



October 26, 2017

Supervisor Joan Hartmann, Chair  
Supervisor Das Williams, Vice-Chair  
Supervisor Janet Wolf  
Supervisor Peter Adam  
Supervisor Steve Lavagnino  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan Coastal Zone Certification

Dear Chair Hartmann and Supervisors,

The Santa Barbara Association of REALTORS® (SBAOR) represents roughly 1,200 REALTORS® throughout the South Coast and our mission includes promoting home ownership as well as protecting private property rights. SBAOR urges you to **reject** the California Coastal Commission's certification with modifications of an amendment to the County's Local Coastal Program regarding the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan.

While the majority of the Coastal Commission's suggested modifications are agreeable, Policy GEO-EGV-1.1 is unacceptable because it takes away private property rights and creates a health and safety issue for the properties in the areas of Hope Ranch, east of More Mesa, and west of More Mesa. The private bluff staircases and access ways are part of the land owner's private property and therefore the only way that any government entity can take them is through negotiations with the private property owner or through eminent domain. The Coastal Commission is virtually taking away these private stairs by stating they can only be accessible by the *public*. The public has access to the coast through More Mesa so why should property owners be burdened with potential litigation if the public ends up getting hurt on their private property? Also, private access is allowed under the County's Article 2 which is certified by the Coastal Commission. The Coastal Act has not changed since the adoption of Article 2 and the Coastal Commission's certification and the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan is part of Article 2.

In addition to this backdoor taking, there is no specific language on repair and replace. Given the current language, what happens to current private stairs that need to be repaired or replaced so they are safe? These stairs need to remain and be maintained because there are historical bluff fractures. If these stairs were to be removed since they wouldn't be able to be maintained, the bluff could fracture, and people who use the beach could be hurt.

Another consideration is the bluffs in the area are shale/oil. This means that when there is a substantial fracture in the bluff, fires deep in the core ignite and have been known to burn for months. The only method of fire suppression has been hoses that the Fire Department access via the private stairs from the neighboring properties. If these stairs are removed and cannot be repaired or replaced what happens when this phenomenon happens again? Not only would these fires burn for an indeterminate time since the Fire Department couldn't access them, but the smoke from the fires would create hazardous smoke for the residents and beach users in the area.

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Your constituency has elected you to protect their local interests, not to turn over very important land use decisions to a State Commission that does not know the specifics of the County. For years the County has tried to protect and preserve land while working with and compromising with land and property owners. These owners do not want to have to proceed through an even more arduous process than what they have to go through now. They want the process to stay local so they don't have to spend thousands of additional dollars and significantly more time to get permits.

In 2011 one of the reasons the Board of Supervisors rejected the Coastal Commission's certification of the LUDC with modifications is because of this proposed modification. We request that you follow in the footsteps of the previous Board and **reject** the California Coastal Commission's certification with modifications of an amendment to the County's Local Coastal Program regarding the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan.

Sincerely,



David Kim  
2017 President

