

Midcoast Community Council

*An elected Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
representing Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton, and Miramar*

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Dave Olson **Chris Johnson** **Lisa Ketcham** **Dan Haggerty** **Erin Deinzer** **Joel Janoe** **Laura Stein**
Chair Vice-Chair Secretary Treasurer

Date: December 10, 2014

To: Camille Leung, Project Planner

Cc: SMC Planning Commission
SMC Board of Supervisors
Steve Monowitz, Acting Community Development Director
Coastal Commission staff: Nancy Cave, Jeannine Manna

Subject: **Big Wave (BW) North Parcel Alternative (NPA) 8-Building Option
PLN2013-00451**

The Midcoast Community Council is requested to comment by December 11 on the BW NPA 8-Building Option. The Coastsides Design Review Committee will not consider this plan until December 18. The plans we received are low resolution with limited detail and legibility, revealing little more than building footprints. Revised building elevations were not provided. Tables of measurements compare the 8-building option to the 4-building version, which was also sketchy and lacking necessary detail. There was inadequate time to digest the unfortunate last-minute redesign consolidating 9 buildings down to 4 in the November "revised NPA" staff report and EIR Addendum. Now the unwanted 4-building version that came and went within a week has become the reference point, instead of the original NPA 9-building layout carefully reviewed and extensively commented on last summer. More unnecessary complexity and confusion can hardly be imagined. Purported urgency negates careful review and thoughtful comment, and unnecessarily creates more negativity towards the project.

In both the 4 and 8-building versions, the 27,000 s/f of commercial space owned by the Wellness Center is no longer a separate building in the Office Park but has been incorporated into the first floor of the Wellness Center. While this resolves the issue of what to do with the first floor space not allowed for residential use, it raises potential conflicts with unspecified leased commercial uses within the sanitarium building.

The addition of office space as a possible use, to what was identified in the NPA as 27,000 s/f of commercial storage, exacerbates the problem of unallocated commercial use intensity vs. total parking spaces. Office space requires ten times the number of off-street parking spaces as storage or manufacturing uses do. The project's original proposal for 100% office space ran up against untenable parking and traffic impacts, hence the downgrade to mixed use. The arbitrary and non-binding apportionment of uses is applied over the entire project on a first-come first-served basis. Realistically, the County will not deny development on some of the subdivided parcels simply because the available parking was already taken by other parcels developed with office space. Additional parking will be found within 1,000 feet, as allowed by County ordinance. Realistically, traffic impacts have been drastically underestimated for the actual built-out project.

While the 4 and 8-building versions have been reduced from 3 to 2-story, the building heights were only reduced by an insignificant 1.5 feet, down to 36.5 feet, which seems unnecessarily tall for a 2-story building. Leaving some of the buildings 3 stories, 38 feet tall, would enable reduced building footprints. The residential use has been brought closer to the airport runway (about 300 feet away directly across the street), whereas in the original NPA, residential areas were tucked behind the gym and commercial buildings. The visual building mass immediately adjacent to Pillar Ridge residential community has been significantly increased. It appears Buildings 1 & 2 are actually joined by a covered basketball court. We don't find the indoor fire flow storage anywhere.

Nobody liked the building facades depicted for the 4-building version. Each building should have a cohesive design and not pretend to be more than one building. The group of buildings should have elements that relate to each other. Above all they should blend in with the backdrop of forested bluff and marsh. We have yet to see any detailed renderings for the building exteriors that adequately serve to evaluate the project. We need to see where the entrances are and the walkways and planted areas next to the buildings, with people in the picture for scale. There have been no story poles and the visual simulations are inadequate and out of date.

All these alternatives attempt to deal with this out-of-scale massive development without adequately reducing square footage. The applicant should be required to reduce the current total of 189,000 s/f of commercial space to the 155,000 s/f originally proposed in 2006 as satisfying all project goals¹. The proposed density on the north parcel is unchanged from the project denied by the Coastal Commission. There is no guarantee that the south parcel won't be developed later.

Please refer to our previous comments on August 27² and November 10³ of this year regarding our continuing concerns on project scale, traffic, parking, agriculture, extended development phasing, and airport issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

MIDCOAST COMMUNITY COUNCIL
s/Dave Olson, Chair

¹ <http://www.midcoastcommunitycouncil.org/storage/issues/bigwave/2006-06-BW-pre-app-wkshop.pdf>

² <http://www.midcoastcommunitycouncil.org/storage/mtgs-com2014/2014-08-27-MCC-re-BW-NPA-EIR.pdf>

³ <http://www.midcoastcommunitycouncil.org/storage/mtgs-com2014/2014-11-10-MCC-to-PC-BW-NPA.pdf>