



CATE SCHOOL

#5

July 20, 2010

BY HAND DELIVERY

Chair Janet Wolf and Members of the Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Barbara
105 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: Your Meeting of July 27, 2010
Land Use and Development Code – Coastal Commission Suggested Modifications

Dear Supervisors:

This letter is a follow-up to our letter of June 29, 2010. I have received a detailed report concerning your deliberations on July 13, and continue to have concerns about several of the Coastal Commission staff's proposed revisions to the Santa Barbara Land Use and Development Code. I am looking at these revisions as they relate to Cate School and the potential impacts the school would experience if these revisions are implemented. I respectfully offer the following suggestions for your consideration:

1. Cate School, which has been in existence for 100 years, is a lawful use in the agricultural zone. As such, it can expand or remodel existing buildings, construct new buildings and facilities, acquire additional parcels (both contiguous and non-contiguous) and enjoy the full range of rights held by a lawful use as addressed under its CUP.

If Cate is downgraded from a "use by right" to an "exception," I am very concerned that it will lose the ability to expand, remodel existing buildings or construct new facilities in the future. The lawful ability to make these changes have allowed Cate School the opportunity to improve and upgrade the facility to meet the changing educational needs of both students and faculty over the past century. Our ability to meet the needs of the changing educational environment is key to attracting and retaining the best students and faculty possible and to providing a top educational program. To lose this ability would greatly affect the future of Cate School.

2. I feel the currently proposed text regarding the potential for existing schools in Agricultural zones to expand (Footnote 11 in Table 2-1) is ambiguous. The terms "school," "reconstruction" and "expansion" are not defined which leaves them open to interpretation in the future. The uncertainty and potential inconsistency of interpretation is of great concern to the school as implementation depends on who is interpreting the request at any given point in time.


3. I understand the Board of Supervisors received a verbal report on some “concessions” and “agreements” made by Coastal Commission staff in a recent meeting with County staff. I respectfully suggest that the Board insist any changes to the Coastal Commission staff’s suggested modifications be (i) in writing, and (ii) distributed in advance to the public so people have a chance to understand exactly what is being proposed. I believe the proposed changes as currently written will negatively impact the future of Cate School, and would welcome the opportunity to review any concessions or agreements that have been discussed. I am hopeful this comment period will allow the opportunity for this type of dialogue.

4. Please take the time to review the Coastal Commission staff comments carefully. The County’s Land Use and Development Code are the rules that will govern our county for years to come, and the citizens rightfully expect that they will be carefully considered.

For all of these reasons, I urge the Board to advise the Coastal Commission that it will not be in a position to respond to the proposed modifications until they have all been presented in writing and the community has examined and understood those changes. The wording currently being discussed will negatively impact Cate School’s future ability to respond to changes in the educational environment and is not at all in keeping with the current CUP regulations per Article II that have been in existence for many decades.

Thank you for considering these thoughts.

Sincerely,

 *Andi Rice* FOR BENJAMIN WILLIAMS

Benjamin D. Williams IV
Headmaster