

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

CENTRAL COAST DISTRICT
725 FRONT STREET, SUITE 300
SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
PHONE: (831) 427-4863
FAX: (831) 427-4877
WEB: WWW.COASTAL.CA.GOV



Th8a

Prepared October 5, 2020 for October 8, 2020 Hearing

To: Commissioners and Interested Persons
From: Susan Craig, Central Coast District Manager
Brian O'Neill, Coastal Planner

Subject: Additional hearing materials for Th8a CDP Application Number A-3-SLO-20-0047 (Settimi, Los Osos, San Luis Obispo County)

This package includes additional materials related to the above-referenced hearing item as follows:

Correspondence received since the staff report was distributed.

Fwd: Public Comment on October 2020 Agenda Item Thursday 8a - A-3-SLO-20-0616 (Settimi, Los Osos, San Luis Obispo Co.)

CentralCoast@Coastal <CentralCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Wed 9/30/2020 1:14 PM

To: O'Neill, Brian@Coastal <Brian.O'Neill@coastal.ca.gov>

From: David Slater <davidslater1538@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 6:20:14 PM

To: CentralCoast@Coastal <CentralCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on October 2020 Agenda Item Thursday 8a - A-3-SLO-20-0616 (Settimi, Los Osos, San Luis Obispo Co.)

We own a home in the Cambria neighborhood where this project would be located. We purchased our home 11 years ago, despite trepidation at that time regarding adequacy and durability of the water supply. We were reassured that a moratorium existed on new water demand, or we likely would not have bought our home.

Nothing has improved since then climatologically or operationally. The CCSD's cobbled together emergency water supply augmentation scheme is not approved for use outside of such defined times, nor do the particulars of its engineering and execution to-date give one confidence that it ever should be regarded as a reasonable stepping stone to serve significant additional development-related water demand. There is enough concern that it will function as advertised to improve supply safety for existing users.

I agree with the Commissions analysis: there is not sufficient water; even existing home owners have marginal water security, which negatively impacts property values and interest in home ownership in Cambria; reliance on long outdated intent to serve letters or meter transfers from properties that never even used water does not recognize the fact that this is incremental demand on an already tenuous system (legality of that stance would need to be established, I agree); and the precedent-setting significance of this particular application is large, with repercussions that must be admitted by all to exceed the specific impact of this one home building proposal.

I support rejection of the proposal, and I consider the rationale and documentation for doing so, reasonable and solid. There are many homes for sale in Cambria at all times. There is nothing to prevent someone wanting to join our community from doing so, without creating incremental demand on our tenuous water supply.

Sincerely,

David Slater

Sent from my iPad

Elizabeth Bettenhausen, Ph.D.
345 Plymouth Street
Cambria, CA 93428-2716
elizabethbettenhausen@gmail.com

1 October 2020

California Coastal Commission
via email CentralCoast@coastal.ca.gov

Dear Commissioners:

Re: Oct. 8, 2020, Th8a: Appeal Number A-3-SLO-20-0047

Please find a substantial issue and deny a Coastal Development Permit

The first general goal of THE LAND USE AND CIRCULATION ELEMENTS OF THE SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN for the NORTH COAST (Rev. Oct. 2018) could have been written today, given the urgency of its focus.

1. Environment. Maintain and protect a living environment that is safe, healthful and pleasant for all residents by:

- A.** Assuring the protection of coastal resources such as wetlands, coastal streams, forests, marine habitats, and wildlife, including threatened and endangered species.
- B.** Conserving nonrenewable resources and replenishing renewable resources.¹

In Cambria we are coming to realize that the protection of the town must be not in vague long-term plans but rather in specific, immediate actions. Many people used to dream of the expansion of paradise, as if all resources and space were infinite. Now the changes in the conditions of the forest and creeks, the beach and ocean, the roads and preserves, the wildlife call us to account.

If only decisions by individuals always accomplished the best protection of the town and its environs. But that is not the case. Sometimes the common good must take precedence over the wishes of individuals. Discerning and protecting the common good is one of the real challenges for elected and appointed officials these days.

The difficulty of the decisions is often avoided by relying on prior judgments. In the Settimi application, for example, the San Luis Obispo County Planning Department statement reads: The Environmental Coordinator finds that the previously adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration (ED13-072 SCH#2014061033) is adequate for the purposes of compliance with CEQA because no substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revision of the previous Mitigated Negative Declaration, no substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstance under which the project is undertaken which will require major revision of the previous Mitigated Negative Declaration, and no new information of substantial importance has been identified which was not known at the time that the previous Mitigated Negative Declaration was adopted.²

However, this environmental determination was made on 6/4/2014. The past six years included the drought in California, the inability of the Cambria Community Services District to maintain a conservation plan, the disappearance of retrofit points tallying from the CCSD records, unpermitted manipulation of Santa Rosa Creek production wells by CCSD, the hasty CCSD investment in 2014 in a still unpermitted reverse osmosis plant, and intensified likelihood of forest fires due to climate change and residential intrusion into open space.

Cambria Community Services District has repeatedly reached decisions that avoid coming to terms with the environmental effects of withdrawal of potable water from Santa Rosa Creek

¹ p. 1-2 of <https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/getattachment/d8c5ebea-b556-4774-9d2d-53af23bc09c8/North-Coast-Area-Plan.aspx>

² <https://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/meeting/details/1131>

and San Simeon Creek. Unwilling to acknowledge the scope of the requirements protecting the Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) that defines Cambria and the creeks, they repeatedly use the Mitigation tactic without adequate data base and subsequent monitoring. I would be happy to provide you with copies of my documentation of this, should you so request.

The California Coastal Commission staff has done excellent evaluation of specific building applications in light of the effects on the creeks, their environs, and Cambria.³ I respectfully ask that you read the entire Staff Discussion and Recommendations carefully. Approving coastal development permits (CDP) for construction in Cambria that creates increased water use is a grave error. Documenting claims of retrofit conservation has been a complete failure in CCSD. The proposed new program for such conservation is rhetorically rich and practically poor.

Raised in North and South Dakota farming communities, I have been struck by how imperious we've become in our use of the land and water. Perhaps that's why this passage in Brian O'Neill's analysis comes to mind when I wake up during the night in my 79th year.

...there is not an adequate sustainable water supply to provide new water service to serve new development in Cambria (and it is not adequate even for existing development), a fact that has been repeatedly determined by the Commission in relation to Cambria development through multiple actions, including certification of LCP policies (specific to the lack of available water and imposing specific water supply requirements) and CDP actions; (4) the sources of Cambria's water supply (i.e., Santa Rosa and San Simeon Creeks) are environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHA) that are currently being adversely affected by existing water extractions to support existing development in Cambria....⁴

For too long we've run communities as if growth of the economy and resources would speed along and serve all of our interests. Robert J. Gordon's *The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The U. S. Standard of Living Since the Civil War* (2017) presents a detailed history of the decline in real GDP per person and real disposable income per person in the USA since 1970 (see Table 18-4). Certain economic interests in SLO County interpret so-called natural resources solely as means to net profit, a long-standing practice in the USA. Including the economic value of the environment is an urgently needed change in this.

Once again we come face to face with our responsibility for and complete dependence on the conditions of land, water, air, and diverse forms of life. The commonwealth is not endlessly ample. It is being destroyed. This includes the forest in Cambria and the creeks that run through and near the town. Please do not permit piecemeal erosion of the habitat that grounds us. The change in climate is a crisis.

Do not approve an individual permit. The well-being of the ecosystems is prerequisite to life's survival.

Thank you for considering this decisive action carefully in the tumultuous times surrounding us.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Bettenhausen

cc: Harry Farmer, president, CCSD Board of Directors, <hfarmer@cambriacsd.org>
Brian O'Neill, California Coastal Commission, <Brian.O'Neill@coastal.ca.gov>

³ Orellana <https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2017/9/th22c/th22c-9-2017-report.pdf>
Peoples' Self-Help Housing <https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2019/9/W14a/w14a-9-2019-report.pdf>
Hadian <https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2019/11/W32e/w32e-11-2019-report.pdf>

⁴ p. 2, <https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2019/9/W14a/w14a-9-2019-report.pdf> and p. 2 of Th8a before you now.