



March 30, 2016

Marin County Board of Supervisors

Via email: [bos@marincounty.org](mailto:bos@marincounty.org)

Re: Local Coastal Program Update Draft Environmental Hazards Policies

Dear Supervisors:

We are writing to request that you reconsider your intention to approve the Environmental Hazards chapter of the Local Coastal Program update at your April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. We do not believe the public has been adequately informed of the meaning and consequences of adopting these policies.

Although the county has conducted a series of public meetings regarding different strategies for adapting to sea level rise, you have never explicitly informed the public of what strategy or combination of strategies you would chose, nor the rationale upon which such a choice would be made. Now the recently released draft Environmental Hazards policies make clear that the heart of your strategy is a requirement for private residences to be elevated above FEMA Base Flood Levels. We do not believe the public understands this.

The draft policies disguise the consequences of the concomitant requirements of the Coastal Act and FEMA. For example, we do not believe that a homeowner in a coastal flood zone will be aware that in order to undertake a major remodel of their home, they will also have to elevate the home. Separately, and outside Coastal Act requirements, the policies will curtail or eliminate a neighbor's ability to challenge a variance for excess height. We do not believe the public understands this.

The draft policies will have profound effects: on community character, protection of public views and other visual resources, protection of wetlands, protection of public health through septic regulations, prioritization of visitor-serving uses, and myriad other coastal resources. Yet none of the policies dealing with those issues has been updated. The public interest and the protection of coastal resources are ill-served by such a piecemeal and incomplete approach to a

planning issue with such far-reaching consequences.

We strongly urge you not to approve these policies without giving the public an opportunity to understand and react to them. Section 22.90.020I of the Marin County Development Code provides for the Planning Commission to recommend LCP amendments to your Board. The Work Program submitted by the county for its C-SMART grant also calls for a Planning Commission hearing. A hearing or workshop at the Planning Commission is the appropriate venue for public discussion of these policies before they come to your Board for approval. To bypass the Planning Commission will invite rancor and discord rather than the full participation that is the public's right under Section 30006 of the Coastal Act.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bridger Mitchell  
President

Cc: Brian Crawford