforts; does the establishment of this ordinance guarantee sufficient county staff to be able to handle these issues in a timely manner?
3. Proposed Administrative Fines Ordinance
Section 6596.3 (a) - "Upon determination...": how, and by whom, is such determination made? Also, reference is made to "thirty (30) days": are these calendar or working days? And given the severity of the possible infraction, thirty days may not be sufficient to find a licensed contractor and complete the necessary work.

We hope the Commission will give us the opportunity to adequately review these proposed ordinances with our community. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,



Chris McComb, Chair