

Barker, Russ

From: Chris Crabtree <ccrabsb@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 9:29 PM
To: Barker, Russ
Cc: Lieu, Nicole
Subject: Letter to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors Regarding the Feb 4 Board Hearing – Agenda Item # 14-00074 - Consider the Appeals (Case No. 13APL-00000-00037 and 13APL-00000-00038) of the County Planning Commission's Approval of the Paradiso de...

Russ - I am probably too late getting this in, but nevertheless, please forward to the Board for their consideration.

Thanks Much
Chris Crabtree
708-7453

Letter to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors Regarding the Feb 4 Board Hearing – Agenda Item # 14-00074 - Consider the Appeals (Case No. 13APL-00000-00037 and 13APL-00000-00038) of the County Planning Commission's Approval of the Paradiso del Mare Ocean and Inland Estates Project

I have been fortunate to have frequented the Paradiso del Mare Ocean and Inland Estates project site and adjoining beach area on a fairly regular basis since 1974. I have accessed the project site from every possible angle, have observed the harbor seals in the adjacent rookery and near shore waters in every month of the year, and have seen the site change from a partial industrial site to a veritable wildlife preserve. I provide the following comments regarding the inadequacy of the vertical beach access offered by the applicant as part of the project.

The applicant offers vertical beach access at Eagle Canyon on the east end of the project property at no cost to them self. However, the cost to implement such a proposal would be so high that it raises serious doubt as to its legitimacy. Several people believe that it would cost at least two million dollars to permit and build such an engineer feat. This is the case, as whoever accepts this access offer would have to build (1) a new bridge over the Union Pacific train tracks to connect access from the proposed public parking lot to the beach, as the railroad would not allow an at grade crossing and (2) a concrete stairway down to the beach. Strangely, the applicant does not offer access over an existing bridge that is perfectly suited to accommodate public access (Project Final Environmental Impact Report [FEIR] page 2.0-16 states "The existing wood bridge ... over the UPRR ... would be maintained.").

What entity – the public or applicant - has the funds to develop such access? If the applicant is serious about providing public access to the beach, I suggest he offer a more feasible approach, such as the following.

The best public vertical access point on the property is the ravine at the western end of the property owned by the applicant. This opinion has been voiced by many that are familiar with the project site and have commented on the EIR, including those submitted by the Santa Barbara County Trails Council. This is the case for at least three reasons:

1. The effort and cost to develop the western access point would be substantially less compared to the Eagle Canyon location. Constructing the western access point would require a minimal amount of manmade materials and could take the form of a natural trail. The finished trail could have a gravel base hewn out of the ravine and could extend its grade down to the mean high tide mark, thereby requiring no stairs at the beach end. It could be constructed with a minimal amount of equipment - most work could even be done with hand tools.
2. The destination of most people that want to access the beach is the top of the point, which is west of the seal rookery and near this access point. Having access here rather than at Eagle Canyon would result in much lower foot traffic through the seal rookery and resulting disturbance to these animals.
3. During periods of high run-off, the creek would flood the canyon mouth at Eagle Canyon, thereby making it impossible for people to safely access the beach.

The most resourceful way to connect access between this vertical point and the public parking lot would be the following:

- Create a trail from the parking lot that parallels the residence access road to just west of the crossing of drainage #4 (See FEIR Figure 3.4-7a). From this point, continue the trail southwest to the train tracks, then west to the residence access road, and then over the new railroad bridge (proposed for access to the ocean estate house) to the south side of the tracks. Then develop the proposed coastal trail parallel to the train tracks all the way to the west end of the property. From here, continue the trail south to the cliff and then down into the most western ravine.

An alternative way to connect access between the western vertical point and the public parking lot would be the following:

- Allow access over the existing railroad bridge and then continue the trail from the south side of the train tracks along the coastal trail proposed in the FEIR all the way to the new railroad bridge and then continue west from this point as mentioned above.

Please encourage the applicant to re-consider their offer of vertical beach access based on the above for the benefit of the public and harbor seals within the rookery adjacent to the project site. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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