

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**RECORD PACKET COPY**

South Coast Area Office
200 Oceangate, Suite 1000
Long Beach, CA 90802-4302

(562) 590-5071

Th 13 a,b

Filed: 8-12-98
49th day: 9-21-98
180th day: 1-30-99
Staff: JLR /LB
Staff Report: 12-11-98
Hearing Date: Jan. 12-15, 1999

**STAFF REPORT: REGULAR CALENDAR**

APPLICATION NO.: A-5-VEN-98-315/5-98-263

APPLICANT: City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

PROJECT LOCATION: Grand Canal, in the median of Venice Boulevard between Dell Avenue and Pacific Avenue, Venice, Los Angeles County

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Install four locking gates at the Grand Canal pedestrian tunnel to enable City to close off pedestrian sidewalks under bridge from sunset to sunrise.

LOCAL APPROVALS RECEIVED: City of Los Angeles CDP 98-01

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:

- 1) City of Los Angeles Local Coastal Development Permit No. 98-01
- 2) Coastal Development Permit 5-91-584 (City of Los Angeles-Venice Canals Rehabilitation Project,
- 3) Coastal Development Permit 5-91-463 (through A3) (Caltrans/City of Los Angeles) Refurbishment of Venice Boulevard.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is recommending approval of the proposed gates with conditions requiring that only a public agency, the Department of Public Works, is authorized to open and close the gates, and that the Department place signs notifying the public of the hours of operation and the telephone number of its office that is responsible for opening and closing the gates. As conditioned, the project will be consistent with the public access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act.

Procedural note concerning the requirements for two permits under the "local permit option" in certain locations (dual permit requirement.): The proposed development is located between the sea and the first public road nearest the shoreline and within three hundred feet of the inland extent of the beach. Therefore, it is within the coastal zone area of the City of Los Angeles which has been designated in the City's permit program as the Dual Permit Jurisdiction area. Pursuant to Section 30601 of the Coastal Act and Section 13307 of the California Code of Regulations, any development located in the Dual Permit

Jurisdiction which receives a Local Coastal Development Permit must also obtain a permit from the Coastal Commission.

The City's approval of the Local Coastal Development Permit has been appealed to the Commission. On November 6, 1998, the Commission found Substantial Issue with the City's approval of the underlying city permit CDP 98-01. In order to minimize duplication and unnecessary delays, Commission staff has combined the de novo appeal and Coastal Development Permit into one staff report and one Commission hearing. However, Commission approval, modification, or disapproval of this project will require two separate Commission actions: one on the appeal and one on the Coastal Development Permit.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution:

I. Approval with Conditions of 5-98-263.

The Commission hereby grants, subject to the conditions below, a permit for the proposed development on the grounds that the development, as conditioned, will be in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976, will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, is located between the sea and first public road nearest the shoreline and is in conformance with the public access and recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, and will not have any significant adverse impacts on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act.

II. Approval with Conditions of A-5-VEN-98-315

The Commission hereby grants, subject to the conditions below, a permit for the proposed development on the grounds that the development, as conditioned, will be in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976, will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, is located between the sea and first public road nearest the shoreline and is in conformance with the public access and recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, and will not have any significant adverse impacts on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act.

III. Standard Conditions.

1. Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment. The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
2. Expiration. If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date this permit is reported to the Commission. Development shall be pursued in

a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.

3. Compliance. All development must occur in strict compliance with the proposal as set forth in the application for permit, subject to any special conditions set forth below. Any deviation from the approved plans must be reviewed and approved by the staff and may require Commission approval.

4. Interpretation. Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.

5. Inspections. The Commission staff shall be allowed to inspect the site and the project during its development, subject to 24-hour advance notice.

6. Assignment. The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.

7. Terms and Conditions Run with the Land. These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

IV. Special Conditions:

1. Gate Locking/Opening hours and agency authorized

Prior to issuance of the coastal development permit, the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works shall agree in writing to the satisfaction of the Executive Director that the Department of Public Works employees or its contractors shall open the gates no later than sunrise and close no earlier than sunset: that only the Department and its employees will open and close the gates. For this purpose, the City may not delegate this responsibility to or contract with a private agency or homeowner's association or with a security company that also answers to a homeowner's association.

2. Signage

Prior to issuance of permit, the applicant shall submit a signage plan for the review and approval of the Executive Director. The plan shall indicate the size, location and text of the proposed signs. The signage plan shall include no fewer than four 2' x 3' signs which shall inform the public when the gates will be locked, and include the telephone number of the local office of the department of public works that is responsible for dispatching employees to open and close the gates. The signs shall be legible and conspicuously posted.

V. TWO PERMITS REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 30501 (DUAL PERMIT AREA)

The proposed development involves two separate types of Coastal Development Permit jurisdiction. Section 30601 of the Coastal Act states:

Prior to certification of the Local Coastal Program and, where applicable, in addition to a permit from local government pursuant to subdivision (b) or (d) of Section 30600, a Coastal Development Permit shall be obtained from the Commission for any of the following:

- (1) Developments between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea or within 300 feet of the inland extent of any beach or of the mean high tide line of the sea where there is no beach, whichever is the greater distance.
- (2) Development not included within paragraph (1) located on tidelands, submerged lands, public trust lands, within 100 feet of any wetland, estuary, stream or within 300 feet of the top of the seaward face of any coastal bluff.
- (3) Any development which constitutes a major public works project or a major energy facility.

Within the areas specified in Section 30601, which is known in the City of Los Angeles permit program as the Dual Permit Jurisdiction area, the Coastal Act requires that the development which receives a Local Coastal Development Permit also obtain a permit from the Coastal Commission. For projects outside of this area, more than 300 feet from the inland extent of a beach, or the sea where there is no beach, or more than 100 feet from a wetland or more than 300' from a coastal bluff, known as the Single Jurisdiction area, the City of Los Angeles Coastal Development Permit is the only Coastal Development Permit required. Both single and dual jurisdiction permits can be appealed to the Commission.

The proposed development is located adjacent to the sea, in this case the Venice Canals, and also is within three hundred feet of the inland extent of the beach, or the sea where there is no beach, an area that was designated as within the Dual Permit Jurisdiction area by the Commission pursuant to Section 13307 of the California Code of Regulations.

On November, 6, 1998 the Commission found that a substantial issue exists with the City's approval of the Local Coastal Development Permit. This action will combine the de novo action for the proposed project with the required Coastal Commission Coastal Development Permit decision. The matter will not be referred back to the local government.

VI. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.

The Commission hereby finds and declares as follows:

A. Project Description and Background

The applicant proposes to install four locking gates at the Grand Canal pedestrian tunnel. The tunnel is located under a bridge within a median between the streets of North Venice Boulevard and South Venice Boulevard. The walkways are located on the banks of the Grand Canal as it extends through the tunnel. The walkways do not extend under South Venice Boulevard. The median is approximately 200 feet in width and contains a public parking lot. Construction of South Venice Boulevard eliminated the public sidewalks leading to the main Venice Canal walkways. Therefore, persons using the walkways through the tunnel must exit the tunnel and walk up a ramp that exits at South Venice Boulevard. From there, pedestrians walk across South Venice Boulevard to access the Venice Canals. Closure of the tunnel at night will still allow pedestrians to walk across the parking lot and South Venice Boulevard to access the walkways along the Canals. The tunnel is approximately 25 feet in length. The City proposes to install four gates, one at each tunnel entrance.

The City Local Government Action approving the CDP allows a private security company hired by a homeowner's association to lock and unlike the gates. The City conditions require that the gates may be locked only from sunset to sunrise and that the company open the gates at sunrise, and leave them open until sunset. Following is a more detailed description excerpted from a City staff report

The Grand Canal crosses the median between South and North Venice Boulevards east of Strongs Drive and west of Dell Avenue. A bridge over the canal connects the east and west portions of a parking lot situated in the median. Walkways adjacent to the canal run from North Venice Boulevard to South Venice Boulevard and pass through tunnels under this bridge. These tunnels have been the location of criminal and nuisance activities, as noted by the Los Angeles Police Department and a private security company hired by the Venice Canals Association.

The proposed project would install four gates, one at each entrance to the tunnels. Each gate would be constructed of wrought iron to completely fill the tunnel entrance. Gates would be locked in an open position from sunrise to sunset, and would be locked closed from sunset to sunrise. The Venice Canals Association's security company, which patrols the canals on a 24-hour basis, would be responsible for unlocking and locking the gates.

The walkways are accessible from the sidewalks of both South and North Venice Boulevard. Access to the walkways on either side of the tunnels would not be affected by the proposed project. Access to the Grand Canal would not be affected by the proposed project. A public boat launching ramp extends from the east walkway into the canal; access to the ramp, and its associated loading/unloading area, would not be affected by the proposed project.

B) Background History of Surrounding Area

The Venice Canals are a unique cultural, historic and scenic resource of Southern California. The canals, which were created as part of the "Venice of America" subdivision in 1905, provide a sense of character and history for the Venice community. They also provide public access, recreation, and wildlife habitat.

The Venice Canals neighborhood is a predominantly residential community consisting of single family homes located along the open waterways. The houses front on the canals, but vehicle access is from the alleys lying to the rear of the houses. Public walkways run along both sides of each canal and separate the private residences from the canals. These walkways and the canal embankments were refurbished in 1994 with a combined Coastal Conservancy grant and local tax levy. The canals are a popular visitor destination in Southern California. The neighborhood is located about four blocks from Venice Beach, one of the most popular visitor destinations in Los Angeles.

The Venice Canals are part of the Ballona Lagoon sea water system and are connected with the Ballona Lagoon via Grand Canal. Water enters the canals system from the Pacific Ocean through two sets of tidal gates at Ballona Lagoon and Grand Canal. The water is discharged from the canals during outgoing tides at weekly intervals through the tidegates located between Grand Canal and Ballona Lagoon at Washington Street.

C. Public Access/Recreation

The proposed development is located between the first public road and the sea, requiring the Commission to evaluate the project in terms of the public access and public recreation policies of the Coastal Act. The following Sections of the Coastal Act are relevant:

Section 30210.

In carrying out the requirement of Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution, maximum access, which shall be conspicuously posted, and recreational opportunities shall be provided for all the people consistent with public safety needs and the need to protect public rights, rights of private property owners, and natural resource areas from overuse.

Section 30212.

(a) Public access from the nearest public roadway to the shoreline and along the coast shall be provided in new development projects except where:

- (1) it is inconsistent with public safety, military security needs, or the protection of fragile coastal resources,
- (2) adequate access exists nearby, or,

Section 30221.

Oceanfront land suitable for recreational use shall be protected for recreational use and development unless present and foreseeable future demand for public or commercial recreational activities that could be accommodated on the property is already adequately provided for in the area.

The Venice Canals area is a major visitor destination. The walkways provide public access along the canals for passive/active recreational purposes. The walkways are continuous and unimpeded. Presently, there are no gates restricting access. The canals are connected with overhead bridges that provide continuous pedestrian access throughout the area.

In 1991, the Commission approved a Coastal Development Permit (5-91-584) for a restoration project to improve the Venice Canals. Part of the project included replacement of the 4.5-foot wide sidewalks, which originally lined both sides of each canal. Legal public access to the canal walkways was restored for the first time since the City legally withdrew the walkways from public use in the 1940's. Coastal Permit No.5-91-584 resulted in an improved gain of almost three miles of coastal walkways. The improved walkways enhanced public access for purposes of walking, jogging, duck feeding, photography and other forms of recreation in the canal areas. While "legally closed" in fact canal walkways had remained open and were used by public.

The tunnel is located near the terminus of the Grand Canal under the Venice median public parking lot. The top of the tunnel connects the easterly and westerly areas of the lot.

The subject tunnel is the only tunnel located in the Venice Canals. The canal walkways are connected with pedestrian and vehicular overhead bridges. Night time closure of the pedestrian walkways within the tunnel will still allow pedestrians to walk across the public parking lot above the tunnel and cross South Venice Boulevard to access the walkways along the canals. The City is not proposing to restrict access along canals in the residential neighborhood.

However, as part of the proposed project, the applicant is proposing that the Venice Canal Homeowner's Association's security company that patrols the canals, will be responsible for locking and unlocking the gates. The proposal raises a serious question, which is that of a private company answerable to nearby homeowners managing any public facility. The Commission cannot find that a private company managing a public area will adequately protect a public access facility.

The nearby residents of a private homeowner's association may have a conflict of interest to ensure that the gates are opened for public use during the daytime. Therefore, the Commission is requiring a special condition that requires that only the applicant, the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, or its contractors will be responsible to open the gates at sunrise and to close the gates at sunset. In addition, the Commission is requiring a signage plan that will adequately inform the public when the gates will be locked. Even though walkways go through residential neighborhoods, the canals themselves are popular with a broad spectrum of Venice and Los Angeles area residents. It is important that the management of any portion of the canals reflect the city-wide constituency.

Night time closure of the pedestrian walkways within the tunnel will still allow pedestrians to walk across the public parking lot above the tunnel and cross South Venice Boulevard to access the walkway along the canals. However, as previously discussed, the Commission is requiring a special condition that only the applicant or its contractors will be responsible to open the gates at sunrise and to close the gates at sunset. The Commission is also requiring the applicant to provide a signage plan that will adequately inform the public when the gates will be locked.

Only as conditioned, can the Commission find that the proposed development is consistent with the applicable public access and public recreation provisions of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.

D. Scenic Resources

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act states:

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

The Venice Canals area is a Los Angeles City Historic-Cultural Monument and is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Venice Canals Historic District is significant as an early example of community and recreational planning in a coastal marshland area.

Maintaining the special character of the area is important to the continuance of the area as a historic district. The historic public walkways along the banks of the canals lend to the special character of the area. The Commission has previously recognized the special character of the canals area and the walkways by requiring fifteen foot setbacks on all Coastal Permit approvals which number approximately 200 in the Venice Canals area. The proposed project will impede access along 25 feet of a portion of walkway that is adjacent to a parking lot, not to the canal neighborhood. The walkway is located near the terminus of the Grand Canal and is not part of a central access facility. Only as conditioned, can the Commission find that the proposed project is consistent with Section 30251 of the Coastal Act.

E. Local Coastal Program

Section 30604(a) of the Coastal Act provides that the Commission shall issue a Coastal Permit only if the project will not prejudice the ability of the local

government having jurisdiction to prepare a Local Coastal Program which conforms with Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act:

- (a) Prior to certification of the Local Coastal Program, a Coastal Development Permit shall be issued if the issuing agency, or the Commission on appeal, finds that the proposed development is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of this division and that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a Local Coastal Program that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200). A denial of a Coastal Development Permit on grounds it would prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a Local Coastal Program that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) shall be accompanied by a specific finding which sets forth the basis for such conclusion.

An LCP Specific Plan for the Venice Canals/Marina Peninsula area was prepared by the City of Los Angeles in 1983 and was subsequently approved by the Commission with suggested modifications. The City did not accept the modifications and the Commission's approval lapsed. There is currently a new draft Local Coastal Program being developed by the City. It has not yet been submitted to the Commission for certification. Therefore, the City does not have a Local Coastal Program or a Land Use Plan that has been certified by the Commission. The draft LCP contains policies addressing access along the Venice Canal walkways. The proposed project, as conditioned, to protect public access, is consistent with the public access provisions of the Coastal Act.

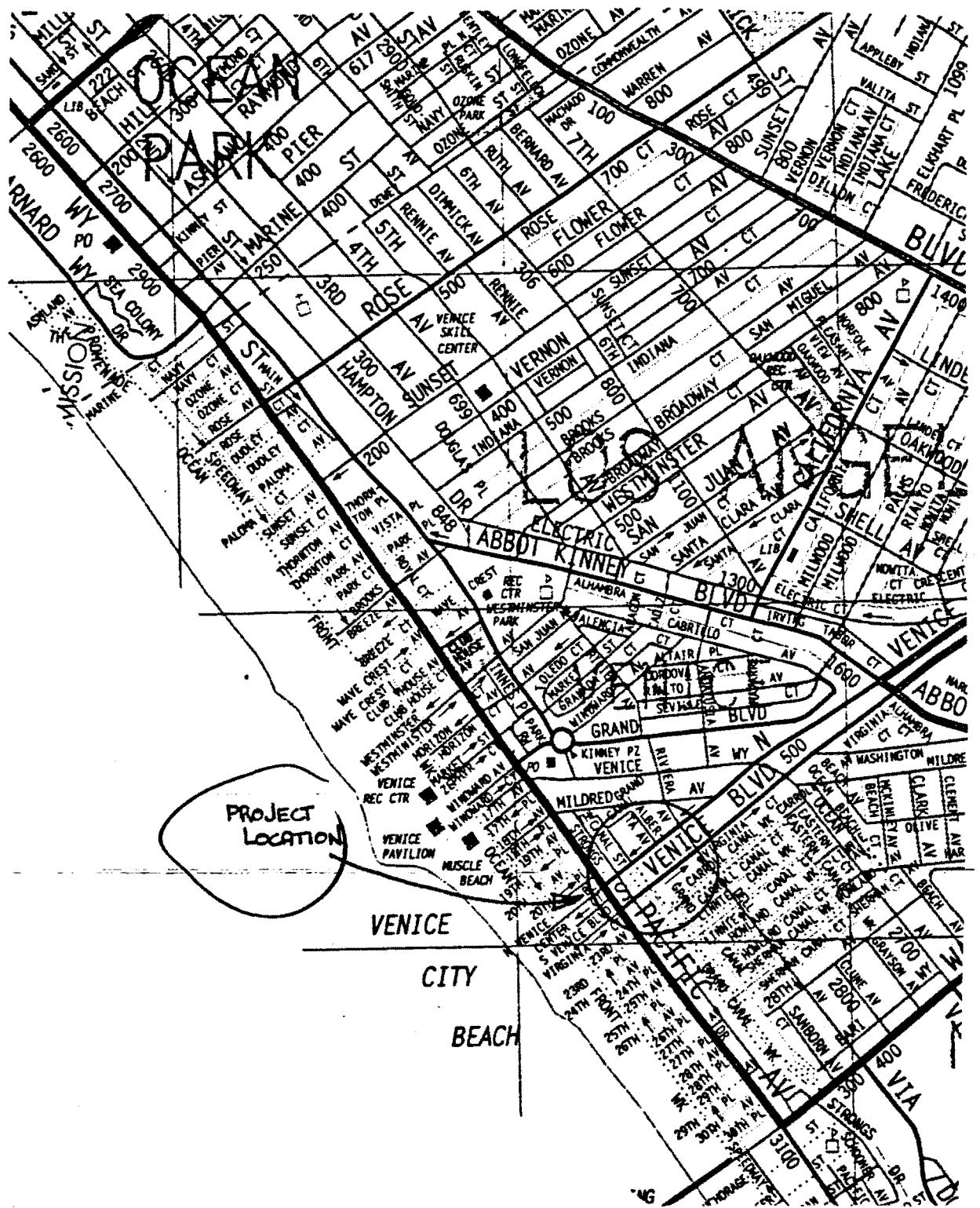
F. CEQA

Section 13096 of the Commission's administrative regulations requires Commission approval of Coastal Development Permit applications to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effects, which the activity may have on the environment.

The proposed project has been conditioned in order to be found consistent with the public access/recreation policies of the Coastal Act. Mitigation measures to ensure that the gates will be opened by the Department of Public Works or its contractors and that adequate signs will be conspicuously posted will minimize all adverse impacts. As conditioned, there are no feasible alternatives or mitigation measures available, which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact, which the activity may have on the environment. Therefore, as conditioned, the project is consistent with CEQA and the policies of the Coastal Act to conform to CEQA.

JLR/PE:

a-5-ven-98-315/5-98-263 city la canalgate



5-98-263
Exhibit A

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION

ASSESSOR'S MAP
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

M.B. 2-59

SUBJECT LINE BEACH SUBDIVISION NO.1

STRONG'S
DR.

27

20. SEP 1943

AVE. 2

DOES COPY, DOESN'T SEE

CODE

BK.
4226

5-98-263

Exhibit B

1994

38-24

109

629

31mm

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CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION

WESTBOUND

d Parking

EN-96-315
ALTERNATE ROUTE:
SIDEWALK, WALK THROUGH
SECTION OF PARKING LOT IN
CE BOULEVARD MEDIAN

Grand Canal
The

PUBLIC
BOAT
LAUNCH
RAMP

BOAT
LOADING/
UNLOADING

PROPOSED GATES

Photo 1

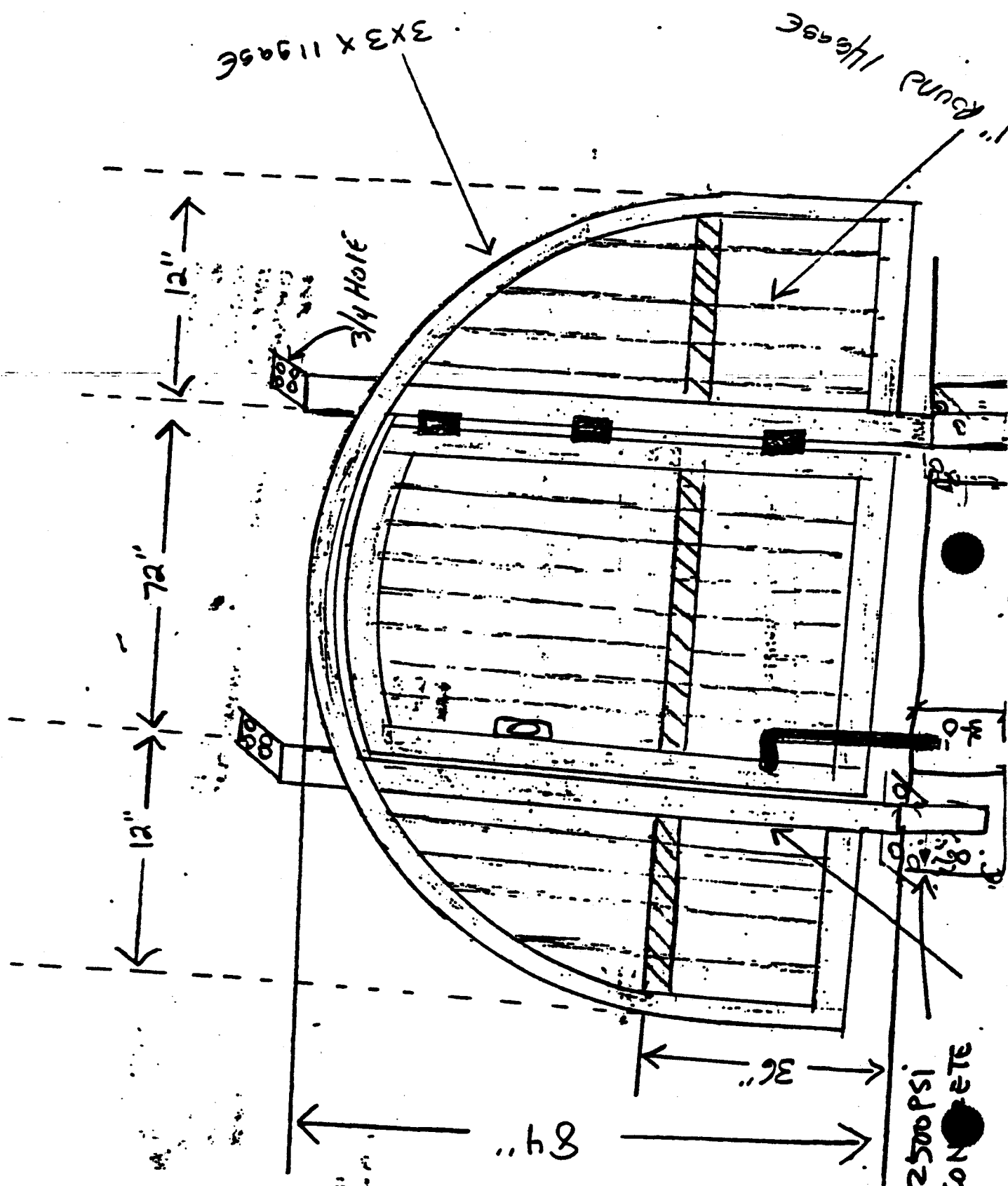
Photo 2

Paved Parkin

END OF WALKWAYS

EASTBOUND

5-98-263
Exhibit C



5-98-263
Exhibit D



Commissioner Tod A. Burnett
Room 370, City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA. 90012

RE: Venice Canal Historical Bridge Tunnel

Dear Commissioner Burnett:

The Venice Canals Association requests the placement of locking gate, fence and lighting at the entrances of the tunnel below the Venice parking lot overpass bridge located at Grand Canal and 200 N. Venice Blvd. (See map attached)

We have had numerous public safety and public health problems at this location. A Security Systems Patrol officer has documented a sampling of the problems and concerns over a one week period. I have enclosed the report for your records.

It is my understanding that the City of Los Angeles has a program that will allow us to protect this location from night to morning.

The Venice Canals Association has arraigned with Security Systems Services, a private patrol service serving the Venice Canals area, to open and close the gates on a daily basis. Please let me know how we should coordinate this service. I recommend two (Combination) pad locks, one for the City and one for the Security company.

Please let me know if there is anything else you may require from us.

Sincerely,


Mark Galanter
President

CC: VCA Board of Directors
Security Systems Services
Councilwomen Galanter

Post-It® Fax Note 7671

To	Bob Hayes	Date	8/11/97	# of pages	4
Co./Dept.	Comm. Burnett	From	Comm. Burnett		
Phone #	(213) 465-3377	Phone #	(213) 465-3377		
Fax #	(213) 847-3163	Fax #	(213) 847-3163		

473-4301

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CALIFORNIA
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5-98-263

5-98-263
EXHIBIT E

VENICE CANAL ASSOCIATION * P.O. BOX 893, * VENICE, CA. 90294

michael engelstein 2314 grand canal court venice california 90291

July 8, 1997

Councilwoman Ruth Galanter
Sixth District
7166 W. Manchester Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Commissioner Tod A. Burnett
Department of Public Works
Room 370 City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilwoman Galanter and Commissioner Burnett:

I am writing this letter as a member of the Board of Directors of the Venice Canals Association, and it is being written on its behalf.

As you are aware, among the many issues in the Canals, we have a major problem with the tunnel that parallels Grand Canal under the bridge at Venice Boulevard. We are requesting that it be locked and gated during the evening hours for the protection and safety of our neighborhood.

The following are some of the excerpts from the log maintained by Officer Robert Way from Security Service Systems. S.S.S. provides a dedicated security patrol (approximately 60 hours per week) in the Canals. These notations refer specifically to the tunnel.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Occurrence</u>
5/29	Male, drinking, open container
5/30	Male, sleeping
6/1	3 Males, drinking
6/3	Male, loitering
6/4	2 Men drinking and bathing
6/4	Found empty liquor containers, broken duck eggs, ashes from fire, human excrement.
6/10	Male and female drinking, open containers
6/16	Male, drinking, open container
6/19	Used hypodermic needles found
6/20	2 Men drinking, open containers
6/24	Male, drinking
6/28	2 Men fighting
7/1	Male, sleeping
7/5	2 Men drinking
7/5	4 Men spraying ducks
7/6	3 Men, bedding down for night, drugs, liquor present.

5-98-263
Exhibit F
10 f2

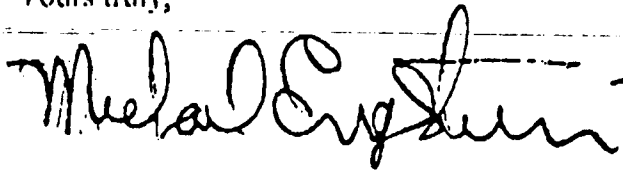
Page 2

Additionally, virtually every morning, there is evidence that the tunnel has been 'occupied' the previous evening. One day, Robert found the remains of three ducks that had been roasted for dinner. But I think by now you have an idea of our concerns.

Officer Brent Honore, I.A.P.D. Senior Lead Officer of the Venice Beach Patrol, and Cpl. Smedley, I.A.P.D. have also assisted us in monitoring the activities in the tunnel. If necessary, I can request their logs to be made available to you. Photographs are also available.

If I can be of any additional assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Yours truly,



Michael Engelstein

5-98-263
Exhibit F
2 of 2



RUTH GALANTER
COUNCILMEMBER
SIXTH DISTRICT

City Council
of the
City of Los Angeles
City Hall
90012

200 N. MAIN STREET
ROOM 515, CITY HALL, EAST
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
(213) 485-8857
FAX (213) 847-0548

DISTRICT OFFICE
7184 W. MANCHESTER AVE
LOS ANGELES, CA 90048
(310) 524-1180
FAX (213) 237-0558

October 6, 1998

Ms. Deborah Lee, Director
California Coastal Commission
South Coast Area
200 Oceangate, Suite 1000
Long Beach, CA 90802-4416

Attention: Jim Ryan, Staff Planner

Dear Ms. Lee:

As the Los Angeles City Councilmember for Council District Six, I support the City of Los Angeles' Application for Coastal Permit #5-98-263, to install four locking gates at the entrances to the Grand Canal Pedestrian Tunnel in the Venice Boulevard median and to lock the gates at night.

The Pedestrian Tunnel is two blocks east of the Venice Boardwalk, the second most popular tourist attraction in Southern California. The structure itself, two tunnels leading from North and South Venice Boulevards to the public boat launch below, is surrounded by a city-owned parking lot that serves local beach users and tourists. Because of this unique context, the Tunnel area receives a high volume of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

However, the tunnels have become a serious public safety hazard for beach users, tourists, and local residents. Since the tunnels are inconspicuous and below street level, they provide a safe haven for illegal activity, particularly at night. Over the past two years, my office has received numerous complaints regarding the criminal and nuisance activities occurring at the Tunnel entrances. The Los Angeles Police Department and Security Service Systems, a private security patrol for the Canals, have documented persons engaged in illegal drug use, drinking in public, urinating and defecating on public property, and accosting pedestrians. Leaving the Tunnel entrances unsecured in the evenings will only perpetuate the degradation of an area that I worked hard to restore, and which is otherwise a source of civic pride.

Recycling and waste are required under

Exhibit G
2 of 2
5-98-263

A historical reminder of the original Venice Canals, the Pedestrian Tunnel merely provides access to the public boat launch for the canals, and a route across the Venice Boulevard median. While it serves both ornamental and utilitarian functions, the Tunnel provides no access to the Canals themselves, and no direct access to the adjacent parking lot. The walkways end at the sidewalk of Venice Boulevard South, and alternate routes through the median are readily available. Accordingly, gating of the tunnels will not restrict access to the Canals. Moreover, securing the tunnels at night will not impair any recreational use of the Canals or the Venice Boardwalk.

Under the permit, the City's Board of Public Works will accept responsibility for the operation of the security gates at the Pedestrian Tunnel. Currently, the Board has a maintenance agreement with Mariposa, a private maintenance group responsible for the Venice Canals. It is my understanding that an amendment to this agreement to include opening and closing of the security gates is the most feasible option.

Because of the public safety issues associated with the Pedestrian Tunnel, and the corresponding negative impact on recreational uses on the Venice Boardwalk, I urge the Commission to support night-time closing of the Pedestrian Tunnel and grant the permit.

Sincerely yours,



RUTH GALANTER

Councilmember, Sixth Council District

5-98-263
Exhibit G
20f2

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
MEMBERS

ELLEN STEIN
PRESIDENT
(213) 485-3378

VALERIE LYNNE SHAW
VICE PRESIDENT
(213) 485-3376

M.E. "RED" MARTINEZ
PRESIDENT PRO-TEMPORE
(213) 485-3375

TOD A. BURNETT
(213) 485-3377

MARIBEL MARIN
(213) 485-3379

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA



RICHARD J. RIORDAN
MAYOR

OFFICE OF THE
BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

ROOM 600
433 S. SPRING STREET
LOS ANGELES, CA 90013

JAMES A. GIBSON
SECRETARY

GENERAL INFORMATION
(213) 485-3381
FAX (213) 237-1445
TDD (213) 847-4750

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CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION

October 5, 1998

Ms. Deborah Lee, Director
California Coastal Commission
South Coast Area
200 Oceangate, Suite 1000
Long Beach, CA 90802-4416

Attention: Jim Ryan

Dear Ms Lee:

As a Commissioner of the City of Los Angeles Board of Public Works, I am writing to you in support of the City of Los Angeles' Application for Coastal Permit #5-98-263, to install four locking gates at the entrances to the Grand Canal Pedestrian Tunnel in the median of Venice Boulevard.

The Venice Boardwalk, located just two short blocks west of the Grand Canal, is a major recreational destination for both local beach users and tourists, and the parking lot in the Venice Boulevard median, adjacent to the proposed gates, is heavily used by these visitors.

The City is concerned that the recreational use of the Boardwalk may be negatively impacted by the nuisance and criminal activities which regularly occur in the tunnels adjacent to the parking lot. Local police and the private security company which patrol the canals have received numerous reports from tourists of being accosted and threatened by people loitering in these tunnels. Additionally, these people use the tunnels for such activities as drinking, fighting, drug use and dealing, and as outdoor toilets. Such activities are conspicuous not only while actually in progress, but also by the evidence left, such as broken glass, hypodermic needles, and human wastes.

Exhibit #
2 of 2
5-98-263



Ms. Deborah Lee

-2-

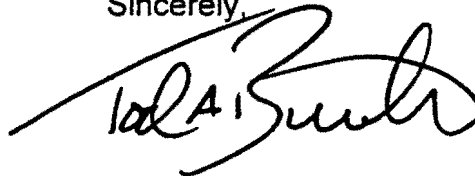
October 5, 1998

These activities, and their aftermath of waste and odors, detract from the recreational aspect of the canal and the Venice Boardwalk, and discourage repeat visits. The City has worked hard to make the Boardwalk a favored destination for visitors and tourists, and would not like to see recreational uses chased out by nuisance and criminal uses.

The tunnels provide no access to the Venice Canals, as the walkways end at Venice Boulevard South and exit to the sidewalk at that point. Therefore, access to the canal system will not be negatively impacted by gating the tunnels. The tunnels provide no access to the adjacent parking lot, and alternate routes through the Venice Boulevard median are readily available. Closing of these tunnels during non-daylight hours will not negatively impact any recreational use of the canals or the Boardwalk.

The Los Angeles Board of Public Works strongly supports the nighttime closing of these tunnels in order to preserve their use by visitors and tourists.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tod Burnett", written over a horizontal line.

Tod Burnett, Commissioner
Board of Public Works

Exhibit H
2042
5-98-263

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT

BERNARD C. PARKS
Chief of Police



P.O. Box 30188
Los Angeles, Calif. 90030
(310) 202-4571

Ref #: 6.2

RICHARD J. RIORDAN
Mayor

September 22, 1998

Mr. Jeff Harlan, Field Deputy
c/o Councilwoman Ruth Galarter
City of Los Angeles
7166 West Manchester Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Post-It Fax Note	7671	Date	9/24/98	# of pages	2
To	JIM RYAN	From	MISTIE M JOYCE		
Co./Dept.	CA COASTAL COMM	Co.	LA CITY BUD ENG		
Phone #		Phone #	(213) 847-8699		
Fax #	(562) 590-5084	Fax #			

Dear Mr. Harlan:

As requested by Mr. Michael Engelstein in his correspondence dated September 19, 1998, here is documented substantiation of chronic crime problems commonly associated with the Venice Canals.

There are currently ongoing problems in the tunnels under the Venice Boulevard historic bridge over Grand Canal. These problems include drunkenness, fighting, assault, loitering, drug use and dealing, overnight camping, using the tunnels as toilets, and the illegal killing and cooking of ducks that live in the canals. The Los Angeles Police Department would welcome any sanctioned structural changes that deter the above activity.

I hope that this affirmation will assist in expediting the Venice Canals Association fence proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact us again if we may be of assistance in the future.

Very truly yours,

BERNARD C. PARKS
Chief of Police


GARY S. WILLIAMS, Captain
Area Commanding Officer
Pacific Community Police Station



Security Service Systems
6733 S Sepulveda Blvd. Suite 100
Los Angeles, CA 90045
310-477-2095

To Whom It May Concern:

As a patrol supervisor assigned to the Venice Canals area for the past 20 months, myself and my officers have encountered numerous problems in the tunnel area of Grand Canal. The majority of these problems occur during the hours of darkness. This area, having no lighting and shelter from the elements, provides perfect cover for drug addicts and the homeless who sleep, defecate and often fight in this area. We have received numerous calls in the past from concerned residents regarding this area. I have personally in the past made arrests for narcotics use, assault with a deadly weapon, lewd acts in public, drunk and disorderly conduct and drinking in public. The workers of Mariposa, the canal maintenance crew, who's yard is alongside the tunnel area, have had several problems with homeless camping in the tunnels blocking their access. I have personally found discarded crack cocaine pipes and hypodermic needles within the area.

Over the past 20 months I have worked very closely with the LAPD Senior Lead Officer Corporal Brent Honore to try and keep the problems to a bare minimum, setting up extra patrols and arresting suspects that congregate in this area. Officer Honore has regularly targeted this area during his community clean-up campaigns to remove graffiti and gang tagging from the walls. Officer Honore and myself both welcome the installation of gates and their being secured from dusk to dawn as a step in the right direction to help alleviate the continual problems experienced in this particular area. As a service to the community, my company is willing to lock and unlock the gates at the prescribed times free of charge.

If you have any questions on this matter, please feel free to contact me at my office (310) 477-2095, or my pager (310) 655-3689. In closing I would like to thank you for you anticipated support in us and the community on this matter.

Yours Sincerely,

Robert H. Way

Patrol Guards Alarms Monitoring Repair

5-98-263
Exhibit J

C & O
Trattoria
RISTORANTE ITALIANO

RECEIVED
OCT 14 1998

10/8/98

California Coastal Commission
200 Oceangate #1000
Long Beach, CA 90802
Attn: Jim Ryan

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION

Jim Ryan

As a local business owner, parent and local resident I wanted to voice my support for the placement of gates at the Venice Blvd & Grand Canal tunnel in Venice Beach.

This location is a haven for loitering and what appears to be a place for consumption of alcohol and illegal drug use, etc. Please consider this when making decisions re: placement of a gate in this area.

Thank you,


Debbi Singer

5-98-263

Exhibit K