



*Sensible planning and protection
for the San Mateo County Midcoast*

To: San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
CC: Mike Schaller, Steve Monowitz, San Mateo County Planning Commission, Renee Ananda,
Midcoast Community Council
From: Resist Density Board of Directors
Re: \$3 Million Allocation of Measure K Funding for MidPen Moss Beach Housing Project
Date: September 30, 2018

We are writing to urge the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors to withhold allocating \$3 million additional funding (\$1.9 million previously allocated) for the proposed MidPen Cypress Point project in Moss Beach until there is a clear understanding of the environmental issues, transportation plan, cost of clean up, and construction costs of this project.

Initial agency referral letters on MidPen's application from Caltrans, Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Midcoast Community Council (MCC) have raised serious questions regarding the feasibility of this project (see attached letters).

Environmental Concerns – Former top-secret military site

The proposed location of Cypress point is a former top-secret military training site that has never undergone an official evaluation or clean up. Its proximity to a residential neighborhood, as well as the Montara Creek and federally-protected Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, raise significant concerns regarding potential environmental hazards and their safe remediation, as well as the potentially significant costs of such remediation, that must be addressed prior to any construction on the site.

Traffic – Significant VMT and LOS impacts

Both CalTrans and DPW have submitted referral letters that raise major questions about MidPen's transportation and traffic plans. Sierra Club has expressed that "there could hardly be a much worse location for affordable housing in the urbanized Midcoast." The impacts on Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) and Level of Service (LOS) are significant and the isolated project site does not approach the goals of Plan Bay Area 2040. The project's closest access to the highway is located at a dangerous blind curve several miles from any supermarkets, community-oriented services, transit, medical practices, or jobs. The lack of walkability and public transit create a need for vehicle reliance, which is both a cost burden on the intended residents and a physical burden on the limited road infrastructure of the community.

71 Units All at Once – Inconsistency with LCP

The Local Coastal Program limits all new housing units to 40 in a calendar year throughout the MidCoast. The LCP specifically limits the number of affordable housing units "on the designated sites to a total of 60 during any 12-month period in order to allow the affordable housing units constructed on the designated housing sites to be assimilated into the community a few at a time". MidPen is pressing for an exemption to build all 71 units at once in a single location, a concentration that has no precedent to properly evaluate the potential impact on the community or its infrastructure. Issues with road safety, the aged sewer system, and proximity to sensitive habitats – key concerns under the LCP – are magnified by concentration, rather than building units over a range of several miles dotting the entire MidCoast (from Montara to El Granada). Since the decades-old moratorium on new water connections was lifted in 2014, there has been an annual



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average of 20 new housing permits issued for the entire Midcoast, a sharp contrast to the out-of-scale 71 proposed here.

No Guarantee for Locals

The County and MidPen have been promoting this project to support local residents and workers as a big selling point to the coastside community. Yet there is still no clarity as to how many units can be legally reserved for local workers. Without local preference, this project will further impede local traffic and significantly reduce road safety, as there will be a relatively large and abrupt increase in the number of local residents who must travel up to 7 miles or more to jobs and services.

Funding Issues

Through Public Records Act requests, we are aware that MidPen is very concerned with escalating construction costs on this remote and challenging location, as their estimates now are over \$500,000 per housing unit and climbing. Estimates appear to be based on experience at other sites and not from actual bids or considerations of some issues unique to this site. We question whether potential funding sources are aware of the issues raised above. To this end, we are concerned that the County is creating a conflict of interest by providing additional funds to MidPen before there is a clear path for amending the Local Coastal Program and the County's General Plan to allow for rezoning the subject parcel. If the amendments are not certified or the project does not occur, will the county be refunded for incurred costs? How much will it cost to clean up this site? What are the construction and grading costs? What are the risks and benefits to the community?

We urge the Board of Supervisors to withhold any further allocation of funding to MidPen's proposed Cypress Point project until these major questions can be answered.

Thank you for your consideration.

Attached:

MCC 9/26/18 referral letter

DPW 9/24/18 referral letter

Caltrans 8/29/18 referral letter