



PO Box 61731, Santa Barbara, CA 93160

June 30, 2010

Janet Wolf, Chair  
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re Santa Barbara County Local Coastal Program Amendment No. MAJ-1-09

Dear Ms. Wolf:

I am writing in behalf of over 100 property owners in the "More Mesa Shores" neighborhood regarding the California Coastal Commission's proposed "Modification #21" that would in effect condemn existing beach stairways, including a stairway in our neighborhood that has been in existence for fifty years.

Our Board of Directors, and our homeowners, strongly object to this amendment as proposed by the CCC staff. Among our concerns are the following:

1. Our neighborhood is served by a single road (the southerly extension of Patterson Avenue, which becomes our Orchid Drive) and our only refuge and egress from the area should the road become impassible due to an emergency such as a widespread fire is down our beach stairway. Without that stairway, we could become trapped, condemned like lemmings at the edge of the cliff to either jump or burn.
2. The existing stairway has served as access to the beach for the County Fire Department and Sheriff's Department many times. Without this access, their path to provide aid is greatly impaired.
3. The CCC's charge is to preserve the beach environment due to "the sensitive nature of the coastal bluffs," yet ironically they would in effect be compelling us to make the access public, which could significantly increase traffic and impact on the bluffs. May I note here that the beach in question is easily accessible from existing public pathways from Anderson Lane, More Mesa, and Goleta Beach.
4. We do not have the resources or capacity to accommodate public access to this stairway, given that there is no room for parking on our very narrow streets, no sanitation facilities, and no security or lifeguard personnel. Also, we could be held liable as an Association and/or as individual property owners for injuries incurred by the public when using the access.



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I must also voice our concern about how this process has taken place. The Coastal Commission is attempting to make sweeping regulatory changes without the benefit of environmental review or inclusion of the public in the process. They have been seemingly covert in these endeavors, by keeping these “recommendations” at the CCC staff level and by not seeking any input from local residents or even providing those residents with any notice whatsoever of their intentions. In an article in yesterday’s Santa Barbara Noozhawk, the authors characterized this as an “underhanded maneuver by the Coastal Commission to increase its power over local land-use decisions and further restrict property rights.” We agree with this assessment.

The “all or nothing” nature of the CCC’s modifications as a group is also troubling and is disrespectful and dismissive of our local concerns and conditions and quite frankly is an attempt to usurp your responsibilities and powers as the governing body of this County.

We urge the Board of Supervisors to stand up for us and reject the California Coastal Commission’s proposed modification #21. If they’re going to strong-arm the Board, this County, and its citizens by using an “all or nothing” tactic, we suggest that “nothing” is the appropriate response.

Sincerely,

Gordon A. Feingold  
President  
The More Mesa Shores Homeowners Association.