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STATE OF CALIFORNIA - THE RESOURCES AGENCY

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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GRAY DAVIS, Governor

 Filed:
 01/24/00

 49th Day:
 03/13/00

 180th Day:
 10/20/00

 Staff:
 S. Tilles

 Staff Report:
 01/27/00

 Hearing Date:
 02/15/00-02/18/00

 Commission Action:
 01/27/00

STAFF REPORT: REGULAR CALENDAR

APPLICATION No. 4-99-263

APPLICANTS: Guillermo and Mariana Groisman

PROJECT LOCATION: 4337 Hillview Drive, Malibu (Los Angeles County)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Construction of a new three-story, 35 feet above grade, 2,000 square foot single family residence, attached two-car garage, new septic system, 88 cubic yards of excavation with off site disposal of the excavated soil, in conjunction with the retirement of all future development potential on three adjacent lots in the Malibu Vista Small Lot Subdivision.

Area of lots:13,410; 13,232; 13,042; and 14,111 square feetCombined area of lots:53,797 square feet (1.235 acres)Building coverage:1,288 square feetHardscape coverage:559 square feetParking spaces:4 (2 garaged, 2 open)Height above finished grade:35 feet

LOCAL APPROVALS RECEIVED: Los Angeles County Environmental Review Board, Approval, June 21, 1999; Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, Approval in Concept, September 27, 1999; Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, Septic Disposal System Design Approval, November 18, 1999; Los Angeles County Fire Department, Approval, December 27, 1999; and Los Angeles County Fire Department, Final Fuel Modification Approval, June 21, 1999.

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS: Certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan; "Geologic and Soils Engineering Investigation Proposed Residential Development," Keith W. Ehlert, Consulting Engineering Geologist, February 11, 1999; "Soils Engineering Review Sheet," Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Materials Engineering Division, March 4, 1999. "Response to County of Los Angeles Geologic and Soils Engineering Review Letters," Keith W. Ehlert, Consulting Engineering Geologist, March 23, 1999; "Soils Engineering Review Sheet," Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Materials Engineering Division, April 8, 1999; "Geologic Review Sheet," Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Materials Engineering Division, April 12, 1999; "Response to County of Los Angeles Geologic and Soils Engineering Review Letters," Keith W. Ehlert, Consulting Engineering Geologist, April 22, 1999; "Soils Engineering Review Sheet," Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Materials Engineering Division, April 28, 1999; "Minutes of the Environmental Review Board Meeting," Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, May 17, 1999; "Geologic Report of Seepage Pit Evaluation," Keith W. Ehlert, Consulting Engineering Geologist, July 28, 1999; "Geologic Report of Seepage Pit Evaluation," Keith W. Ehlert, Consulting Engineering Geologist, September 28, 1999; and "Geology Report of Seepage Pit Evaluation," Keith W. Ehlert, Consulting Engineering Geologist, November 15, 1999.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends **approval** of the proposed project with nine (9) special conditions regarding geologic recommendations; landscaping; removal of natural vegetation; drainage; removal of excavated material, assumption of risk, waiver of liability, and indemnity; lighting; cumulative impact mitigation; and future development. The proposed project is located in the Malibu Vista Small Lot Subdivision in the Santa Monica Mountains and is therefore subject to the limitations on total structural area, addressed by the Gross Structural Area (GSA) analytical formulas contained in the certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan (LUP). A portion of the subject site is also located within the LUP designated Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodlands. In addition, the subject site is located in the immediate vicinity of the LUP designated Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area of Escondido Canyon.

I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

MOTION: I move that the Commission approve Coastal Development Permit No. 4-99-263 pursuant to the staff recommendation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL:

Staff recommends a **YES** vote. Passage of this motion will result in approval of the permit as conditioned and adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PERMIT:

The Commission hereby approves a coastal development permit for the proposed development and adopts the findings set forth below on grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and 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. Approval of the permit complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2)

there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

II. Standard Conditions

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- 1. <u>Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment</u>. 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. <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 within a reasonable period of time. Application for an 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 that the assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all of the terms and conditions of the permit.
- 7. <u>Terms and Conditions Run with the Land</u>. 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.

III. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. Plans Conforming to Geologist's and Engineer's Recommendations

All recommendations contained in the submitted geologic engineering reports prepared by Keith W. Ehlert, Consulting Engineering Geologist relating to <u>foundations</u>, <u>drainage</u>, and <u>erosion control</u> shall be incorporated into all final project plans, designs, and construction, including recommendations concerning <u>septic system</u> plans. All plans must be reviewed and approved by the consultant. Prior to the issuance of the coastal development permit, the applicants shall submit, for review and approval of the Executive Director, evidence of the consultant's review and approval of all project plans. Such evidence shall include affixation of the consulting geologist's stamp and signature to the final project plans and designs.

The final plans approved by the consultant shall be in substantial conformance with the plans approved by the Commission relative to construction, drainage, and erosion control. 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 development permit. The Executive Director shall determine whether required changes are "substantial."

2. Landscape Plan

Prior to issuance of a coastal development permit, the applicant shall submit landscaping and erosion control plans, prepared by a licensed landscape architect or a qualified resource specialist, 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:

A) Landscaping Plan

- All graded and disturbed areas on the subject site shall be planted and maintained for erosion control purposes within 60 days of receipt of the certificate of occupancy for 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 List of Plants for Landscaping in the Santa Monica Mountains</u>, dated October 4, 1994, and shall specifically incorporate the use of coast live oaks (quercus agrifolia). Invasive, non-indigenous plan 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) The Permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the final approved plan. Any proposed changes to the approved final 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.

5) Vegetation within 50 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. 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. Irrigated lawn, turf and ground cover planted within the fifty foot radius of the proposed house shall be selected from the most drought tolerant species or subspecies, or varieties suited to the Mediterranean climate of the Santa Monica Mountains.

B) Interim Erosion Control Plan

- The plan shall delineate the areas to be disturbed by grading or construction activities and shall include any temporary access roads, staging areas and stockpile areas. The natural areas on the site shall be clearly delineated on the project site with fencing or survey flags.
- 2) The plan shall specify that should grading take place during the rainy season (November 1 March 31) the applicant shall install or construct temporary sediment basins (including debris basins, desilting basins or silt traps), temporary drains and swales, sand bag barriers, silt fencing, stabilize any stockpiled fill with geofabric covers or other appropriate cover, install geotextiles or mats on all cut or fill slopes and close and stabilize open trenches as soon as possible. These erosion measures shall be required on the project site prior to or concurrent with the initial grading operations and maintained through out the development process to minimize erosion and 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.
- 3) The plan shall also include temporary erosion control measures should grading or site preparation cease for a period of more than 30 days, including but not limited to: stabilization of all stockpiled fill, access roads, disturbed soils and cut and fill slopes with geotextiles and/or mats, sand bag barriers, silt fencing; temporary drains and swales and sediment basins. The plans shall also specify that all disturbed areas shall be seeded with native grass species and include the technical specifications for seeding the disturbed areas. These temporary erosion control measures shall be monitored and maintained until grading or construction operations resume.
- 4) The plan shall also include installation of a temporary fence around the oak canopy on site, to provide for protection of the on site oak tress during construction activities.

C) Monitoring.

Five (5) 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 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.

3. Removal of Natural Vegetation

Removal of natural vegetation for the purpose of fuel modification within the 50 foot zone surrounding the proposed structure shall not commence until the local government has issued a building permit for the development approved pursuant to this permit. Vegetation thinning within the 50-200 foot fuel modification zone shall not occur until commencement of construction of the structure approved pursuant to this permit.

4. Drainage Plan and Maintenance Responsibility

Prior to the issuance of the Coastal Development Permit, the applicants shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a run-off and erosion control 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 nonerosive manner which avoids ponding on the pad area. Site drainage shall not be accomplished by sheetflow runoff. With acceptance of this permit, the applicants agree that should the project's drainage structures fail or result in erosion of the site, the applicants or successors in interest shall be responsible for any necessary repairs and restoration.

5. Removal of Excavated Material

Prior to the issuance of the coastal development permit, the applicant shall provide evidence to the Executive Director of the location of the disposal site for all excavated material from the site. Should the dump site be located in the Coastal Zone, a coastal development permit shall be required.

6. Assumption of Risk, Waiver of Liability, and Indemnity

- A.) By acceptance of this permit, the applicants acknowledge and agree (i) that the site may be subject to hazards from fire, landslide, erosion, and earth movement; (ii) to assume the risks to the applicants, and the property that is the subject of this permit, of injury and damage from such hazards in connection with this permitted development; (iii) to unconditionally waive any claim of damage or liability against the Commission, its officers, agents, and employees for injury or damage from such hazards; and (iv) to indemnify and hold harmless the Commission, its officers, agents, and employees with respect to the Commission's approval of the project against any and all liability, claims, demands, damages, costs (including costs and fees incurred in defense of such claims), expenses, and amounts paid in settlement arising from any injury or damage due to such hazards.
- B.) PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicants shall execute and record a deed restriction, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director, incorporating all of the above terms of this condition. The deed restriction shall include a legal description of the applicants' four parcels. The deed restriction 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 Commission amendment to this coastal development permit.

7. Lighting Restrictions

PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicants shall execute and record a deed restriction, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director, which specifies that all outdoor night lighting shall be the minimum necessary, consistent with safety requirements, and shall be downward directed to minimize the nighttime intrusion of the light from the project into sensitive habitat areas. The document shall run with the land for the life of the structure 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 interests being conveyed.

8. Cumulative Impact Mitigation

Prior to the issuance of Coastal Development Permit No. 4-99-263, the applicants shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, evidence that all potential for future development has been permanently extinguished on the three contiguous lots adjacent to the lot to be developed under this permit, in order to comply with the requirements of the slope intensity formula in accordance with Policy 271(b)(2) of the certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan (LUP), provided the three lots are legally combined with the developed lot. The three contiguous lots to be retired are identified herein as assessor parcel numbers 4461-019-021, 4461-019-022, and 4461-019-023, while the lot to be developed under this coastal development permit is

identified herein as assessor parcel number 4461-019-024. Under the slope intensity formula, the maximum allowable gross structural area that would be allowed on the parcel to be developed is 500 square feet. Through the retirement of these three adjacent lots, however, the applicants may increase the allowable gross structural area of the parcel to be developed by 1,500 square feet, thereby resulting in a maximum gross structural area of 2,000 square feet.

9. Future Development

- A.) This permit is only for the development described in Coastal Development Permit No. 4-99-263. Pursuant to Title 14 California Code of Regulations Section 13250(b)(6), the exemptions otherwise provided in Public Resources Code section 30610(a) shall not apply to the entire set of four (4) contiguous parcels that are the subject of this coastal development permit. These parcels are herein identified as assessor parcel numbers 4461-019-021, 4461-019-022, 4461-019-023, and 4461-019-024. The common street address identified for the four parcels is 4337 Hillview Drive, Malibu, California. Accordingly, any future improvements to the affected parcels or permitted structure, including but not limited to clearing of vegetation or grading, other than as provided for in the approved landscape. drainage, and erosion control plans prepared pursuant to the applicable special conditions further set forth herein, shall require an amendment to Coastal Development Permit No. 4-99-263 from the Commission or shall require an additional coastal development permit from the Commission or from the applicable certified local government. Any future improvements shall conform to the allowable Gross Structural Area (GSA) as defined by Policy 271 in the certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan.
- B.) PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicants shall secure recordation of a deed restriction, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director, reflecting the above restrictions on development in the restricted area. The deed restriction shall include legal descriptions of the four (4) contiguous parcels that are the subject of this coastal development permit. The deed restriction 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 Commission amendment to this coastal development permit.

IV. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

A. Project Description and Background

The applicants propose to construct a new three-story, 35 feet above grade, 2,000 square foot single family residence, attached 400 square foot two-car garage, new

septic system, 88 cubic yards of excavation with off site disposal of the excavated soil, in conjunction with the retirement of all future development potential on three adjacent lots in the Malibu Vista Small Lot Subdivision.

The subject site consists of four undeveloped, contiguous lots totaling 53,797 square feet (1.235 acres) in area. These lots are identified as assessor parcel numbers 4461-019-021, 4461-019-022, 4461-019-023, and 4461-019-024 and as Lots 60, 61, 62, and 63 of Tract 8848. The site is located on the northwesterly side of Hillview Drive, in Malibu, Los Angeles County, California. The lots slope steeply, with a 65 percent slope, to the northwest, in the direction of Escondido Canyon. Escondido Canyon is an LUP designated Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area where Escondido Creek, a blueline stream, is located. In addition, the northwesterly portion of the site is located within the LUP designated Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland.

B. Hazards

The proposed development is located in the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains area, 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 area include landslides, erosion, and flooding. In addition, fire is an inherent threat to the indigenous chaparral community of the coastal mountains. Wildfires often denude hillsides in the Santa Monica Mountains of all existing vegetation, thereby contributing to an increased potential for erosion and landslides on property.

Section 30253 of the Coastal Act states in pertinent 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 subject site consists of four trapezoidal-shaped, undeveloped, contiguous lots located on the northwesterly side of Hillview Drive, in an unincorporated area of Malibu, in Los Angeles County, California. The lots slope steeply, at a 65 percent slope, to the northwest, where Escondido Canyon is located below. These lots are located within the Malibu Vista Small Lot Subdivision. The proposed project would situate the residence on the northeastern most lot, immediately adjacent to Hillview Drive along the upper portion of the lot.

The applicants have submitted a series of geology reports addressing the subject site, prepared by Keith W. Ehlert, Consulting Engineering Geologist, dated February 11, 1999; March 23, 1999; April 22, 1999; July 28, 1999; September 28, 1999; and November 15, 1999. The report titled "Response to County of Los Angeles Geologic and Soils Engineering Review Letter," prepared by Keith W. Ehlert, Consulting Engineering Geologist, dated April 22, 1999, evaluates the geologic stability of the

proposed development. The report incorporates numerous recommendations regarding construction, foundations, and drainage, and states that:

"It is our opinion the proposed residential development can be constructed and will be free from hazard of landslide, slippage or settlement, and the proposed development can proceed without similar adverse impact on adjoining properties. Obtaining these goals will require adherence to good construction practices and following the recommendations the referenced report."

Therefore, the Commission finds that based on the recommendations of the applicants' geotechnical consultant, the proposed development is consistent with the requirements of Section 30253 of the Coastal Act, so long as the geologic consultant's recommendations are incorporated into the final project plans and designs. Therefore, the Commission also finds it necessary to require the applicants to submit project plans that have been certified in writing by the geotechnical consultant in accordance with **Special Condition Number One (1)**.

In addition, the geology reports submitted by the applicant discuss the potential for downhill creep influences due to site topography and indicate that the implementation of specific requirements for drainage and erosion control are critical in order to ensure continued stability and safety on the site. As previously noted, the site is very steeply sloping, with a 65 percent slope. If runoff is not controlled from the proposed development, the slope will rapidly erode and destabilize the site and the proposed development. Therefore, the Commission finds it necessary to require the applicants to submit drainage and erosion control plans prepared by a gualified engineer for the review and approval of the geotechnical consultant and the Executive Director, prior to the issuance of the coastal development permit, as required by Special Conditions Number Two (2) and Four (4). Further, to ensure that the project's drainage structures will not contribute to further destabilization of the project site or surrounding area, and that the project's drainage structures shall be repaired should the structures fail in the future, Special Condition Number Four (4) also requires that the applicant agree to be responsible for any repairs or restoration of eroded areas, should the drainage structures fail or result in erosion.

The geologic reports prepared by Keith W. Ehlert, Consulting Engineering Geologist, for the subject site contain specific recommendations concerning foundation design, retaining walls, construction, drainage management, and landscaping for the purpose of controlling erosion and protecting site stability. In addition to these measures, the report dated February 11, 1999, indicates that caissons and grade beam construction are necessary to resist pressures due to downhill creep. While caissons, grade beam construction, and the implementation of other protective measures recommended by the geotechnical consultant may ensure the gross stability of the residence and reduce the risk posed by downhill creep to acceptable levels, there remains the risk that the residence, garage, adjacent roads, and other development may nevertheless be adversely affected by downhill creep or debris flows either arising offsite or on the site itself. This risk is inherent to development on a site with the extreme topographic relief and underlying geology of the subject site, and cannot be fully mitigated. In such cases, the Commission has typically required the applicants to record an assumption of risk deed restriction, as required by **Special Condition Number Six (6)**, accepting the liability for developing a site that is subject to such risks, and agreeing thereby to indemnify the Commission and its employees, officers, and agents against any liability of any kind that might arise out of the approval and construction of such development. Because **Special Condition Number Six (6)** must be implemented by means of a recorded deed restriction, it also provides the benefit of informing future landowners of the risks associated with the site, thus increasing the likelihood that drainage devices, landscaping, and other measures affecting long term site stability will be maintained and monitored by future land owners in accordance with good site management practices.

In his report dated February 11, 1999, Keith W. Ehlert, Consulting Engineering Geologist, specifically noted that the slope and yard should be "provided with low maintenance, erosion control vegetation" and that "care should be taken not to overirrigate the site" in order to maintain continued site stability. Landscaping of the disturbed areas on the project site will enhance the geological stability of the site. In addition, interim erosion control measures implemented during construction will minimize erosion and enhance site stability. The Commission finds that the minimization of site erosion will add to the stability of the site. Erosion can best be minimized by requiring the applicants to revegetate all disturbed areas of the site with native plants, compatible with the surrounding environment.

Invasive and non-native plant species are generally characterized as having a shallow root structure in comparison with their high surface/foliage weight. The Commission finds that non-native and invasive plant species with high surface/foliage weight and shallow root structures do not serve to stabilize slopes and that such vegetation results in potential adverse effects to the stability of the project site. Native species. alternatively, tend to have a deeper root structure than non-native, invasive species and aid in preventing erosion. In addition, the use of invasive, non-indigenous plant species tends to supplant species that are native to the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains area. Increasing urbanization in this area has also caused the loss or degradation of major portions of the native habitat and the loss of native plant seed banks through grading and removal of topsoil. Moreover, invasive groundcovers and fast-growing trees that originate from other continents, that have been used as landscaping in this area, have invaded and already seriously degraded native plant communities adjacent to development. The Commission finds that in order to ensure site stability, the disturbed areas of the site shall be landscaped with appropriate native plant species, as specified in Special Condition Number Two (2).

In addition, in order to ensure that vegetation clearance for fire protection purposes does not occur prior to commencement of construction of the proposed structure, the Commission finds it necessary to impose a restriction on the removal of natural vegetation, as specified in **Special Condition Number Three (3)**. This restriction specifies that natural vegetation shall not be removed until building permits have been secured and construction of the permitted structure has commenced.

In addition, the applicants are proposing to excavate a total of 88 cubic yards of material in order to embed the caissons for the development. The applicants have agreed to dispose of the excess material (approximately 88 cubic yards) at either the Potrero Canyon Landfill, which has been authorized to receive fill within the Coastal Zone, or the Bradley Landfill, located outside of the Coastal Zone in Sun Valley, California. Excavated materials that are placed in stockpiles are subject to increased erosion. As noted above, Coastal Act Section 30253 requires that new development not create or contribute to erosion. The Commission also notes that additional landform alteration would result if the excavated material were to be retained on site. In order to ensure that excavated material will not be stockpiled on site and that landform alteration is minimized, **Special Condition Number Five (5)** requires the applicant to remove all excavated material from the site to an appropriate location and provide evidence to the Executive Director of the location of the disposal site prior to the issuance of the permit. Should the dump site be located in the Coastal Zone, a coastal development permit shall be required.

Therefore, for all of the reasons cited above, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned by Special Conditions Number One (1), Two (2), Three (3), Four (4), Five (5), and Six (6), is consistent with the requirements of Coastal Act Section 30253 applicable to geologic stability.

Wildfire

The proposed project is located in the Santa Monica Mountains, an area subject to an extraordinary potential for damage or destruction from wildfire. The typical vegetation in 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, <u>Terrestrial Vegetation of California</u>, 1988). Chaparral and sage scrub communities have evolved in concert with, and continue to produce the potential for, frequent wildfires. The typical warm, dry summer conditions of the Mediterranean climate combine with the natural characteristics of native vegetation to pose a risk of wildfire damage to development that cannot be completely avoided or mitigated. The applicants did, however, received final approval of their fuel modification plan from the County of Los Angeles, Fire Department on June 21, 1999.

Due to the fact that the proposed project is located in an area subject to an extraordinary potential for damage or destruction from wildfire, the Commission can only approve the project if the applicants assume the liability from these associated risks. Through **Special Condition Number Six (6)**, assumption of risk, the applicants acknowledge 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 Number Six (6)**, the applicants also agree to indemnify the Commission, its officers, agents, and employees against any and all expenses or liability arising out of the acquisition, design, construction, operation, maintenance, existence, or failure of the permitted project.

For these reasons, the Commission finds that as conditioned, the proposed project is consistent with the provisions of Section 30253 of the Coastal Act applicable to hazards specifically posed by wildfire.

C. Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas

Section 30230 of the Coastal Act states:

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 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, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.

Section 30240 of the Coastal Acts 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.

Sections 30230 and 30231 require that the biological productivity and quality of coastal waters and the marine environment be maintained and, where feasible, restored through among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharge and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flows. and maintaining natural buffer areas.

In addition, the Coastal Act defines environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHAs) as any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and development. Section 30240 of the Coastal Act permits development in areas that have been designated as ESHA only when the location of the proposed development is dependent upon those habitat resources and when such development is protected against significant reduction in value. As previously mentioned, the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains LUP has also designated Escondido Canyon Creek as an ESHA and a portion of Escondido Canyon as a disturbed sensitive resource area (DSR), referred to as the Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland.

To assist in the determination of whether a project is consistent with Section 30230, 30231, and 30240, Commission has relied in past permit decisions on the certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan (LUP), which contains numerous policies designated to protect sensitive habitat areas from the individual and cumulative impacts of development. The LUP has been found to be consistent with the Coastal Act and provides specific standards for development in Malibu and the Santa Monica Mountains.

In concert with Sections 30230, 30231, and 30240 of the Coastal Act, the certified LUP offers numerous policies as guidance. Policy 63 states that uses shall be permitted in ESHAs, DSRs, and Significant Oak Woodlands if there is a minimization of grading and removal of native vegetation, and if grading adheres to stream protection and erosion control policies. The certified LUP also contains the following policies that specifically address stream protection and erosion control. Policy 79 states that all development, other than driveways and walkways, should be set back at least 50 feet from the outer limit of designated environmentally sensitive riparian vegetation in order to maintain natural vegetation buffer areas that protect sensitive riparian habitats (as required by Section 30231 of the Coastal Act). In order to ensure stream protection, Policy 80 requires new septic systems to be set back at least 50 feet from the outer edge of the existing riparian or oak canopy for leachfields, and at least 100 feet from the outer edge of the existing riparian or oak canopy for seepage pits. Under Policy 82, grading is to be minimized to reduce potential negative effects of runoff and erosion. Policy 84 states that in disturbed areas, "landscape plans shall balance long-term stability and minimization of fuel load" and that a "combination of taller, deep-rooted plants and low growing ground covers to reduce heat output shall be used" and that within ESHAs native plant species shall be used. Policy 86 provides that 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, while Policy 87 requires abatement of any grading or drainage condition on the property which gives rise to existing erosion problems. Furthermore, Policy 89 states that in ESHAs and other areas of high potential erosion hazard, approval of the final site development plans is required, including drainage and erosion control plans, prior to authorization of any grading activities. Additionally, Policy 91 requires a minimization of impacts and alterations of physical features, such as ravines and hillsides, and natural processes of the site, to the maximum extent possible. Policy 92 requires the that smallest practical area of land should be exposed at any one time during construction, and the length of exposure should be kept to the shortest practicable amount of time for grading operations on hillsides. Finally, Policy 94 requires cut and fill slopes to be stabilized with planting at the completion of final grading and that in ESHAs, planting shall be of native plant species using accepted planting procedures.

As stated previously, the northwestern portion of the subject site is designated by the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan (LUP) as a disturbed sensitive resource area (DSR) (Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland), and the proposed development will be located (at the nearest edge of the residential structure) approximately 275 feet upslope from the streambed of Escondido Canyon Creek. The creek is a blueline stream designated by the U.S. Geological Survey and the riparian corridor is an environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA), as shown on the sensitive environmental resource map of the certified LUP.

Disturbed sensitive resource areas have substantial biological value, but due to the encroachment of development, the continuity and quality of the habitat has been significantly modified in comparison to a relatively undisturbed ESHA. Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland continues to support native wildlife populations and it is sufficiently valuable to warrant some degree of protection. The northwesterly portion of the subject site falls within the Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland area.

The applicants propose to construct a new three-story, 35 feet above grade, 2,000 square foot single family residence, attached two-car garage, new septic system, 88 cubic yards of excavation with removal of excavated material off site, in conjunction with the retirement of all future development potential on three adjacent lots in the Malibu Vista Small Lot Subdivision.

As required by the Coastal Act and the certified LUP, the proposed project will be adequately set back from the ESHA riparian corridor of Escondido Canyon Creek and the Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland, as designated by the certified LUP. The development site will be set back approximately 275 feet from the stream bed of Escondido Canyon Creek, and over 100 feet from the creek's associated riparian corridor. The area to be developed of the site will be located immediately outside, though not within, the Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland. The development site will be located in the immediately adjacent to the access road (Hillview Drive), on the most upper portion of the site, and as far away as possible from the Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland. In addition, the proposed seepage pit would be located approximately 20 feet down slope from the northwestern corner of the proposed single family residence, approximately 80 feet northwest of Hillside Drive, and 10 feet outside of the dripline of two nearby, on site oak trees that are isolated from the Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland area. The seepage pit would be located approximately 250 feet from the stream bed of Escondido Canyon Creek, and outside of the riparian canopy associated with it. Therefore, the seepage pits are located more than 100 feet from the riparian canopy of Escondido Canyon Creek, consistent with Policy 80 of the certified LUP, upon which the Commission has relied for guidance in past permit decisions

The direct impacts of the proposed project, such as vegetation removal and hardscaping of the formerly natural areas of a developed lot, will be mitigated through the implementation of the applicable special conditions. **Special Condition Number Two (2)** requires a landscape plan comprised primarily of native plant species, in

conjunction with an interim erosion control plan. The landscaping of the disturbed areas of the subject site, particularly with respect to particularly steep slopes, with native plant species will assist in preventing erosion and the displacement of native plant species by non-native or invasive species. Furthermore, because a portion of the site is located within the Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland area, Special Condition Number Two (2) also requires the applicant to specifically incorporate coast live oaks (quercus agrifolia) into the landscape plan, which will aid in mitigating potential disturbance of the Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland by the development. Furthermore, the on site oak trees, which are physically isolated from the Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland area, will be afforded additional protection from construction activities and erosion through the installation of a temporary fence, as required by Special Condition Number Two (2). In addition, in order to ensure that vegetation clearance for fire protection purposes does not occur prior to commencement of grading or construction of the proposed structures, the Commission finds it necessary to impose a restriction on the removal of natural vegetation, as specified in Special Condition Number Three (3). This restriction specifies that natural vegetation shall not be removed until building permits have been secured and construction of the permitted structures has commenced, preventing unnecessary disturbance of the area. Special Condition Number Four (4) requires a drainage plan, which will ensure that drainage will be conducted in a non-erosive manner. The Commission finds that a drainage system will serve to minimize the environmental and sensitive habitat degradation associated with erosion. Additionally, pursuant to Special Condition Number Five (5), the applicant will be required to remove all excavated material (approximately 88 cubic yards) to an approved off-site disposal area, thereby reducing potentially harmful erosion in this area. Furthermore, night lighting of a high intensity has the potential to disrupt the hunting, roosting, and nesting behavior of wildlife that occupy this sensitive habitat area. Special Condition Number Seven (7) reduces the disruptive effects that night lighting can have on the wildlife occupying these sensitive habitat areas, by restricting outdoor night lighting to the minimum amount required for safety. Furthermore, Special Condition Number Nine (9) addresses future development by ensuring that all future development proposals for the site, which might otherwise be exempt from review, would require prior review so that potential impacts to this sensitive habitat area may adequately be considered.

The effects of fuel modification, required on the applicants' project by the Los Angeles County Fire Department, have been reduced by siting the development directly adjacent to the access road (Hillview Drive) and as far upslope as feasible from the the Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland area and Escondido Canyon Creek ESHA, as designated by the certified LUP. Fuel modification requirements can affect natural vegetation for up to 200 feet from the footprint of defensible structures. Due to the set back of the proposed development, the nearest corner of the proposed residence would be approximately 275 feet from stream bed of Escondido Canyon Creek and over 100 feet from the associated riparian corridor and ESHA. The northwesterly half of the subject site does fall within the Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland area, however. Fuel modification will not significantly degrade this oak woodland, however, since the Fire Department does not require removal of oak trees pursuant to fuel modification, but rather only the understory. The applicants have consolidated and set back the proposed project from the designated ESHA and Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland, while still developing a minimum of one residence on the site. Furthermore, the applicants are utilizing four separate, legal lots to construct the proposed project. The potential exists to construct to separate, smaller residences all four lots, which could result in further encroachment of development toward the ESHA and Escondido Canyon Disturbed Significant Oak Woodland than would result from the present proposal.

To ensure that any future proposals for accessory structures, additions, or other development on the subject site are evaluated for consistency with Coastal Act Sections 30230, 30231, and 30240, and that potential impacts upon ESHAs and coastal waters are thereby avoided, the Commission finds it necessary to impose **Special Condition Number Nine (9)** specifically for this reason, in addition to the other aspects of the project that require the imposition of the condition that are discussed above. The Commission notes that the construction of swimming pools, art studios, garages, or any other structures within a designated ESHA may not be authorized and that the applicants and successors in interest do not have an entitlement to such structures in the future on these four lots.

Therefore, the Commission finds that, through **Special Conditions Number Two (2)**, **Three (3)**, **Four (4)**, and **Five (5)**, the proposed development will minimize removal of native vegetation, minimize grading (only minimal excavation will be required), and reduce erosion, consistent with LUP Policy 63 and 82. **Special Condition Number Two (2)**, which requires native plant species in the landscaping plan, will also be consistent with the guidelines of LUP Policies 84 and 94. The erosion control and drainage plans required by **Special Conditions Number Two (2)** and **Four (4)** will also be consistent with the intent of LUP Policies 86, 89, and 92. This project is also adequately set back from the sensitive riparian habitat area, thereby minimizing potential negative impacts, in compliance with LUP Policy 79 and Policy 80. Therefore, the Commission finds for all of the reasons set forth above, that the proposed project, as conditioned by **Special Conditions Number Two (2)**, **Three (3)**, **Four (4)**, **Five (5)**, **Seven (7)**, **and Nine (9)** is consistent with the requirements of Coastal Act Sections 30230, 30231, and 30240.

D. Cumulative Impacts of Development

Section 30250(a) of the Coastal Act states:

(a) New residential, commercial, or industrial development, except as otherwise provided in this division, shall be located within, contiguous with, or in close proximity to, existing developed areas able to accommodate it or, where such areas are not able to accommodate it, in other areas with adequate public services and where it will not have significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, on coastal resources. In addition, land divisions, other than leases for agricultural uses, outside existing developed areas shall be permitted only where 50 percent of the usable parcels in the area have been developed and the created parcels would be no smaller than the average size of surrounding parcels. Section 30105.5 of the Coastal Act defines the term "cumulatively," as used in Section 30250(a) as:

"...the incremental effects of an individual project shall be reviewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects."

A number of areas in the coastal zone in the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains area were divided into small "urban" scale lots in the 1920s and 1930s, often resulting in lots as small as 4,000 to 5,000 square feet in area. The Malibu Vista subdivision, within which the proposed project is located, is among these so-called "small-lot subdivisions."

The Commission has recognized that buildout of these small-lot subdivisions would result in a number of adverse cumulative effects upon coastal resources. Among these potential adverse effects are geologic and fire hazards, limited road access, septic and water quality problems, and disruption of rural community character.

As a means of controlling the amount and size of development that may occur in smalllot subdivisions, and thus by extension to limit the potential cumulative effects that associated development may have upon coastal resources, the Commission developed the Slope Intensity Formula. The formula was incorporated into the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan, which was approved by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and certified by the Commission in 1986. The Commission has since relied on the application of this formula as guidance in reviewing proposed development within small-lot subdivisions, thereby addressing the cumulative effects of such development in accordance with the requirements of Coastal Act Section 30250(a) set forth above.

Policy 271(b)(2) of the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan requires that new development in small-lot subdivisions comply with the Slope Intensity Formula for calculating the maximum Gross Structural Area (GSA) that may be allowed for a residential unit. The basic concept of the formula assumes that the suitability of the development of small hillside lots should be determined by the physical characteristics of the building site, recognizing, for example, that development on steep slopes has a high potential for adverse effects upon coastal resources.

Slope-Intensity Formula:

 $GSA = (A/5) \times ((50-S)/35) + 500$

- GSA =The allowable gross structural area of the permitted development in square feet. The GSA includes all substantially enclosed residential and storage areas, but does not include garages or carports designed for storage of autos.
- A = The area of the building site in square feet. The building site is defined by the applicant and may consist of all or a designated portion of the one or more lots comprising the project location. All permitted structures must be located within the designated building site.

S = The average slope of the building site in percent as calculated by the formula:

$\mathbf{S} = \mathbf{I} \times \mathbf{L} / \mathbf{A} \times \mathbf{100}$

I = Contour interval in feet, at not greater than 25-foot intervals, resulting in at least 5 contour lines.

L = Total accumulated length of all contours of interval "I" in feet.

A = The area being considered in square feet.

The applicants propose to construct a new three-story, 35 feet above grade, 2,000 square foot single family residence, attached two-car garage, new septic system, 88 cubic yards of excavation, in conjunction with the retirement of all future development potential on three adjacent lots in the Malibu Vista Small Lot Subdivision. The applicable GSA formula indicates that the parcel upon which the applicants propose the development, identified herein as assessor parcel number 4461-019-024, qualifies for a maximum of 500 square feet. Therefore, the applicants require an additional 1,500 square foot of credit to achieve the 2,000 square feet pursuant to the proposed project description. The applicant is proposing to extinguish all future development rights on the three adjacent, contiguous lots within the same small lot subdivision to achieve the 2,000 square feet proposed for the residence. Special Condition Number Eight (8) requires the applicants to submit evidence, prior to the issuance of this coastal development permit, that all potential for future development has been permanently extinguished on the three adjacent lots, identified herein as assessor parcel numbers 4461-019-021, 4461-019-022, and 4461-019-023, which are contiguous to the subject site and within the same small lot subdivision. Special Condition Number Eight (8) also requires that the three restricted lots be legally combined with the lot proposed to be developed pursuant to this permit.

To ensure that future additions do not exceed the restriction of total allowable development of the site set forth above, which the applicants propose to exhaust with the construction of a 2,000 square foot single family residence, that the proposed development conforms with the guidelines of Policy 271(b)(2) of the certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan relative to the maximum size of residential structures in small-lot subdivisions, and is consistent with the requirements of Coastal Act Policy 30250 (a), the Commission finds it necessary to impose **Special Condition Number Nine (9)** relating to future improvements. **Special Condition Number Nine (9)** requires Commission review and approval of proposals for future improvements of the site.

For the reasons set forth above, the Commission finds that, as conditioned by **Special Condition Number Eight (8) and Special Condition Number Nine (9)**, the proposed development is consistent with Section 30250(a) of the Coastal Act.

E. Septic System

The Commission recognizes that the potential build-out of lots in the Malibu area, 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 applicants propose to construct a septic system relying on the use of a seepage pit as the means of wastewater disposal. The applicants have submitted percolation test reports for the subject site demonstrating that adequate percolation capacity exists, and that the proposed system will exceed the minimum performance 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 applicants have obtained approval-in-concept for the proposed septic disposal system from the Los Angles County Department of Health Services, dated November 18, 1999.

The proposed seepage pit would be located approximately 20 feet downslope from the northwestern corner of the proposed single family residence, approximately 80 feet northwest of Hillside Drive, and 10 feet outside of the dripline of two nearby, on site oak trees. The seepage pit would be located approximately 250 feet from Escondido Canyon Creek, and outside of the riparian canopy associated with it. Therefore, the seepage pits are located more than 100 feet from the riparian canopy, consistent with the certified LUP Policy 80, upon which the Commission has relied for guidance in past permit decisions.

Therefore, for all of these reasons, the Commission finds that the proposed septic disposal system is consistent with Section 30231 of the Coastal Act.

F. Local Coastal Program

Section 30604 of the Coastal Act states that:

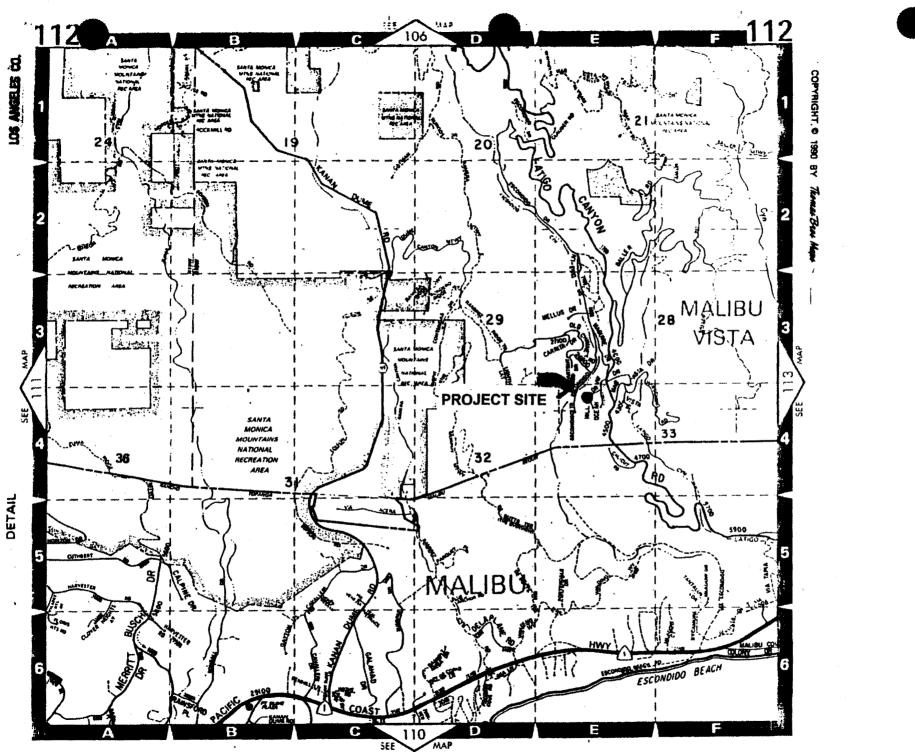
(a) Prior to certification of the local coastal program, a coastal development permit shall be issued if the issuing agency, or the commission on appeal, finds that the proposed development is in conformity with Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) and that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a local coastal program that is in conformity with 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 applicants. As conditioned, the proposed development will not create adverse effects 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 County's ability to prepare a Local Coastal Program for the unincorporated area of Malibu and the Santa Monica Mountains that is also consistent with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act as required by Section 30604(a).

G. California Environmental Quality Act

The Coastal Commission's permit process has been designated as the functional equivalent of CEQA. Section 13096(a) of the California Code of 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 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 that would substantially lessen any significant adverse effects that the activity may have on the environment.

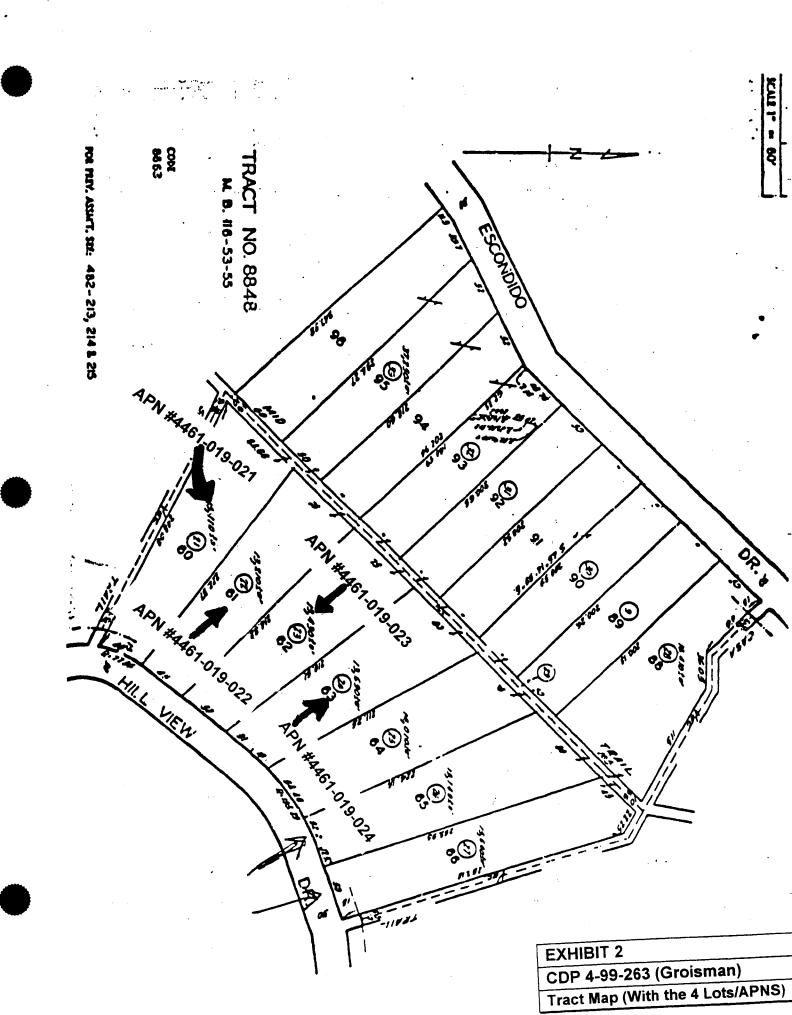
The proposed development, as conditioned, will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned to mitigate the identified effects, is consistent with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

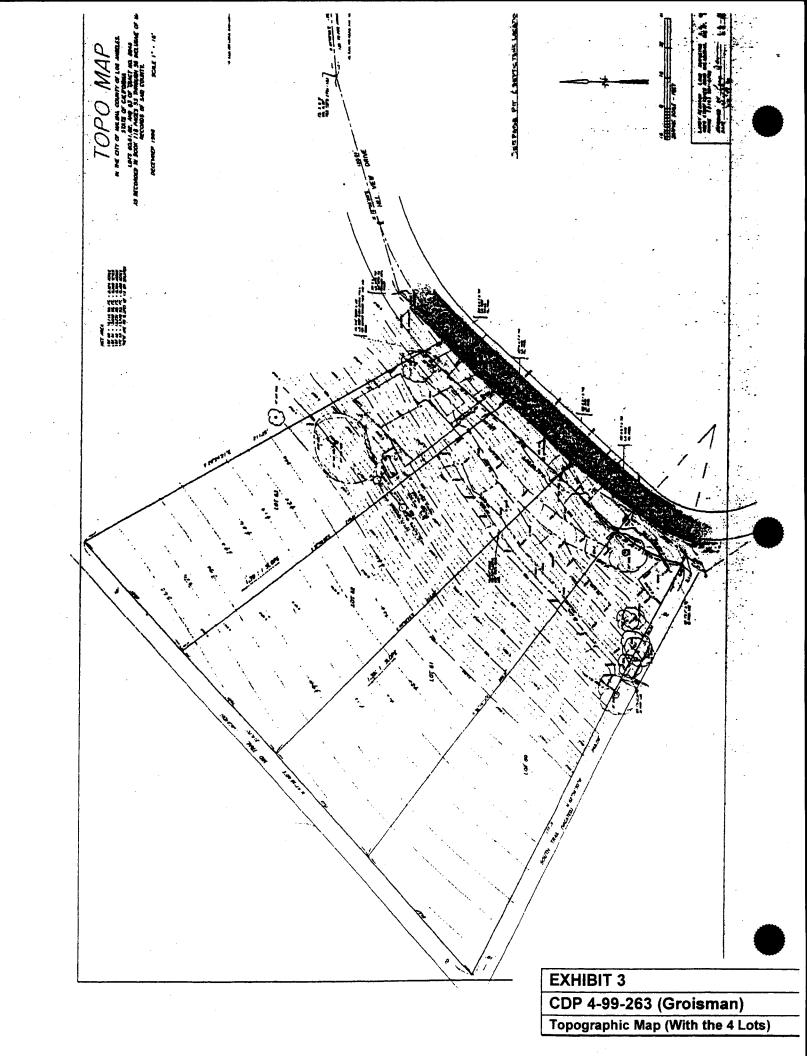
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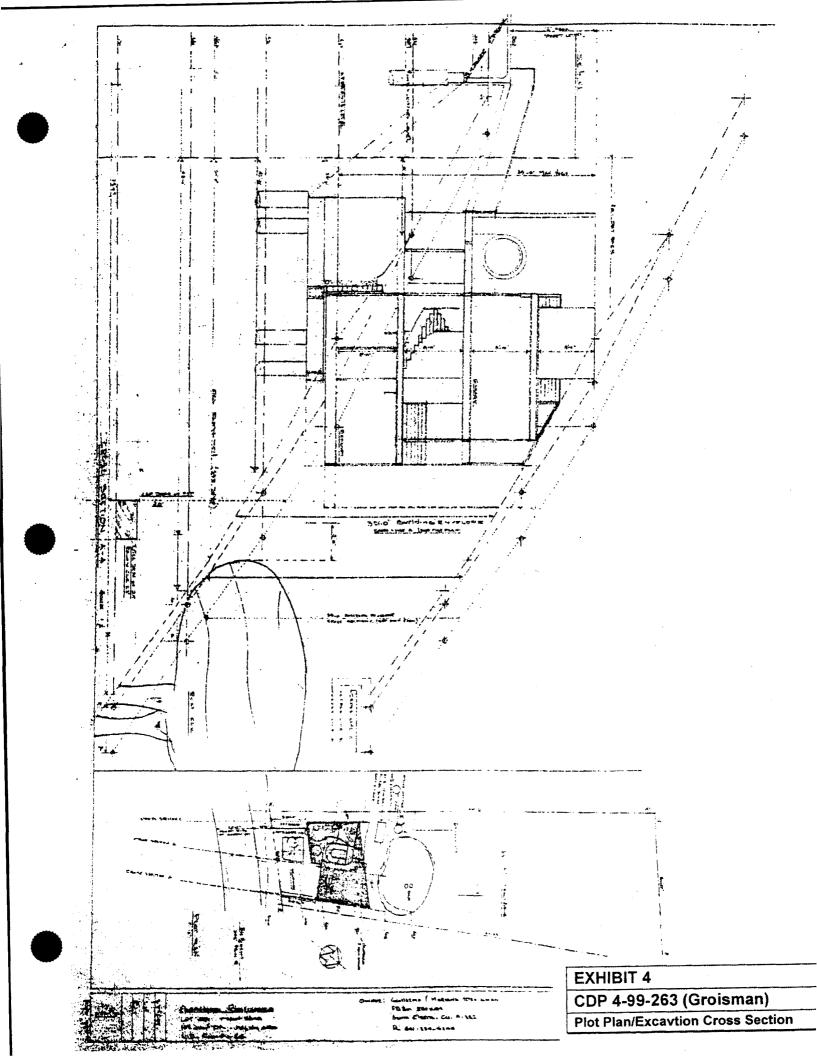


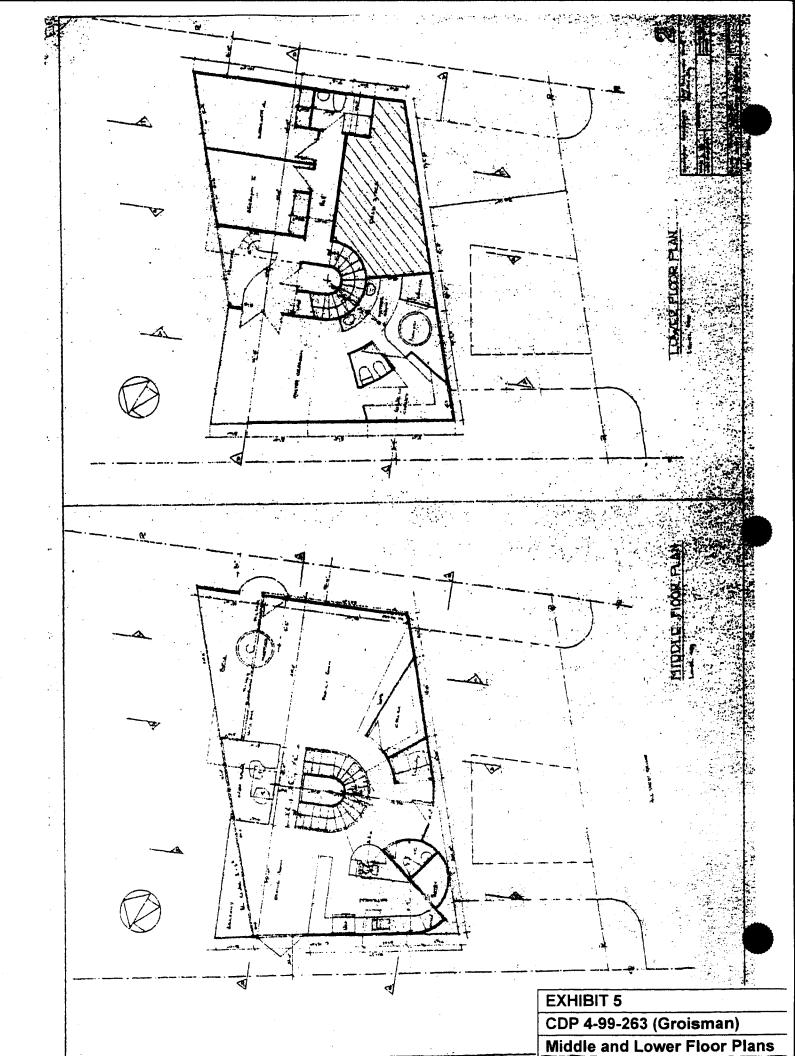
CDP 4-99-263 (Groisman) Location Map

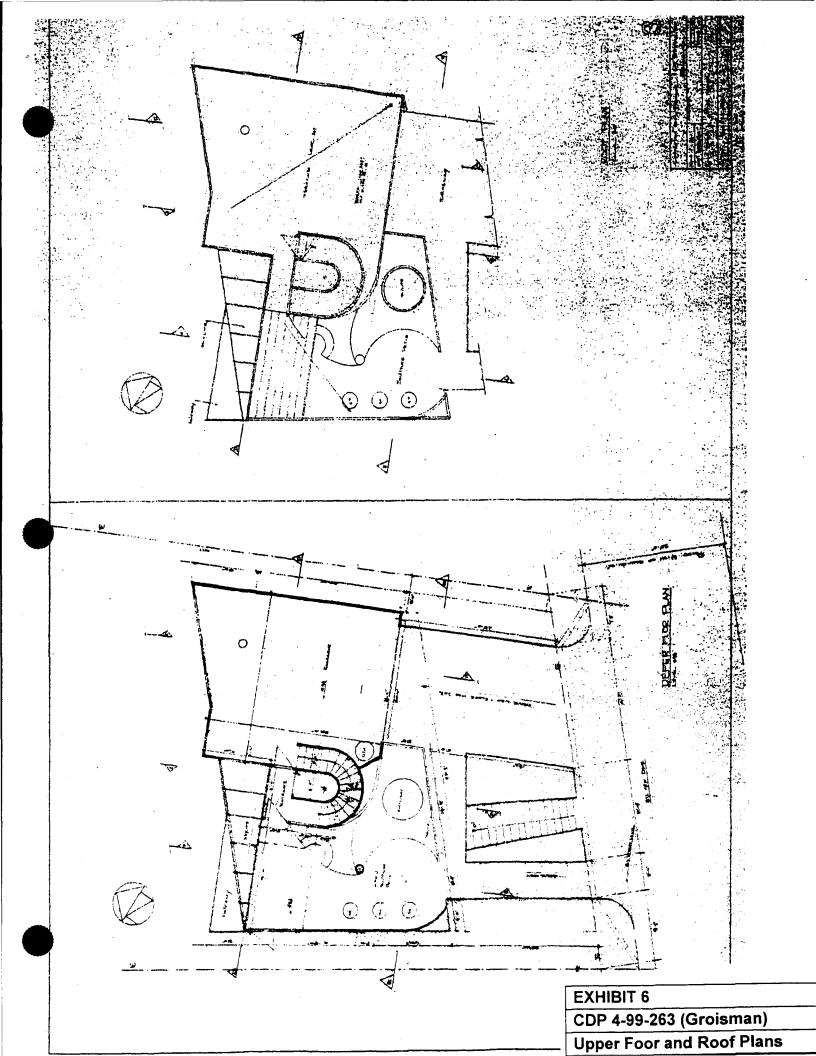
EXHIBIT 1

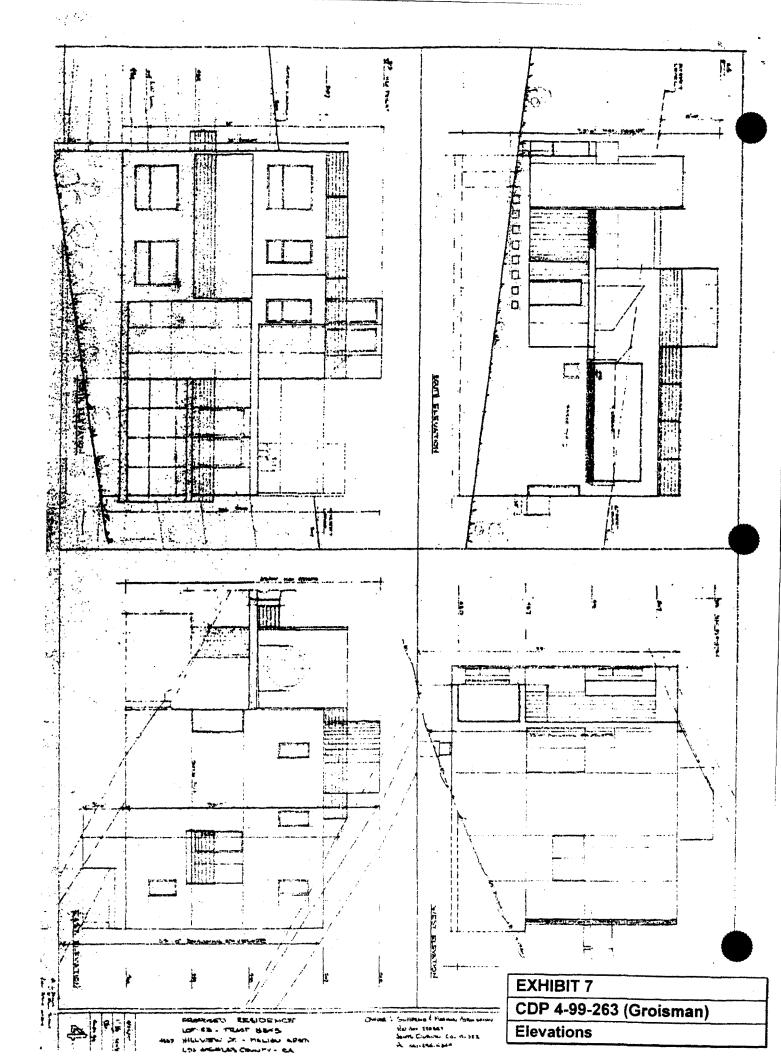


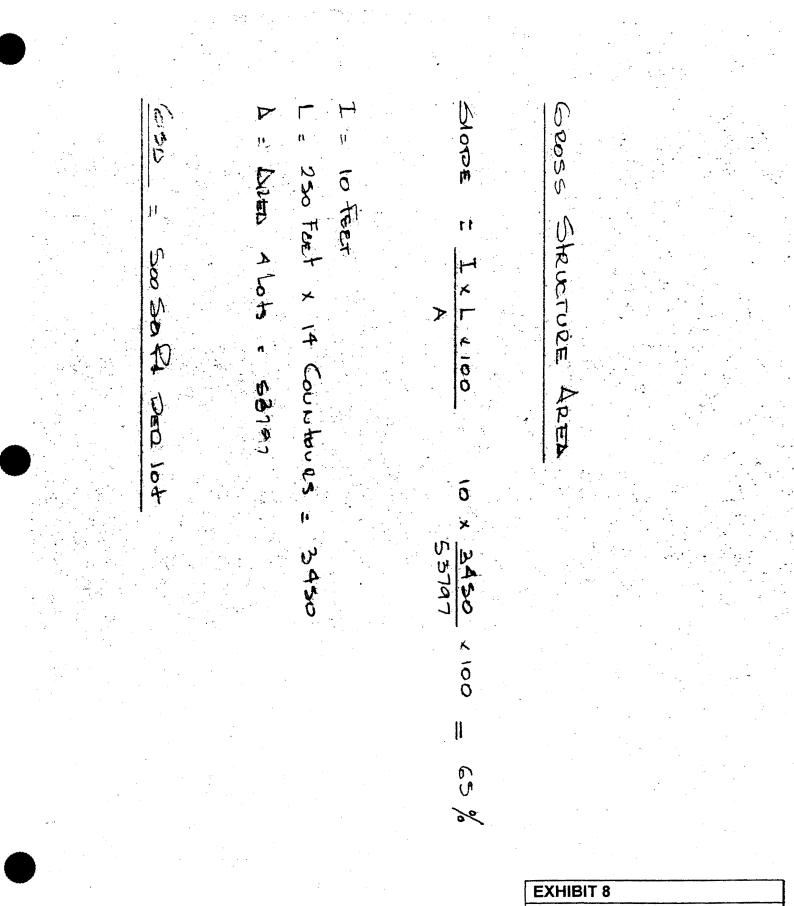












CDP 4-99-263 (Groisman)

Gross Structural Area Calculation

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