

Opinion

Half Moon Bay Review Wednesday, May 13, 1991

Big step for the mid-coast

Recognition as a Municipal Advisory Committee will give the Mid-Coast Community Council — and residents of El Granada, Moss Beach, Montara, Princeton and Miramar — a much stronger voice in San Mateo County.

The county Board of Supervisors will consider recognizing the Mid-Coast Council as a Municipal Advisory Council next Tuesday.

And within a few months, the Pescadero Community Council, which has been active for years, will ask for the same recognition.

Such a designation would make the councils "official" voices for these unincorporated Coast-side communities, and although their votes would not be binding, messages sent by an elected board would carry some clout.

The Mid-Coast Community Council began to take shape about 18 months ago, after the stormy debate over the Pillar Point Harbor Village project. Residents of the mid-coast felt that county officials had failed to properly inform them of details of the project or heed their concerns.

They won vindication in April when a judge ruled that the county and the Coastal Commission had indeed failed to follow their own guidelines in approving that development.

But Municipal Advisory Councils can — and should — transcend single issues.

The mid-coast faces many formidable obstacles: limited sewage capacity, the struggling Citizens Utilities water company, development in Princeton and around Pillar Point Harbor, road maintenance.

Creation of an "official" arena where the community's response to these problems can be debated and articulated will be invaluable.

The council will also serve to provide a "big picture" view of the mid-coast communities, their fractured public services and their future role in this big community we call the Coastside.

The Board of Supervisors should give resounding approval of Municipal Advisory Council for both the Mid-Coast and Pescadero community councils.

Mid-Coast Council wins county voice

By RICHARD CONNELLY
Half Moon Bay Review

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved Tuesday a proposal to upgrade the Mid-Coast Community Council to a municipal advisory council.

"We are extremely pleased," said Nancy Hansen, chairwoman of the council.

Supervisors said they decided to enhance the council's status to increase input from citizens living in towns north of Half Moon Bay in county decisions.

The council's first order of business is to get on the November ballot so the council's seven members can be elected by people living in the unincorporated towns of El Granada, Princeton, Moss Beach, Montara and the Miramar area.

Hansen said the council will hold a town hall meeting in June to explain the status of the panel to the community and encourage people to run for council seats.

Achieving MAC status comes 18 months after the council first formed.

Robert Carter, vice-chairman of the Princeton Citizen's Advisory

Committee, told supervisors his group had no problem with the council becoming a MAC, but warned the council to leave Princeton affairs to the advisory committee.

"We wish them luck. We have several cross-members, however, stay out of our territory," Carter said.

In November of 1989 area residents gathered in Montara, saying the county wasn't listening to their concerns. Their anger was partially fueled by county Planning Commission approval of the Pillar Point Harbor Village project.

Both the Board of Supervisors and the California Coastal Commission also approved the project.

A Monterey County Superior Court judge ruled last month in favor of a local citizens group who sued the county and the state to stop the project.

The community council never took a formal position on the project. Hansen said the council doesn't want to be a single issue group, but intends to represent the communities on a wide variety of topics.