CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

South Coast Area Office 200 Oceangate, Suite 1000 Long Beach, CA 90802-4302 (562) 590-5071

Filed:June 22, 200949th Day:August 10, 2009180th Day:December 19, 2009Staff:Liliana Roman-LBStaff Report:August 19, 2009Hearing Date:September 9, 2009Commission Action:

STAFF REPORT: CONSENT CALENDAR

APPLICATION NUMBER: 5-09-105

- APPLICANT: Donald Norberg
- AGENT: Felix Lim
- **PROJECT LOCATION:** 86 South La Senda, City of Laguna Beach (Orange County)

DESCRIPTION: Interior remodel of an existing single-story single-family residence and addition of a new 800 sq. ft. lower level within the footprint of the existing residence consisting of 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, family room and storage room; addition of a lower level paved patio with outdoor spa and shower, outdoor half spiral stair to access new lower level; including 307 cu. yds. cut/fill grading for the semisubterranean addition.

> Lot Area Building Coverage Pavement Coverage Landscape Coverage Unimproved Area Parking Spaces Zoning Planning Designation Ht above final grade

11,620 square feet 1,996 square feet 1,863 square feet 1,498 square feet 6,263 square feet 2 Three Arch Bay Low Density Residential 21.6 feet

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The applicant is proposing the remodel of an existing single level single-family residence by the addition of a new semi-subterranean level. The proposed development is located on a bluff top site, the toe of which is subject to wave attack. The geotechnical study of the site deems the site is grossly stable under current and proposed conditions. The primary issue with the proposed development is conformance with bluff top setbacks. No landscaping or drainage improvements are proposed as part of this remodel project. Therefore a landscaping condition is not applied.

Commission staff is recommending <u>APPROVAL</u> of the proposed project with Six (6) Special Conditions regarding: 1) assumption of risk; 2) no future blufftop or shoreline protective devices; 3) future development; 4) submittal of revised final plans; 5) conformance with geotechnical recommendations; and 6) a deed restriction against the property, referencing all of the Special Conditions contained in this staff report.

Item W6c

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SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS: Updated Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation For Foundation Design of Residence Additions, 86 South La Senda, prepared by Geofirm, dated April 22, 2009; City of Laguna Beach certified Local Coastal Program (as guidance only), Coastal Development Permit No. 5-95-047

LOCAL APPROVALS RECEIVED: City of Laguna Beach Approval in Concept, dated 6/03/09.

LIST OF EXHIBITS

- 1. Location Map
- 2. Assessor's Parcel Map
- 3. Project Plans

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution to <u>APPROVE</u> the coastal development permit application:

<u>MOTION</u>: I move that the Commission approve coastal development permit applications included on the consent calendar in accordance with the staff recommendations.

Staff recommends a <u>YES</u> vote. Passage of this motion will result in approval of all permits included on the consent calendar. An affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present is needed to pass the motion.

RESOLUTION:

I. APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

The Commission hereby <u>APPROVES</u> a coastal development permit for the proposed development and adopts the findings set forth below on grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3. Approval of the permit complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

II. STANDARD CONDITIONS:

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.

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- 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. 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 bluff and slope instability, erosion, landslides, waves, and sea level rise; (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.

2. <u>No Future Blufftop or Shoreline Protective Devices</u>

- A. By acceptance of this Permit, the applicants agree, on behalf of themselves and all successors and assigns, that no bluff or shoreline protective device(s) shall ever be constructed to protect the development approved pursuant to Coastal Development Permit No. 5-09-105 including, but not limited to, the residence, garage, foundations, patios, balconies and any other future improvements in the event that the development is threatened with damage or destruction from waves, erosion, storm conditions, bluff retreat, landslides, sea level rise or other natural coastal hazards in the future. By acceptance of this Permit, the applicant/landowner hereby waives, on behalf of itself and all successors and assigns, any rights to construct such devices that may exist under Public Resources Code Section 30235.
- B. By acceptance of this Permit, the applicant/landowner further agrees, on behalf of itself and all successors and assigns, that the landowner(s) shall remove the development authorized by this Permit, including the residence, garage, foundations, patios, balconies and any other future improvements if any

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government agency has ordered that the structures are not to be occupied due to any of the hazards identified above. In the event that portions of the development fall to the beach before they are removed, the landowner shall remove all recoverable debris associated with the development from the beach and ocean and lawfully dispose of the material in an approved disposal site. Such removal shall require a coastal development permit.

C. In the event the edge of the bluff recedes to within five (5) feet of the principal residence but no government agency has ordered that the structures are not to be occupied, a geotechnical investigation shall be prepared by a licensed coastal engineer and geologist retained by the applicants, that addresses whether any portions of the residence are threatened by bluff and slope instability, erosion, landslides or other natural hazards. The report shall identify all those immediate or potential future measures that could stabilize the principal residence without bluff protection, including but not limited to removal or relocation of portions of the residence. The report shall be submitted to the Executive Director and the appropriate local government official. If the geotechnical report concludes that the residence or any portion of the residence is unsafe for occupancy, the permittee shall, within 90 days of submitting the report, apply for a coastal development permit amendment to remedy the hazard which shall include removal of the threatened portion of the structure.

3. <u>Future Development</u>

This permit is only for the development described in coastal development permit 5-09-105. Pursuant to Title 14 California Code of Regulations section 13250(b)(6), the exemptions otherwise provided in Public Resources Code section 30610(b) shall not apply to the development governed by the coastal development permit 5-09-105. Accordingly, any future improvements to the structures authorized by this permit shall require an amendment to permit 5-09-105 from the Commission or shall require an additional coastal development permit from the Commission or from the applicable certified local government.

4. <u>Submittal of Revised Final Plans</u>

- A. **PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT**, the applicant shall submit to the Executive Director for review and written approval, two (2) sets of final building and foundation plans that substantially conform with the plans dated July 9, 2009, but shall be revised to provide a 5 foot setback from the bluff edge identified approximately at the 100 foot contour line for the proposed new ground level concrete patio as shown on Exhibit #4.
- B. The permittee shall undertake the development authorized by the approved plans. Any proposed changes to the approved plans shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the plans shall occur without a Coastal Commission approved amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is legally required.

5. <u>Conformance of Design and Construction Plans to Geotechnical Report</u>

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- A. All final design and construction plans, including grading, foundations, site plans, and elevation plans shall meet or exceed all recommendations and requirements contained in *Updated Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation For Foundation Design of Residence Additions, 86 South La Senda*, prepared by Geofirm, dated April 22, 2009.
- B. **PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT,** the applicant shall submit, for the Executive Director's review and approval, evidence that an appropriately licensed professional has reviewed and approved all final design and construction plans and certified that each of those final plans is consistent with all of the recommendations specified in the above-referenced geologic evaluation approved by the California Coastal Commission for the project site.
- C. The permittees 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 of this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is legally required.

6. <u>Deed Restriction</u>

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicants shall submit to the Executive Director for review and approval documentation demonstrating that the landowners have 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. <u>Project Description and Location</u>

The proposed project is a single family residence interior remodel of the existing upper street level and addition of new 860 sq. ft. lower level (semi-subterranean) consisting of two (2) bedrooms, two (2) baths, family room and storage room; new glass screen on an existing deck, a new lower level patio with outdoor spa and shower, outdoor half spiral stair to access new lower level (see Exhibit #4). The project also includes hardscape improvements (new rear yard ground

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level paved patio, outdoor spa and outdoor shower and repairs to an existing wood raised deck). The addition will not result in an increase in height of the existing residence (12' 3" as measured from centerline of the frontage road). The applicant proposes deepened footing foundation system and two caissons along the bluff facing basement wall. The proposed development includes approximately 295 cubic yards of cut and 12 cubic yards of fill for the proposed basement level of the residence. No new landscaping or additional drainage improvements are proposed as part of the proposed remodel project. Furthermore, the geotechnical report prepared by Geofirm dated April 22, 2009 found no evidence of uncontrolled, concentrated, and erosive runoff onto or from the developed areas of the property that would require drainage improvements.

The subject site is located within the locked gate community of Three Arch Bay in the City of Laguna Beach (see Exhibit #1). The residence is on an oceanfront, blufftop lot. Laguna Beach has a certified Local Coastal Program (LCP) except for the four areas of deferred certification: Irvine Cove, Blue Lagoon, Hobo Canyon, and Three Arch Bay. Certification of the Three Arch Bay area was deferred due to access issues arising from the locked gate nature of the community. The proposed development needs a coastal development permit from the Coastal Commission because it is located in the Three Arch Bay area of deferred certification. Because the site is located within a locked gate community, no public access exists in the immediate vicinity. The nearest public access exists at 1000 Steps County Beach approximately one half mile upcoast of the site.

The subject site is a rectangular shaped oceanfront bluff top lot. The lot slopes gently seaward between the road and the bluff edge, and then slopes to the rocky beach below. The bluff has an overall height of 70+/- feet and consists of a moderately sloping upper terrace slope which has been previously modified with the construction of backyard garden walls with heights ranging from 3 to 5 feet; and a steep, locally vertical, lower sea cliff backed by bedrock material that descends to beach level. The toe of the bluff is subject to marine erosion.

In the project vicinity, the Commission typically imposes either a minimum bluff edge setback of 25 feet from the edge of the bluff for primary structures (e.g. the enclosed living area of residential structures) and minimum 5 foot setback for secondary structures (e.g., patios, decks, garden walls) or requires conformance with the stringline setbacks. Consistently applying an appropriate bluff edge setback provides equitability for developments within the same general area. A stringline is the line formed by connecting the nearest adjacent corners of the adjacent residences. A stringline setback allows an applicant to have a setback that averages the setback of the adjacent neighbors provided it is otherwise consistent with Coastal Act policies. This allows equity among neighbors and recognizes existing patterns of development. The structural stringline setback applies to enclosed structural area and the deck stringline applies to minor development such as patios and decks. These setbacks are deemed acceptable within the Three Arch Bay community based on the relatively stable, underlying bedrock. The intent of the setback is to substantially reduce the likelihood of proposed development becoming threatened given the inherent uncertainty in predicting geologic processes in the future, and to allow for potential changes in bluff erosion rates as a result of rising sea level.

The applicant's site surveyor identified a bluff "crest" generally located along the 72 foot to 80 foot contour elevation (see Exhibit #4) providing the existing residence with a 25 foot setback from the bluff "crest". However, based on the bluff edge definition contained in Section 13577 of the California Code of Regulations which states, in part: "the edge shall be defined as that point

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nearest the cliff beyond which the downward gradient of the land surface increases more or less continuously until it reaches the general gradient of the cliff" staff determines the bluff edge to be along the contour of the existing uppermost rock garden wall at approximately the 103 foot contour line. Although, the existing residence meets the structural stringline setback, the existing residence at approximately 12 feet from the bluff edge and therefore the proposed room additions (entirely within the footprint of the existing residence) also would not comply with the minimum 25 feet from the bluff setback structural setback. However, as the proposed project is a remodel and addition and not a complete demolition and rebuild, at this time there isn't an opportunity to apply the typical minimum 25 feet from edge of bluff setback to the entire development.

Additionally, the Commission typically imposes a setback for hardscape/patio type development. Hardscape/patio type improvements can be moved away from hazards more readily than primary structures. The proposed hardscape development includes a new approximately 36' long by 10' wide on-grade concrete patio with spa and outdoor shower to be constructed directly beneath an existing 27' long by 13' wide (355 sq. ft.) wood balcony deck. The applicant proposes to replace the wood railing on an existing balcony with a steel frame and tempered glass railing, however, no work is proposed to replace other components of the existing balcony deck such as the decking, support poles or foundation requiring substantial demolition of the existing balcony. As proposed, the applicant has included a bird-strike avoidance treatment to the proposed new glass balcony railing.

Based on the results of stability analyses provided by the geotechnical investigation prepared by Geofirm dated April 22, 2009, the site is considered to be grossly stable, wave erosion along the base of the slope and lateral retreat of the bedrock seacliff was considered unlikely over the next 75 years and no faults were located on the property. Therefore, due to the geologic stability present on-site, the Commission finds that a minimal geologic setback is appropriate in this case. Applying a stringline setback would be appropriate for the proposed addition considering that the proposed partial subterranean interior addition is entirely within the footprint of the existing residence; with no new interior living space is proposed seaward of the existing residence footprint. This will result in a 12 foot setback from the bluff edge for the primary structure. Although the proposed ground level patio improvements meet the patio stringline, conformance solely with stringline would result in a zero (0) foot setback from the bluff edge. Although the rate of erosion is minimal at this site, a zero foot setback would not be adequate to accommodate even the minimal erosion rate. In Three Arch Bay, the Commission has found that in some cases a 5-foot bluff edge setback is the minimum necessary for accessory structures (e.g., CDP 5-04-414 [Swartz]): typically a 10-foot bluff edge setback is applied for accessory structures. The proposed ground level patio improvements do not meet the minimum 5-foot bluff edge setback typically applied in this area for secondary structures. Therefore, the Commission imposes Special Condition 4 requiring revision of the final plans to bring all proposed ground level patio improvements into conformance with the five foot bluff setback.

B. <u>Hazards</u>

Development adjacent to the edge of a blufftop is inherently hazardous. Development, which may require a protective device in the future cannot be allowed due to the adverse impacts such

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devices have upon, among other things, public access, visual resources and shoreline processes. To minimize the project's impact on shoreline processes, and to minimize risks to life and property, the development has been conditioned to: require an appropriate set-back from the blufftop; prohibit construction of protective devices (such as blufftop or shoreline protective devices) in the future; and to require that the landowner and any successor-in-interest assume the risk of undertaking the development. Therefore, as conditioned, the Commission finds that the development conforms to the requirements of Sections 30235 and 30253 of the Coastal Act regarding the siting of development in hazardous locations.

C. <u>Community Character/Visual Quality</u>

The development is located within an existing developed area and is compatible with the character and scale of the surrounding area. However, the proposed project raises concerns that future development of the project site potentially may result in a development which is not consistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. To assure that future development is consistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act, the Commission finds that a future improvements special condition be imposed. As conditioned the development conforms with Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act.

D. <u>Public Access</u>

The proposed project is located within an existing locked gate community located between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea. Public access through this community does not currently exist. The proposed development, demolition and construction of a single-family residence on an existing residential lot, will not affect the existing public access conditions. It is the locked gate community, not this home that impedes public access. As conditioned, the proposed development will not have any new adverse impact on public access to the coast or to nearby recreational facilities. Thus, as conditioned, the proposed development conforms with Sections 30210 through 30214, Sections 30220 through 30224, and 30252 of the Coastal Act.

E. <u>Water Quality</u>

The proposed development has a potential for a discharge of polluted runoff from the project site into coastal waters. Due to the potential for increased hazards in blufftop areas, which could be caused by encouraging water infiltration for water quality purposes, maximizing on site retention of drainage is not required. The development, as proposed and as conditioned, incorporates design features to minimize the effect of construction and post-construction activities on the marine environment. These design features include, but are not limited to, the appropriate management of equipment and construction materials and for the use of pre and post-construction best management practices to minimize the project's adverse impact on coastal waters. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed development, as conditioned, conforms with Sections 30230 and 30231 of the Coastal Act regarding the protection of water quality to promote the biological productivity of coastal waters and to protect human health.

F. <u>Deed Restriction</u>

To ensure that any prospective future owners of the property are made aware of the applicability of the conditions of this permit, the Commission imposes one additional condition requiring that the property owner record a deed restriction against the property, referencing all of the above Special Conditions of this permit and imposing them as covenants, conditions and restrictions on

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the use and enjoyment of the Property. Thus, as conditioned, this permit ensures that any prospective future owner will receive actual notice of the restrictions and/or obligations imposed on the use and enjoyment of the land in connection with the authorized development, including the risks of the development and/or hazards to which the site is subject, and the Commission's immunity from liability.

G. Local Coastal Program

Coastal Act section 30604(a) states that, prior to certification of a local coastal program ("LCP"), a coastal development permit can only be issued upon a finding that the proposed development is in conformity with Chapter 3 of the Act and that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare an LCP that is in conformity with Chapter 3.

The City of Laguna Beach Local Coastal Program was certified with suggested modifications, except for the areas of deferred certification, in July 1992. In February 1993 the Commission concurred with the Executive Director's determination that the suggested modification had been properly accepted and the City assumed permit issuing authority at that time.

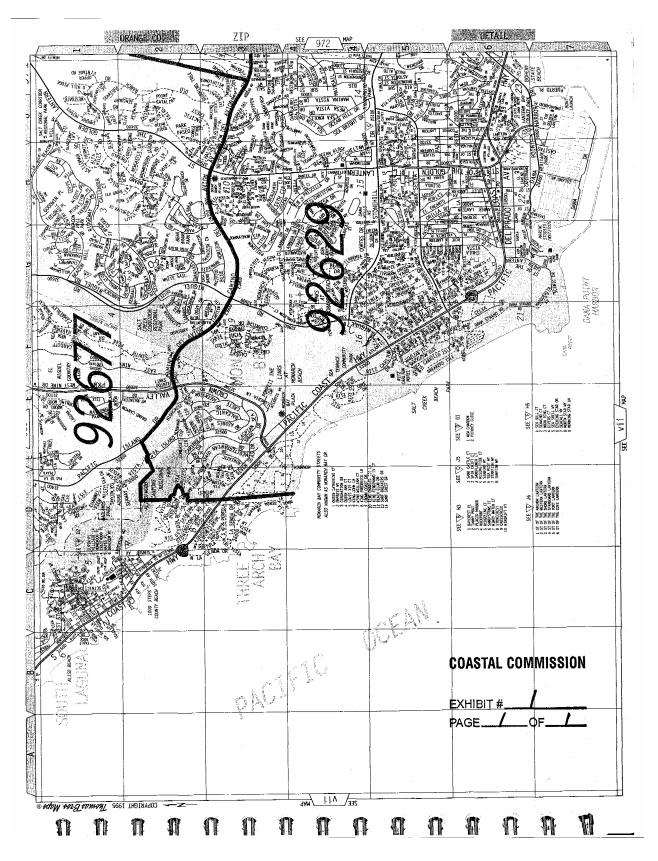
The subject site is located within the Three Arch Bay area of deferred certification. Certification in this area was deferred due to issues of public access arising from the locked gate nature of the community. However, as discussed above, the proposed development will not further decrease or impact public access within the existing locked gate community. Therefore the Commission finds that approval of this project, as conditioned, will not prevent the City of Laguna Beach from preparing a total Local Coastal Program for the areas of deferred certification that conforms with and is adequate to carry out the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act.

H. <u>California Environmental Quality Act</u>

Section 13096 of the Commission's regulations requires Commission approval of Coastal Development Permit applications to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of 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.

As conditioned, there are no feasible alternatives or additional feasible mitigation measures available that would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect that the activity may have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned to mitigate the identified impacts, is the least environmentally damaging feasible alternative and can be found consistent with the requirements of the Coastal Act to conform to CEQA.

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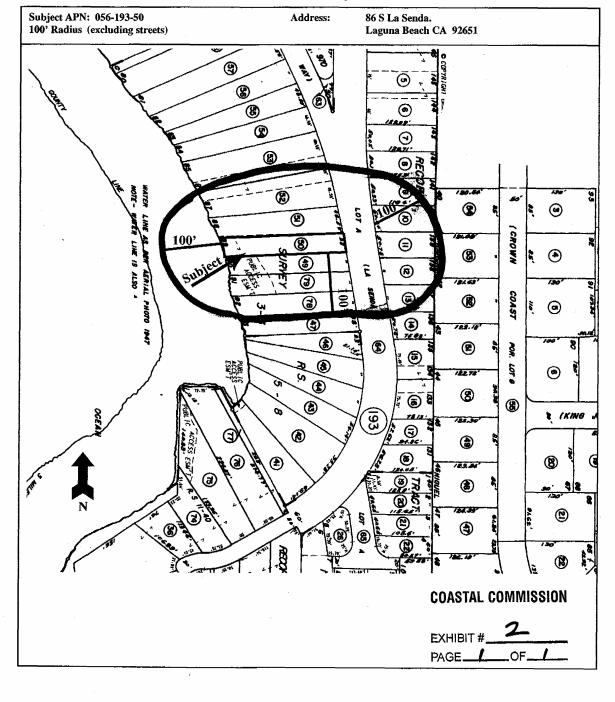


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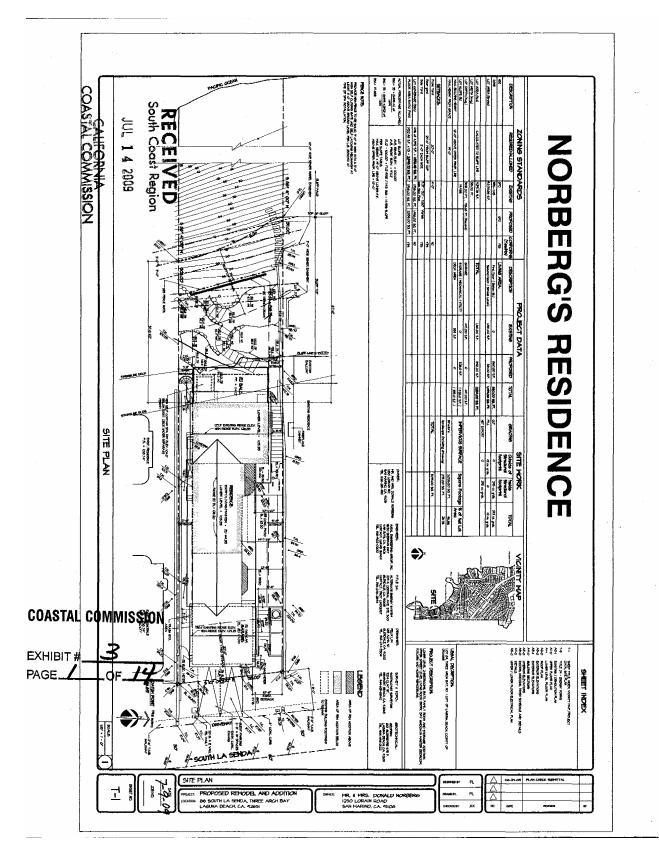


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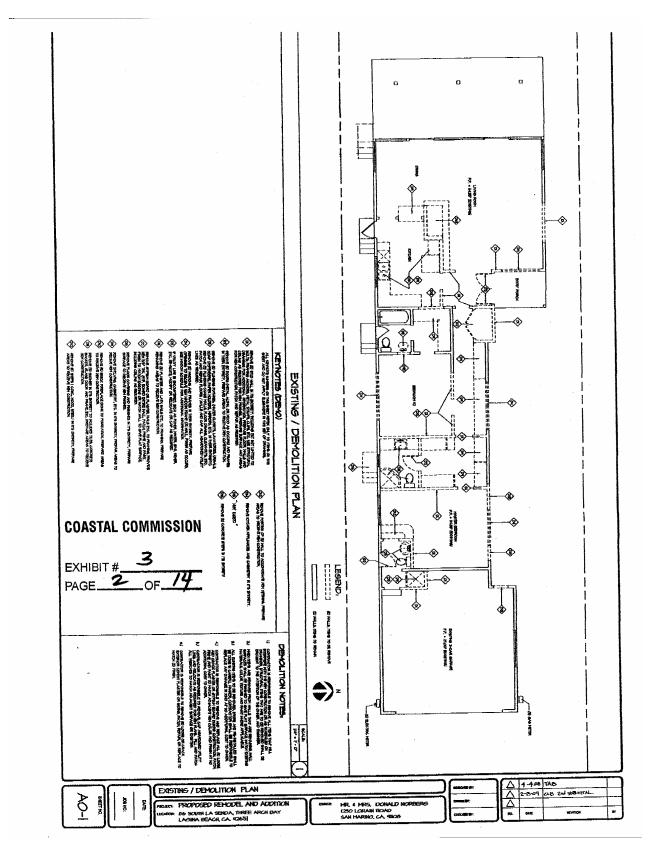
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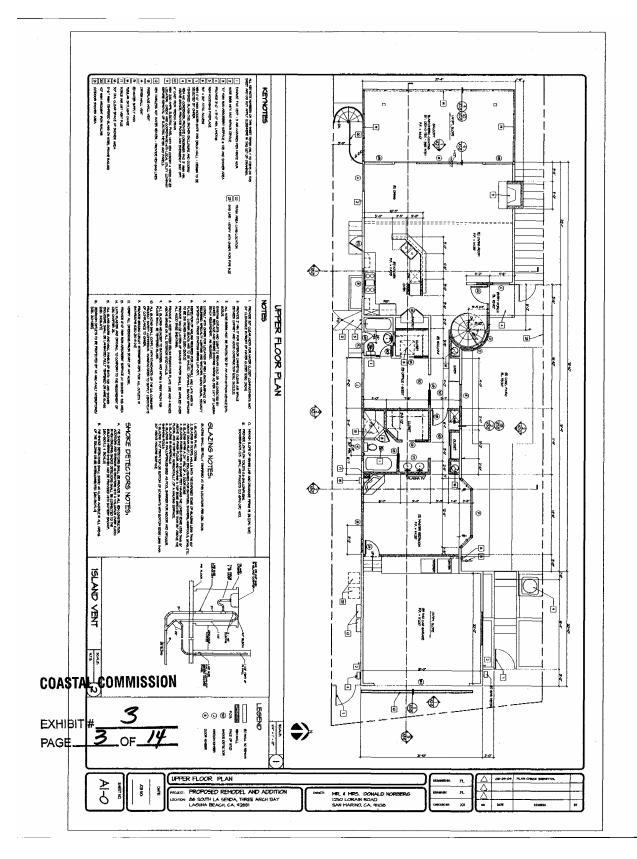
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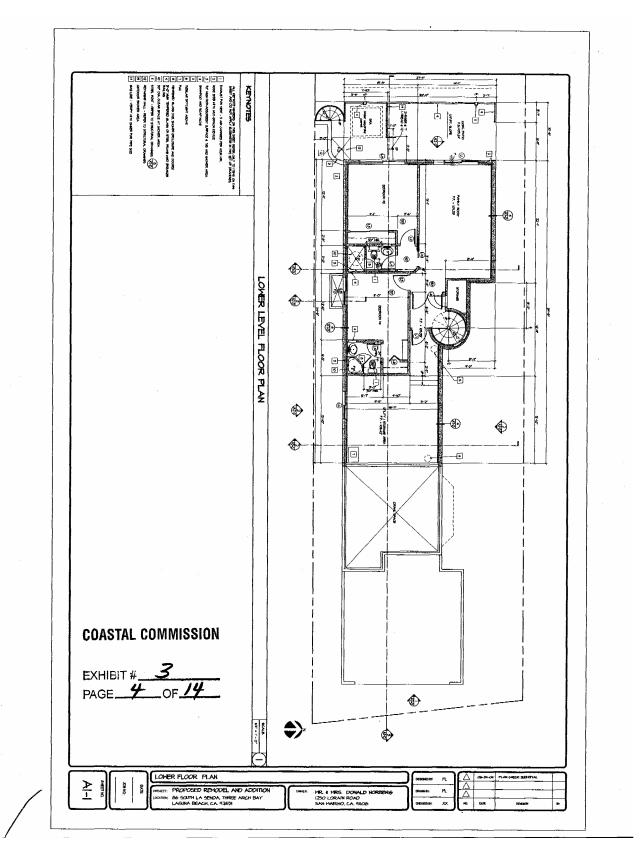
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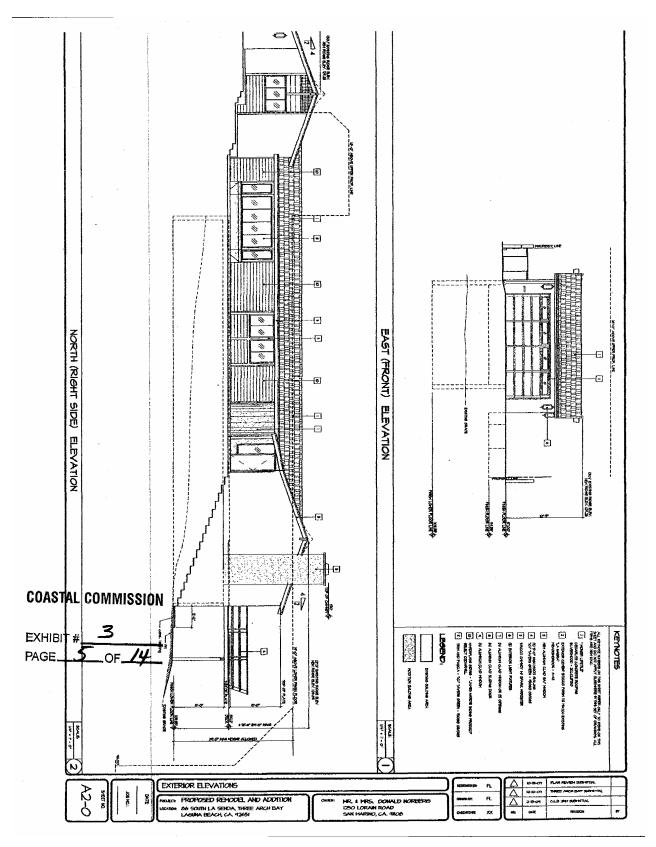
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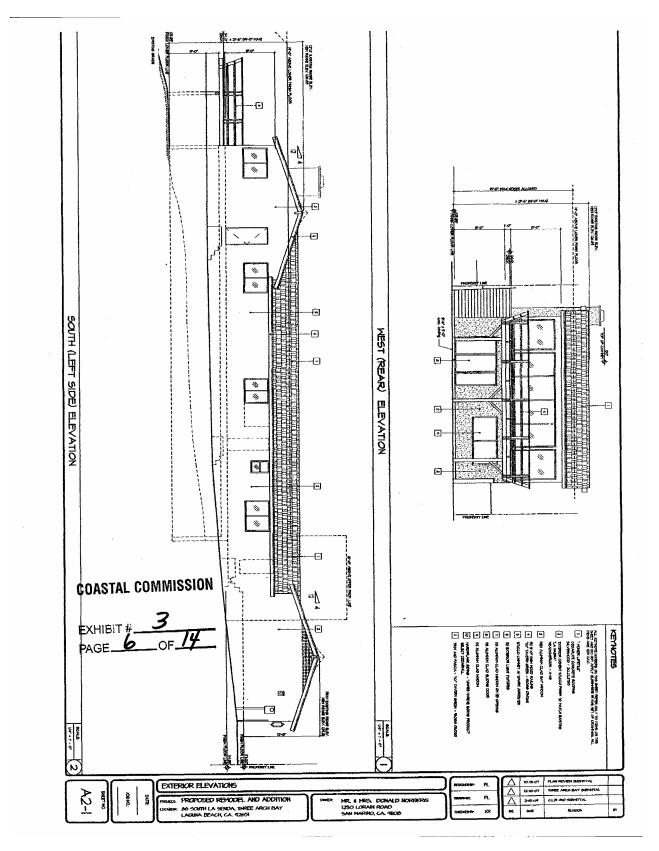
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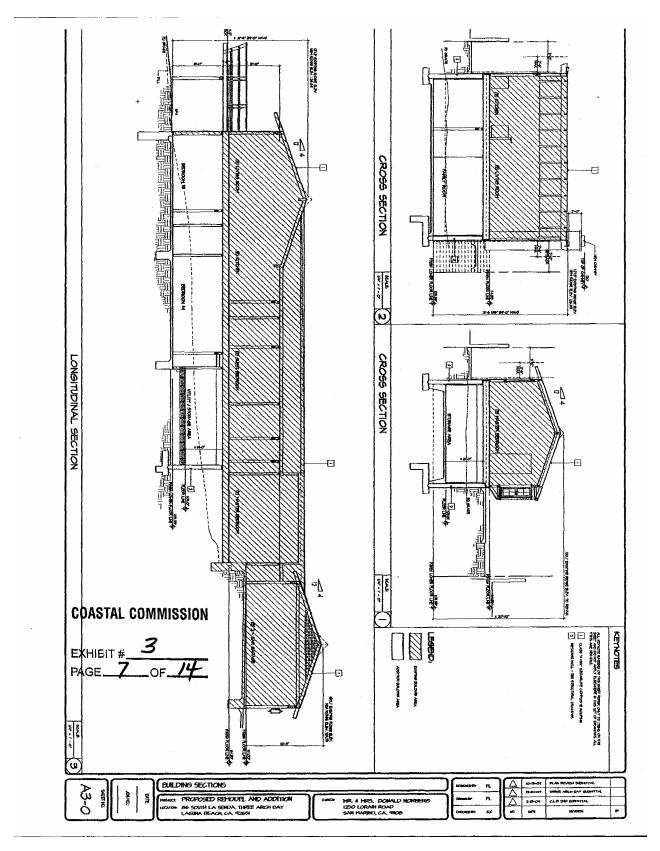
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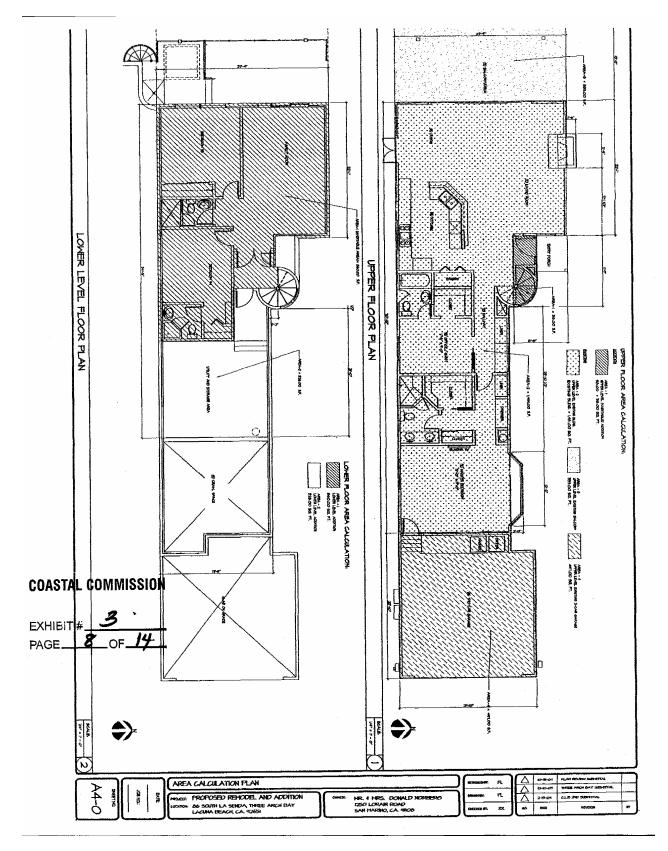
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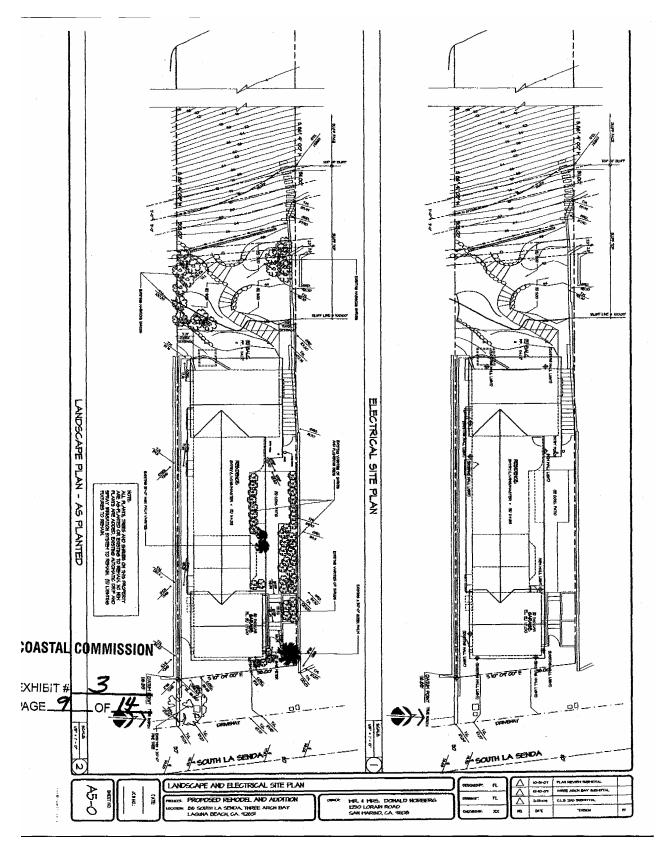
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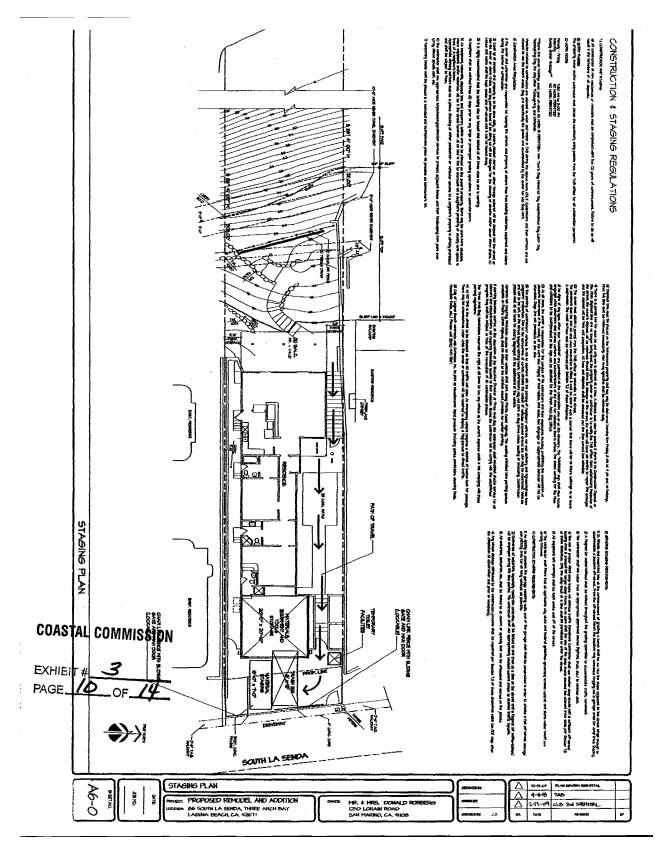
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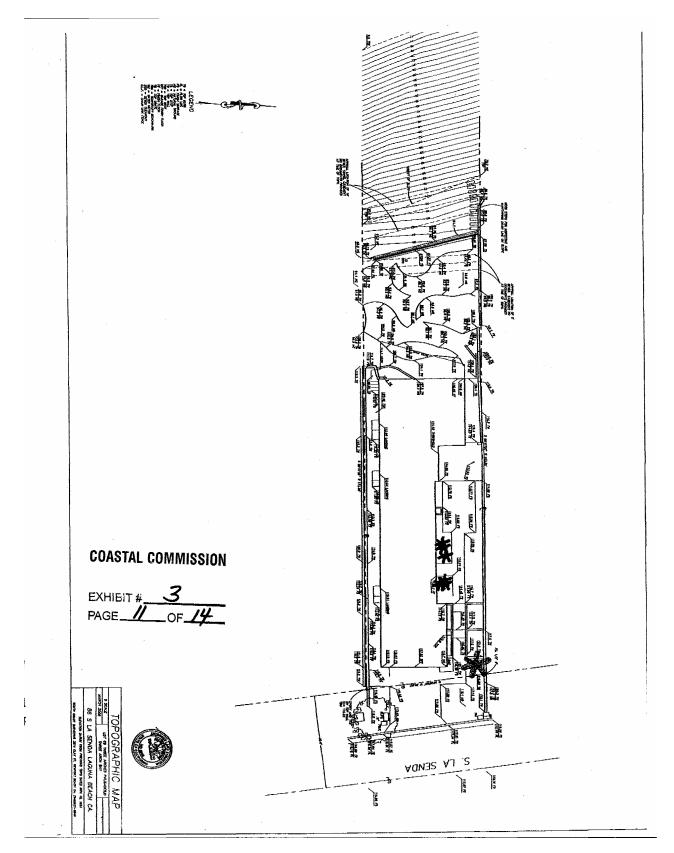
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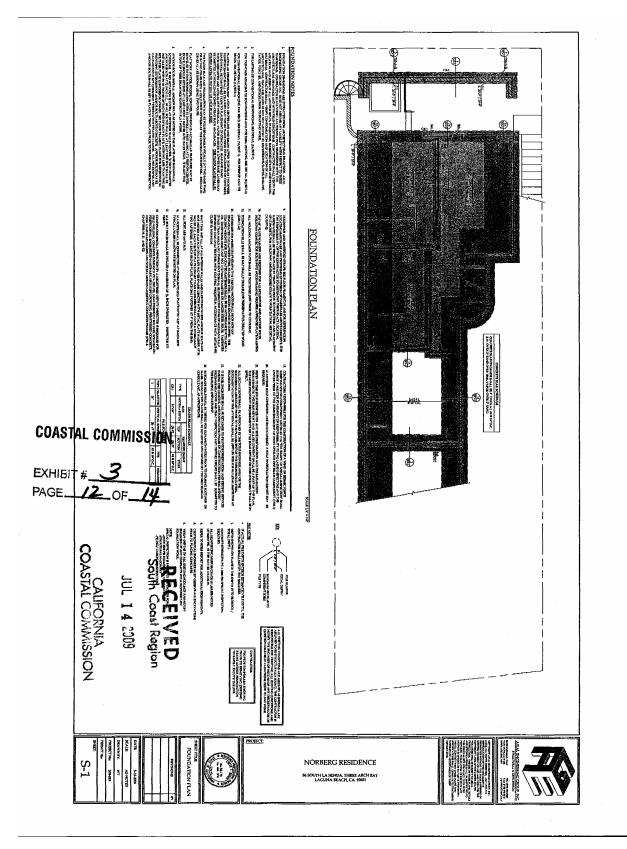
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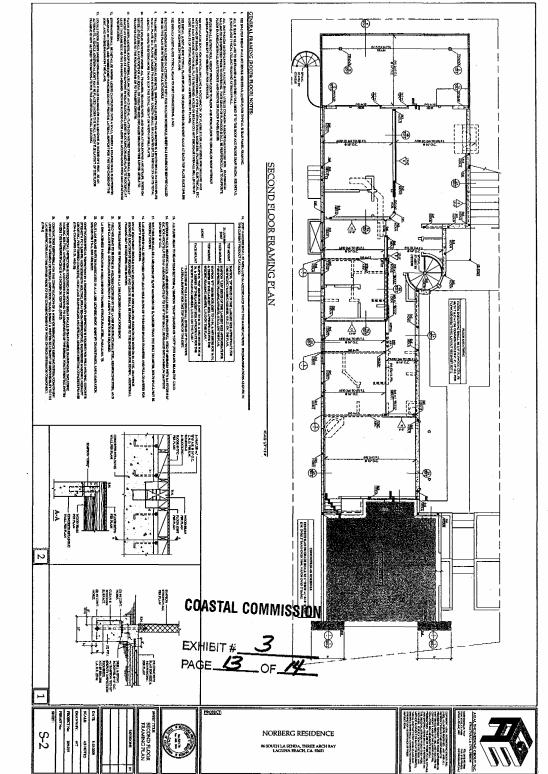
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