

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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January 28, 2015

Mike Schaller, Project Planner
San Mateo County Planning and Building Department
455 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, California 94063

Re: San Mateo County Planning Case Number PLN2015-00020

Dear Mr. Schaller,

Thank you for forwarding the project referral form for the County's Planning Case Number PLN2015-00020, dated January 14, 2015, received in our San Francisco office on January 16, 2015. We appreciate the opportunity to provide you with comments. The Project Applicant is requesting a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) to obtain authorization to conduct development in an area located between the sea and Highway 1. The issuance of CDPs for development in this area is appealable to the Coastal Commission. The proposed development entails the installation/construction of a new four-foot-tall, wood frame and wire mesh fence that would be located five feet in to the public right-of-way (r-o-w) at the west end of 7th Street in Montara. Commission staff comments are provided below. The following Commission staff comments are preliminary and may not be comprehensive with respect to the proposed project.

Applicant: Please clarify who the applicant is for the proposed project. The referral form indicates Geoff Westerfield as the applicant; while the application identifies Bradford Westerfield.

Project Description: The proposed development would entail construction of a new 4-foot tall, 30-foot long, wood frame and wire mesh fence that would be located five feet in to the public r-o-w. The new fence would extend westward down 7th Street and end perpendicular to the bluff. We suggest that the applicant provide additional detail for the project description that includes the purpose and need for such a fence and the effect it will have on public use of the 150 square-foot public r-o-w area on 7th Street, itself. Review of the plan prepared by Edward C. Love, dated 1/9/15, shows that the existing fence will be removed. This proposed work is not included in the project description narrative. The application must have a consistent project description. Please clarify whether the fence removal is part of this subject project. Further, there is an existing fence and "main gate" that is shown to remain. Additional comments on the fence follow, below.

Public Access: The existing fence is located within the County's r-o-w and although it appears, based on the plan, that a portion of the fence is to be removed, Commission staff recommends that the entire fence must be removed from the r-o-w. Complete removal of the fence is warranted because as constructed it interferes with the public's ability to laterally access the bluff top public property, specifically Marine Walk that extends along the top of the bluff parallel and

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seaward to the Westerfield private property. Marine Walk is an existing public access path that extends in a north to south direction within the public r-o-w along the top of the bluff. This walkway/path is identified in the certified Local Coastal Program (LCP) as a shoreline destination, see LCP Table 10.1. Further, the LCP Table 10.6 calls for improvements to this trail, including posting a warning of hazards, and has a special consideration to keep the end of the residential street, e.g., 7th Street, open to develop as a view point. The fence as currently constructed and located inhibits the public's ability to access Marine Walk along the bluff. The applicant must therefore remove the entire fence in order to ensure that opportunity for the public to access the existing Marine Walk is provided. We recommend that as a condition of approval all unpermitted obstructions to public access within the public right-of-way must be removed, including but not limited to non-native plants, such as the myoporum described in the application attachment, the fence, outdoor furniture, and gravel/rock material that may have been installed by the Westerfields.

Consistency with the LCP: The proposed project must be consistent with the LCP policies under its Visual Resources Component, in particular, LCP Policies 8.4 for cliffs and bluffs, 8.10 vegetative cover, and 8.32 scenic corridors in urban areas. It must also be in conformity with the Shoreline Access Component as provided in LCP Policies 10.1 (Permit Conditions for Shoreline Access), 10.2b (Definition of Development), 10.3 (Definition of Shoreline Access on bluff), 10.4 (Designation of Shoreline Access), 10.23 (Access Trails), 10.23d (Refer to Site Specific Recommendations in Table 10.6), 10.23e (Post Caution signs on difficult access trails), and 10.29 (Protection of Trails from Closing and Encroachment). It is important that the proposed fence must be consistent with LCP Sections 6412 and 6565.20(F)3.

We also note that in addition to this project referral from County Planning regarding the subject CDP application a project referral has also been submitted to Commission staff for review and comment on a San Mateo County Department of Public Works (DPW) CDP application (Planning Case Number PLN2014-00302). DPW is seeking a CDP to obtain authorization to install 2 metal-beam guardrails and remove a portion of the existing wooden fence in the vicinity of this fence installation project. Commission staff will provide comments on PLN 2014-00302 under separate cover, however we strongly recommend that both of these proposed projects be planned and considered in concert because they overlap and involve the very important issue of public access to Marine Walk.

Sincerely,



Renée Ananda, Coastal Program Analyst
North Central Coast District

CC: Steve Monowitz, San Mateo County
John Nibbelin, San Mateo County
Dan Carl, Coastal Commission
Nancy Cave, Coastal Commission
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