



**Neighborhood  
Defense League  
of California**

*(formerly Homeowners Defense Fund)*

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April 1, 2015

*Accommodating growth  
While preserving the character  
Of our neighborhoods*

**Supervisor Lavagnino**  
County Administrative Building  
105 E. Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara CA 93101

Board of Directions  
.....

**Judith Ishkanian**  
*President*

Dear Supervisor Lavagnino,

**Sally Jordan**  
*Vice President*

At the March 13 meeting of the Neighborhood Defense League Board of Directors, a unanimous vote was taken to send a Letter of Concern to the Board of Supervisors regarding the Caruso Appeal of the Montecito Planning Commission's "Approval with conditions" of the Miramar Hotel project.

**Kendra O'Connor**  
Secretary

First, we wish to express our long-standing public support of the Miramar project. We want it built! Unfortunately, after the January 21 hearing of the MPC, two critical issues remain that make it impossible for the MPC to yield, because they go against the Community Plan, which the MPC is pledged to support.

**James Westby**  
Treasurer

**Michael F. Brown**

1. Parking. Mr. Caruso offered to supply off-site parking for hotel employees. (A good idea) However, Staff and County Counsel argued that such an offer was "unenforceable." Was an EIR on parking ever done? Parking was one of the two biggest worries of residents who expressed their concerns.

**Robert Collector**

**Doug Herthel**

**Morris Jurkowitz**

How is a contract between a hotel and the County whereby the hotel provides employees off-site parking "unenforceable?" Would that not be part of a condition of approval? Off-site parking for employees is a very sound compromise to a long-standing problem and would hasten the projects ultimate approval.

**Richard Thielscher**  
*Temporary Leave*

**Wendy Coggins, Emeritus**

**Gary Earle, Emeritus**

2. The South Jameson Lane setback. Last week, before the City of Santa Barbara Planning Commission, SBCAG Deputy Director Stephen VanDenburgh stated-in no uncertain terms-that allowing the Hotel to be sited in the setback from South Jameson Lane, will likely preclude options for the eventual re-engineering and improvement of the San Ysidro intersection.

**Roy Gaskin, Emeritus**

**Rob Lowe, Emeritus**

In other words, once the large, imposing Project is built, it can't be moved, thus limiting CalTrans' and County Public Works' ability to design the safest and most effective intersection and freeway on-ramp, consistent with the 101 widening design.

Prior to the January 21<sup>st</sup> MPC meeting, Caruso Affiliated developed and submitted to P & D a plan to site all structures out of the required front yard setback, thus allowing more options for traffic engineers and Public works to produce the best and safest plan for future traffic circulation. However, Mr. Caruso withdrew this plan because Mr. Caruso was informed it could not be reviewed by P & D staff prior to the January 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting.

The 101 Improvement Project has been winding its own tortuous way through our County system. Now it interfaces the Miramar plan. It introduces Caltrans and new safety concerns into the complicated mix of issues facing the Miramar appeal before the Board of Supervisors. An adherence to the County's setback requirements along South Jameson Lane would resolve the second of the two lingering issues and put the Miramar project on a path to completion.

The Neighborhood Defense League voted unanimously for a sensible compromise on parking and the setback issue that should be agreeable to all parties and allow the Miramar Project to advance.

Thank you,

Sincerely,



Judith Ishkanian, President  
For the Board of Directors  
Neighborhood Defense League