STATE OF CALIFORNIA -- THE RESOURCES AGENCY

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION SOUTH CENTRAL COAST AREA OUTH CALIFORNIA ST., SUITE 200 TURA, CA 93001 (805) 585 - 1800 RECORD PACKET COPY

Filed:8/16/02180th Day:2/12/03Staff:J JohnsonStaff Report:1/17/03Hearing Date:2/6/03Commission Action:



STAFF REPORT: REGULAR CALENDAR

APPLICATION NO.: 4-02-004

APPLICANT: Steve Natale

- AGENT: Charlotte Hassett
- **PROJECT LOCATION:** 6242 DeButts Terrace and 27767 Pacific Coast Highway, City of Malibu

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Proposal to remediate a landslide along property line by grading about 2,000 cubic yards of material to stabilize a hillside and landscaping.

Lot areas	
De Butts Parcel	2.98 acres
Pacific Coast Hwy Parcel	3.99 acres
Landscape coverage	7,616 sq. ft.

LOCAL APPROVALS RECEIVED: City of Malibu Building Department Grading Permit Nos. 02-0543 and 02-0544, approved 4/15/02; City of Malibu Geology and Geotechnical Engineering Review Sheet, dated 1/16/02 and Approved 1/24/02; City of Malibu Planning Department, Approval in Concept, 12/21/01; City of Malibu Environmental and Building Safety Department, Approval in Concept, 1/9/02.

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS: Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering Report and Addendum No. 1 Geotechnical Engineering Report dated February 26, 2001 and July 19, 2001 respectively by Earth Systems Southern California; Certified Malibu Local Coastal Program; Coastal Development Emergency Permit No. 4-02-004-G (Natale); Coastal Development Permit Application No. 4-02-178 (JC Beach LLC).

Summary of Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends *approval* of the proposed project with **four special conditions** addressing (1) geologic and engineering recommendations, (2) assumption of risk, and (3) a generic deed restriction to bring the project into conformance with the City of Malibu Local Coastal Program. This request is a follow up application for a regular coastal permit to an emergency coastal permit authorizing this project on January 17, 2002.

Staff Note

Due to Permit Streamlining Act Requirements the Commission must act on this permit application at the February 4 – 7, 2003 Commission meeting.

I. Staff Recommendation

MOTION: I move that the Commission approve Coastal Development Permit No. 4-02-004 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 Malibu Local Coastal Program. 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 that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

II. Standard Conditions

- 1. Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment. The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
- 2. Expiration. If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date on which the Commission voted on the application. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
- 3. Interpretation. Any questions of intent or interpretation of any term or condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
- 4. Assignment. 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. Terms and Conditions Run with the Land. 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 Geologic and Engineering Consultants' Recommendations

All recommendations contained in the Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering Report and Addendum No. 1 Geotechnical Engineering Report dated February 26, 2001 and July 19, 2001

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respectively by Earth Systems Southern California shall be incorporated into all final design and construction including *removals, key dimensions, keyway gravel fill, backdrains, and compacted fill.* Final plans must be reviewed and approved by the project's consulting geotechnical engineer and geologist. *Prior to issuance of the coastal development permit,* the applicant shall submit, for review and approval by the Executive Director, two sets of plans with evidence of the consultant's review and approval of all project plans.

The final plans approved by the consultants shall be in substantial conformance with the plans approved by the Commission relative to construction, grading, sewage disposal and drainage. Any substantial changes in the proposed development approved by the Commission which may be required by the consultants shall require an amendment to the permit or a new coastal permit.

2. Assumption of Risk, Waiver of Liability and Indemnity

By acceptance of this permit, the applicant acknowledges and agrees (i) that the site may be subject to hazards from landslides, ground movement, or wildfire; (ii) to assume the risks to the applicant 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.

3. Generic Deed Restriction

Prior to the Issuance of the Coastal Development Permit, the applicant shall submit to the Executive Director for review and approval documentation demonstrating that the applicant has executed and recorded against the parcel(s) governed by this permit a deed restriction, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director: (1) indicating that, pursuant to this permit, the California Coastal Commission has authorized development on the subject property, subject to terms and conditions that restrict the use and enjoyment of that property; and (2) imposing the Special Conditions of this permit as covenants, conditions and restrictions on the use and enjoyment of the Property. The deed restriction shall include a legal description of the entire parcel or parcels governed by this permit. The deed restriction shall also indicate that, in the event of an extinguishment or termination of the deed restriction for any reason, the terms and conditions of this permit shall continue to restrict the use and enjoyment of the subject property so long as either this permit or the development it authorizes, or any part, modification, or amendment thereof, remains in existence on or with respect to the subject property.

IV. Findings and Declarations

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

A. Project Description and Background

The applicant is proposing to remediate a landslide along the property line of two parcels by grading about 2,000 cubic yards of material to stabilize a hillside and landscaping. The applicant has completed this project in early 2002 as a result of Coastal Emergency Permit No. 4-02-004-G. The grading consisted of 120 cubic yards of cut and 1,880 cubic yards of fill with 1,760 cubic yards of imported fill

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material necessary to remediate and stabilize the landslide area. The landslide was threatening an existing residence, access driveway and pool area (Exhibits 3 and 4). The landslide encompasses an area of about 7, 616 sq. ft.

The project site is located on two adjoining parcels along a shared property boundary inland of Pacific Coast Highway along De Butts Terrace and Winding Way about a half mile north of Pacific Coast Highway (Exhibit 1). The applicants' parcel is a 2.98 acre parcel that includes a portion of a drainage channel and the slopes located on either side of the drainage channel. The second 3.99 acre parcel is located immediately to the south along De Butts Terrace and Winding Way with the address of 27767 Pacific Coast Highway (Exhibit 2). The second parcel is owned by Ms. Gini Barrett who has authorized the applicant to obtain a coastal permit for the portion of the project located on her property. The project site is not visible from any public roads or trails and does not include any designated or identified environmentally sensitive habitat.

On September 13, 2002, the Commission adopted the Malibu Local Coastal Program (LCP). The subject permit application was filed prior to the date the LCP was adopted and therefore remains under the jurisdiction of the Commission. Prior to the adoption of the LCP the standard of review for permit applications in Malibu were the chapter three policies Coastal Act. After the adoption of the LCP the standard of review for permit applications is the LCP.

B. Hazards

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

The Malibu Local Coastal Program (LCP) contains the following development policies related to hazards and development that are applicable to the proposed development:

Section 30253 of the Coastal Act, which is incorporated as part of the Malibu LCP, 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.

In addition, the following LCP policies are applicable in this case:

3.1 New development that requires a grading permit or Local SWPPP shall include landscaping and re-vegetation of graded or disturbed areas, consistent with Policy 3.50. Any landscaping that is required to control erosion shall use native or drought-tolerant non-invasive plants to minimize the need for fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides, and excessive irrigation. Where irrigation is necessary, efficient irrigation practices shall be required.

- 4.2. All new development shall be sized, designed and sited to minimize risks to life and property from geologic, flood, and fire hazard.
- 4.4. On ancient landslides, unstable slopes and other geologic hazard areas, new development shall only be permitted where an adequate factor of safety can be provided, consistent with the applicable provisions of Chapter 9 of the certified Local Implementation Plan.
- 4.5. Applications for new development, where applicable, shall include a geologic/soils/geotechnical study that identifies any geologic hazards affecting the proposed project site, any necessary mitigation measures, and contains a statement that the project site is suitable for the proposed development and that the development will be safe from geologic hazard. Such reports shall be signed by a licensed Certified Engineering Geologist (CEG) or Geotechnical Engineer (GE) and subject to review and approval by the City Geologist.
- 4.10. New development shall provide adequate drainage and erosion control facilities that convey site drainage in a non-erosive manner in order to minimize hazards resulting from increased runoff, erosion and other hydrologic impacts to streams.
- 1.45 New development shall minimize risks to life and property from fire hazard through:
 - Assessing site-specific characteristics such as topography, slope, vegetation type, wind patterns etc.;
 - Siting and designing development to avoid hazardous locations;
 - Incorporation of fuel modification and brush clearance techniques in accordance with applicable fire safety requirements and carried out in a manner which reduces impacts to environmentally sensitive habitat to the maximum feasible extent;
 - Use of appropriate building materials and design features to insure the minimum amount of required fuel modification;
 - Use of fire-retardant, native plant species in landscaping.
- 6.29 Cut and fill slopes and other areas disturbed by construction activities shall be landscaped or revegetated at the completion of grading. Landscape plans shall provide that:
 - Plantings shall be of native, drought-tolerant plant species, and blend with the existing natural vegetation and natural habitats on the site, except as noted below.
 - Invasive plant species that tend to supplant native species and natural habitats shall be prohibited.
 - Non-invasive ornamental plants and lawn may be permitted in combination with native, drought-tolerant species within the irrigated zone(s) required for fuel modification nearest approved residential structures.
 - Lawn shall not be located on any geologically sensitive area such as coastal blufftop.
 - Landscaping or revegetation shall provide 90 percent coverage within five years. Landscaping or revegetation that is located within any required fuel modification thinning zone (Zone C, if required by the Los Angeles County Fire Department) shall provide 60 percent coverage within five years.

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The applicant proposes to remediate a landslide along the property line of two parcels by grading about 2,000 cubic yards of material to stabilize a hillside and landscaping. The applicant has completed this project in early 2002 as a result of Coastal Emergency Permit No. 4-02-004-G. The grading consisted of 120 cubic yards of cut and 1,880 cubic yards of fill with 1,760 cubic yards of imported fill material necessary to remediate and stabilize the landslide area. The landslide was threatening an existing residence, access driveway and pool area (Exhibits 3 and 4). The landslide encompasses an area of about 7, 616 sq. ft.

The project site is located on two adjoining parcels along a shared property boundary inland of Pacific Coast Highway along De Butts Terrace and Winding Way about a half mile north of Pacific Coast Highway (Exhibit 1). The property slopes gently from about 270 feet to 220 feet above sea level into a drainage. The lower portion of this slope where the landslide occurred is as steep a 1.8 : 1. The applicants' parcel is a 2.98 acre parcel that includes a portion of a drainage channel and the slopes located on either side of the drainage channel. Single family residential structures are present on the upper west portions of both properties.

The slopes along a drainage area are subject to erosion along the base of the drainage channel. Further, due to geologic structure and soil composition, these slopes are also susceptible to surficial failure, especially with excessive water infiltration. According to the applicant's geology reports, a small slide (slope failure) is located on a portion of a natural descending slope straddling the property line between two properties that occurred in early March 2000. The slope failure is located on the lower western slope where a toe bulge approximately 60 feet wide by 120 feet long by four to six feet deep is located. This site does not include any artificial fill according to the subsurface explorations completed by the project engineer and geotechnical engineer with Earth Systems Southern California.

The Malibu LCP requires that new development be sited and designed to minimize risks to life and property from geologic, flood, and fire hazard. In addition, the LCP requires a geologic/soils/geotechnical study that identifies any geologic hazards affecting the proposed project site, any necessary mitigation measures, and contains a statement that the project site is suitable for the proposed development, in this case the slope remediation, and that the surrounding properties will be safe from geologic hazard. The Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering Report, for the subject site, by Earth Systems Southern California dated February 26, 2001 states:

Based on the findings summarized in this addendum report and the referenced Geotechnical report, and provided the recommendations in these reports are incorporated into the site development, it is ESSC's opinion that re-construction of the failed portion of the described slope will not be subject to a geologic hazard from landslides, slippage, or settlement beyond the limits discussed in the referenced Geotechnical Report. It is also ESSC's opinion that the proposed remedial slope repair will not adversely affect the geologic stability of the site or adjacent properties provided the recommendations of this report are followed. Test findings and statements of professional opinions do not constitute a guarantee or warranty, expressed or implied.

As such, the Commission notes that the proposed slide remediation project will serve to ensure general geologic and structural integrity on site. However, the Commission also notes that the submitted Geotechnical Engineering Report, for the subject site, by Earth Systems Southern California includes a number of recommendations to ensure the geologic stability and geotechnical safety of the site. To ensure that the recommendations of the geologic and geotechnical engineering consultants are incorporated into all new development, Special Condition No. One (1) requires the applicant to submit project plans certified by the consulting engineer and geotechnical engineer as conforming to all geologic and

geotechnical recommendations, as well as any new or additional recommendations by the consulting geologist and geotechnical engineer to ensure structural and site stability. The final plans approved by the consultants shall be in substantial conformance with the plans approved by the Commission relative to slope repair, excavation safety, slope protection and maintenance, and drainage. Any substantial changes to the proposed development approved by the Commission which may be recommended by the consultants shall require an amendment to the permit or a new coastal permit. The applicant has provide a set of plans confirming that this special condition has been met.

Although the geology information noted above provides that the project site is considered stable from a geologic standpoint after the slide remediation is completed, the property still has a risk of instability as noted by the applicant's engineering geologist's comments above that their "professional opinions do not constitute a guarantee or warranty, expressed or implied". The Coastal Act requires that new development minimize the risk to life and property in areas of high geologic and fire hazard. The Coastal Act also recognizes that new development may involve the taking of some risk and that Coastal Act policies require the Commission to establish the appropriate degree of risk acceptable for the proposed development and to establish who should assume the risk. When development in areas of identified hazards is proposed, the Commission considers the hazard associated with the project site and the potential cost to the public, as well as the individual's right to use his property. Due to the fact that the proposed project is located in an area subject to an extraordinary potential for damage or destruction from landslides, ground movement, and wildfire, the Commission can only approve the project if the applicant assumes the liability from these associated risks. Through the Assumption of Risk, Waiver of Liability and Indemnity Special Condition, the applicant acknowledges and appreciates the nature of the landslide, ground movement, and wildfire hazard which exist on the site and which may affect the safety of the proposed development, as incorporated by Special Condition Number Two.

In addition, the Commission notes vegetation in the coastal areas of the Santa Monica Mountains consists mostly of coastal sage scrub and chaparral. Many plant species common to these communities produce and store terpenes, which are highly flammable substances (Mooney in Barbour, <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 wild fires. The typical warm, dry summer conditions of the Mediterranean climate combine with the natural characteristics of the native vegetation to pose a risk of wild fire damage to development that cannot be completely avoided or mitigated. Due to the fact that the proposed project is located in an area subject to an extraordinary potential for damage or destruction from wild fire, the Commission can only approve the project if the applicants assumes the liability from these associated risks. Through the Wildfire Waiver of Liability Special Condition, the applicant acknowledges and appreciates the nature of the fire hazard which exists on the site and which may affect the safety of the proposed development, as incorporated by **Special Condition No. Two**.

The applicant's geotechnical engineer consultant has recommended that a drainage plan be prepared to dewater the remediated slope, collect the water and distributed it in a non-erosive manner. In addition, the Malibu LCP policy 4.10 requires that "new development shall provide adequate drainage and erosion control facilities that convey site drainage in a non-erosive manner in order to minimize hazards resulting from increased runoff, erosion and other hydrologic impacts to streams". The applicant has completed this plan and has had it approved by the City of Malibu and the consulting geotechnical engineer.

The project site where the landslide slope is located is surrounded by mature landscaping as a result of residential development which reduces erosion on site. The applicant has provided a landscape and erosion control plan that include numerous native ground cover plants with burlap cover to reduce erosion and a drainage system to convey water in the area of the remediated landslide. The applicant has

implemented the landscape and erosion control plan. Therefore, a landscape and erosion control condition is not necessary in this case.

Finally, **Special Condition No. Three** requires the applicant to record a deed restriction that imposes the terms and conditions of this permit as restrictions on use and enjoyment of the property and provides any prospective purchaser of the site with recorded notice that the restrictions are imposed on the subject property.

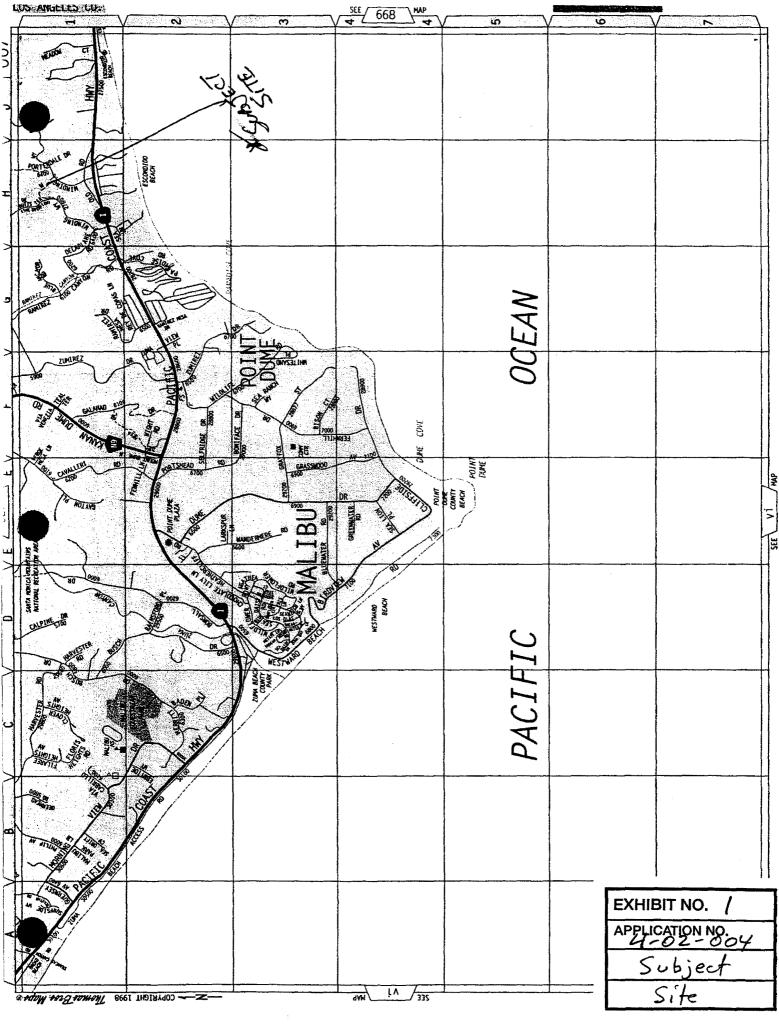
Therefore, for the reasons discussed above, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with the applicable policies of the Malibu LCP.

C. California Environmental Quality Act

Section 13096(a) of the Commission's administrative regulations requires Commission approval of a Coastal Development Permit application to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmentally 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 that the activity may have on the environment. The City of Malibu has determined that the proposed project is categorically exempt from CEQA on 12/21/01.

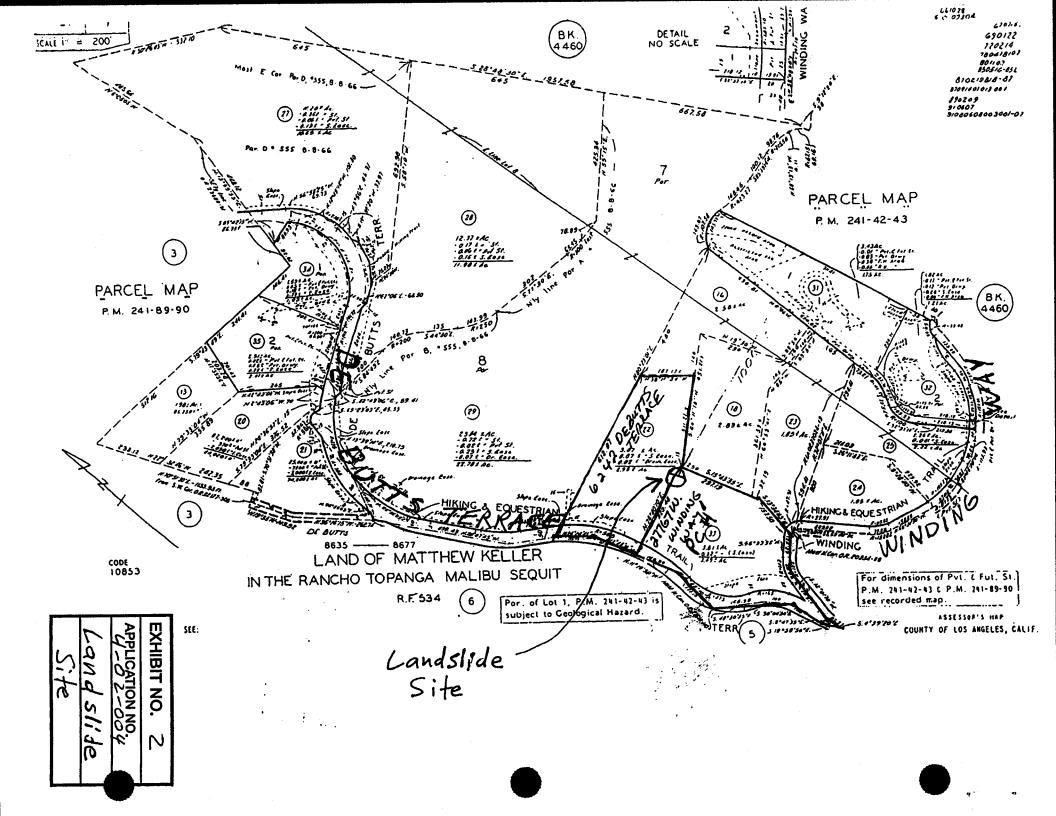
The Commission finds that, the proposed project, as conditioned, will not have any significant adverse effects on the environment, within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970. Therefore, the proposed project, as conditioned, has been adequately mitigated and is determined to be consistent with CEQA and the policies of the Coastal Act.

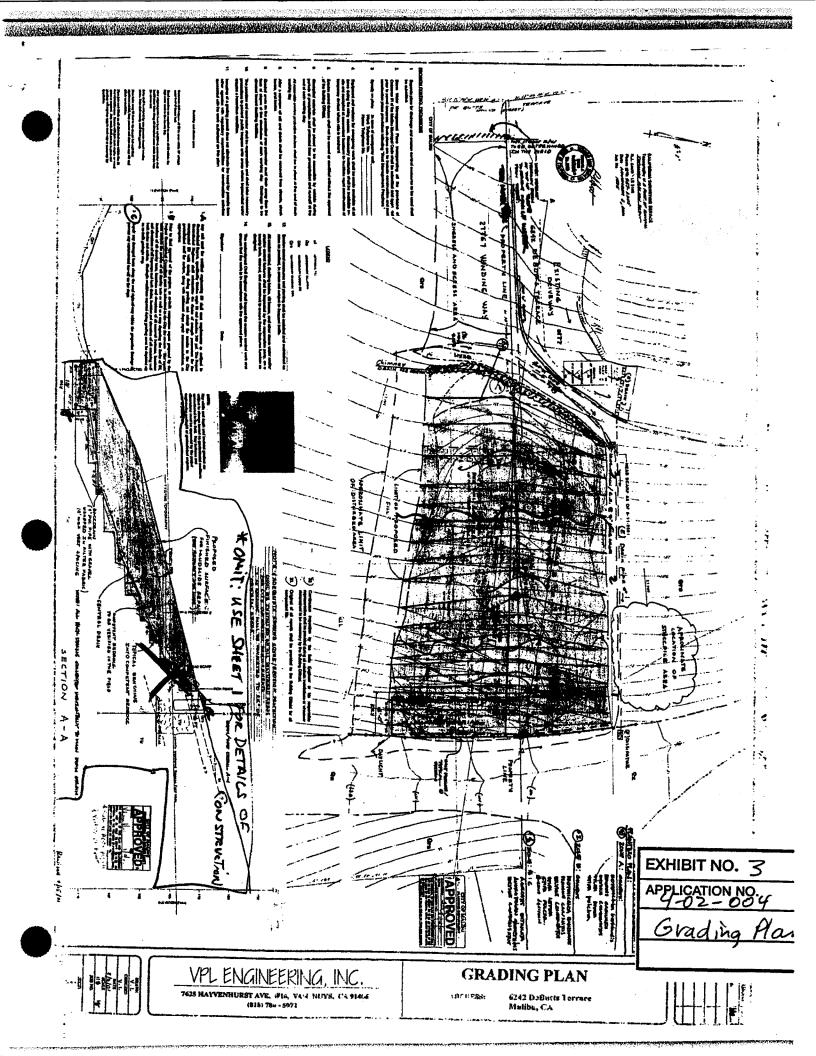
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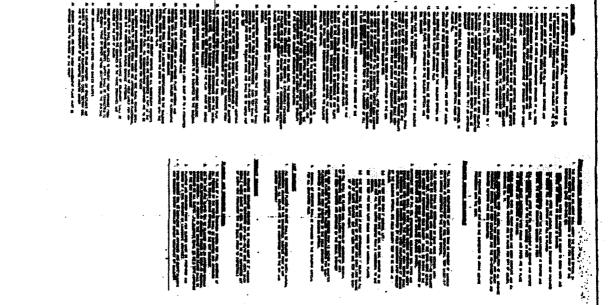
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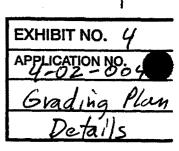
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GRADING PLAN

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