CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

SAN DIEGO AREA 7575 METROPOLITAN DRIVE, SUITE 103 SAN DIEGO, CA 92108-4402 (619) 767-2370



Wed 17a

Filed: 2/27/03 49th Day: Waived Staff: BP-SD

Staff Report:

10/17/03 11/5-7/03

Hearing Date: 11/5

STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION ON APPEAL SUBSTANTAIL ISSUE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: City of Carlsbad

DECISION: Approval with Conditions

APPEAL NO.: A-6-CII-03-26

APPELLANTS: Commissioner Patrick Kruer and Commissioner Sara Wan

APPLICANT: Fred Kiko

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Demolition of an existing single-family dwelling and construction of a two-story and basement, 30-foot high, 6,358 sq.ft. single-family dwelling and attached 700-sq.ft garage/storage, swimming pool, spa and seawall on a 7,000 sq. ft. blufftop site consisting of two 3,500 sq.ft. merged lots.

PROJECT LOCATION: 2649 Ocean Street, Carlsbad (San Diego County) APN 155-104-04

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The staff recommends that the Commission, after public hearing, determine that substantial issue exists with respect to the grounds on which the appeal has been filed.

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS: Certified City of Carlsbad Local Coastal Program (LCP)/Mello II Segment, Carlsbad Coastal Development Permit CDP 99-53; Appeal #A-6-CII-01-20, Report of Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation, June 2002, Wave Runup and Coastal Hazard Study by Skelly Engineering, May 2002.

I. Appellant Contends That:

The appellants contend that the City's approval is inconsistent with Carlsbad LCP provisions pertaining to shoreline development, public access, coastal bluff protection

and ocean setback (stringline). Most prominent are concerns related to alteration of landforms, encroachment along the shoreline and the requirement that new development needs to be independent of armoring. Because development is proposed along the entire sloping blufftop lot which requires substantial grading of the bluff, the proposed development is inconsistent with the historic pattern of development for this stretch of coast. The appellants contend redevelopment of the site can be supported utilizing the stringline provisions of the LCP, but only when it is done in the least environmentally damaging manner. Also, a seawall is not permitted for new development in the Carlsbad LCP. The appellants contend the City failed to require an analysis, based on an average long-term bluff retreat rate and wave runup analysis, of how the proposed home and accessory improvements can be sited and designed such that any approved development is safe for its economic life without the need for a seawall or other shore protection.

In addition, the appellants question the seawall's effect on public access and the project's affect on public views originating at Ocean Avenue to the ocean.

II. <u>Local Government Action</u>: The coastal development permit was approved by the Planning Commission on 2/5/03. The conditions of approval address, in part, the following: parking; building height; required blufftop setback (stringline) and landscaping.

III. Appeal Procedures:

After certification of a Local Coastal Program (LCP), the Coastal Act provides for limited appeals to the Coastal Commission of certain local government actions on coastal development permits. Projects within cities and counties may be appealed if they are located within mapped appealable areas. The grounds for appeal are limited to the assertion that "development does not conform to the certified local coastal program or the access policies set forth in the Coastal Act.

Section 30625(b) of the Coastal Act requires the Commission to hear an appeal unless it determines that no substantial issue is raised by the appeal. If the staff recommends "substantial issue" and no Commissioner objects, the Commission will proceed directly to a de novo hearing on the merits of the project.

If the staff recommends "no substantial issue" or the Commission decides to hear arguments and vote on the substantial issue question, certain proponents and opponents (as indicated below) will have 3 minutes per side to address whether the appeal raises a substantial issue. It takes a majority of Commissioners present to find that no substantial issue is raised. If substantial issue is found, the Commission will proceed to a full public hearing on the merits of the project. If the Commission conducts a de novo hearing on the permit application, the applicable test for the Commission to consider is whether the proposed development is in conformity with the certified Local Coastal Program.

In addition, for projects located between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea, Sec. 30604(c) of the Act requires that a finding must be made by the approving agency, whether the local government or the Coastal Commission on appeal, that the development is in conformity with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3.

The only persons qualified to testify before the Commission at the "substantial issue" stage of the appeal process are the applicant, persons who opposed the application before the local government (or their representatives), and the local government. Testimony from other persons must be submitted in writing. At the time of the de novo hearing, any person may testify.

IV. **MOTION**:

I move that the Commission determine that Appeal No. A-6-CII-03-26 raises NO substantial issue with respect to the grounds on which the appeal has been filed under § 30603 of the Coastal Act.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION OF NO SUBSTANTIAL ISSUE:

Staff recommends a NO vote. Failure of this motion will result in a de novo hearing on the application and adoption of the following resolution and findings. Passage of this motion will result in a finding of No Substantial Issue, and the local action will become final and effective. The motion passes only by an affirmative vote by a majority of the Commissioners present.

RESOLUTION TO FIND NO SUBSTANTIAL ISSUE:

The Commission hereby finds that Appeal No. A-6-CII-03-26 presents a substantial issue with respect to the grounds on which the appeal has been filed under § 30603 of the Coastal Act regarding consistency with the Certified Local Coastal Plan and/or the public access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act.

V. Findings and Declarations:

1. Project Description/Permit History. The proposal includes demolition of an existing single-family dwelling and construction of a two-story with basement, 30-foot high, 6,358 sq.ft. single-family dwelling and attached 700-sq.ft garage/storage on an oceanfronting and blufftop site within the Mello II plan area of the Carlsbad Local Coastal Program segment. The site consists of two narrow rectangular lots, each 3,500 square feet, which are being merged as approved by Carlsbad, into one 7,000 square foot lot for the proposed residence. The basement level will not be visible from the street but will be open from the west (seaward) side of the structure. The project site is located on the west side of Ocean Street. Also proposed is a roof deck, swimming pool, spa, sun deck and vertical seawall.

An existing unpermitted wooden bulkhead is located approximately 28 feet seaward of the base of the bluff on the beach. The proposed vertical seawall to extend to 17.5 MSL would replace the existing wooden bulkhead and is designed to extend 4 feet into bedrock (to 1.0 feet MSL), be constructed with a 15-inch thick concrete cap over steel, and have a recurved cap at the top to deflect water to seaward. Backfill will be added behind the seawall to create a perched beach. Approximately 1,278 cubic yards of cut grading is proposed to prepare the site for the improvements.

The site is currently developed with a single-family residence and the western slope contains mainly ice plant and other non-native plant species. There is no significant vegetation on the site.

The standard of review is consistency with the certified City of Carlsbad Local Coastal Program, Mello II segment and, because the site is between the sea and the first public road, the public access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act.

2. <u>Stringline</u>. The appellants contend that the City's approval of the proposed new single-family residence on the subject site is inconsistent with the City's certified LCP as it pertains to blufftop setbacks. The proposed project involves construction of a single family dwelling on a bluff top lot. The certified LCP prohibits new development along the ocean from extending further seaward than a "stringline" drawn between adjacent sites. The goal of limiting new development from extending beyond the stringline is to restrict encroachment onto the shoreline and preserve public views along the shoreline. Section 21.204.050B of the Coastal Shoreline Development Overlay provides:

New development fronting the ocean shall observe at a minimum, an ocean setback based on a "stringline" method of measurement. No enclosed portions of a structure shall be permitted further seaward than allowed by a line drawn between the adjacent structure to the north and south; no decks or other appurtenances shall be permitted further seaward than those allowed by a line drawn between those on the adjacent structures to the north and south. A greater ocean setback may be required for geologic reasons and if specified in the Local Coastal Program.

Additionally, Policy 7-12 of the Mello II LUP states:

Seaward of Ocean Street

New development on the seaward side of Ocean Street shall observe at a minimum, an ocean setback based on a "stringline" method of measurement. No enclosed portions of a structure shall be permitted further seaward than allowed by a line drawn between the adjacent structure to the north and south; no decks or other appurtenances shall be permitted further seaward than those allowed by a line drawn between those on the adjacent structures to the north and south. The policy shall be used on single family, "infill" parcels, and a greater ocean setback may be required for geologic reasons.

The proposed project is new development on the seaward side of Ocean Street. The certified LCP requires that no enclosed portions of a structure shall be permitted further seaward than allowed by a line drawn between the adjacent structure to the north and south. Consistency with the stringline assures, among other things, that new development will not adversely impact public views. The City found the project adheres to all coastal "stringline" setback requirements for the placement of structures, decks, pools and spas and sea wall. However, the appellants contend that as approved, the project is inconsistent with the LCP requirement that "...no decks or other appurtenances shall be permitted further seaward than those allowed by a line drawn between those on the adjacent structures to the north and south"as the deck improvements extend approximately 10 feet further seaward on the subject lot than similar improvements on the adjacent lot to the north (i.e., a retaining wall was used for the stringline rather than a deck) (Exhibit 3). Therefore, the appellants have raised a substantial issue regarding the conformity of the development with the policies of the certified LCP.

3. <u>Landform Alteration/Coastal Bluff Preservation</u>. The Mello II LUP contains policies that address bluff preservation. Policy 4-1 provides:

(d) <u>Undevelopable Shoreline Features</u>

No development shall be permitted on any sand or rock beach or on the face of any ocean bluff, with the exception of accessways to provide public beach access and of limited public recreation facilities.

Section 21.204.050 of the Coastal Shoreline Development Overlay Zone provides:

[...]

- a. Grading and Excavation Grading and excavation shall be the minimum necessary to complete the proposed development consistent with the provisions of this zone and the following requirements:
 [...]
 - 2) No excavation, grading or deposit of natural materials shall be permitted on the beach or the face of the bluff except to the extent necessary to accomplish construction pursuant to this section.

This shoreline overlay is intended to provide land use regulations along the Carlsbad shoreline including beaches, bluffs and the land area immediately landward. The purpose of the overlay zone is to ensure that the public's interest in maintaining the shoreline as a unique recreational and scenic resource is adequately protected. Additionally, the overlay ensures public safety and public access will be maintained and promotes avoidance of the adverse geologic and economic effects of bluff erosion.

The appellants contend that the City's approval of several of the proposed accessory improvements on the subject site is inconsistent with the certified LCP as it pertains to

landform alteration/coastal bluff preservation. The Commission has interpreted the above cited LCP policies in past permit decisions on Ocean Avenue and other blufftop lots within the City to mean that although accessory improvements are allowed seaward of the home, they must be within the stringline and at-grade (i.e., no substantial foundations that require grading) so that grading and alteration of natural landforms is minimized (ref. CDP Nos. 6-92-100/Fulton; 6-92-252/Meiberger; 6-92-232/Weldon and 6-93-006/Gilstrap). In this case, the project was approved with a swimming pool and other accessory improvements whose installation requires substantial grading and landform alteration seaward of the home. In fact, grading and alteration of the entire sloping portion of the lot was approved. Additionally, fill was also approved as backfill behind the seawall which constitutes grading on the bluff seaward of the home. Therefore, the appellants have raised a substantial issue regarding the conformity of the development with the policies of the certified LCP.

4. <u>Shoreline Development/Hazards</u>. The appellants contend that the City's approval of the proposed new single-family residence on the subject site is inconsistent with the City's certified LCP as it pertains to shoreline development/hazards. Section 21.204.110 4b of the Coastal Shoreline Development Overlay zone states.

Revetments, breakwaters, groins, harbor channels, seawalls, cliff retaining walls, and other such construction that alters natural shoreline processes shall be permitted when required to serve coastal-dependent uses or to protect existing structures or public beaches in danger from erosion, and when designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts on local shoreline sand supply.

The wave action study found the existing timber bulkhead was in disrepair and ineffective, resulting in the site and adjacent properties experiencing erosion from wave action. The report recommends its replacement with the proposed vertical seawall. However, the appellants allege that while the LCP allows shoreline protection to protect existing development and coastal-dependent uses, it does not permit seawalls to protect "new development" such as proposed in the subject project. The City failed to require an alternatives analysis regarding the feasibility of siting the proposed development so as to not require the proposed shoreline protection (suggesting an appropriate setback for the new home such that shore protection is not needed). The wave action study did not address erosion, sea level rise, or any factors that could cause long-term change at the site and how such changes could affect the 75-year economic life of the project. Additionally, the City did not address the fact that the seawall is not at toe of bluff, but out on the beach. The City did not address the siting of the seawall. According to the cross section in the June 2003 geotechnical report, the existing and proposed shoreline protective device is on the beach approximately 28-feet seaward of the toe of the bluff. Therefore, the appellants have raised a substantial issue regarding the conformity of the development with the policies of the certified LCP.

5. <u>Public Access</u>. The public access and recreation policies of the Coastal Act are applicable because the proposed development is located between the sea and the first public road. Section 30604(c) requires that a specific access finding be made. In

addition, many policies of the Coastal Act address the provision, protection and enhancement of public access to and along the shoreline, in particular, Sections 30210, 30211, 30212 and 30223. These policies address maintaining the public's ability to reach and enjoy the water, preventing overcrowding by providing adequate recreational area, and protecting suitable upland recreational sites.

Section 30210 of the Coastal Act states:

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

Section 30211

Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.

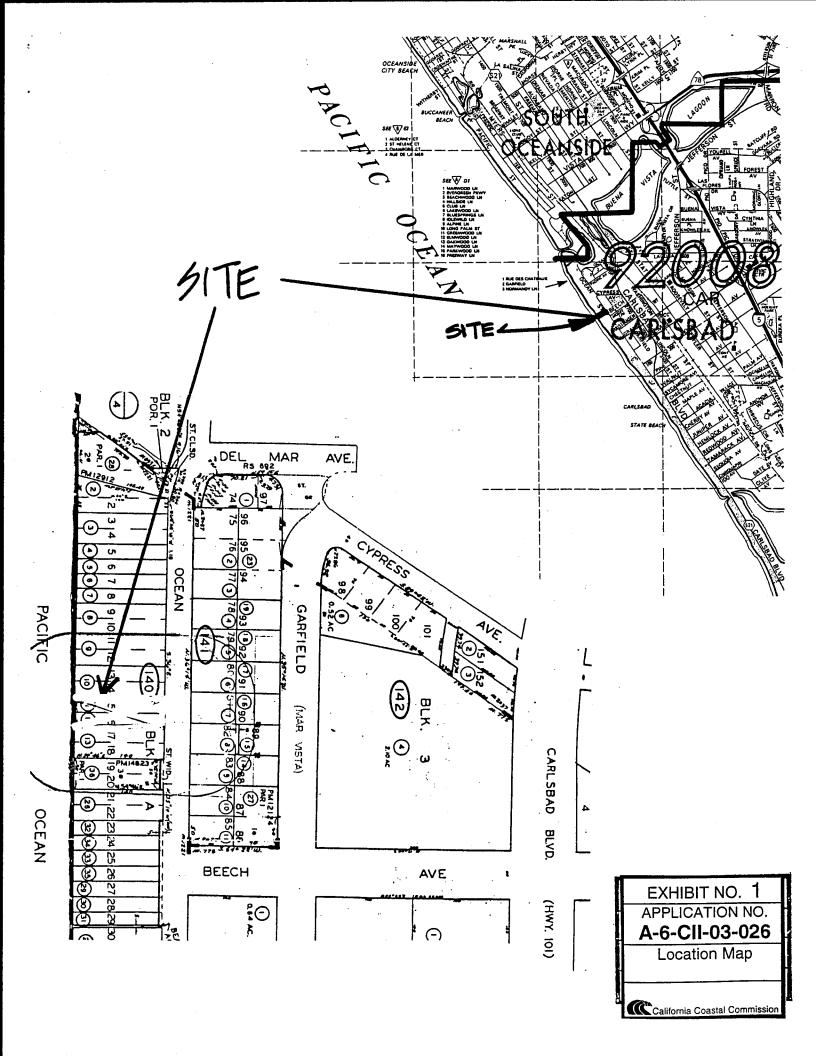
Additionally, Section 21.204.070(A)1 of the Coastal Shoreline Development Overlay requires that "Development shall be sited and designed in a manner which does not interfere or diminish the potential public rights based on historic public use...." The LCP requires that a seawall's effect on public access be evaluated. The subject area is a heavily used beach, including the sandy beach portion of the subject property. The appellants allege the City failed to do an alternatives analysis regarding the feasibility of siting the proposed development so as to not require a seawall. Another issue raised by the appellants is that the City failed to do an alternatives analysis regarding siting the seawall further inland. Failure to require such analyses is important because seawalls displace area that may provide public use of the beach, interrupt sand supply that nourishes beaches and erodes beaches through reflection of wave energy. Thus, the appellants state the City failed to evaluate the seawall's effect on public access and for that reason the proposed project is inconsistent with the above policy of the Carlsbad LCP and policies of the Coastal Act.

- 6. <u>Public Views</u>. The appellants contend that the City's approval of the proposed new single-family residence on the subject site is inconsistent with the City's certified LCP as it pertains to visual resources. LCP Section 21.204.100 (B & C) of the Coastal Shoreline Development Overlay Zone states:
 - B. Appearance Buildings and structures will be so located on the site as to create a generally attractive appearance and be agreeably related to surrounding development and the natural environment.

C. Ocean Views – Buildings, structures, and landscaping will be so located as to preserve the degree feasible any ocean views as may be visible from the nearest public street.

Ocean views are available from Ocean Avenue to the many visitors that use this area. However, many residences have built fences, doors and other structures in the side yards which block views to the ocean. In this case, the appellants state that while the project maintains 5-foot side yard setbacks, the City's approval did not assure that development would be prohibited (structures and landscaping) in the side yards that could block views of the ocean from Ocean Street. Therefore, the appellants have raised a substantial issue regarding the conformity of the development with the policies of the certified LCP.

For the reasons above, the Commission finds the appellants have raised a substantial issue regarding the conformity of the development with the policies of the certified LCP. (G:\San Diego\Reports\Appeals\2003\A-6-CII-03-26kikodsrdoc)



CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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APPEAL FROM COASTAL PERMIT DECISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Please Review Attached Appeal Information Sheet Prior To Completing This Form.

SECTION I	. Appellant(s)

Name:

Sara Wan

Mailing Address:

22350 Carbon Mesa Road

Malibu, CA 90265

Phone Number:

310) 456-6605

SECTION II. Decision Being Appealed

- 1. Name of local/port government: Carlsbad
- 2. Brief description of development being appealed: Construction of a single-family residence on a blufftop lot.
- 3. Development's location (street address, assessor's parcel no., cross street, etc.) 2649 Ocean Street, Carlsbad
- 4. Description of decision being appealed:

a. Approval; no special conditions:

b. Approval with special conditions:

c. Denial:

Note: For jurisdictions with a total LCP, denial decisions by a local government cannot be appealed unless the development is a major energy or public works project. Denial decisions by port governments are not appealable.

TO BE COMPLETED BY COMMISSION:

APPEAL NO: A-6-CII-03-26

DATE FILED: 2/27/03

DISTRICT: San Diego

APPLICATION NO.

A-6-CII-03-026
Commissioner

Appeal



APPEAL FROM COASTAL PERMIT DECISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT Page 2 $\,$

5. I	5. Decision being appealed was made by (check one):					
a		Planning Director/2 Administrator	Zoning	c. 🛚	Planning Commission	
b		City Council/Board Supervisors	l of	d. 🗌	Other	
Date of lo	ocal go	overnment's decision	on: <u>2/5/2003</u>			
Local gov	vernm	ent's file number (i	f any): <u>CDP #02-</u>	<u>28</u>		
SECTION	N III.	Identification of O	ther Interested Pe	<u>rsons</u>		
Give the necessary		and addresses of t	he following parti	ies. (Us	se additional paper as	
Name and	d mail	ing address of pern	nit applicant:			
Fred Kike 3561 Don Carlsbad,	nna Dr					
<u> </u>		·				
writing) a	at the c		aring(s). Include		tified (either verbally or in arties which you know to be	
_						
SECTION	N IV.	Reasons Supportin	g This Appeal			

Note: Appeals of local government coastal permit decisions are limited by a variety of factors and requirements of the Coastal Act. Please review the appeal information sheet for assistance in completing this section, which continues on the next page.

APPEAL FROM COASTAL PERMIT DECISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT Page 3

State briefly your reasons for this appeal. Include a summary description of Local Coastal Program, Land Use Plan, or Port Master Plan policies and requirements in which you believe the project is inconsistent and the reasons the decision warrants a new hearing. (Use additional paper as necessary.)

SEE Exhibit A dated February 27, 2003

Note: The above description need not be a complete or exhaustive statement of your reasons of appeal; however, there must be sufficient discussion for staff to determine that the appeal is allowed by law. The appellant, subsequent to filing the appeal, may submit additional information to the staff and/or Commission to support the appeal request.

(Document2)

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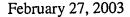




EXHIBIT "A" --Kiko Appeal

The proposal includes demolition of an existing single-family dwelling and construction of a two-story, 30-foot high, 6,358 sq.ft. single-family dwelling and attached 700-sq.ft garage/storage on a 7,000-sq.ft oceanfronting and blufftop site within the Mello II plan area of the Carlsbad Local Coastal Program segment. Also proposed are appurtenant improvements (concrete decks, spa, planters and stairs, pool) seaward of the residence and a vertical seawall. The eastern third of the lot is relatively flat, with bluff slopes of 25% or greater towards the middle of the lot, then leveling out as it reaches the beach. An existing wooden bulkhead (previously described as a "sandbox") is located at the base of the bluff fronting most of the property. Approximately 1,278 cubic yards of cut grading is proposed to prepare the site for the improvements. The standard of review for this project is the Mello II LCP which includes the Coastal Shoreline Development Overlay Zone.

The Coastal Shoreline Development Overlay Zone ("Developments or Uses not on the Beach subject to Coastal Shoreline Development Permit") provides:

Uses permitted by the underlying zone map may be permitted on non-beach areas subject to granting of a Coastal Development permit for coastal shoreline development issued pursuant to the procedures of Chapter 21.201 of this title, unless specifically prohibited by policies or other applicable ordinances in the approved Carlsbad Local Coastal Program. Non-beach areas are defined as areas at elevations of 10 feet or more above mean sea level. Permitted uses are subject to the following criteria:

Grading and Excavation - Grading and excavation shall be the minimum necessary (emphasis added) to complete the proposed development consistent with the provisions of this zone and the following requirements:

- 1). Building sites shall be graded to direct surface water away from the top of the bluff, or alternatively, drainage shall be handled in a manner satisfactory to the City which will prevent damage to the bluff by surface and percolating water.
- 2.) No excavation, grading or deposit of natural materials shall be permitted on the beach or the face of the bluff except to the extent necessary to accomplish construction pursuant to this section.

New development fronting the ocean shall observe at a minimum, an ocean setback based on a "stringline" method of measurement. No enclosed portions of a structure shall be permitted further seaward than allowed by a line drawn between the adjacent structure to the north and south; no decks or other appurtenances shall be permitted further seaward than those allowed by a line drawn between those on the adjacent structures to the north and south". A greater

2/27/2003 KIKO Appeal Page 2

ocean setback may be required for geologic reasons and if specified in the Local Coastal Program.

The City found that the project was not grading on the bluff face for accessory improvements. The bluff edge was established at +18 MSL, which is approximately 8 feet above the beach level and a lower elevation than has historically been considered the bluff edge. Additionally, fill was also approved as backfill behind the seawall which would constitute grading on the bluff face. Plan cross-sections indicate the bluff edge would be more appropriately established at +30 MSL. In any event, grading and alteration of the entire sloping portion of the lot was approved. The Commission has interpreted the above LCP provisions to mean that only at-grade structures are permitted on a bluff face which are consistent with the appropriate stringline and do not require grading. The Commission has found that "the minimum necessary" for new development on the bluff face means at-grade and ephemeral without requiring excavation which makes such improvements more "permanent". The project is proposing permanent appurtenant structures on the bluff face which will require excavation and, as such, appear inconsistent with the above provisions of the certified LCP.

The overlay also requires that new development be sited appropriately with respect to hazards. The wave action study found the existing timber bulkhead was in disrepair and ineffective, resulting in the site and adjacent properties experiencing erosion from wave action. The report recommends its replacement with the proposed vertical seawall. However, while the LCP allows shoreline protection to protect existing development, new development should not be dependent on a seawall. The LCP requires that such protection's effect on public access be evaluated. The overlay requires that "development shall be sited and designed in a manner which does not interfere or diminish the potential public rights based on historic public use" (Section 21.204.070(A)1). The study failed to address the associated impacts to public access from the seawall. This is a heavily used beach, including the sandy beach portion of the subject property. The City failed to do an alternatives analysis regarding the feasibility of siting the proposed development so as to not require the proposed shoreline protection (suggesting an appropriate setback for the new home such that shore protection is not needed).

The City also found that the project is consistent with the stringline provisions of the LCP. However, it appears that proposed patio improvements extend approximately 10 feet further seaward than similar improvements on the adjacent lot to the north, inconsistent with LCP policies.

The City did not address preserving public views in perpetuity. Section 21.204.100(c) of the overlay states "Ocean Views - Buildings, structures, and landscaping will be so located as to preserve to the degree feasible any ocean views as may be visible from the nearest public street." While the City found that the project maintains 5-foot side yard setbacks from Ocean Street, it did not assure their preservation. As approved, development could be placed in the side yards that would block views of the ocean, inconsistent with LCP policies.

