CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

OUTH CENTRAL COAST AREA SOUTH CALIFORNIA ST., SUITE 200 VENTURA, CA 93001 (805) 641-0142

ITEM:

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Commission Action:

STAFF REPORT: CONSENT CALENDAR

APPLICATION NO.

4-98-318

RECORD PACKET COPY

APPLICANT:

Malibu Investors

AGENT:

John Kilbane

PROJECT LOCATION: 27460 Latigo Bay View Dr., Malibu, Los Angeles County

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Construct a 6,482 sq. ft., two story, 27.5 foot high, single family residence, including an attached 4-car garage, swimming pool, driveway, patios and landscaping, septic system, and 804 cu. yds. of grading (432 cu. yds. cut, 372 cu. yds. fill) with excess material to be disposed of at the Calabasas Landfill.

Lot Area:

64,468 sq. ft.

Building Coverage:

4,100 sq. ft.

Pavement Coverage: 8,847 sq. ft. Landscaped Area:

Parking Spaces:

55,621 sq. ft.

Plan Designation:

4 (garage)

Zoning:

Residential I One du/1 acre

Project Density:

One du/1 acre

Ht. abv ext grade:

27.5 feet maximum.

LOCAL APPROVALS RECEIVED: Approval in Concept, City of Malibu Planning Department, dated December 15, 1998; City of Malibu, Notice of Decision, Site Plan Review Number 98-031, dated November 23, 1998; In Concept Approval (Septic System), City of Malibu Environmental Health Department, dated August 3, 1998; Los Angeles County Fire Department, Preliminary Approval, dated November 4, 1998; Approval in Concept, City of Malibu Geology and Engineering Review, dated August 31, 1998; City of Malibu Archaeological Review Phase I Report, dated August 14, 1998.

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS: Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan, Coastal Development Permit 5-89-1149 (Thorne); 4-97-157 (Malibu Investors);



for review and approval by the Executive Director. The plans shall incorporate the following criteria:

- All disturbed areas on the subject site shall be planted and maintained for (1) erosion control and visual enhancement purposes within sixty (60) days of receipt of the Certificate of Occupancy from Los Angeles County. To minimize the need for irrigation and to screen or soften the visual impact of development, all landscaping shall consist primarily of native/drought resistant plants as listed by the California Native Plant Society, Santa Monica Mountains Chapter, in their document entitled Recommended List of Plants for Landscaping in the Santa Monica Mountains, dated October 4, 1994. Invasive, non-indigenous plant species that tend to supplant native species shall not be used. Such planting shall be adequate to provide ninety (90) percent coverage within two (2) years, shall be repeated, if necessary, to provide the required coverage. This requirement shall apply to all disturbed soils including the existing graded pad and slopes. Plantings shall include vertical elements to screen and soften the visual impact of the residence and garage as seen from Latigo Canyon Road.
- (2) Vegetation within 50 feet of the proposed house may be removed to mineral earth or planted in a zone of irrigated lawn or similar ground cover. Selective thinning, for purposes of fire hazard reduction shall be allowed in accordance with an approved long-term fuel modification plan submitted pursuant to this special condition. The applicant shall submit evidence to the satisfaction of the Executive Director that the fuel modification plan required herein has been approved by the Los Angeles County Forestry Department.
- (3) All plantings shall be maintained in good growing condition throughout the life of the project and, whenever necessary, shall be replaced with new plant materials to ensure continued compliance with applicable landscape requirements.
- (4) All development approved herein shall be undertaken in accordance with the final approved plans. Any proposed changes to the approved final landscape or fuel modification plans shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to said plans shall occur without a Coastal-Commission approved amendment to the coastal development permit, unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.
- (5) Should grading take place during the rainy season (November 1 March 31), sediment basins (including debris basins, desilting basins, or silt traps) shall be required on the project site prior to or concurrent with the initial

grading operations and maintained through the development process to minimize sediment from runoff waters during construction. All sediment should be retained on-site unless removed to an approved dumping location.

B. Monitoring Plan

- (1) Five years from the date of the receipt of the Certificate of Occupancy for the residence the applicant shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a landscape monitoring report, prepared by a licensed Landscape Architect or qualified Resource Specialist, that certifies the onsite landscaping is in conformance with the landscape plan approved pursuant to this Special Condition. The monitoring report shall include photographic documentation of plant species and plant coverage.
- (2) If the landscape monitoring report indicates the landscaping is not in conformance with or has failed to meet the performance standards specified in the landscaping plan approved pursuant to this permit, the applicant, or successors in interest, shall submit a revised or supplemental landscape plan for the review and approval of the Executive Director. The revised landscaping plan must be prepared by a licensed Landscape Architect or a qualified Resource Specialist and shall specify measures to remediate those portions of the original plan that have failed or are not in conformance with the original approved plan.

2. Plans Conforming to Geologic Recommendations

- (a) All recommendations contained in the Building Plan Review, Lot 5, Tract 46851, dated July 7, 1998, and in the Building Plan Review, Lot 5, Tract 46851, dated July 13, 1998, both prepared by Geosystems, Environmental and Geotechnical Consultants, shall be incorporated into all final design and construction including recommendations concerning foundations, grading, drainage, erosion control, retaining walls (new and existing), site preparation, friction piles, general construction specifications and precautions, floor slabs, pavement, swimming pool, and sewage disposal. All plans must be reviewed and approved by the geotechnical consultants. Prior to the issuance of the coastal development permit, the applicant shall submit, for review and approval of the Executive Director, evidence of the geotechnical consultants' review and approval of all project plans. Such evidence shall include affixation of the consulting geologists' stamp and signature to the final project plans and designs.
- (b) The final plans approved by the consultants shall be in substantial conformance with the plans approved by the Commission relative to construction, grading and drainage. Any substantial changes in the proposed development approved by the

Commission which may be required by the consultants shall require an amendment to the permit or a new coastal permit. The Executive Director shall determine whether required changes are "substantial."

3. Wild Fire Waiver of Liability

Prior to the issuance of the coastal development permit, the applicant shall submit a signed document which shall indemnify and hold harmless the California Coastal Commission, its officers, agents and employees against any and all claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses of liability arising out of the acquisition, design, construction, operation, maintenance, existence, or failure of the permitted project in an area where an extraordinary potential for damage or destruction from wild fire exists as an inherent risk to life and property.

4. Design Restrictions

Prior to the issuance of the coastal development permit, the applicant shall execute and record a deed restriction, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director, which restricts the color of the subject residence, garage, and roofs to colors compatible with the surrounding environment. White tones shall not be acceptable. All windows shall be of non-glare glass.

The document shall run with the land for the life of the structures approved in this permit, binding all successors and assigns, and shall be recorded free of prior liens and any other encumbrances which the Executive Director determines may affect the enforceability of the restriction. This deed restriction shall not be removed or changed without a Coastal Commission-approved amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.

5. Swimming Pool Drainage Plan

Prior to the issuance of the coastal development permit, the applicant shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a swimming pool drainage plan prepared by a licensed engineer that connects the swimming pool drain directly to the previously-constructed storm drain system. The swimming pool drainage plan shall certify that the proposed drainage system is adequate to drain the subject pool's volume of stored water at full capacity and shall specify that swimming pool drainage shall not be accomplished by pumping the drained effluent onto adjacent open areas or slopes.

6. Future Improvements

Prior to issuance of a coastal development permit, the applicants as landowners shall execute and record a deed restriction, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive

Director, which shall provide that Coastal Development Permit 4-98-318 is only for the proposed development and that any future additions or improvements to the permitted structures, or property, including but not limited to clearing of vegetation and grading, other than as provided for in the approved landscape plan prepared pursuant to Special Condition 1, that might otherwise be exempt under Public Resource Code Section 30610 (a), will require a permit from the Coastal Commission or the affected local government authorized to issue such coastal development permits. The deed restriction shall specify that clearance of vegetation consistent with the fuel modification plan approved by the Los Angeles County Fire Department pursuant to Special Condition 1(A)(2) above is permitted.

The document shall run with the land, binding all successors and assigns, and shall be recorded free of prior liens that the Executive Director determines may affect the enforceability of the restriction. This deed restriction shall not be removed or changes without a Coastal Commission-approved amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.

7. Drainage and Erosion Control Plan

Prior to the issuance of the coastal development permit, the applicant shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a drainage and erosion control plan prepared by a licensed engineer which assures that run-off from the roof, patios, driveways, parking areas, swimming pool hardscape, decks and all other impervious surfaces on the subject parcel are collected and discharged in a non-erosive manner which avoids ponding on the pad area and does not increase the volume or velocity of runoff into the natural drainage courses on site. The plan shall discharge site runoff primarily, and directly, into the previously installed storm drain system. In addition, the applicants' consulting geologist shall review the run-off and erosion control plan and confirm that the plan adequately incorporates all recommendations contained in the report titled Building Plan Review, Lot 5, Tract 46851, dated July 7, 1998, prepared by GeoSystems Environmental and Geotechnical Consultants. Evidence of such review by the consulting geologist shall be submitted for the review and approval of the Executive Director.

The plan shall ensure that site drainage is not accomplished by sheetflow runoff and shall further ensure that drainage from the proposed project does not result in the erosion of any slope draining into the drainage courses tributary to Escondido Canyon Creek. Should the project's drainage structures fail or result in erosion, the applicants/landowner or successor interests shall be responsible for any necessary repairs or restoration.

IV. Findings and Declarations.

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

A. Project Description and Background

The proposed project site is located at 27460 Latigo Bay View Dr. (APN 4460-035-005), about one mile inland and north of the Pacific Ocean, and west of Latigo Canyon Road (see Exhibits 1-12). The building site on the subject 55,621 square foot parcel, is a split-level previously graded pad constructed pursuant to Coastal Development Permit 5-89-1149 (Thorne) for the underlying subdivision. Access to the site is from a private road, Latigo Bay View Drive, off of Latigo Canyon Road, at the western side of the parcel.

The applicant proposes to construct a 6,482 sq. ft., two story, 27.5 foot high, single family residence, including an attached 4-car garage, a swimming pool, driveway, patios and landscaping, and to grade 804 cubic yards (432 cu. yds. of cut, 372 cu. yds. of fill) and dispose of excess material at the Calabasas Landfill. The additional grading is required to recondition the existing pad and to excavate the swimming pool location.

The subject parcel is one of nineteen lots created by a subdivision approved by the Commission in 1990 (CDP 89-1149 (Thorne)). Many of the parcels in the subdivision, which is now known as "Malibu Pacifica," are subject to extensive open space and geologic restricted use areas. The subject parcel (Lot 5), however, is not among these.

Lot 5 descends to an unnamed blue line drainage on the eastern and southeastern portion of the parcel. The drainage is tributary to Escondido Canyon Creek and ultimately to the Pacific Ocean less than one mile downgradient of the site.

The pad for Lot 5 is located at approximately the 750-foot elevation and as such, the project will be visible from scenic vistas along Latigo Canyon Road (east of the subdivision). These vista points are designated in the certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan (LUP). The proposed project is not visible from the Escondido Falls Trail.

The Commission has approved the development of single family residences on eight of the lots in this subdivision within the past year, including Lots 3, 4, 7, 11, 14, 16, 17, and 18, as shown below.

B. Geology and Fire Hazards

Coastal Act Section 30253 provides in pertinent part that:

Section 30253.

New development shall:

- (1) Minimize risks to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood, and fire hazard.
- (2) Assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms along bluffs and cliffs.

In addition, the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains LUP, which the Commission has certified and utilized as guidance in past permit decisions, contains policies applicable to the proposed project:

- P 147 Continue to evaluate all new development for impact on, and from, geologic hazard.
- P 149 Continue to require a geologic report, prepared by a registered engineer...
- P 156 Continue to evaluate all new development for impact on, and from, fire hazard.

The proposed development is located in the Santa Monica Mountains, an area that is generally considered to be subject to an unusually high amount of natural hazards. Geologic hazards common to the Santa Monica Mountains include landslides, erosion, and flooding. In addition, fire is an inherent threat to the indigenous chaparral community of the coastal mountains. Wild fires often denude hillsides in the Santa Monica Mountains of all existing vegetation, thereby contributing to an increased potential for erosion and landslides on property.

1. Geology; Site Stability

Section 30253 of the Coastal Act requires that new development assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area. The applicant has submitted a geology report titled Building Plan Review, Lot 5, Tract 46851, dated July 7, 1998, and prepared by GeoSystems Environmental and Geotechnical Consultants.

The applicant proposes to construct a 6,482 sq. ft., two story, 27.5 foot high, single family residence, including an attached 4-car garage, swimming pool, driveway, patios and landscaping, septic system, and 804 cu. yds. of grading (432 cu. yds. cut, 372 cu. yds. fill) with excess material to be disposed of at the Calabasas Landfill. Although the building pad was previously constructed, the additional grading is necessary to recondition the pad and to excavate the location of the proposed swimming pool.

The proposed building site is an 18,600 square foot pad constructed pursuant to the Commission's previous approval of the underlying subdivision. As such, the Commission in its previous permit action on CDP 5-89-1149 (Thorne) has already considered the general geologic competence of the site and the suitability of performing the landform alterations associated with the underlying subdivision.

According to the final geologic and soils engineering reports for the site the entire building pad is underlain by at least 5 feet of compacted fill.

The building site for the proposed project is located along the north and west side of the subject parcel. A compacted fill slope, approximately 35 feet in height, descends at a 2:1 gradient from the street and driveway entrance to the building pad. The eastern side of the building pad is supported by a Hilfiker retaining wall located along the top of the descending slope. (The Hilfiker retaining walls used throughout the subdivision consist of gravel and soil compacted into a wire mesh structure.) This wall is approximately 12 feet in height. East of the wall a 2:1 fill slope descends approximately 20 feet. Downslope of the fill slope, the natural slope continues to descend approximately 70 feet to a natural drainage course at the toe of the slope. To the south of the building pad, a 2:1 compacted fill slope descends approximately 36 feet to a graded building pad on Lot 6.

The applicant's geotechnical consultant noted that the proposed cabana and swimming pool were initially located closer to the Hilfiker wall than the recommended 14 feet. The applicant has revised the project plans to ensure that the pool and cabana are set back the required distance, thus ensuring that the placement of these structures does not adversely affect the wall's stability. The most recent geotechnical report submitted by the applicant, prepared by GeoSystems and dated July 13, 1998, recommends that future development of the site be set back a minimum of 14 feet from the Hilfiker retaining wall and that should additional development be proposed near the walls, that the adequacy and continuing stability of the walls be further evaluated by a structural engineer.

Special Condition 6 (Future Improvements) requires that the applicant seek a new coastal development permit for additional construction on the site that would otherwise be exempt from such requirements, should future development be proposed for the site beyond the project description contemplated in this permit approval. The purpose of this condition is to ensure that, in accordance with the recommendations of the applicant's geotechnical consultant, additional analysis of the retaining wall's support capacity, and of any effects that future development may have on the wall's integrity, be evaluated and found acceptable by a structural engineer before additional development is approved for the site. Therefore, the Commission finds that the imposition of Special Condition 6 will ensure that the retaining walls constructed previously on Lot 5 are protected from the potentially adverse effects of additional development in the future.

The Geosystems report cited above states that the subdrain system for the swimming pool will collect and discharge overspillage from the pool via a drainage system exiting approximately midway down the adjacent slope. The applicant's agent, John Kilbane, has confirmed that the subdrain system designed for this project and other similar projects proposed in this subdivision will only collect minimal amounts of overtopping or incidental spillage from the pool. Nevertheless, to protect the integrity of the constructed slopes and thereby ensure the geologic stability of the site, Special Condition 5 requires the applicant to prepare a swimming pool drainage plan that requires that the subdrain system, in addition to the main drainage system of the pool, be connected directly into the previously constructed storm drain infrastructure that drains the subdivision.

In addition, the geotechnical report does not state how maintenance or emergency drainage of the swimming pool's full capacity would be managed. Such drainage on or into the adjacent slope could saturate or erode the slope, resulting in slope destabilization and potential failure. As noted above, Special Condition 5 ensures that maintenance and emergency drainage of the pool is conducted directly via the storm drain infrastructure. Special Condition 5 requires the applicant to prepare and submit for the Executive Director's approval a swimming pool drainage plan prepared by a licensed engineer. The plan must specify how all swimming pool drainage will be conducted to the storm drain system; drainage to open areas or onto or within slope areas is unacceptable. Implementation of the drainage plan required by Special Condition 5 will ensure that swimming pool drainage is managed in a non-erosive manner consistent with preserving the stability of the site.

The Geosystems report makes numerous recommendations regarding site preparation, foundation and building setbacks, foundation footings, support piles, design requirements, erosion control, retaining walls, drainage protection, sewage disposal, and other considerations potentially affecting site stability.

The Geosystems report concludes that:

Based on the findings of our updated investigation, and on the findings of the referenced reports, the site is considered to be suitable from a soils and engineering standpoint for construction of a residence, cabana and swimming pool provided the recommendations included herein are followed and integrated into the building and/or grading plans.

Based on the recommendations of the Geosystems geologists and soils engineers, therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed development, as conditioned herein, minimizes risks to life and property from geologic hazards and assures stability and structural integrity, as required by Section 30253 of the Coastal Act, so long as the recommendations set forth in the Geosystems report are incorporated into the project plans. Therefore, the Commission finds it necessary to require the applicant to submit

project plans that have been certified in writing by the geotechnical consultants as conforming to their recommendations (Special Condition 2).

As stated, Section 30253 of the Coastal Act requires that new development neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion. Accordingly, Special Condition 1 requires the applicant to submit for the Executive Director's approval, landscape and fuel modification plans incorporating erosion control measures and providing for landscaping with suitable, locally native plant species. Established native plants, particularly shrubs common to the chaparral plant communities typical of the vegetation of the Santa Monica Mountains, develop deep root systems. These roots, together with the ground cover of established native vegetation, hold soil in place and inhibit erosion. The use of these materials as required by the special condition will, therefore, ensure maximum stability of the site immediately after the disturbance of construction, in addition to superior long-term erosion control on the subject site. Further, as mentioned above, Special Condition 5 requires the non-erosive drainage of the swimming pool via the storm drain system, thus avoiding the potential erosion of the adjacent slope.

The landscape plan required by Special Condition 1 specifies that disturbance caused by grading and/or excavations must be immediately stabilized and planted for erosion control with approved, locally native plant species. Temporary measures must also be incorporated into the landscape plan to protect excavated soils from erosion while construction is in progress during the rainy season. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, covering stockpiled soils and exposed graded areas with weighted plastic coverings, constructing siltation and debris basis, and strategically placing sandbags, haybales, or geotextiles as necessary to provide adequate protection of soils. Thus, Special Condition 1, if fully implemented, will protect the site's stability and control erosion that might otherwise occur.

The Commission notes that the use of native plants to landscape disturbed areas of the site (in addition to the use of native plants for overall landscape design), provides superior erosion control to that provided by more common applications, such as the hydroseeding with non-native annual grasses that is often employed along roadcuts or burned areas. Non-native grass seeding provides a quick, shallow layer of growth and a more immediate "greening" effect, but the grasses quickly deplete the soil of available nutrients, crowd slower-growing native plant seedlings, and potentially preclude establishment of erosion controlling, native shrub species altogether.

Native shrub species common to the chaparral vegetation that characterizes much of the Santa Monica Mountains are more deeply rooted than annual grasses, and thus provide superior long-term slope stability and erosion control. Non-native annual grasses, by contrast, are shallow-rooted and tend to attract foraging by pocket gophers. Gopher tunnels provide conduits for rainwater intrusion and resultant slope loading, which may result in washouts and gullying as rainwater is funneled into burrows. Gross slope failure

may eventually result. Even minor slope failures and resultant erosion further deplete the topsoil layer and exacerbate the difficulty in establishing vegetation. Thus, a negative "feedback loop" may be established as the result of inappropriate landscaping practices.

An additional disincentive to the selection of non-native annual grasses for immediate seeding after site disturbance is that while the grasses provide a quick seasonal flush of green cover in response to the wet winter season, these grasses quickly die as the hot, dry summer season commences. The fine, dry fuel provided by dead annual grasses carries fire efficiently. Native chaparral communities that burn again too soon after a previous fire fail to re-establish a seedbank and thus the native shrubs may be permanently lost from such an area. The presence of tinder provided by dead grasses encourages the hot, secondary fires that would otherwise be unlikely to burn in previously denuded chaparral habitat.

Areas landscaped with annual grasses near habitable structures often require mechanized cutting to provide satisfactory fuel management for fire safety in the Santa Monica Mountains. The chronic disturbance of blading or mowing grassy areas—particularly on slopes—further retards the establishment of native vegetative cover and thus contributes to the general degradation of watersheds and other sensitive habitat areas.

For these reasons, the Commission finds it necessary to impose Special Condition 1 as a condition of approval of the proposed development, thereby ensuring that erosion is controlled and that native plants are appropriately utilized for slope stabilization and landscaping.

On site erosion control is also necessary to ensure that the proposed project does not adversely affect sensitive habitat areas downslope and downgradient of the project site. As noted in the applicant's geotechnical report, as shown in Exhibits 5-7, and as discussed in Section D of this report, the subject parcel drains into an unnamed drainage that is tributary to Escondido Canyon Creek less than one quarter of a mile downgradient. Further, Escondido Canyon Creek, a blue line stream designated on the U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle maps, empties into the Pacific Ocean less than one mile downgradient of the proposed project site. The creek is flanked by inland wetlands designated as Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas in the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains LUP maps, as well as designated Disturbed Sensitive Resource Areas. In addition, the nearshore marine environment affected by the outflow of Escondido Canyon Creek contains kelp beds also designated as ESHAs on the LUP maps.

As discussed in Section D below, erosion caused by the proposed project would contribute sediment pollution to the downgradient riparian, wetland and marine sensitive resource areas. As noted above, these resources include a blue line stream flanked by riparian woodlands, inland wetlands, and the marine resources of the Pacific Ocean. Thus, the

control of erosion on the subject site is necessary to protect the designated habitat areas that are ecologically linked to the site.

Special Conditions 1, 2, and 5 contain measures to, among other things, control erosion that may otherwise be caused by the proposed construction and long-term use of the subject site. Special Condition 6 requires the applicant to seek a coastal development permit for, among other things, vegetation clearance in excess of that specifically authorized in Special Condition 1 for fuel management purposes. Further, Special Condition 7 requires the applicant to submit a drainage and erosion control plan prepared by a licensed engineer for the Executive Director's review and approval. The plan must also be reviewed by the applicant's geotechnical consultant to ensure that the plan incorporates the erosion control measures set forth in the consultant's recommendations contained in the Geosystems report cited above. The requirements of Special Condition 7, if fully implemented, will prevent the discharge of drainage from the site in a manner that would adversely affect the natural drainage courses on site or the downgradient sensitive resources ecologically connected to these drainages.

The control of erosion in conjunction with the construction and maintenance of the proposed project as required by Special Conditions 1, 2, 5, and 7, together with the required planting of appropriate, locally native species in accordance with Special Condition 1, and the requirement of obtaining a permit for any additional vegetation clearance not specifically authorized in this permit approval (Special Condition 6), will therefore prevent erosion and the associated adverse impacts upon sensitive habitat areas and resources.

Therefore, for all of the reasons set forth above, the Commission finds that the proposed project as conditioned by Special Conditions 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7 will be consistent with the requirements of Coastal Act Section 30253 applicable to geology and site stability.

2. Wild Fire

Section 30253 of the Coastal Act also requires that new development minimize the risk to life and property in areas of high fire hazard. The Coastal Act recognizes that new development may involve the taking of some risk. Coastal Act policies require the Commission to establish the appropriate degree of risk acceptable for the proposed development and to establish who should assume the risk. When development in areas of identified hazards is proposed, the Commission considers the hazard associated with the project site and the potential cost to the public, as well as the individual's right to use his property.

Vegetation in the coastal areas of the Santa Monica Mountains consists mostly of coastal sage scrub and chaparral. Many plant species common to these communities produce and store terpenes, which are highly flammable substances (Mooney in Barbour, Terrestrial Vegetation of California, 1988). Chaparral and sage scrub communities have evolved in

concert with, and continue to produce the potential for, frequent wild fires. The typical warm, dry summer conditions of the Mediterranean climate combine with the natural characteristics of the native vegetation to pose a risk of wild fire damage to development that cannot be completely avoided or mitigated.

Much of the Malibu Pacifica subdivision, including the applicant's parcel, burned during the 1993 Malibu Fire. Due to the fact that the proposed project is located in an area subject to an extraordinary potential for damage or destruction from wild fire, the Commission can only approve the project if the applicant assumes the liability from these associated risks. Through Special Condition 3, the wild fire waiver of liability, the applicant acknowledges the nature of the fire hazard which exists on the site and which may affect the safety of the proposed development. Moreover, through acceptance of Special Condition 3 the applicant agrees to indemnify the Commission, its officers, agents and employees against any and all claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses or liability arising out of the acquisition, design, construction, operation, maintenance, existence, or failure of the permitted project in an area where an extraordinary potential for damage or destruction from wild fire exists as an inherent risk

In addition, Special Condition 1 requires the applicant to submit landscape and fuel modification plans. These plans require the use of locally native plant species while incorporating the fuel modification requirements of the Los Angeles County Fire Department, thus reducing the threat of wildfire to the proposed residence that might otherwise exist.

The Commission finds that only as conditioned by Special Conditions 1 and 3 is the proposed project consistent with Section 30253 of the Coastal Act applicable to hazards from wildfire.

C. Visual Resources

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act states:

Section 30251.

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 reservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

In addition, the certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains LUP contains numerous policies regarding the protection of visual resources. The Coastal Commission has utilized these policies as guidance in past permit decisions. LUP policies particularly applicable to the proposed project include:

- P 91 All new development shall be designed to minimize impacts and alterations of physical features, such as ravines and hillsides, and processes of the site (i.e., geological, soils, hydrological, water percolation and runoff) to the maximum extent feasible.
- P125 New development shall be sited and designed to protect public views from LCP-designated scenic highways to and along the shoreline and to scenic coastal areas, including public parklands.
- P129 Structures should be designed and located so as to create an attractive appearance and harmonious relationship with the surrounding environment.
- P130 In highly scenic areas and along scenic highways, new development (including buildings, fences, paved areas, signs, and landscaping) shall:
- Be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and to and along other scenic features, as defined and identified in the Malibu LCP.
- □ Minimize the alteration of natural landforms.
- □ Be landscaped to conceal raw-cut slopes.
- Be visually compatible with and subordinate to the character of its setting.
- Be sited so as to not significantly intrude into the skyline as seen from public viewing places.
- P134 Structures shall be sited to conform to the natural topography, as feasible. Massive grading and reconfiguration of the site shall be discouraged.
- P135 Ensure that any alteration of the natural landscape from earthmoving activity blends with the existing terrain of the site and the surroundings.

1. Visual Resources

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act requires scenic and visual qualities to be considered and protected. The subject site is located within a rural area characterized by expansive mountain vistas. The site is visible from some public vistas along Latigo Canyon Road, which parallels the eastern side of the subdivision. These vista points are designated in the certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains LUP. (See Exhibit 4). The site is not, however, visible from the Escondido Falls Trail.

As stated previously, the applicant proposes to construct a 6,482 sq. ft., two story, 27.5 foot high, single family residence, including an attached 4-car garage, swimming pool, driveway, patios and landscaping, septic system, and 804 cu. yds. of grading (432 cu. yds. cut, 372 cu. yds. fill).

The Commission finds it necessary to require that the proposed residence be subject to the specific design restrictions set forth in Special Condition 4. The purpose of these restrictions is to reduce the impacts of the proposed project on public coastal views from Latigo Canyon Road. These restrictions limit the color of the proposed residence, garage, and associated roofs to colors compatible with the surrounding environment, and require the use of non-glare glass for all windows. If fully implemented, Special Condition 4 will ensure that the effects of the project on public coastal views from Latigo Canyon Road are minimized.

In addition, Special Condition 1, discussed in Section B above, requires immediate stabilization and planting of all disturbed areas with native plant species. The condition requires the applicant to prepare a landscape plan that draws upon a palette of locally native plants for the landscape design of the subject parcel. The appropriate choice of use of native plant materials will not only minimize the potential for erosion (as discussed previously) and resultant adverse visual impacts, but will ensure that any residual visual effects of the proposed project on public coastal views are minimized. To further mitigate any residual impacts on public views that may be caused by the proposed development, the Special Condition 1 further requires that the approved planting plan include vertical elements to screen and soften the visual impact of the proposed development as seen from public viewing areas, particularly along Latigo Canyon Road.

The Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned to incorporate the specified design restrictions and landscaping plans required by Special Conditions 1, 4 and 6, is consistent with Section 30251 of the Coastal Act.

2. Landform Alteration

As stated previously, the proposed site has already been graded to construct the existing 18,600 square foot building pad pursuant to the previously approved subdivision. The applicant proposes under this application to grade an additional 804 cu. yds. of material (432 cu. yds. cut, and 372 cu. yds. fill) to recondition the existing pad and to excavate the location for the proposed swimming pool. The applicant states that the cuttings will be disposed of at the Calabasas Landfill, which is authorized to receive such material. Although the proposed grading is relatively minimal, and confined to the previously disturbed pad, any disturbance on or near the highly erosive, constructed slopes can lead to significant erosion and produce scarring effects on the slopes. Such effects would comprise the panoramic mountain views of the Latigo Canyon Road area. To ensure that

these potentially adverse effects are fully mitigated or avoided, Special Condition 1, as discussed above, requires immediate stabilization of the excavated area and replanting of residual disturbed areas with locally native plant species after grading and swimming pool installation.

Additionally, the applicant's consulting geologist has addressed measures to prevent erosion in the report cited above, and Special Condition 2 requires the applicant to submit evidence that the final project plans and designs incorporate all of the recommendations provided by the consultants and referenced herein. The control of erosion and use of native plant species for erosion control and landscaping will minimize the adverse effects on public coastal views that might otherwise be caused by the proposed project.

The Commission finds that as conditioned by Special Conditions 1, 2, 4, and 5, to minimize or avoid landform alteration and erosion, to utilize a palette of native plant species on site, and to conform to specified design restrictions, the proposed project thereby minimizes landform alteration, erosion and impacts to public views to and along the coast and thus is consistent with the requirements of Coastal Act Section 30251.

D. Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas

Section 30230 of the Coastal Act states:

Section 30230.

Marine resources shall be maintained, enhanced, and where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance. Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes.

Section 30231 of the Coastal Act states:

Section 30231.

The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.

Section 30240 of the Coastal Act states:

Section 30240.

- (a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas.
- (b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas.

(Amended by Ch. 285, Stats. 1991.)

In addition, the certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains LUP contains numerous policies regarding the protection of sensitive resource areas. The Coastal Commission has utilized these policies as guidance in past permit decisions. LUP policies particularly applicable to the proposed project include:

- P82 Grading shall be minimized for all new development to ensure the potential negative effects of runoff and erosion on these resources are minimized.
- P 84 In disturbed areas, landscape plans shall balance long-term stability and minimization of fuel load. For instance, a combination of taller, deep-rooted plants and low growing ground covers to reduce heat output may be used. Within ESHAs and Significant Watersheds, native plant species shall be used, consistent with fire safety requirements.
- P 86 A drainage control system, including on-site retention or detention where appropriate, shall be incorporated into the site design of new developments to minimize the effects of runoff and erosion. Runoff control systems shall be designed to prevent any increase in site runoff over pre-existing peak flows. Impacts on downstream sensitive riparian habitats must be mitigated.

Sections 30230 and 30231 of the Coastal Act require that the biological productivity and quality of coastal waters and the marine environment be maintained and, where feasible, restored. Section 30240 requires the protection of environmentally sensitive habitat areas against significant disruption of habitat values.

As described in Section B above, and as shown on Exhibit 7, the eastern side of the subject parcel slopes steeply into a natural, unnamed drainage course that is tributary to Escondido Canyon Creek. The creek, designated as a blue line stream on the U.S. Geological Survey

quadrangle maps, empties into the Pacific Ocean less than one mile downgradient of the proposed project site. The creek is flanked by inland wetlands designated as Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas in the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains LUP maps, as well as designated Disturbed Sensitive Resource Areas. In addition, the nearshore marine environment affected by the outflow of Escondido Canyon Creek contains kelp beds also designated as ESHAs on the LUP maps. (The site drainage as related to sensitive resources designated in the LUP is shown in Exhibits 5 and 6).

The disturbance caused by construction and vegetation removal on sites that drain into the watersheds of the Santa Monica Mountains may result in erosion and thus in the pollution by the release of sediments into downgradient streams and ultimately into the Pacific Ocean. Vegetation removal necessary to prepare the pad and to excavate the swimming pool site, together with the disturbance caused by the staging of construction on or adjacent to slope areas, exposes fragile soils to wind and rain, compacts soil, and contributes to long term erosion. The disturbance of established cover in watersheds draining into sensitive habitats compromises the natural buffering effect of native vegetation and renders affected slope areas more vulnerable to disturbance, such as accelerated gullying or siltflow. In addition, the discharge of increased and artificially concentrated volumes of runoff resulting from the increase in impervious surfaces, such as tennis courts, and the episodic drainage of swimming pool contents, may further deplete the fragile soils of the affected slope.

These factors combine to increase the potential for the proposed project to cause erosion. Unless adequately mitigated, the resultant sediment pollution of downgradient streams and wetlands has been shown to be a primary contributor to the pollution of coastal ecosystems and adversely affects sensitive habitat areas in a number of ways. For example:

- 1. Eroded soil contains nitrogen, phosphorus, and other nutrients. When carried into water bodies by runoff waters, these nutrients trigger algal blooms that reduce water clarity and deplete oxygen. This process frequently causes fish kills.
- 2. Excessive deposition of sediments may "pave" the bottom of the habitat, smothering the bottom dwelling biota and destroying aquatic ecosystems. Eventually, this process fills in wetland areas and the former wetland habitat is transformed into grassland, most often invaded by non-native weedy species, with the resultant loss of scarce wetland habitat.

Sensitive streams, wetlands, and kelp beds downgradient and downstream from the project may be adversely affected if the potential impacts of the project are not prevented. Preparation of the building pad, installation and maintenance of the swimming pool and landscaping, may cause erosion or lead to the planting of invasive, non-native plant species unless properly undertaken. Special Condition 1 requires the implementation of a

landscape plan relying on appropriate, locally native plant species and erosion control measures for construction undertaken during the rainy season. This condition will ensure that downgradient sensitive resources are protected from sediment pollution or invasion by non-native species (for example, eucalyptus, pampas grass, ice plant, etc.) that tend to outcompete and crowd out native species. Special Condition 2 requires that the final project plans and designs incorporate all erosion control measures recommended by the geotechnical consultant, thus further ensures that the project does not discharge sediment pollution into downgradient waterways. Special Condition 5 requires the drainage of the proposed swimming pool via the previously installed storm drain system and not by discharge on or into adjacent slopes, open spaces, or natural drainages. Special Condition 6 requires additional permit review for any subsequent proposal to remove vegetation from the site that is not specifically authorized for fuel modification pursuant to Special Condition 1. Thus, Special Condition 6 protects the native vegetation on site and further ensures that erosion does not occur as the result of future unauthorized vegetation removal or future plantings of unauthorized vegetation. Finally, Special Condition 7 requires that the applicant submit for the Executive Director's review and approval, a drainage and erosion control plan setting forth specific measures to ensure that site drainage is managed in a non-erosive manner that additionally prevents site drainage from adversely affecting the natural drainage course on the site and, by extension, the downgradient sensitive resources.

Thus, the Commission finds that approval of the proposed project is consistent with the ESHA and coastal resource protection policies of Sections 30230, 30231, and 30240 of the Coastal Act only if the project is conditioned in accordance with the requirements of Special Conditions 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7.

E. Septic System

The Commission recognizes that the potential build-out of lots in Malibu, and the resultant installation of septic systems, may contribute to adverse health effects and geologic hazards in the local area. Section 30231 of the Coastal Act states that:

The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, minimizing alteration of natural streams.

The applicant proposes to construct a new 1,500 gallon septic system with a drain field as shown on the plans approved by the City of Malibu, August 3, 1998. The conceptual approval by the City of Malibu Environmental Health Department indicates that the

sewage disposal system for the project in this application complies with all minimum requirements of the Uniform Plumbing Code.

The Commission has found in past permit actions that compliance with the health and safety codes will minimize any potential for wastewater discharge that could adversely impact coastal waters. In addition, the applicant's geotechnical consultants have provided specific recommendations for the sewage disposal system that will be incorporated into the final project plans and designs as required by Special Condition 2. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with Section 30231 of the Coastal Act.

F. Local Coastal Program

Section 30604(a) of the Coastal Act states that:

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 program that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200).

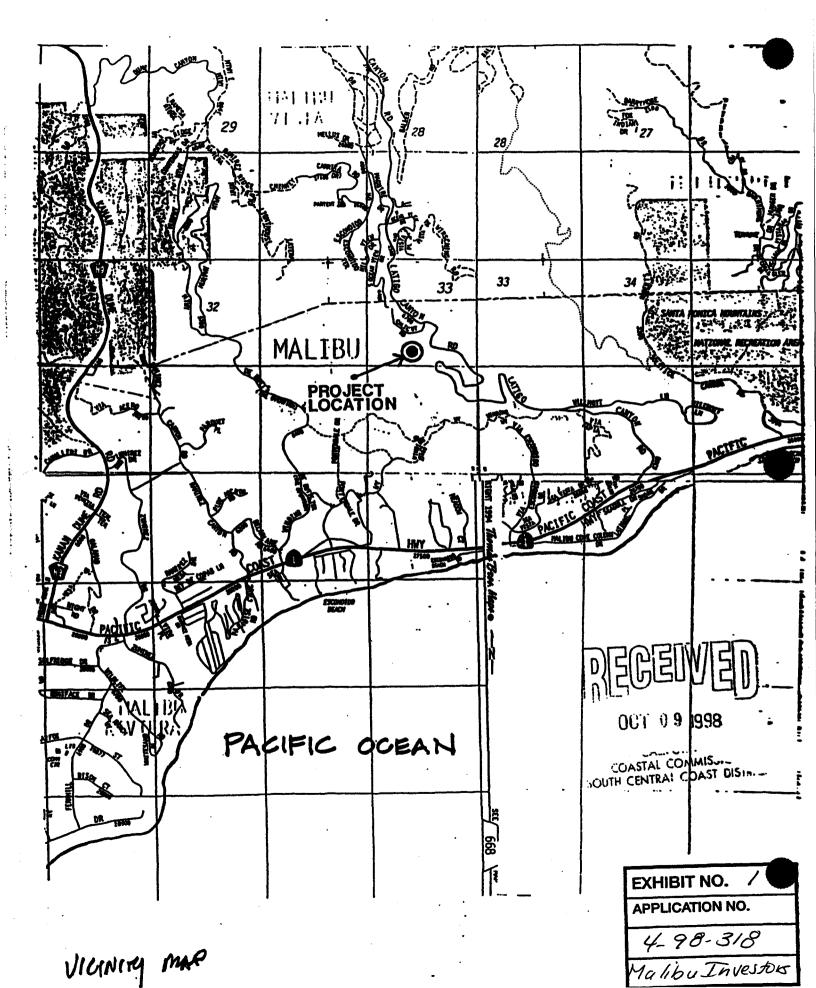
Section 30604(a) of the Coastal Act provides that the Commission shall issue a coastal development permit only if the project will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction to prepare a Local Coastal Program which conforms with Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. The preceding sections provide findings that the proposed project will be in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 if certain conditions are incorporated into the project and accepted by the applicant. As conditioned, the proposed development will not create adverse impacts and is found to be consistent with the applicable policies contained in Chapter 3. Therefore, the Commission finds that approval of the proposed development, as conditioned, will not prejudice the City's ability to prepare a Local Coastal Program for Malibu which is also consistent with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act as required by Section 30604(a).

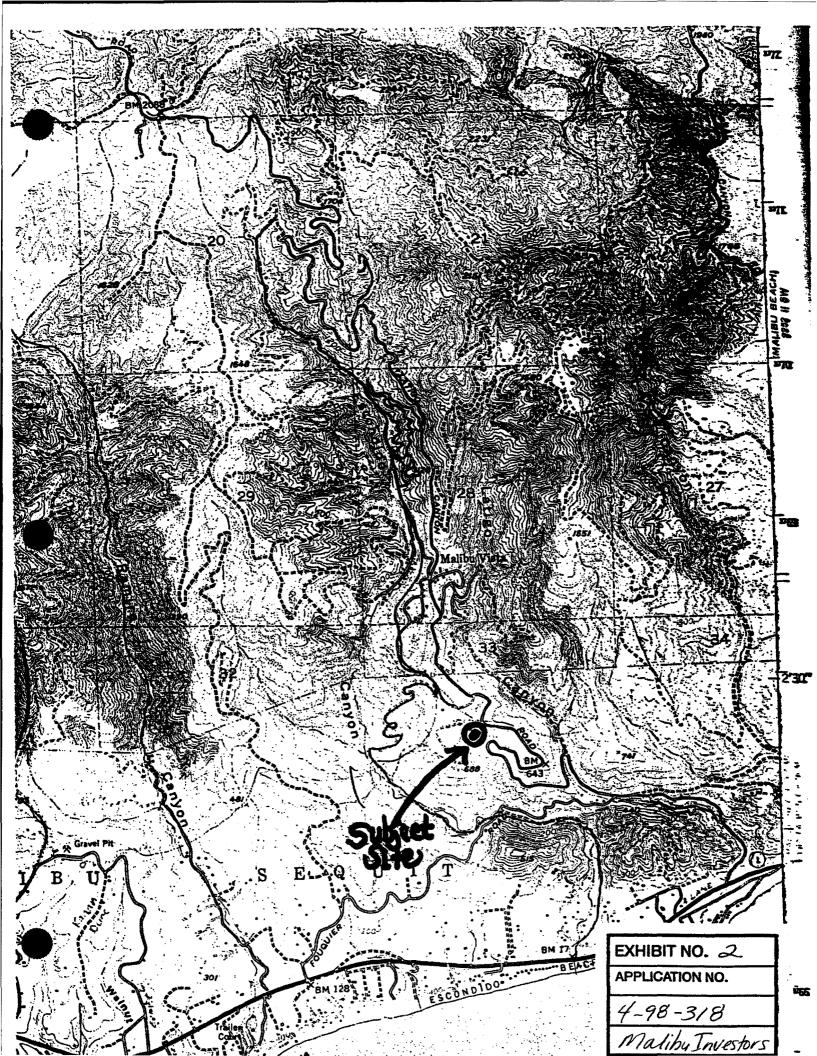
G. California Environmental Quality Act

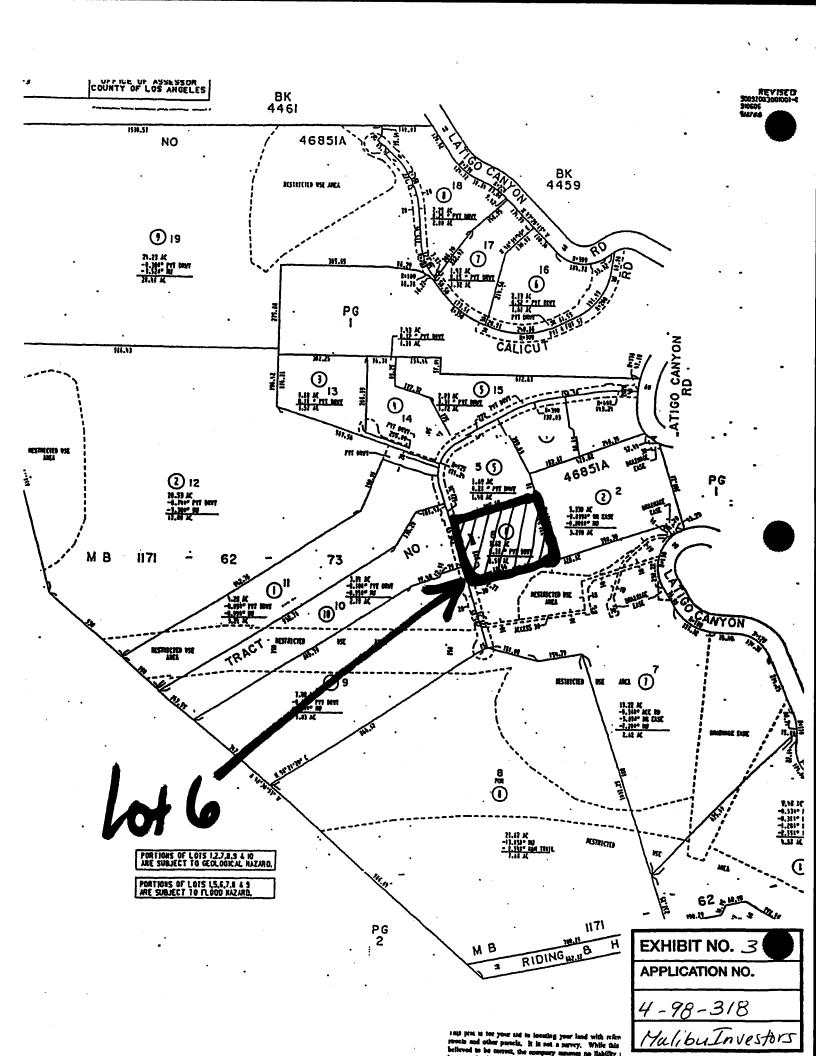
Section 13096(a) of the Commission's administrative regulations requires Commission approval of a Coastal Development Permit application to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if

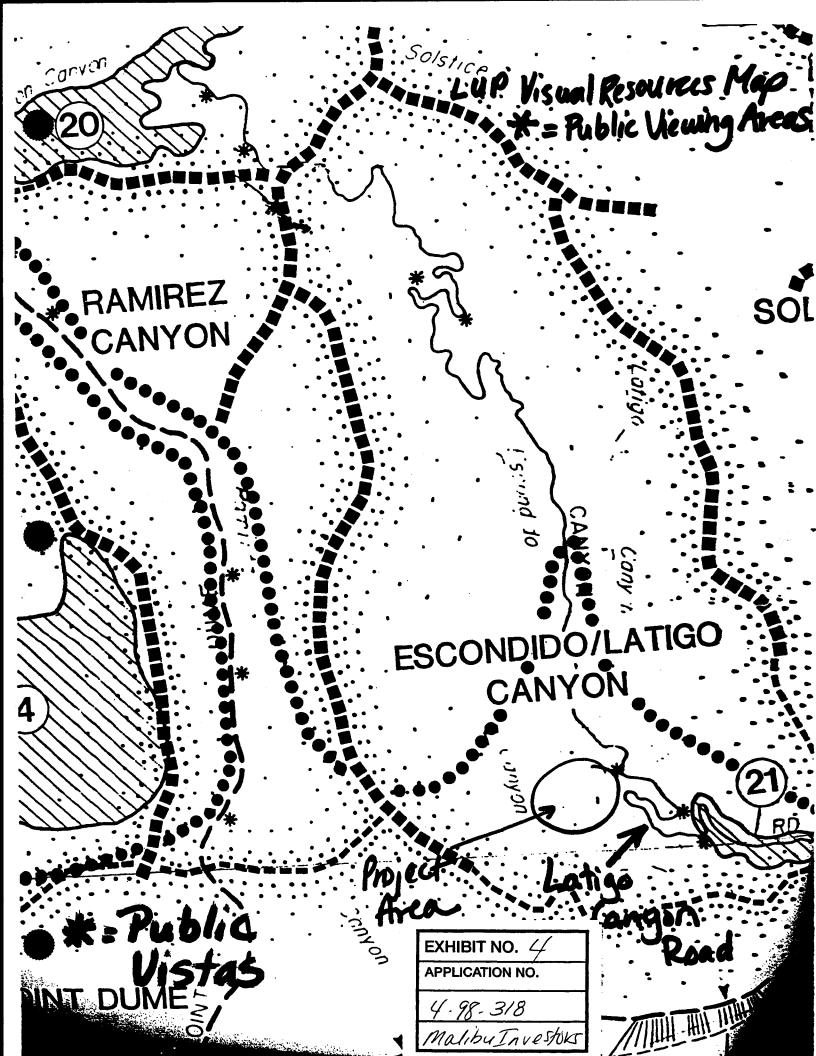
there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect which the activity would have on the environment.

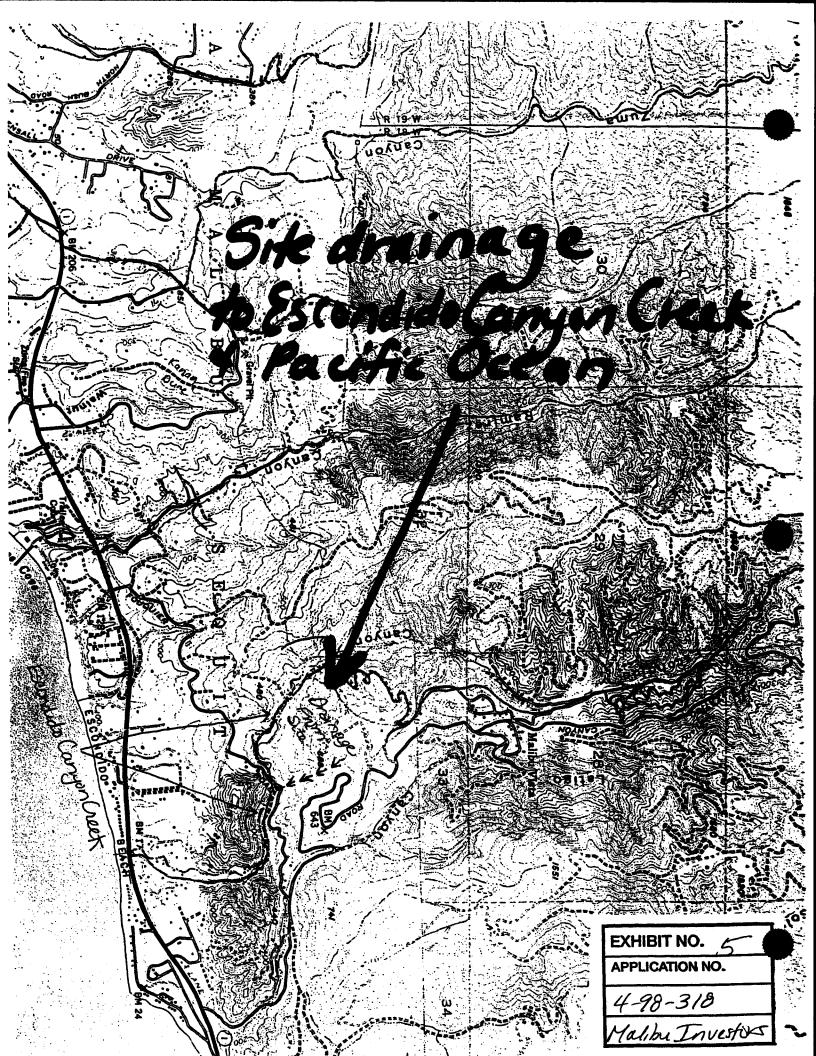
The Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned to mitigate the identified effects, is consistent with the requirements of CEQA and the policies of the Coastal Act.

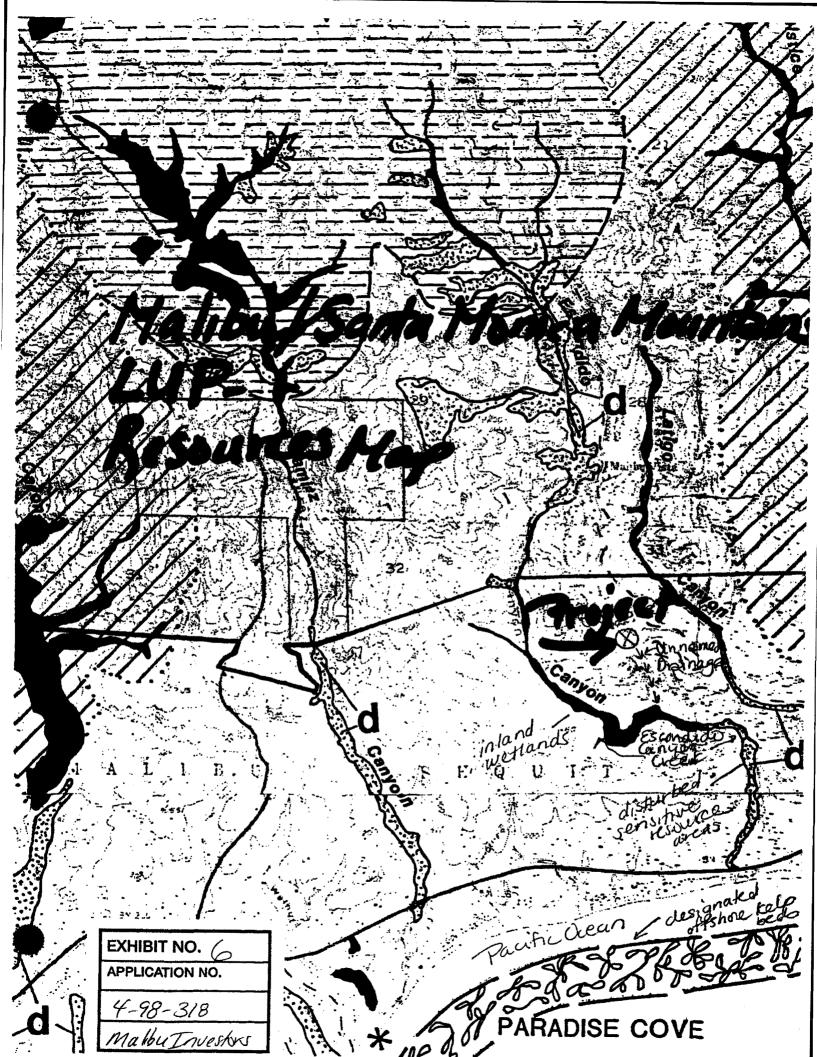


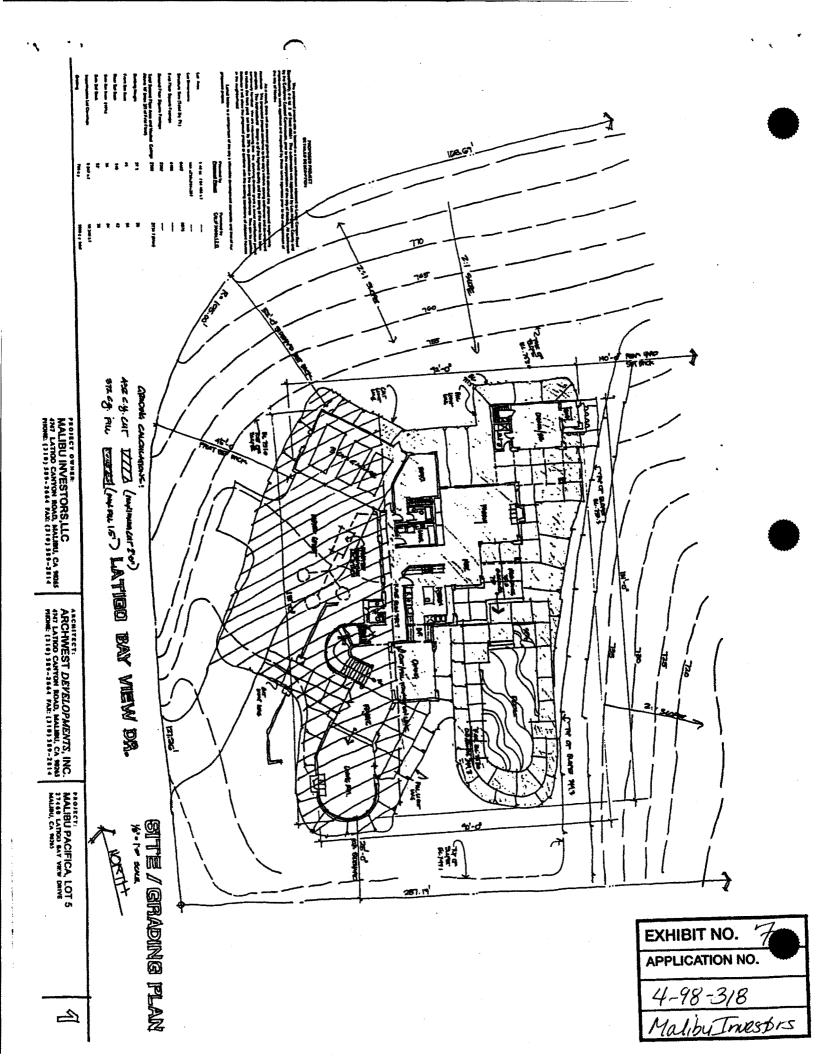


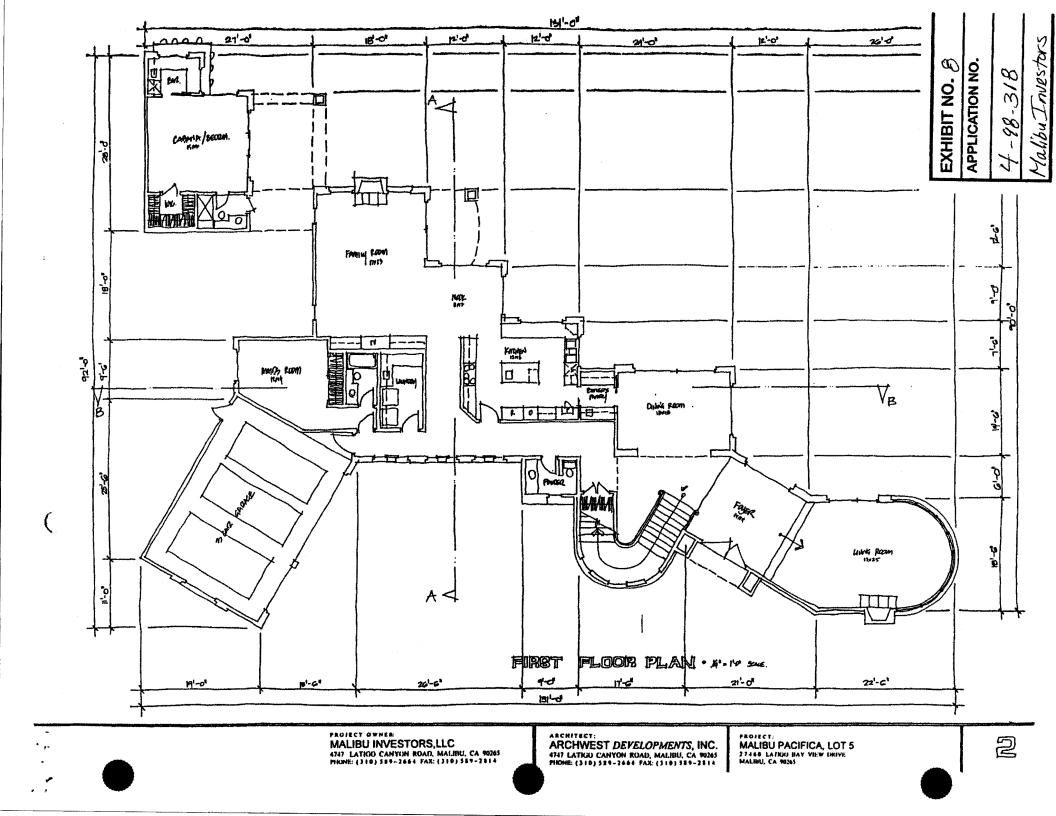


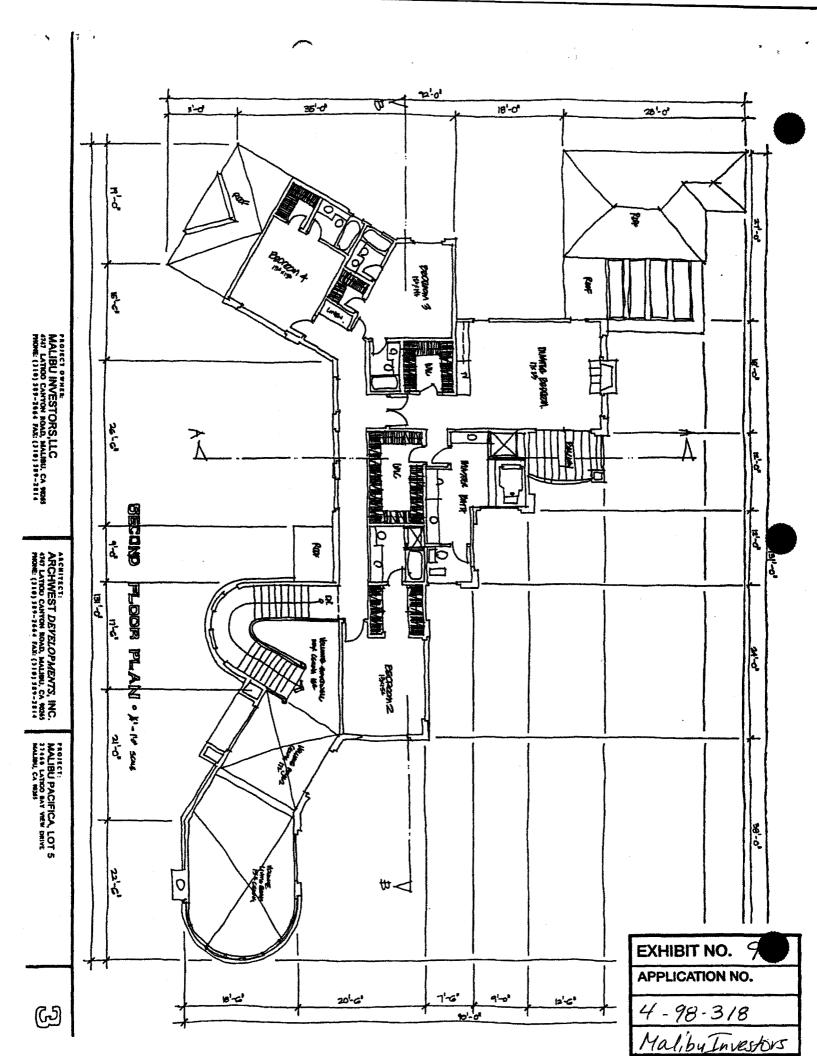




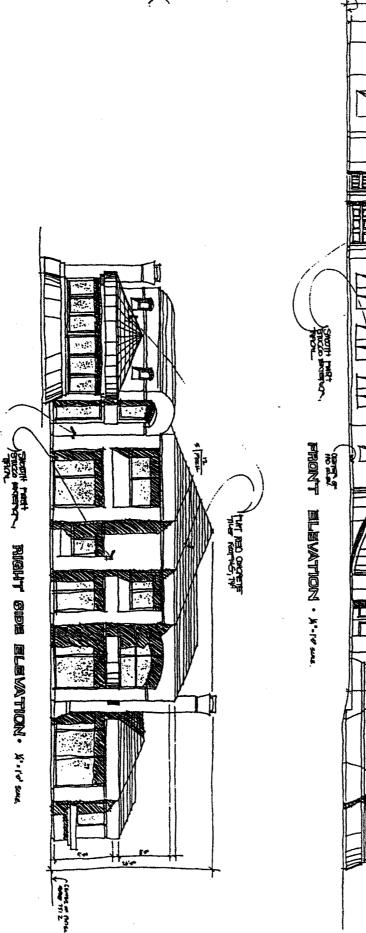








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THE REPORTED APPLICATION NO.

EXHIBIT NO.

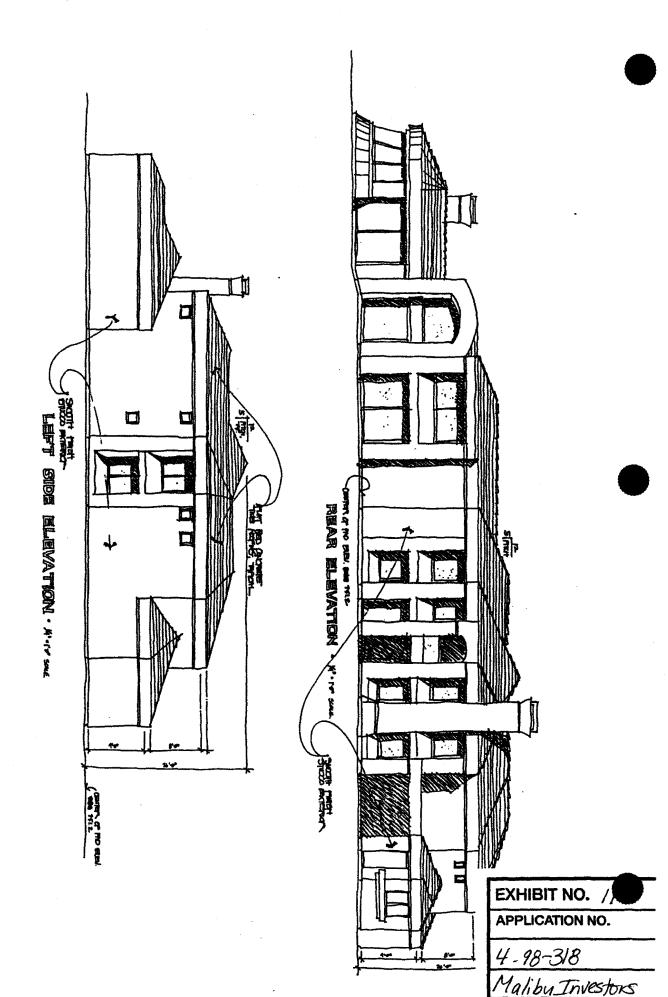
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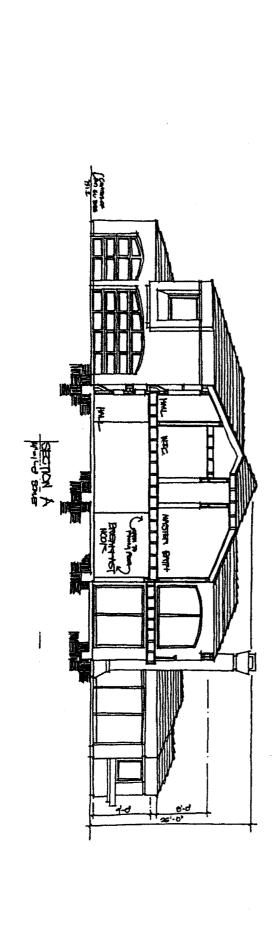
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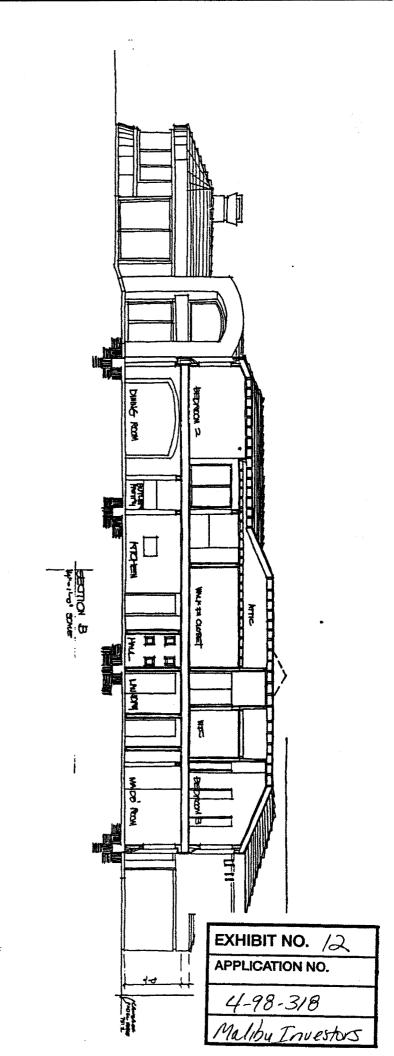
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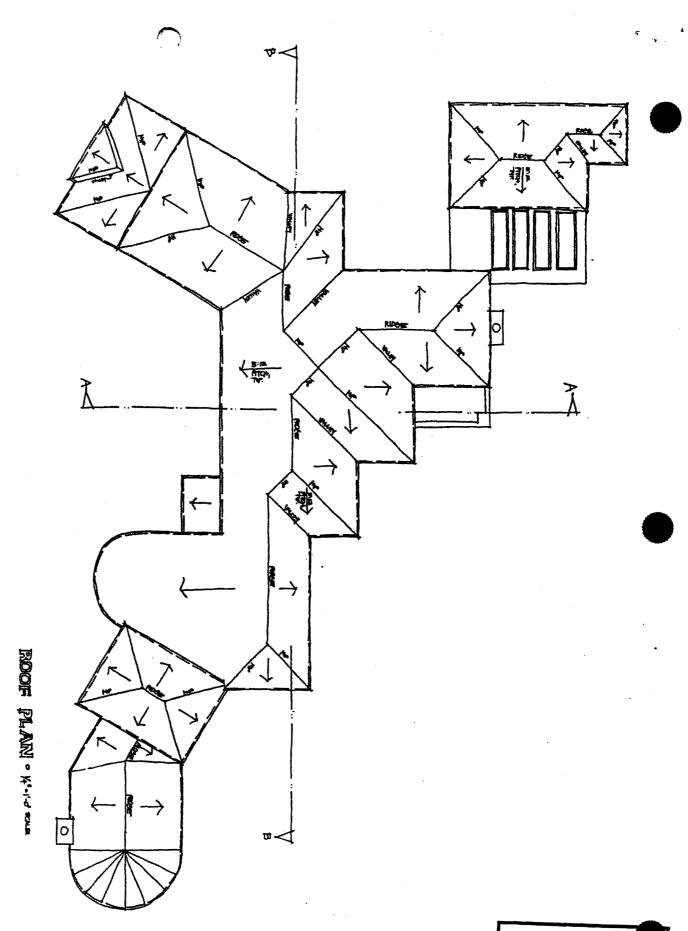
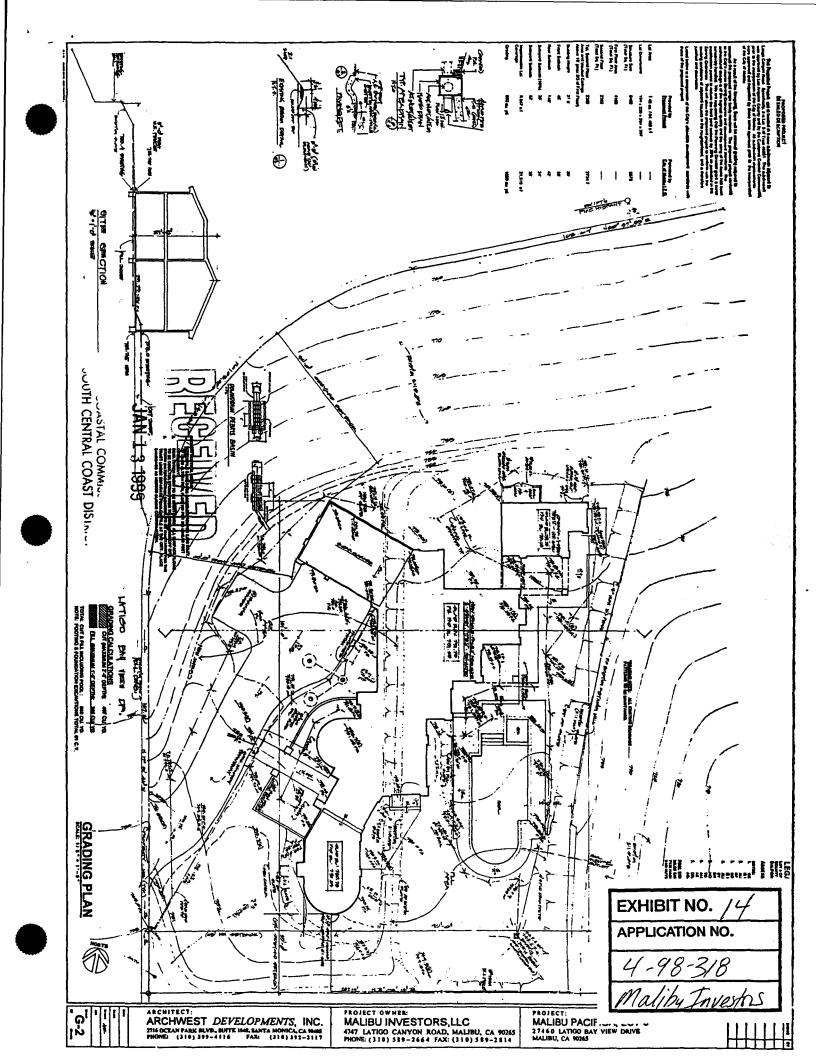


EXHIBIT NO.

APPLICATION NO.

4-98-318 Malibu Investors



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