*CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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Staff Report:

August 23, 2001

Hearing Date:

September 11, 2001

Commission Action:

STAFF REPORT: REGULAR CALENDAR

APPLICATION NUMBER: 5-01-169

RECORD PACKET COPY

APPLICANT:

David Ronen

AGENT:

Jeffer, Mangels, Butler, and Marmaro LLP

PROJECT LOCATION:

222 Coperto Drive (Lot C, Tract 5938), Pacific Palisades,

City of Los Angeles

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

After-the-fact approval for the construction of the foundation and partial first floor wall framing for the proposed single family home; and complete construction of a two-story, 33-foot high, 7,583 square foot single family home with an attached 900 square foot, three-car garage, and accessory pool, fountains, and driveways, located on a 38,500 square foot vacant lot.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is recommending approval of the proposed coastal development permit with four special conditions to provide an erosion and drainage control plan during and after construction, comply with all recommendations from the applicant's geotechnical consultant, and provide and implement a landscaping plan that incorporates non-invasive, native and drought tolerant plant species. Special condition #4 requires the applicant to comply with all prior to issuance conditions within 90 days of the Commission action taken on this coastal development permit. This is an after-the-fact permit, as the construction of the foundation and first floor wall framing were undertaken without benefit of a coastal development permit.



STAFF NOTE:

A more inclusive version of this application was presented to the Commission at its April 10, 2001 hearing. That application requested after-the-fact approval of the grading and retaining walls, as well as the construction of a single family home, pool, fountains, and an additional approximately 1,000 cubic yards of grading. The Commission continued the item to allow staff geologist Dr. Mark Johnsson to review the geotechnical reports provided by the applicant and to address the Commission's concerns that grew out of the public comments in opposition to the project. The original environmental impact report (FEIR) and the previous permits for the subdivision all proposed the use of caissons for the structural foundation rather than flat building pads. The Commission requested information on whether it was necessary to grade to a flat building pad to ensure site stability. The Commission also required the applicant to separate the permit application into two parts: an amendment to the original permit for the subdivision that would address only the grading and retaining walls and a separate coastal development permit for the single family home and accessory structures.

Dr. Johnsson concluded that grading to flat building pads was not required in order to ensure site stability and the use of caissons for the foundation system would have required less grading than what was proposed in the amendment application. However, because neither the prior permit nor the FEIR actually *required* the use of caissons, and because the additional grading did not adversely affect visual qualities, site stability, or any other Coastal Act policies, the staff recommended approval for the amendment.

At its August 7, 2001 meeting, the Commission approved the permit amendment with conditions for 3,320 cubic yards of grading and 4 to 18-foot retaining walls. This permit application, 5-01-169, is for the after-the-fact approval of the foundation and partial construction of the first floor wall framing and the complete construction of a two-story, 33-foot high, 7,583 square foot single family home with an attached 900 square foot, three-car garage, and accessory pool, fountains, and driveways. The staff is recommending approval with four special conditions that include compliance with the geotechnical recommendations, submittal of an erosion and drainage control plan and a landscaping plan, and compliance with all prior to issuance conditions within 90 days of Commission action.

LOCAL APPROVALS:

City of Los Angeles Recorded Parcel Map 5938

City of Los Angeles Coastal Development Permit 86-043

City of Los Angeles Coastal Development Permit 97-014

Recorded Map Modification No. 5938, February 24, 1997 and March 6, 2001

City of Los Angeles, Department of Building and Safety, Geology and Soils Review, Log #24419

City of Los Angeles, Department of Building and Safety, building permit #98010-30000-00241, 11/24/98; 4/2199; 11/01/99

City of Los Angeles, Department of Building and Safety, grading permit, 11/24/98

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:

Coastal Development Permit #5-89-729 (Runka)

Coastal Development Permit # 5-97-030 (Santa Monica Bank)

Coastal Development Permit # 5-98-083 (Coleman)

Coastal Development Permit # 5-97-030-A1 (Ronen)

Geologic Review Memorandum by Commission staff geologist Dr. Mark Johnsson, July 12, 2001

Final EIR 86-0789, October 1988

Geology and Soils Report by Geosoils, Inc., 4/1/98

Letter in response to grading on Lot C by Geosoils, Inc., 2/28/00

Letter in response to questions from Mark Johnsson, Commission staff senior geologist, by Geosoils, Inc., July 9, 2001

I. MOTION, STAFF RECOMMENDATION, AND RESOLUTION:

The staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution to **APPROVE** the coastal development permit application with special conditions:

MOTION: I move that the Commission approve Coastal Development Permit No.

5-01-169 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 A PERMIT AMENDMENT:

The Commission hereby approves the coastal development permit amendment on the ground that the development as amended and subject to conditions, 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 amendment 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 amended development on the environment, or 2) there are no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the amended development on the environment.

II. STANDARD CONDITIONS:

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 this permit is reported to the Commission. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
- 3. <u>Interpretation.</u> Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
- 4. <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.
- 5. <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. <u>Conformance of Design and Construction Plans to Geotechnical Reports and Recorded Map Modification #5938</u>

A. All final design and construction plans and grading and drainage plans shall be consistent with all recommendations contained in Geology and Soils Report by Geosoils, Inc., 4/1/98, Letter in response to grading on Lot C by Geosoils, Inc., 2/28/00, the requirements of the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, Soils/Geologic review letter Log #24419, May 28, 1998 and all conditions within the City of Los Angeles Recorded Map Modification #5938, March 6, 2001. Such recommendations shall be incorporated into all final design and construction plans.

B. The permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the approved final plans. Any proposed changes to the approved final plans shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the approved final plans shall occur without a Commission amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.

2. <u>Erosion and Drainage Control</u>

A. **Prior to Issuance of the Coastal Development Permit,** the applicant shall submit, for review and approval of the Executive Director, a plan for erosion and drainage control.

1) Erosion and Drainage Control Plan

- (a) The erosion and drainage control plan shall demonstrate that:
- During construction, erosion on the site shall be controlled to avoid adverse impacts across the site, adjacent properties, and the public streets.
- The following temporary erosion control measures shall be used during construction: 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.
- All drainage from the lot shall be directed toward the street and away from the sloped areas and other properties, into suitable collection and discharge facilities.
- Run-off from all roofs, patios, driveways and other impervious surfaces on the site shall be collected and discharged to avoid ponding and/or erosion either on or off the site.
 - (b) The plan shall include, at a minimum, the following components:
- A narrative report describing all temporary run-off and erosion control measures to be used during construction and all permanent erosion control measures to be installed for permanent erosion control.
- A site plan showing the location of all temporary erosion control measures.
- A schedule for installation and removal of the temporary erosion control measures.
- A written review and approval of all erosion and drainage control measures by the applicant's engineer and/or geologist.
- A written agreement indicating where all excavated material will be disposed and acknowledgement that any construction debris disposed within the coastal zone requires a separate coastal development permit.
- The location, types and capacity of pipes drains and/or filters proposed.
- · A schedule for installation and maintenance of the devices.
- A site plan showing finished grades at two-foot contour intervals and drainage improvements.
 - (c) These erosion and drainage control measures are required to be in place and operational on the project site prior to or concurrent with the initial

grading operations and maintained throughout the development process to minimize erosion and sediment from the runoff waters during construction. All sediment shall be retained on-site unless removed to an appropriately approved dumping location either outside the coastal zone or to a site within the coastal zone permitted to receive fill.

- (d) 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, and/or silt fencing; and include temporary drains and swales and sediment basins. The plan 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.
- B. The permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the approved final plans. Any proposed changes to the approved final plans shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the approved final plans shall occur without a Commission amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.

3. Landscape Plan

- A. **Prior to issuance of a Coastal Development Permit**, the applicant shall submit a landscaping plan prepared by a professionally licensed landscape architect or resources specialist, for review and approval by the Executive Director. The plan shall include, at a minimum, the following components: a map showing the type, size, and location of all plant materials that will be on the developed site, the topography of the developed site, all other landscape features, and a schedule for installation of plants. The landscaping plan shall show all existing vegetation. The plan shall incorporate the following criteria:
 - (a) The subject site shall be planted and maintained for slope stability, erosion control, and native habitat enhancement purposes. The landscaping shall be planted within sixty (60) days of receipt of the certificate of occupancy for the residence. To minimize encroachment of non-native plant species into adjacent, existing native plant areas, landscaping on the entire lot shall consist of non-invasive plant species (see exhibit #6 for a list of invasive plant species). The landscaping on the lot shall not include volatile plant species, such as eucalyptus, pine, and other introduced species, which increase the fuel load of the area.
 - (b) Landscaped areas on all sloped portions of the lot shall consist of 100 percent native and/or drought tolerant plants as listed by the California

Native Plant Society, Santa Monica Mountains Chapter, in their document entitled Recommended List of Plants for Landscaping in the Santa Monica Mountains, dated February 5, 1996. The landscaping shall be planted using accepted planting procedures required by a professionally licensed landscape architect.

- (c) A majority of the landscaping on the flat portion of the lot shall consist of either native and/or drought tolerant plants.
- (d) Plantings shall be maintained in good growing condition throughout the life of the project and whenever necessary shall be replaced with new plant materials to ensure continued compliance with applicable landscape requirements in the landscaping plan.

B. Monitoring

Five years from the date of the receipt of the Certificate of Occupancy for the residence the applicant or successor in interest shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a landscape monitoring report, prepared by a licensed Landscape Architect or qualified Resource Specialist, that certifies the onsite landscaping is in conformance with the landscape plan approved pursuant to this Special Condition. The monitoring report shall include photographic documentation of plant species and plant coverage.

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.

C. The permitee shall undertake development in accordance with the approved final 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 Commission amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.

4. <u>Condition Compliance</u>

Within 90 days of Commission action on this coastal development permit application, or within such additional time as the Executive Director may grant for good cause, the applicant shall satisfy all requirements specified in the conditions hereto that the applicant is required to satisfy prior to issuance of this permit. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the institution of enforcement

action related to the unpermitted grading and construction that has occurred, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Coastal Act.

IV. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS:

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

A. <u>Project Description and Location</u>

On March 10, 1998, the California Coastal Commission approved Coastal Development Permit 5-97-030 for the Subdivision of a 4.53 acre lot into 4 single-family parcels and approximately 7,000 cubic yards of remedial grading (removal and recompaction of soil). The permit was issued on September 11, 1998.

Coastal Development Permit 5-97-030 approved the subdivision of a single lot into four single-family parcels but did not give approval for the construction of any homes. The applicant, David Ronen, requested to grade beyond the amount approved in the original permit. Specifically, the applicant requested the after-the-fact approval of 2,825 cubic yards of grading (removal and recompaction) on Lot C and construction of 4 to 18-foot high retaining walls. An additional 545 cubic yards of cut material required by City of Los Angeles Recorded Map Modification requirements to reconfigure the landscaping area to a more natural state was also proposed. The applicant submitted permit amendment application 5-97-030-A1 to incorporate the additional grading and retaining walls into the original permit for the subdivision. The amendment was approved on August 7, 2001 with five special conditions. This permit application, 5-01-169, is for the after-the-fact approval for the construction of the foundation and partial first floor wall framing for the proposed single family home; and complete construction of a two-story, 33-foot high, 7,583 square foot single family home with an attached 900 square foot, three-car garage, and accessory pool, fountains, and driveways, located on a 38,500 square foot vacant lot (see Exhibits).

The project is located on a 38,500 square foot vacant lot (Lot C of Tract 5938) in the Castellammare area of Pacific Palisades (Exhibit #1). This particular lot faces away from the Pacific Ocean and toward Los Liones Canyon. The northwestern portion of the subject property borders a "finger" of Topanga State Park (Exhibit #2). This area is described as a "finger" because it is a small sloped area of the Park bordered on the east side by Los Liones Drive and the west side by a row of single family home along Quadro Vecchio (Exhibit #1). The homes along Quadro Vecchio overlook the downsloping "finger" of the park. However, the Park is shielded by an upward sloping area on the northern edge of the subject property and Lot B (Exhibit #3).

B. **Project History**

Prior to the submittal of the coastal development permit application the City of Los Angeles, Environmental Review Section finalized and circulated Environmental Impact Report # 86-0789 for the subdivision of 4.53 acres into four parcels for single family

homes, in October 1988. The proposed subdivision involved 300 cubic yards of graded cut required to provide four driveways and approximately 4,000 cubic yards of removal and recompaction to stabilize a slump feature along the northwest property line. The EIR addressed potential impacts from the implementation of the project due to: grading and geologic hazards, water runoff and hydrology, plant and animal life, land use, fire protection, energy conservation, and cultural resources.

In 1989 the Coastal Commission approved Coastal Development Permit 5-89-729 for the subdivision of the 4.53 acre parcel into 4 lots for single family homes, construction of street improvements, utilities, drainage, and slope repair. The slope repair consisted of the removal and recompaction of a shallow surficial slope failure located on Lot A. 950 cubic yards of graded cut and export was proposed in addition to the remedial grading. One of the conditions required for the project was the recordation of an assumption of risk deed restriction on the property because of a possible ancient landslide that existed on one of the lots (lot A) (Exhibit #3).

Subsequent to the Commission's approval, the applicant recorded the Parcel Map and the City permitted the applicant to do street and infrastructure improvements, install dewatering wells, and three horizontal drains, as required remedial measures for the possible on-site ancient landslide. However, the Commission permit was never issued because the applicant failed to record the assumption of risk deed restriction, per Special Condition #2 of the 1989 permit.

Sometime after the Commission approval in 1989 the property changed ownership (Santa Monica Bank acquired the property). When the new owner became aware that the CDP was never issued, the permit had already expired. Since the permit was never issued, the work performed on the site and undertaken in reliance of a permit did not vest the permit. Therefore, the permit expired and the applicant was required to apply for a new coastal development permit from both the City and the Coastal Commission.

On November 18, 1997, the City of Los Angeles approved local CDP # 97-014 to allow "the construction, use, and maintenance of four single-family dwellings in the dual permit jurisdiction of the California Coastal Zone". The City permit included 11 conditions and incorporated the conditions of Modified Recorded Parcel Map No. 5938. Following the City approval, the Commission approved, on March 10, 1998, Coastal Development Permit #5-97-030 with two additional conditions. CDP #5-97-030, as approved by the Commission, did not include the construction of homes on the four individual lots. Santa Monica Bank has since sold all the lots within the subdivision.

Mr. Ronen, the applicant, purchased Lot C for the construction of a single family home. The City issued building and grading permits to the applicant, Mr. Ronen, for the construction of a single family home and grading. The City and the applicant did not believe an additional coastal development permit was necessary from the Coastal Commission because the CDP issued by the City on November 18, 1997 included "the construction, use, and maintenance of four single-family dwellings in the dual permit jurisdiction of the California Coastal Zone". A coastal development permit was however

required from the Commission because 1) the lot is partially within the dual permit area, 2) the original Coastal Development Permit #5-97-030 did not include authorization for the construction of single family homes on the four lots, and 3) the applicant was requesting grading beyond which was approved in permit #5-97-030 for remedial grading of the subdivision.

Soon after October 1998 the applicant received building and grading permits from the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety. The applicant graded the site, constructed 4-foot to 18-foot high retaining walls, and began foundation and wall beam work for a single family home in reliance on these permits. The City also issued a Calvo Exemption for the construction of a single family home at 222 Coperto Drive on March 25, 1998. In order for this exemption to apply, the subject lot must be a legal lot as of January 1, 1980. Therefore, the City issued this exemption in error. In this case Lot C did not become a legal lot until after the City and Commission issued permits for the subdivision in 1998. The City, after receiving complaints from area residents concerning the grading, issued "stop work" orders on August 20, 1999 based on unpermitted development on the site. After receiving notification from both the City and the Coastal Commission's South Coast District office, which addressed the issue of unpermitted development, the property owner applied to the Coastal Commission to amend coastal development permit 5-97-030 to allow the construction of one single family home and the after-the-fact approval of grading, retaining walls, and the initial construction of the foundation.

Application 5-97-030-A1 was presented to the Commission at their April 10, 2001 hearing for the after-the-fact approval of the grading and retaining walls on Lot C as well as the construction of a 33-foot high, 7,583 square foot single family home, pool, fountains, and an additional approximately 1,000 cubic yards of grading. The Commission continued the item to allow time for staff geologist Dr. Mark Johnsson to review the geotechnical reports provided by the applicant and to address concerns the Commission had based upon public comments in opposition to the project. The comments in opposition related to the fact that the original FEIR as well as the previous permits for the subdivision proposed the use of caissons for the structural foundation. Flat building pads were not proposed in the FEIR. The opponent claimed that the applicant's request to grade a flat building pad was inconsistent with the original FEIR.

The Commission also required the applicant to separate the permit application into two parts. The amendment to the original permit would consist of only the grading and retaining walls. A new coastal development permit would then be required for the new single family home, pool, and fountains. The amendment application, 5-97-030-A1, was presented to the Commission at its August 7, 2001 hearing. The project was approved to allow the after-the-fact grading and retaining walls along with an additional 545 cubic yards of grading as required by the City of Los Angeles. This coastal development permit application 5-01-169 is for the after-the-fact approval of the foundation and first floor wall framing and for the complete single family home and accessory structures.

C. Geologic Stability

Section 30253 states in part:

New development shall:

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

The proposed project is located in the Castellammare area of Pacific Palisades. This area has a long history of natural disasters, some of which have caused catastrophic damages. Such hazards common to this area include landslides, erosion, flooding, and wildfires. The subject property is located on a gently to moderately sloping vacant lot facing Los Liones Canyon (Exhibit #2). The subject property does not face Pacific Coast Highway, which has been the site of most of the landslide activity. Rather, the property faces Los Liones Canyon and other subdivided tracts located above Sunset Boulevard (Exhibit #1).

The project site is located on an inland, level portion of a larger, bowl-shaped area that lies on the side of Los Liones Canyon (Exhibit #3). This bowl-shaped feature has been the subject of many debates by geologists, the City, and the Commission. The debate centers on the geologic origin of this feature. Conflicting reports have indicated that an ancient landslide created the bowl-shaped landform, approximately 5,000 years ago. The possible ancient landslide was said to be the result of either a landslide scarp or the actual head scarp of a landslide. Another conclusion is the feature is the result of an uplifted stream meander.

In the original permit approved in 1989, the applicant submitted seven geologic investigations that were conducted for the subdivision. These reports discussed, in detail, the bowl-shaped feature, located in the southern portion of lot A (Exhibit #2 & #3). GeoSoils, Inc. reviewed studies that had been conducted over the past several years for the area, including 30 test borings and numerous trenches that were excavated on Parcel #5938.

The Geotechnical consultant's exploration revealed a sheared contact between two different formations, which GeoSoils found to be indicative of either landsliding or fault displacement. They concluded that based on the information they could not disprove that a large landslide may exist under a portion of Lot A and offsite. However, they stated that no evidence exists of historic or recent movement. The GeoSoils report sited an earlier report by Geolabs which states:

...the landslide has attained a high degree of stabilization. At the time of principal movement the slide was probably the result of undercutting by the stream of ancient Los Liones Canyon, groundwater, and possibly a strong earthquake.

The Geolabs report found that the Factor of Safety of the slope between Parcel Map #5938 and Los Liones Canyon is in excess of 1.5. GeoSoils recommended that the area of lot A, over which the bowl-shaped feature exists, not be utilized for residential structures. The City concurred and required a sworn affidavit by the applicant that no habitable structures be constructed within the area of the possible landslide (on Lot A). The Commission's approval of the subdivision (CDP #5-97-030) also required the applicant to record an assumption of risk deed restriction on Lot A of Parcel Map #5938. The subject property for Coastal Development Permit 5-01-169 is physically removed from the possible ancient landslide separated by Lots B and D and Tramonto Drive (Exhibit #3).

On August 7, 2001, the Coastal Commission approved an additional 3,370 cubic yards of grading (beyond what was approved in 5-97-030) and 4 to 18-foot high retaining walls on lot C. The applicant had stated that the grading was for the removal and recompaction of the lot. No soil would be physically removed from the project site. The applicant's geotechnical consultant advised that the grading was necessary to control surface drainage and stabilize natural soils and weathered bedrock. Commission staff geologist did not concur with this statement and stated that the grading beyond the original permit was not necessary to achieve these goals but was proposed to create a flat building pad for the single family home and yard area.

While there were no landslide hazards indicated within the geology reports on lot C, hazards can still occur if the applicant does not follow the recommendations of the geotechnical consultant and if a proper erosion and drainage control plan for the project is not incorporated into the project plans.

1. Conformance with Geotechnical Recommendations

Recommendations regarding the design and construction of the single family home and foundation system have been provided in several reports and letters submitted by the applicant, as referenced in the above noted final reports. Adherence to the recommendations contained in these reports is necessary to ensure that the proposed project assures stability and structural integrity, and neither creates nor contributes significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way requires the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms.

Therefore, Special Condition #1 requires the applicant to conform to the geotechnical recommendations in the Geology and Soils Report by Geosoils, Inc., 4/1/98 and letters in response to grading on Lot C by Geosoils, Inc., 2/28/00 and July 9, 2001. The applicant shall also comply with the recommendations by the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, Geologic/Soils Review Letter, Log #24419, May 28, 1998 and all

conditions within the City of Los Angeles Recorded Map Modification #5938, March 6, 2001.

2. <u>Erosion Control Measures</u>

Storage or placement of construction materials, debris, or waste in a location subject to erosion and dispersion via rain or wind could result in possible acceleration of slope erosion and landslide activity. Special Condition #2 requires the applicant to dispose of all demolition and construction debris at an appropriate location outside of the coastal zone and informs the applicant that use of a disposal site within the coastal zone will require an amendment or new coastal development permit. The applicant shall follow both temporary and permanent erosion control measures to ensure that the project area is not susceptible to excessive erosion.

Currently, runoff flows uncontrolled over and across the subject property. This has created cuts in the existing slope and could contribute to an increase in erosion across the subject site. The applicant has submitted a drainage plan that demonstrates that runoff water is directed to the street and not across the subject property. However, the Commission requires a complete erosion control plan for both permanent and temporary measures. Such measures will lessen the effects grading, site development, and future water runoff will have on the site and surrounding properties. Prior to issuance of the Coastal Development Permit, the applicant shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a temporary and permanent erosion and drainage control plan that includes a written report describing all temporary and permanent erosion control and runoff measures to be installed and a site plan and schedule showing the location and time of all temporary and permanent erosion control measures (more specifically defined in special condition #2).

3. Landscaping

Implementing a landscaping plan that requires intensive watering is a major contributor to accelerated slope erosion, landslides, and sloughing, which could necessitate protective devices. The subject property is currently vacant and contains a mixture of invasive grasses and shrubs.

The applicant has proposed to landscape 30,000 square feet of his property. Most of the landscaped areas appear to be located in the eastern and southwestern portions of the subject property (Exhibit #4). The applicant has not stated what plant species he intends to use in the landscaping plan. As previously mentioned, landscaping with plant species that require constant watering can lead to slope erosion and could create a potential for earth movement.

To ensure that the project maintains native and/or drought tolerant vegetation, Special Condition #3 is required by the Commission. Special Condition #3 requires the applicant to submit a landscaping plan for the review and approval of the Executive Director. The plan requires the applicant to plant native and/or drought tolerant vegetation on all sloped

portions of the site and a majority of the flat portions of the lot with native and/or drought tolerant species. Native and/or drought tolerant plants are used because they require little to no watering once they are established (1-3 years), they have deep root systems that tend to stabilize the soil, and are spreading plants that tend to minimize erosion impacts of rain and water run-off. The plantings shall provide 90% coverage within 90 days and the plantings shall be maintained in a good growing condition for the prevention of exposed soil which could lead to erosion and possible earth movement. Special Condition #3 further prohibits the planting of invasive plant species which tend to supplant or dominate other plant species or does not allow for the establishment of other plant species (in this case native or drought tolerant species). A list of invasive plant species is shown as Exhibit #6 of this report. Such plants are restricted in the landscaping plan because of the possibility that the drought tolerant/native plant species would eventually be supplanted or more importantly would not become established at all.

Only as conditioned to incorporate and comply with the recommendation of the applicant's geotechnical consultant, the City of Los Angeles, Department of Building and Safety, and the Recorded Map Modification and to submit a temporary and permanent erosion and drainage control plan and a landscaping plan, is the proposed project consistent with Section 30253 of the Coastal Act.

D. <u>Habitat - Topanga State Park</u>

Section 30240 of the Coastal Act states:

- (a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on such resources shall be allowed within such 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 such areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of such habitat areas.

The Commission has found that certain coastal bluffs and canyons in the Pacific Palisades area and Santa Monica Mountains are classified as Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas. Typically these areas are undeveloped and include extensive, connected habitat areas that are relatively undisturbed. The subject property is located on the southwestern edge of the Santa Monica Mountains in a subdivided, "nearly built-out" tract (Exhibit #1 & #2). The subject area is located in a developed, subdivided location where homes, urban landscaping, and landslides have impacted habitat. Single family homes exist on all three sides of the property. Lot B of the original four-lot subdivision, located to the northeast of the subject property, is currently vacant but is a developable legal lot for a single family home. The subject property borders a portion of Topanga State Park (Exhibit #1, #2, and #3). As mentioned previously, the Park area in this location is a "finger" of the larger Topanga State Park that is bordered by Quadro Vecchio and a row of homes along this ridgeline to the west and Los Liones Drive to the east (Exhibit #1 & #2). The portion of

the Park adjacent to the subject property is located above and on the downward sloping side of the ridgeline.

In the original permit for the subdivision, the applicant submitted both a tree study and biological assessment, as well as an Environmental Impact Report. The site vegetation is comprised of ground cover, common shrubs, weeds, and a variety of trees. The study identified 87 trees on the subdivided parcel, ranging from 8 to 60 feet in height and 6 to 32 inches in diameter. One oak tree was identified on the parcel. The City of Los Angeles conditioned the subdivision and Parcel Map that required the applicant to replace any non-oak trees removed at a 1:1 basis and require City approval to remove any oak tree more than 8 inches in diameter. If any oak trees are removed they must be replaced at a 2:1 basis with 24-inch box trees at least 10 feet tall. The biological survey of the site revealed no sensitive wildlife species.

The Commission approved 4-lot subdivision (5-97-030) incorporated all conditions imposed by the City's Local Coastal Development Permit and Recorded Parcel Map approval. Therefore, the tree replacement condition still applies to the subject property. The subject property is also not located within a habitat corridor. On August 7, 2001, the Coastal Commission approved the amended permit (5-97-030-A1) with additional conditions relating to the habitat on the site. As discussed in the permit amendment staff report, several species of invasive plants were discovered on the site. These plants were established after the grading of the lot and the two-year period of inactivity on the site that followed. The applicant is required to remove all invasive plant material prior to the commencement of any construction on the site.

While the Commission finds that the project site is not located in or near a sensitive habitat area, the northern corner of the property borders a small section of Topanga State Park (Exhibit #2 & #3). This section of Topanga Sate Park is bordered by Quadro Vecchio (a residential street lined on either side with single family homes) to the southwest of the Park and Los Liones Drive (a surface street that terminates at the Los Liones Trail that leads to Paseo Miramar Fire Road and Temescal Ridge) to the northeast (Exhibit #1). Section 30240 requires that development adjacent to parks and recreational areas be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would degrade such areas. The Park and the surrounding habitat within the Santa Monica Mountains still contain large expanses of native vegetation, which is home to several avian and terrestrial species. Such vegetation includes coastal sage scrub, chaparral, scrub oak, and several other plant species endemic to the Santa Monica Mountains. Coastal sage scrub has incurred tremendous losses statewide. Native plants common to this community are highly adapted to the temperate climate of Southern California and provide habitat for the endangered California gnatcatcher, cactus wren, and orange-throated whiptail lizard, among a list of approximately 100 potentially threatened or endangered species¹.

As discussed in the amended permit staff report (5-97-030-A1), invasive plant species had established themselves on the site. As a condition of approval the applicant was required

¹ Premises on Coastal Sage Scrub Ecology, CA Department of Fish and Game

to remove all invasive plant species prior to the commencement of development on the site. Invasive plants are fast spreading plants that can overtake an established native plant community. If new development on the edge of the State Park were to incorporate invasive plant material in its landscaping, the native species could be overwhelmed and supplanted.

To ensure that the project maintains non-invasive plant species, Special Condition #3 is required by the Commission. Special Condition #3 requires the applicant to submit a landscaping plan for the review and approval of the Executive Director. The plan requires the applicant to plant the entire site with non-invasive plant species. A list of invasive plant species is shown as Exhibit #6 of this report. Such plants are restricted in the landscaping plan because of the possibility that the invasive plants would eventually supplant native plant species within Topanga State Park. The landscaping plan also requires the planting of native and/or drought tolerant vegetation on all sloped portions of the property and a majority of native and/or drought tolerant plant species on the flat portion of the lot. Native and/or drought tolerant plants are used because they require little to no watering once they are established (1-3 years), they have deep root systems that tend to stabilize the soil, and are spreading plants that tend to minimize erosion impacts of rain and water runoff. The plantings shall provide 90% coverage within 90 days and the plantings shall be maintained in a good growing condition for the prevention of exposed soil which could lead to erosion and possible earth movement.

The Commission finds that, as conditioned to provide and incorporate a landscaping plan that includes non-invasive plant species on the entire lot, native and/or drought tolerant plant species on the sloped portion of the lot, and a majority of native and/or drought tolerant plant species on the flat portion of the lot, the proposed project will not degrade or significantly impact the State Park area. The project is therefore found consistent with Section 30240 of the Coastal Act.

E. Scenic and Visual Resources

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act states:

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance the visual quality in visually degraded areas.

Under this section of the Coastal Act development must be sited to avoid impacts to the scenic or visual qualities of coastal areas. In this case the public views are the views from Topanga State Park to the hillsides and canyons of the Santa Monica Mountains of Pacific Palisades and from the surrounding public streets and viewpoints to the ocean.

The subject property is located on the inland facing side of the Castellammare area in the Pacific Palisades. It is located approximately one half miles from Will Rodgers State Beach, yet the property is not visible from this beach area (Exhibit #1). The northwestern portion of the subject property borders a "finger" of the larger Topanga State Park. This portion of the Park slopes steeply to the east, away from the subject property. The "finger" is bordered on the western side by single family homes along a ridgeline and Quadro Vecchio Road (upslope) and on the eastern side (downslope) by Los Liones Drive (Exhibit #1, #2, & #3). A natural upward sloping area at the northern border between the subject property and the State Park obstructs the view of the subject property from Topanga State Park (both the larger portion of the Park and the "finger" of the Park (Exhibit #2 & #3).

Staff has conducted several site visits to the areas of the State Park that are located near the subject property and was unable to see the graded portion of this lot from the State Park. The proposed 33-foot high single family home would not be visible from Los Liones Canyon because of the steep slope of the canyon sides and the location of the subject lot on the opposite side of a ridge. While the proposed single family home might be seen from a trail in the Park, the construction of the home would not impact the scenic and visual qualities of the State Park. The subject property is surrounded by two existing single family homes to the east and west and a vacant lot designed for a future single family home to the north (lot B). Lot B is located northeast of the applicant's lot. The northeast side of the property is the area that could be seen from the State Park. A ridgeline located above the subject property is lined with existing one and two-story single-family homes as well. The homes along the ridgeline are accessed by Quadro Vecchio Street (the southwestern border of the "finger" of Topanga State Park (Exhibit #1 & #2).

The proposed single family home will be visible from portions of Sunset Boulevard. The location indicated by opponents to the amended permit 5-97-030-A1 as a public viewpoint is a driveway access above the Self Realization Fellowship Meditation Center. The facility is open to the public and by exiting Sunset Boulevard and driving down the driveway to the Meditation Center one could see the area where the proposed project is located. However, there are also views of the entire inland facing Castellammare community, with roads, single and multi-family homes, and Topanga State Park. Therefore, the proposed single family home would not impact the views from the public vantage points to the Santa Monica Mountains, Topanga State Park, and the coastline.

In this particular case the subject property is located in a nearly built-out tract and the construction of the proposed single family home would not lead to a further degradation of the surrounding area. The proposed project is not is not located in an area that could potentially block public views to either Topanga state Park or the coastline. Therefore, the Commission finds the proposed project consistent with Section 30251 of the Coastal Act.

F. <u>Unpermitted Development</u>

Development has occurred on the subject site including construction of the foundation and partial construction of the first floor wall framing of the single family home without the required coastal development permit. The applicant is proposing to construct a two-story.

33-foot high, 7,583 square foot single family home with an attached 900 square foot, three-car garage, and accessory pool, fountains, and driveways, located on a 38,500 square foot vacant lot.

To ensure that the unpermitted development component of this application is resolved in a timely manner, Special Condition #4 requires that the applicant satisfy all conditions of this permit which are prerequisite to the issuance of this permit within 90 days of Commission action. The Executive Director may grant additional time for good cause. Although development has taken place prior to submission of this permit application, consideration of the application by the Commission has been based solely upon the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. Approval of this permit does not constitute a waiver of any legal action with regard to any alleged violations nor does it constitute an admission as to the legality of any development undertaken on the subject site without a coastal permit.

G. Local Coastal Program

Section 30604 (a) of the Coastal Act states:

Prior to certification of the Local Coastal Program, a Coastal Development Permit shall be issued if the issuing agency, or the Commission on appeal, finds that the proposed development is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of this division and that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a local coastal program that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200).

In 1978, the Commission approved a work program for the preparation of Local Coastal Programs in a number of distinct neighborhoods (segments) in the City of Los Angeles. In the Pacific Palisades, issues identified included public recreation, preservation of mountain and hillside lands, and grading and geologic stability.

The City has submitted five Land Use Plans for Commission review and the Commission has certified three (Playa Vista, San Pedro, and Venice). However, the City has not prepared a Land Use Plan for Pacific Palisades. In the early seventies, a general plan update for the Pacific Palisades had just been completed. When the City began the LUP process in 1978, with the exception of two tracts (a 1200-acre and 300-acre tract of land) which were then undergoing subdivision approval, all private lands in the community were subdivided and built out. The Commission's approval of those tracts in 1980 meant that no major planning decision remained in the Pacific Palisades. The tracts were A-381-78 (Headlands) and A-390-78 (AMH). Consequently, the City concentrated its efforts on communities that were rapidly changing and subject to development pressure and controversy, such as Venice, Airport Dunes, Playa Vista, San Pedro, and Playa del Rey.

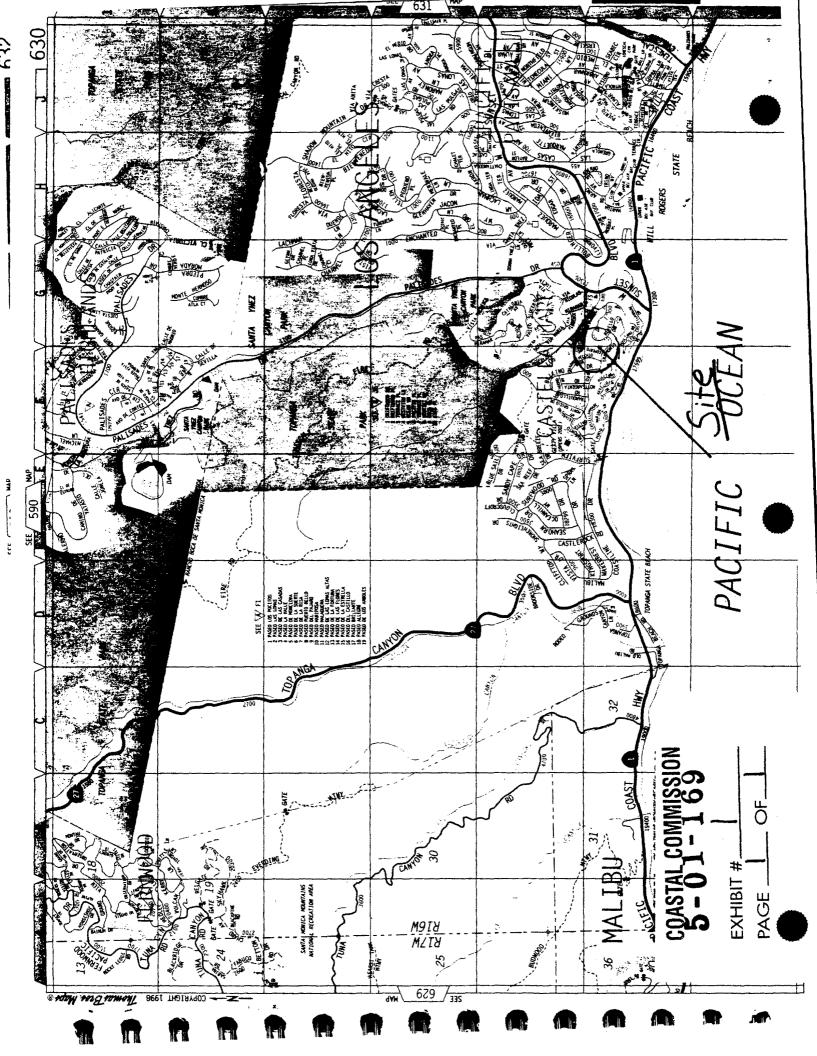
As conditioned, to address the geologic stability, visual quality, habitat issues, and afterthe-fact construction related to the project, approval of the proposed development will not prejudice the City's ability to prepare a Local Coastal Program in conformity with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. The Commission, therefore, finds that the proposed project is consistent with the provisions of Section 30604 (a) of the Coastal Act.

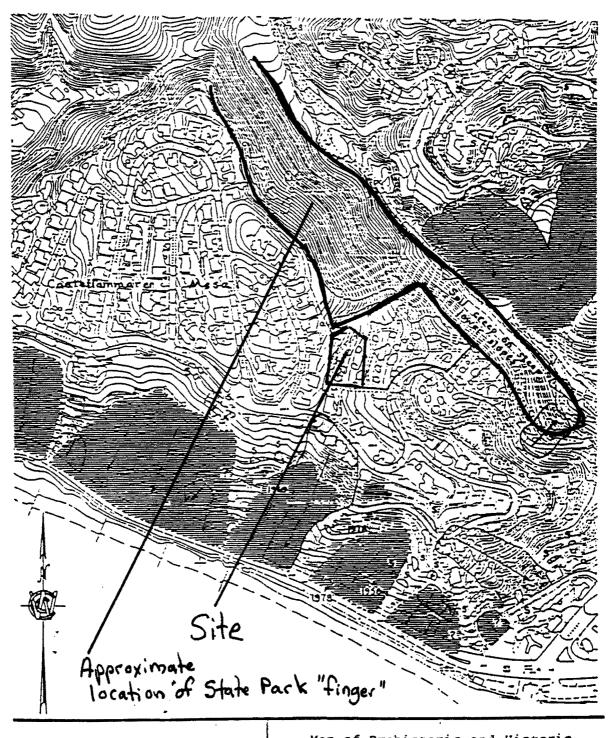
H. California Environmental Quality Act

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

The proposed project, as conditioned, has been found consistent with the scenic and visual, habitat, and geologic hazard policies of the Coastal Act and all adverse impacts have been minimized. As stated in the preceding sections of this staff report the proposed project would not have an impact on the visual quality of the surrounding area or any sensitive habitat and would not lead to development in a hazardous area. Therefore, the Commission finds that in this particular project, there are no feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact that the activity may have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project can be found consistent with the requirements of the Coastal Act to conform to CEQA.

End/am





GeoSoils, Inc.

Map of Prehistoric and Historic Landslides, McGill, 1982

DATE 2/27 W.O. NO. 2275-VN BY ____

Soil Mechanics • Geology • Foundation Engineering

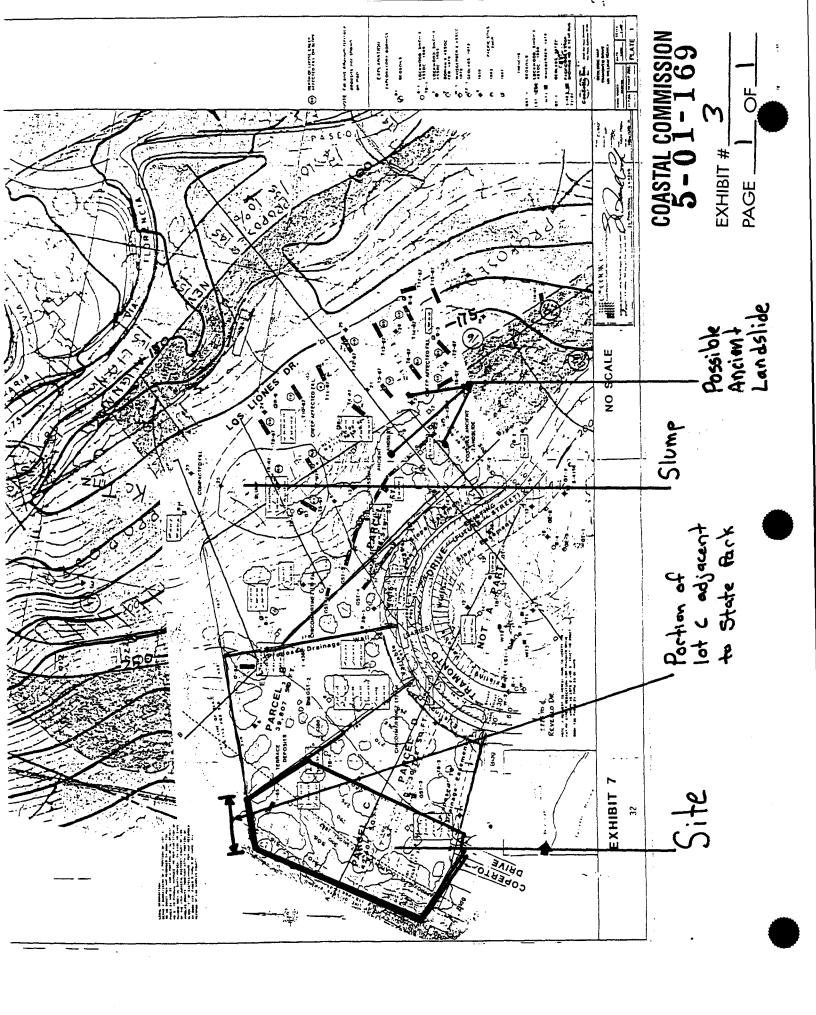
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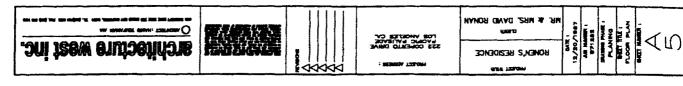
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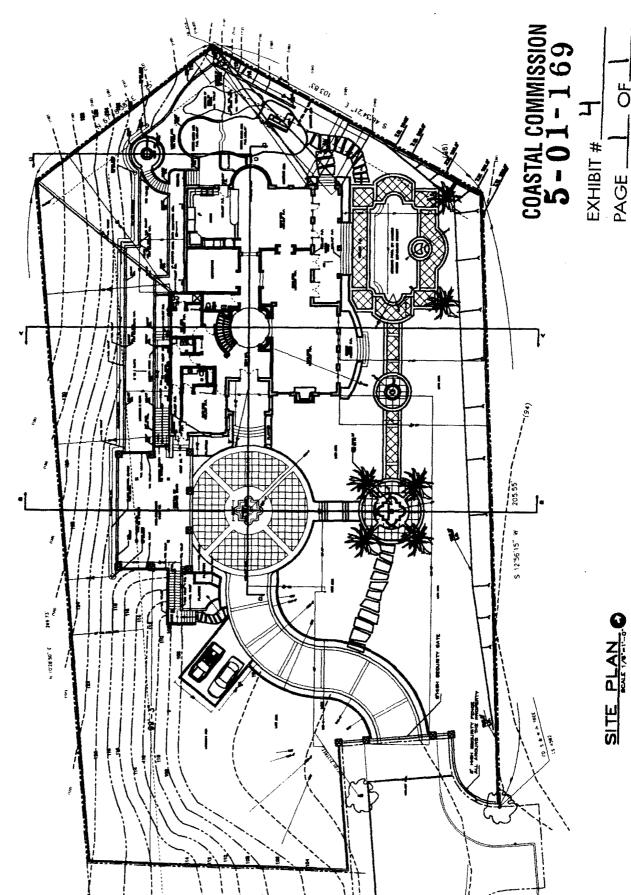
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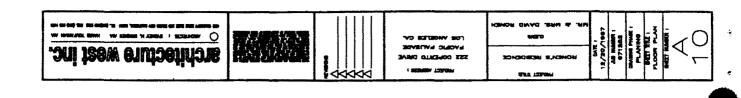
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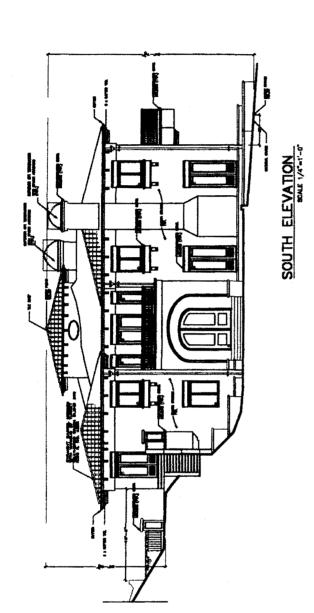


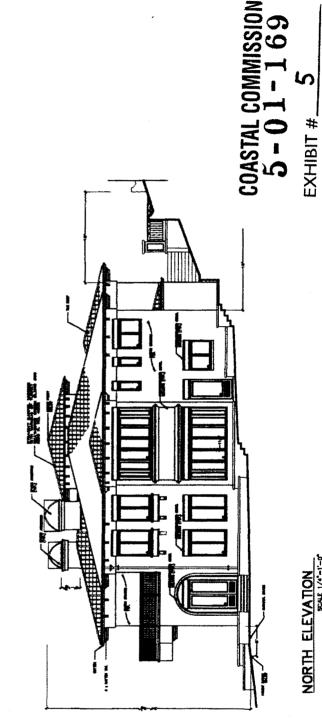








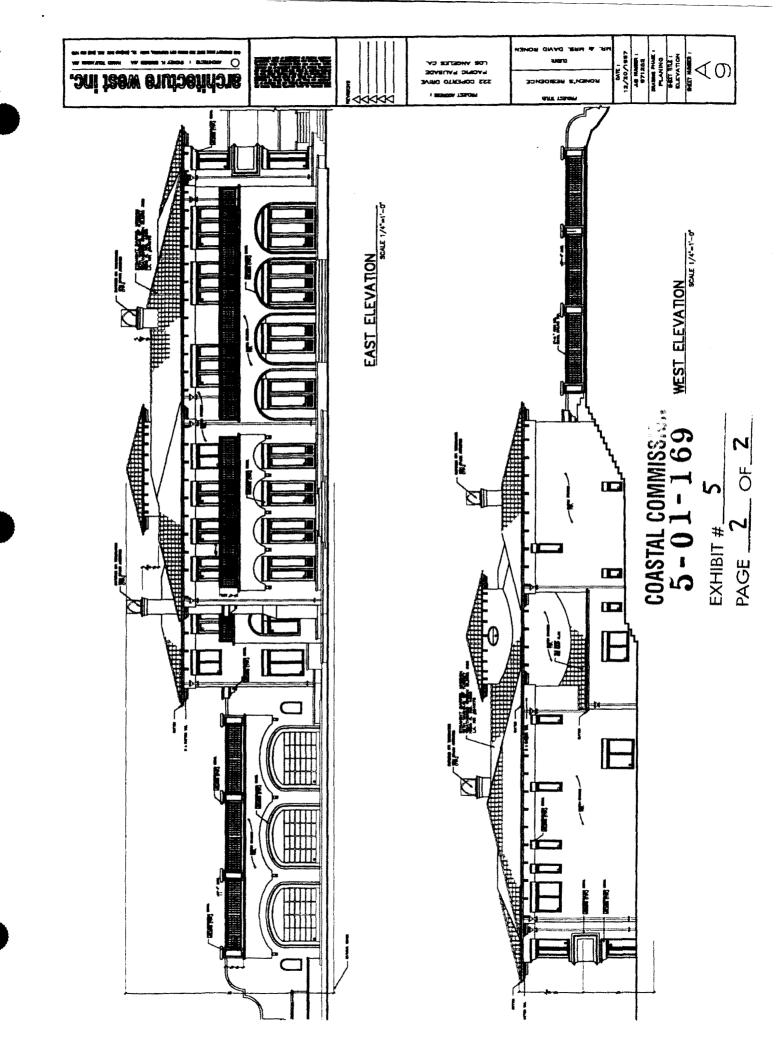




NORTH ELEVATION

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Prohibited Invasive Ornamental Plants

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Acacia sp. (all species)
Acacia cyclopis
Acacia dealbata
Acacia decurrens
Acacia longifolia
Acacia melanoxylon
Acacia redolens

Achilles millefolium var. millefolium

Agave americana Alianthus altiszima Aptenia cordifolia Arctotheca calendula

Arctotis sp. (all species & hybrids)

Arundo donax
Asphodelus fisulosus
Atriplex glauca
Atriplex semibaccata
Carpobrotus chilensis
Carpobrotus edulis
Cantranthus ruber
Chenopodium album
Chrysanthemum coronarium

Chrysanmemum coronanum Cistus sp. (all species)

Cortaderia jubata [C. Atacamensis] Cortaderia diolea [C. sellowana] Cotoneaster sp. (all species) Cynodon decivion

Cynodon dactylon Cytisus sp. (all species) Delosperma 'Alba'

Hedera helix

Dimorphotheca sp. (all species)

Drosanthemum floribundum
Drosanthemum hispidum
Eucalyptus (all species)
Eupatorium coelestinum [Ageratina sp.]
Foeniculum vulgare
Gazania sp. (all species & hybrids)
Genista sp. (all species)
Hedera canadensis

COMMON NAME

Acacia
Acacia
Acacia
Acacia
Acacia
Green Wattle
Sidney Golden Wattle
Blackwood Acacia
a.k.a. A. Ongerup
Common Yarrow
Century plant
Tree of Heaven
Red Apple
Capa Weed
African daisy

Glant Reed or Arundo Grass

Asphodie White Saltbush Australian Saltbush Ice Plant

Hottentot Fig Red Valerian

Pigweed, Lamb's Quarters
Annual chrysanthemum

Rockrose

Atzcamą Pampės Gress Seilos Pampas Gress

Cotoneaster Bermuda Grass

Broom

White Trailing los Plant African daisy, Cape mangold,

Freeway dalsy
Rosea Ice Plant
Purple Ice Plant
Eucalyptus
Mist Flower
Sweet Fennel
Gazania
Broom
Algerian Ivy
English Ivy

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT	#.	6	
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Prohibited Invasive Ornamental Plants

Ipomoea acuminata

Lampranthus spectabilis
Lantana camara
Limonium perazii
Unaria bipartita
Lobularia maritima
Lonicera japonica "Halliana"
Lotus comiculatus

Lupinus sp. (all non-native species)

Lupinus arboreus Lupinus texanus Malephora croces Malephora luteola

Mesembryanthemum crystallinum Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum

Myoporum laetum Nicoliana glauca Cenothera berlandleri Olea europea

Opuntia ficus-Indica

Osteospernum sp. (all species)

Oxalis pes-caprae Pennisetum clandestinum Pennisatum sataceum Phoenix canadensis Phoenix dectylifers Plumbago auriculata Ricinus communis Rubus procerus Schinus molle Schinus terebinthifollus Senecio mikanioides Spartium Junceum Tamarix chinensis Trifollum tregiferum Tropaelolum maius Ulex europaeus Vinca major

Blue dawn flower, Mexican morning glory Trailing Ice Plant Common garden lantana

Sea Lavender
Toadflax
Sweet Alyssum
Hall's Honeysuckle
Birdsfoot trefoil

Lupine

Yellow bush lupine Texas blue bonnets

Ice Plant
Ice Plant
Crystal Ice Plant
Little Ice Plant
Myoporum
Tree Tobacco

Mexican Evening Primrose

Olive tree Indian fig

Trailing African daisy, African daisy,

Cape marigold, Freeway daisy

Bermuda Buttercup Kikuyu Grass Fountain Grass

Canary Island date paim

Date paim Cape leadwort Castorbean

Himatayan blackberry California Pepper Tree Florida Pepper Tree German Ivy Spanish Broom

Temarisk Strawberry clover Nasturtium Prickley Broom Perlwinkle

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBI	T#	6		
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