

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors:

I am writing to you as the informal representative of a number of community groups in the Stinson Beach area who have come together at the direct request of Supervisor Kinsey and management of the County's Community Development Agency over the past year to discuss proposed amendments to the Local Coastal Plan, specifically to the Environmental Hazards section of the Land Use Plan and associated Implementation Program Amendments. Board members of the Stinson Beach Village Association, the Seadrift Homeowners Association, "Residents for Responsible Land Use" (a grassroots organization of homeowners in the low-lying Calles and Patios section of Stinson Beach), the Stinson Beach County Water District, local Realtors and other concerned citizens first met with Supervisor Kinsey, Tom Lai and Jack Liebster of the CDA during Thanksgiving week of last year. Following initial discussions, Supervisor Kinsey asked us to arrive as best we could at a "community consensus"; a small number of changes that we all agreed would be most critical for our local community, and that could be taken into account as final amendments were drafted. We held several meetings, exchanged dozens of pages of analysis and position statements on these issues, and posted numerous information statements to the surrounding community on NextDoor, via fliers, and through email. At a very well-attended Stinson Beach Village Association meeting of over fifty local residents and members of these groups with Jack Liebster and his staff, Jack and I led a community discussion of five major areas of concern that we had in fact agreed were of special importance to the greater Stinson Beach community. While I cannot claim the direct mandate of every resident of Stinson Beach, after each issue was discussed Jack called for a show of hands – and on each the consensus of the entire assembly was unanimous.

Our concerns were that, as proposed by California Coastal Commission staff: 1) Hazard reporting requirements were overly onerous, costly and in some cases impossible to meet for many in Stinson Beach; 2) Requirements for 100 year sea level rise projections and lack of definition as to what it meant to be "near the shoreline" would effectively lead to development or even regular maintenance being impossible to pursue in most of low-lying Stinson Beach; 3) "Coastal Redevelopment" would lead to a new set of permit requirements that could strip homeowners of rights to develop and maintain their properties; 4) Height limits, view considerations as a "stalking horse" for the obstruction of further development, and a blanket prohibition on elevating homes in response to sea level rise meant that our homes would have to be abandoned instead of simply raised a few feet as flooding hazards increased over time; and 5) categorical exclusions duly ordered by the Board of Supervisors of Marin and still in force, as well as exemptions for single-family home development explicitly granted by the Coastal Act itself, could in many cases be denied to Stinson Beach residents.

While not every proposal made by the representatives of these Stinson Beach community groups was implemented as requested at this meeting, we believe that County staff at the Community Development Agency truly listened to and diligently considered these critical community concerns, and that the proposed amendments to the Environment Hazards section of the Land Use Plan and to the Implementing Program best represent the appropriate balance the Coastal Act demands between the safety and property rights of homeowners in the Coastal Zone, and critical environmental, public access, public view, and community character mandates. The

Coastal Act requires that local governments create their local coastal programs “with full public participation”. Having myself attended seven community meetings at which County staff were present to explain and seek input on these amendments, read and discussed documents exchanged with a working group of fourteen local community leaders, and even gone on local radio station KWMR twice in the past four months to help inform the community of the work of County staff on the Local Coastal Plan, I cannot imagine that - short of knocking on every door in Stinson Beach to hold one on one discussions - any local government could possibly have done more to encourage and obtain “full public participation” in this process. Their work has been truly exemplary.

Please support your constituents in the Stinson Beach community, and all throughout the Coastal Zone of Marin County, by following your staff’s recommendations and approving the resolution to resubmit their proposed Land Use Plan Amendments and Implementation Program Amendments to the California Coastal Commission.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration,

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cc: Brian Crawford, Director  
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