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### CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

SOUTH CENTRAL COAST AREA

THE CALIFORNIA ST., SUITE 200

RA, CA 93001

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1/12/99

Hearing Date:

2/2-5/99

STAFF REPORT: CONSENT CALENDAR

**APPLICATION NO.:** 

4-98-320

**APPLICANT:** 

**Scott and Linda Pieper** 

PROJECT LOCATION:

6540 Zuma View Place, City of Malibu (Los Angeles County)

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Construct 25 1/3 ft. high, two story single family residence with attached three car garage, swimming pool, septic tank, and perimeter fence. Grading of 976 cu. yds. (678 cu. yds. cut and 298 cu. yds. fill) and 380 cu. yds. export of cut.

Lot area:

43,799 sq. ft.

**Building coverage:** 

4,400 sq. ft.

Pavement coverage:

6,617 sq. ft.

Landscape coverage:

30,782 sq. ft.

Parking spaces:

three covered and two open

Ht above average finished grade:

25 1/3 ft.

LOCAL APPROVALS RECEIVED: County of Los Angeles, Fire Department, fuel modification plan review letter, November 2, 1998; City of Malibu: Planning Department – Site Plan Review Permit No. 98-167, November 18, 1998 and Approval in Concept, dated 11-18-98; Environmental Health Department, In-concept Approval, dated Sep 28, 1998; Geology and Geotechnical Review Sheet, dated 9-28-98.

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS: Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains certified Land Use Plan; GEOSYSTEMS, Soils and Engineering – Geologic Investigation, September 4, 1998; Coastal development permits 4-92-224 (Synder) and 4-96-081(Keyes).

#### **SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends <u>approval</u> of the project with special conditions relating to: **future** improvements restriction, conformance to geologic recommendations, landscape, drainage and erosion control, and fire waiver of liability.



### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution:

# 1. Approval with Conditions

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, and will not have any significant adverse impacts on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act.

# 11. 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 permute or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
- 2. <u>Expiration</u> If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date on which the Commission voted on the application. 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. <u>Compliance</u> All development must occur in strict compliance with the proposal as set forth below. Any deviation from the approved plans must be reviewed and approved by the staff and may require Commission approval.
- 4. <u>Interpretation</u> Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
- 5. <u>Inspections</u> The Commission staff shall be allowed to inspect the site and the development during construction, subject to 24-hour advance notice.
- 6. <u>Assignment</u> 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 permute to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

# **III. Special Conditions**

### 1. Future Improvements

Prior to the issuance of a coastal development permit, the applicant shall execute and record a document, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director, stating that the subject permit is only for the development described in the Coastal Development Permit No. 4-98-320; and that any additions to the permitted structure, future structures or improvements to the property, including but not limited to clearing of vegetation and grading, that might otherwise be exempt under Public Resource Code Section 30610(a) will require a permit from the Coastal Commission or its successor agency. Removal of vegetation consistent with L. A. County Fire Department standards relative to fire protection 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 changed without a Coastal Commission-approved amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.

### 2. Plans Conforming to Geologic Recommendations

Prior to the issuance of a coastal development permit the applicant shall submit, for review and approval by the Executive Director, evidence of the geology and geotechnical consultants' review and approval of all project plans. All recommendations contained in the GEOSYSTEMS, Soils and Engineering – Geologic Investigation, September 4, 1998 shall be incorporated into all final design and construction including site preparation, grading, and foundations. All plans must be reviewed and approved by the consultants.

The final plans approved by the consultant 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 consultant shall require an amendment to the permit or a new coastal

# 3. Landscape, Drainage and Erosion Control Plan

- a. Prior to issuance of a coastal development permit, the applicant shall submit landscaping and erosion control plans for review and approval by the Executive Director. The landscaping and erosion control plans shall be reviewed and approved by the consulting engineering geologist to ensure that the plans are in conformance with the consultants' recommendations. The plans shall incorporate the following criteria:
  - (1) All graded & disturbed areas on the subject site shall be planted and maintained for erosion control purposes within (60) days of the receipt of certificate of occupancy of the residence. To minimize the need for irrigation 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 <u>Recommended</u> <u>List of Plants for Landscaping in the Santa Monica Mountains</u>, dated October 4, 1994. Invasive, non-indigenous plant species which tend to supplant native species shall not be used.

- (2) All cut and fill slopes shall be stabilized with planting at the completion of final grading. Planting should be of native plant species indigenous to the Santa Monica Mountains using accepted planting procedures, consistent with fire safety requirements. Such planting shall be adequate to provide 90 percent coverage within two (2) years, and this requirement shall apply to all disturbed soils;
- (3) Plantings will 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) 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 appropriate approved dumping location either outside the coastal zone or to a site within the coastal zone permitted to receive fill.
- (5) A Drainage Plan, designed by a licensed engineer, which assures that run-off from the roof, patios, and all other impervious surfaces on the subject parcel are collected and discharged in a manner which avoids ponding on the pad area. Site drainage shall not be accomplished by sheetflow runoff down the slope. Should the project's drainage structures fail or result in erosion, the applicant/ landowner or successor interests shall be responsible for any necessary repairs and restoration. The permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the final approved plan. Any changes to the final approved plan shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the approved final plan shall occur without a Coastal Commission approved amendment to the coastal development permit, unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.
- (6) Vegetation within 30 feet of the proposed house may be removed to mineral earth, vegetation within a 200 foot radius of the main structure may be selectively thinned in order to reduce fire hazard. However, such thinning shall only occur in accordance with an approved long-term fuel modification plan submitted pursuant to this special condition. The fuel modification plan shall include details regarding the types, sizes and location of plant materials to be removed, and how often thinning is to occur. If fuel modification is required within the riparian area, adjacent to the east property boundary, clearance shall be limited to the removal of dead wood and exotic plant species. Removal of native plant species is prohibited. In addition, the applicant shall submit evidence that the fuel modification plan has been reviewed and approved by the Forestry Department of Los Angeles County.

# b. Monitoring

Five years from the completion of development 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 on-site 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.

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.

### 4. Waiver of Liability

Prior to the issuance of a 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

# IV. Findings and Declarations

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

# A. Project Description and Background

The applicant proposes to construct a 25 1/3 ft. high, two story single family residence with attached three car garage, swimming pool, septic system, and perimeter fence. The proposal includes grading of 976 cu. yds. (678 cu. yds. cut and 298 cu. yds. fill) and 380 cu. yds. of export of the remainder of the cut. The subject lot is slightly less than one acre in size at 43,799 sq. ft..

The project is located in the Pt. Dume area south of the Pacific Coast Highway. Surrounding development is vacant land and single family residences. The project area includes two small barrancas to the east and southwest which are inland environmentally sensitive habitat areas

(ESHAs) as designated in the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan (LUP). The project site drains to the east.

The proposed development is not visually intrusive because the location is not visible from either the beach to the south or the Pacific Coast Highway to the north. The project design of two story single family development is consistent with the character of the surrounding area.

### B. Geologic Stability and Hazards/ Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas

PRC Section 30240 states:

- (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.

#### PRC Section 30231 states:

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.

In addition, the certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan (LUP) contains policies that provide useful guidance in evaluating the consistency of the proposed development with the policies of the Coastal Act. These policies have been found by the Coastal Commission, in certifying the LUP, to incorporate the resource protection requirements of Coastal Act Sections 30240 and 30231 for application to specific sensitive resource areas in Malibu and, therefore, continue to serve as guidance in reviewing proposed development for consistency with Coastal Act policies.

Section 30253 of the Coastal Act states in part that 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, 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.

The proposed development is located in the Santa Monica Mountains, an area which 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.

The prominent geomorphic features in the area are Pt. Dume to the southwest, Ramirez Canyon to the east, and the ridge of the first tier of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north. The site is located on a minor ridge. The building pad is at the approximate 105 foot contour.

### 1. Geology

The applicant has submitted a GEOSYSTEMS, Soils and Engineering – Geologic Investigation, September 4, 1998 which states that:

"Based upon the findings of our investigation, the site is considered to be suitable from a soils and engineering geologic standpoint for construction of the proposed residential development provided the recommendations included herein are followed and integrated into the building, grading and drainage plans. ... It is the finding of this firm that the proposed building and or grading will be safe and that the site will not be affected by any hazard from landslide, settlement or slippage and the completed work will not adversely affect adjacent property in compliance with the city code, provided our recommendations are followed."

Given the findings and recommendations of the consulting engineering geologists, the Commission finds that the development is consistent with Section 30253 of the Coastal Act so long as all recommendations regarding the proposed development 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 consulting engineering geologists as conforming to their recommendations, as noted in *special condition number two* (2) for the final project plans for the proposed project.

### 2. Erosion

Surface drainage, as noted above, on site is predominately by sheet flow toward the east, toward the previously noted ESHA located at only approximately 200 feet from the site. Flow thereafter is toward the sea through the second ESHA extending from southwest of the end of Zuma View Place and the site to the beach. A review of aerial photos indicates that the closest ESHA has been disturbed through grading and

vegetation removal in the southern portion of the area closest to the site. Further, the portion further toward the north (i.e. adjacent to the Pacific Coast Highway) which is vegetated according to review of aerial photos has been overgrown with intrusive eucalyptus as noted during the staff site visit. Nearby areas offshore also have an ESHA designation. The consulting geologist is concerned about the drainage associated with the proposal and recommended that drainage should be dispersed in a non-erosive manner, and preclude concentration of runoff and erosion.

The Commission finds that the project will significantly increase the amount of impervious surfaces on the site which will increase both the volume and velocity of storm water runoff. If not controlled and conveyed off the site in a non-erosive manner, this runoff will result in increased erosion on and off the site which could destabilize the site. The Commission has found that this can cause sedimentation and result in degradation to riparian systems in the following manner:

- Eroded soil contains nitrogen, phosphorous, and other nutrients which, when carried into water bodies, trigger algal blooms that reduce water clarity and deplete oxygen which leads to fish kills and creates odors.
- Excessive deposition of sediments in streams blankets the bottom fauna, paves stream bottoms, and destroys fish spawning areas.
- Turbidity from sediment reduces in-stream photosynthesis, which leads to reduced food supply and habitats.
- Suspended sediment abrades and coats aquatic organisms.
- Erosion removes the smaller and less dense constituents of topsoil. These constituents, clay and fine silt particles and organic material hold nutrients that plants require. The remaining subsoil is often hard, rocky, infertile, and droughty. Thus, reestablishment of vegetation is difficult and the eroded soil produces less growth.
- Introduction of pollution, sediments, and turbidity into marine waters and the nearshore bottom has similar effects to the above on marine life. Pollutants in offshore waters, especially heavy metals, are taken up into the food chain and concentrated (bioaccumulated) to the point where they may be harmful to humans, as well as lead to the decline of marine species.

Although the proposed design include several rip-rap water energy flow dissipators at end of drains, there is not a complete drainage plan included in the submittal designed by a qualified professional as typically required by the Commission in similar circumstances. Therefore, the Commission finds it necessary to require the applicant to submit a detailed drainage plan for the proposed development to ensure runoff is conveyed offsite in a nonerosive manner. Special condition number three (3) provides for such a drainage plan prepared by a licensed engineer.

Landscaping also minimizes the potential for erosion of grading and disturbed soils and thereby ensures site stability. Furthermore, given that the consulting engineer specifically recommended landscaping to minimize erosion of potentially erosive soils on site, the Commission finds that the landscape plans must be reviewed and approved by the consulting engineering geologist, as also noted in *special condition number three* (3).

### 3. Fire/ Fuel Modification

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.

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 the waiver of liability, the applicant acknowledges and appreciates the nature of the fire hazard which exists on the site and which may affect the safety of the proposed development, as incorporated by special condition number four (4).

As mentioned above, the proposed development is located approximately 200 ft. from a small riparian area that is designated as an environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA) in the certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains LUP, used for guidance in the City of Malibu. Given that the project is sited approximately 200 ft. from this riparian area, vegetation clearance for fire protection purposes should not be necessary within the ESHA. However, because the riparian area boundaires are irregular and have not been precisely determined, the Fire Department may require some minor thinning on the periphery of this riparian area. Typically within riparian areas, the Fire Department may only require the removal of dead wood. Minor thinning of dead wood on the periphery of the riparian area will not significantly degrade this ESHA. To ensure no riparian vegetation is removed, and to protect the ESHA from significant adverse effects from fuel modification, the Commission finds it necessary to require a specific provision in special condition number 3(a)(6). This requires the applicant to submit a fuel

modification plan approved by the Fire Department that limits vegetation thinning within the riparian area to removal of dead wood and exotic species only. The plan shall specify that the removal of native species is prohibited.

## 4. Summary

The above reviewed the findings and recommendations of the consulting engineering geologists and found it necessary to condition two the project to require their review and certification of project plans. Second, the creation of additional impervious surfaces was reviewed and the resultant increases in the volume and velocity of storm water were noted, requiring mitigation though preparation of a landscape, drainage and erosion control plan which ensures stability of the site and surrounding area and minimize effects on downstream ESHA areas. Third, the findings noted that a wild fire waiver of liability was necessary to ensure that the applicant recognizes the extent of the fire hazard. Last, because of the location of the site within 200 ft. of the nearby riparian ESHA, the landscape, drainage and erosion control condition was modified to avoid potential adverse impact of Fire Department required fuel modification plan on native vegetation. The Commission finds that only as conditioned above is the proposed project consistent with Section 30231, 30240 and 30253 of the Coastal Act.

## C. 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 proposed septic system includes a 1,500 gallon septic tank with seepage pits. The installation of a private sewage disposal system was review by the consulting geologist and found not to create or cause adverse conditions to the site or adjacent properties.

A percolation test was performed on the subject property which indicated the percolation rate meets Uniform Plumbing Code requirements for and is sufficient to serve the proposed single family residence. The applicant has submitted a design approval for the sewage disposal system from the City of Malibu Environmental Health Department. This approval 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 waste water discharge that could adversely impact coastal streams and waters. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed septic system is consistent with Section 30231 of the Coastal Act.

### D. 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).

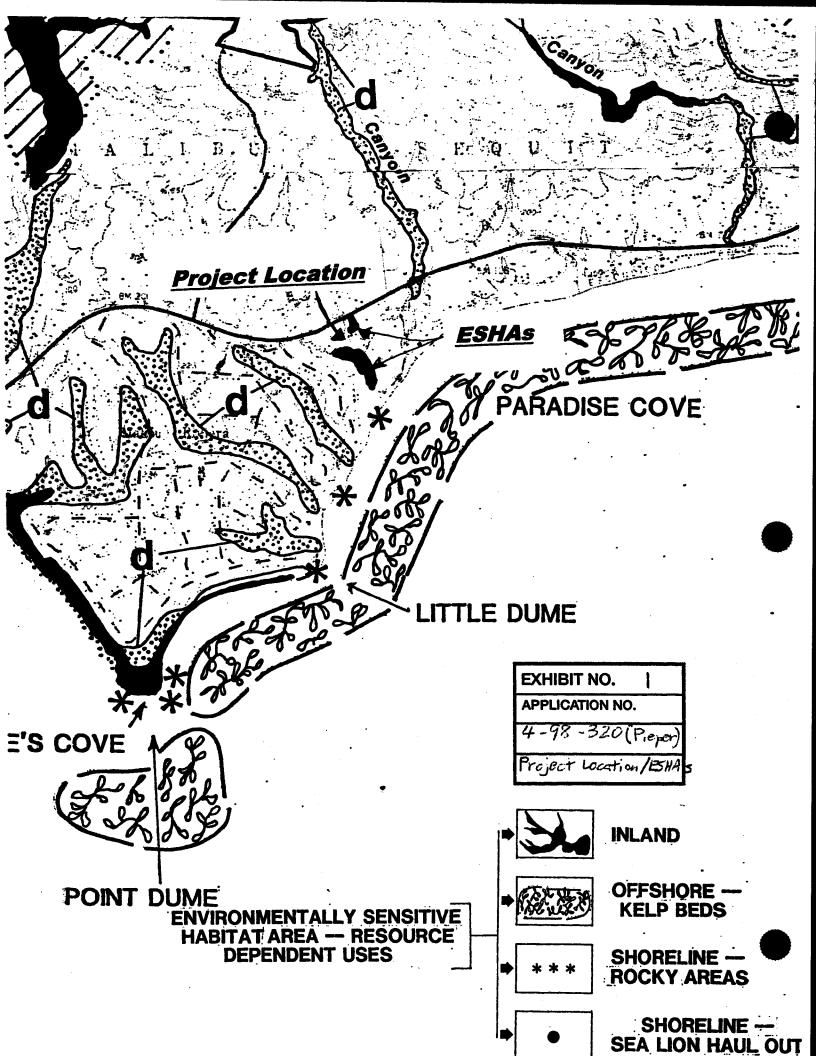
Section 30604(a) of the Coastal Act provides that the Commission shall issue a Coastal Permit only if the project will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction to prepare a Local Coastal Program which conforms with Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. The preceding sections 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.

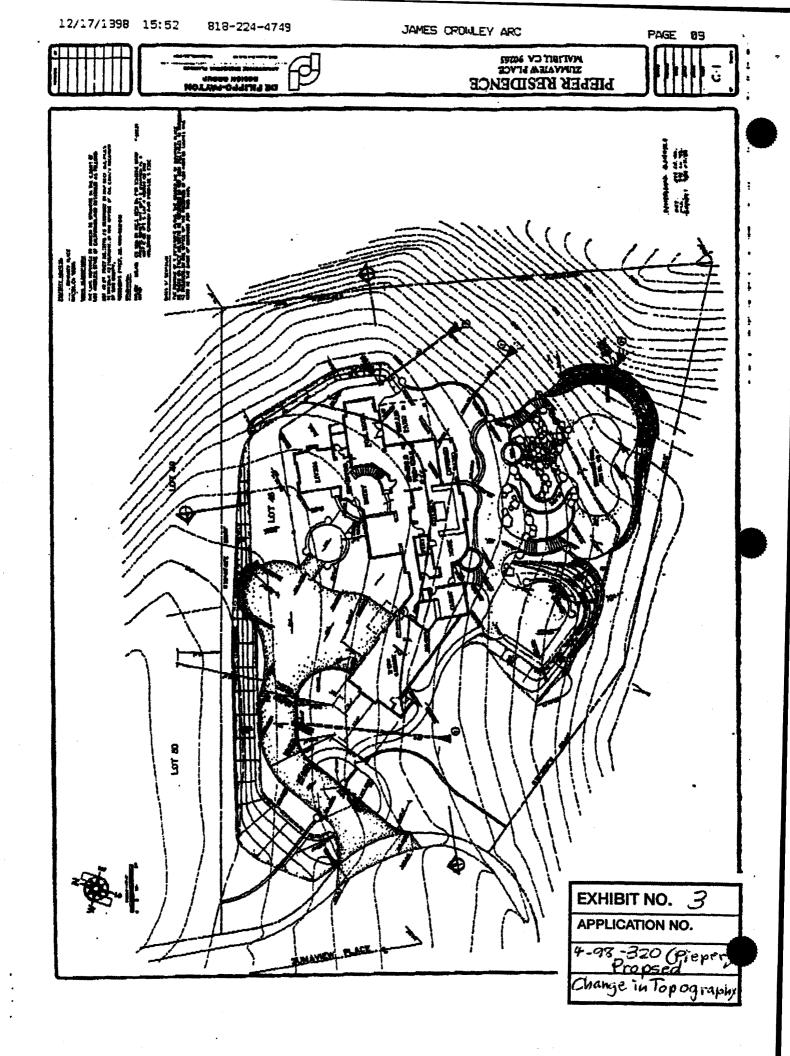
Therefore, the Commission finds that approval of the proposed development, as conditioned, will not prejudice the City's ability to prepare a Local Coastal Program for Malibu which is also consistent with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act as required by Section 30604(a).

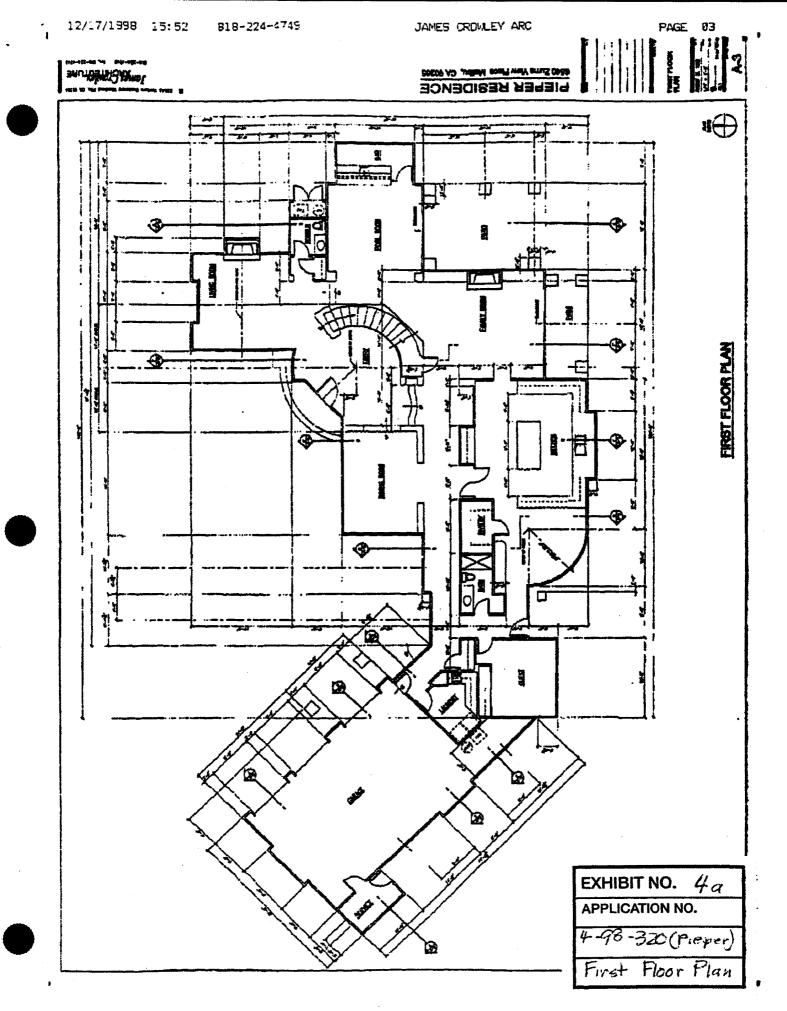
# E. California Environmental Quality Act

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 effects which the activity would have on the environment.

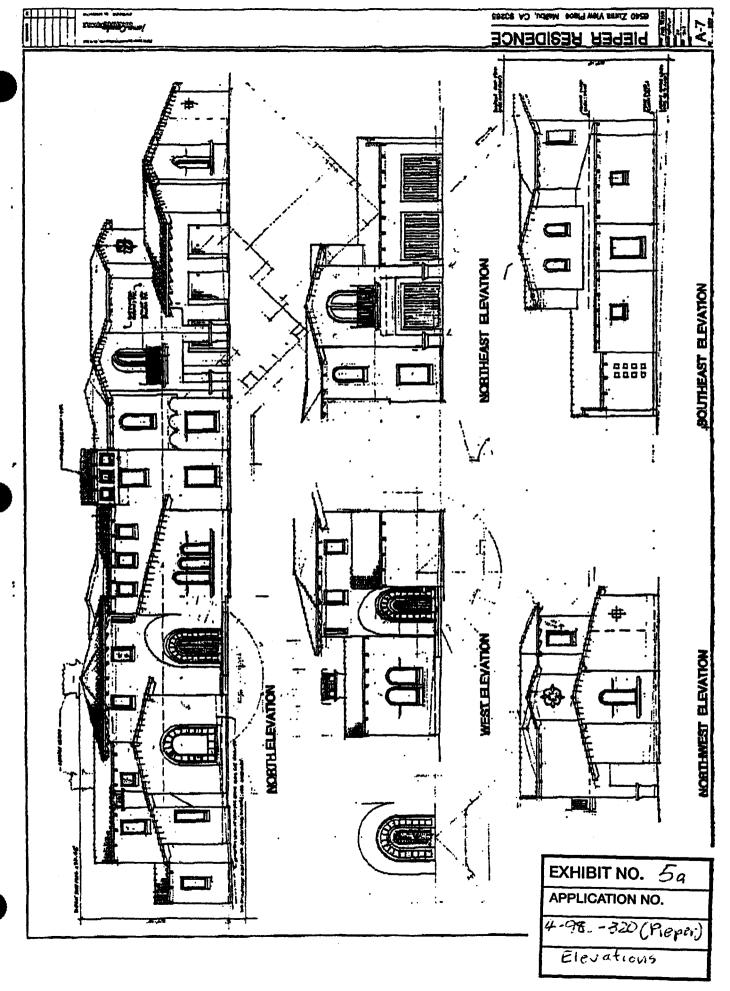
The proposed development would not cause significant, adverse environmental effects which would not be adequately mitigated by the conditions imposed by the Commission. Therefore, the proposed project, as conditioned, is found consistent with CEQA and with the policies of the Coastal Act.







Second Floor Plan



PIEPER RESIDENCE

SOUTHELEVATION

EXHIBIT NO. 56

APPLICATION NO.

4-98-320 (Pieper)

Elevations