

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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April 13, 2022

John Oquendo, Case Planner
County of Ventura Resource Management Agency
Planning Division
800 S. Victoria Ave. #1700
Ventura, CA 93009

RE: 3124 Solimar LLC PD Permit Case No. PL21-0056

Dear Mr. Oquendo,

A

Coastal Commission staff has reviewed the Planning Director Staff Report for PD Permit Case No. PL21-0056 and would like to provide the following preliminary comments for your consideration. The applicant requests a PD Permit to demolish an existing 3,281 square foot beachfront single family dwelling and construct a new 6,204 square foot 2-story single family dwelling with a ground level 3,480-square-foot attached 3-car garage and storage area. The project site is located on a beachfront parcel at 3124 Solimar Beach Drive, in the Solimar Beach area of Ventura County. An existing rock revetment is located along the southern (most seaward) boundary of the project site.

B

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act, as incorporated in the LCP, requires development to be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas and to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas,. However, the subject staff report does not contain adequate findings relating to Section 30251 or an analysis of the view of the proposed structure from the nearby Pacific Coast Highway. As such, it is not clear if the proposed design of the structure with a total floor area of 9,485 square feet located between Pacific Coast Highway and the ocean protects views to the ocean.

C

Ventura County Coastal Area Plan Hazards policy 2 and Coastal Zoning Ordinance section 8178-4.1 require new beachfront development to be sized, sited, and designed to minimize risks from hazards. Additionally, Section 30253 of the Coastal Act, as incorporated in the LCP, requires development to minimize risks to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood or fire hazard. The construction of a new structure that so substantially increases the size and bulk of development on a site so at risk from coastal hazards (particularly with sea level rise in the future) raises concerns about minimizing hazard risks. The structure is proposed to be elevated with the lowest horizontal member at +19 feet NAVD88. The FEMA Flood Rate Insurance Map (FIRM) Panel 06111C0728F shows a portion of the property located within the VE Special Flood Hazard Area with an established Base Flood Elevation (BFE) of 18 feet NAVD88. The 2nd Revised Wave Runup & Coastal Hazard Analysis for the site concludes that the bottom of the lowest horizontal structural member should be BFE +1 foot, which in this case is 19 feet NAVD88. According to the project plans, the resulting structure will have a height of 35.5 feet measured from the street level.

County of Ventura
Planning Director Hearing
Case No. PL21-0056
Exhibit 10 Coastal Commission
Comment Letter

C
Cont.


While the staff report included findings related to how the elevation of the lowest horizontal structural member of the proposed residence at 19 feet NAVD88 would keep the project reasonably safe from coastal hazards including shoreline erosion, wave runup, and flooding without relying on the existing shore protection in place, the County's findings failed to include any analysis of alternative methods, beyond elevation, such as siting the structure further away from the shoreline or designing a smaller structure, to ensure the stability of the new proposed residential structure, to avoid the potential visual and community character impacts of a taller structure.

D

In order to protect shoreline processes, natural landforms, the ambulatory nature of the shoreline, and continued public access to the shoreline, it is necessary to ensure that no shoreline protective device will ever be built, nor the current revetment expanded or redeveloped, to protect the new proposed structure. Although the proposed residence has been designed, as conditioned, to ensure structural stability relative to wave action and forecasted sea level rise to the extent feasible, it is not possible to completely preclude the possibility that conditions on site will change and that the residence could be subject to greater wave action and tidal events in the future. Therefore, it is necessary to condition the project so that no shoreline protective device will be allowed to be built in the future. However, the County failed to include a condition that requires executing and recording deed restrictions waiving the right of the current and all future owners of the subject property to construct shoreline protection structures in order to protect their property from sea level rise and attendant coastal flooding hazards. In addition, the science of sea level rise and coastal hazards prediction is well developed, but not perfect. Even if the home is designed to withstand predicted coastal hazards over the economic life of the project, there is a reasonable possibility that sea level rise and hazards will be greater than anticipated and that the home may be at risk of, or suffer from, damage. In order to prevent portions of the home from remaining in the event that they are unsafe and are potentially falling into the ocean (thereby depositing materials and pollution into the water), the permitted dwelling and accessory structures need to be removed in the future if certain conditions are met. A condition that requires the applicant to agree to abandon and remove the permitted dwelling and accessory structures in the event of significant damage caused by sea level rise or other coastal hazards should be included in the permit in order to ensure that the project is consistent with the policies and provisions of the LCP.

The Coastal Act and LCP require that risks from coastal hazards be minimized and coastal resources be protected and enhanced to the maximum extent feasible. In order to determine consistency with the policies and provisions of the LCP, additional information and analyses are necessary. Lastly, it appears that the subject PD permit would be appealable to the Commission, and as such, should be noticed accordingly. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments for your consideration. Please contact me with any further questions at isabel.qi@coastal.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Isabel Qi
Coastal Program Analyst