



The voice of our community

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July 6, 2020

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Honorable Members of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors,

The Montecito Association (MA) reviewed 19-CUP-00000-00004 & 14-CDP-00000-00055 at its regularly scheduled, publicly-noticed September 10, 2019 Board meeting, during which the applicant was given ample opportunity to address our community. The MA received 502 responses to a membership survey issued in September, and 90% opposed this project. We continue to receive numerous phone calls from local residents, and an additional 40 pieces of public correspondence, all heavily opposing this appeal.

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We very much supported your Planning Commissioners denial of the project, on November 7, 2019, and recommend strongly that you also deny the project for the reasons below.

1. Inconsistency with **The Montecito Community Plan, specifically Goal N-M-1, and Policy N-M-1.1** which state, "Maintain the Existing Low Ambient Noise Level As Part of The Semi-Rural Character of the Montecito Community;" and, "Noise Sensitive Uses Shall Be Protected From Significant Noise Impacts."
2. A Conditional Use Permit (CUP) cannot regulate where helicopters can fly or who occupies them. Allowing helicopters on agriculturally-zoned land in the population-dense south county sets a dangerous precedent which should be evaluated as a **potentially significant cumulative land use impact**.
3. The applicant submitted a Negative Declaration (ND) initially, and your commissioners rightly found this insufficient. A complete EIR would allow an impartial, third-party noise analysis. The Noise report prepared by the applicant & cited in the ND concludes that noise is "not significant," while also stating **helicopter rotary blade slap during descents will attract attention and be conspicuous**. This triggers the Quality of Life threshold which states, "However, a significant effect may also occur when ambient noise levels affecting sensitive receptors increase substantially but remain less than 65dB(A) CNEL, as determined on a case-by-case level."
4. The ND **proposed no mitigation and cites the applicant's project description which unequivocally misleads the public** into thinking that helicopter pilots will be bound to ingress & egress solely over the Pacific Ocean, while also indicating intent to fly over mountainous areas of Montecito. Beyond the obvious conflict of these statements, the noticing for the ND **was inadequate for a project with the potential to disturb residents, people using public trails, and beaches**.

In summary, for the above reasons, the Montecito Association Board requests that you support your Planning Commissioners and staff recommendation, and deny this appeal.

Sincerely,

Megan Orloff, President