

September 30, 2020

To: Brian O'Neill, US Coastal Commission

From: Tova Lelah, 3rd Street Baywood Park resident property owner

Re: Baywood Inn Project - 3rd Street Parking/Pickle Ball/Solar Panels and other project elements

After attending and participating in the September 24th LOCAC Meeting regarding the above referenced project, I find an urgent need to express our concerns and ask for further discussion and consideration before these project elements are finalized. It is my understanding that the Coastal Commission is the Lead Agency in this approval and therefore we address our comments directly to you with copies to other agencies and persons involved. The urgency of our concern is exacerbated by the fact that much site work has already been done WITHOUT Project approval.

Since that meeting I have examined all the documents made publicly available and walked around the site and adjoining areas. I have also reviewed relevant portions of the LCP as pertains to the "Special Community" designation for Baywood Park. I remain concerned, now not only as pertains to my property on 3rd Street, but also those of my neighbors on our street and portions of 4th Street who will also be affected. During the four years I have been living here, I have observed several healthy mature trees be cut down, and what appears to me to be a significant compromise in visual resources along the Back Bay shoreline scenic corridor, by the recently completed addition to the Baywood Inn. I am concerned that without further examination of the proposed project elements, sadly, further degradation will result in this area. The confluence of 3rd Street with El Moro and 2nd Street is among the most scenic portions of that corridor along the bay.

## Traffic, Noise and Land Use

It must be acknowledged that the parking plan for the Baywood Inn has totally shifted all its traffic on to 3rd Street and all of the vehicular and pedestrian noise that will result. There is no landscaping proposed for the 3rd Street edge and both the parking solar panel structure and the pickle ball court are set 10 feet from the sidewalk leaving little room for landscape buffer for the neighborhood. 3rd Street is generally pretty quiet with kids riding bikes and people walking, we have a farmers market every Monday that ends at 3rd Street. Many healthy trees were removed to accomplish this parking plan and we feel that trees need to be planted that will grow to screen the project elements and hotel activity from the neighborhood activity. The project must provide mitigation to buffer the impacts of the increased vehicular and pedestrian activity.

We seriously question the land use decision to permit a pickle ball court on a mostly residential street. Such active recreation would not be compatible with the adjacent residential uses as described in the LCP. Would you want to live next door to or across the street from such an active recreational use? Was the adjacent community considered before forwarding this project element for approval? What is the process for such an issue? What other alternatives were considered for this site? Again, as with the previous paragraph, the Project Proponent shows little regard for its neighbors and to our knowledge, no consultation has occurred. Surely there are more passive recreational options for that site.

## Visual Quality Issues

It appears that the pickle ball court is set back from the adjacent sidewalk by about 10 feet. The court is proposed to have a 10 foot high screened fence surrounding a 30 foot by 60 foot court.

This 1800 square foot footprint and mass is much larger than the existing residences on that portion of the street and will overpower the view corridor looking towards the bay. The project proponent indicated that the screening material would be designed to obscure the play as well as reduce the noise. This being the case, the court will appear as a large dark colored rectangular enclosure with no landscaping shown on the drawings to buffer this visual impact from the neighboring properties.

It appears that the parking area is to be covered by a structure supporting solar panels. The dimensions of this structure (72 feet by 20 feet at 16 feet tall) would also overpower the street, and again no landscaped buffer is proposed. The Project Proponent indicated that trees would block the sun and thereby reduce efficacy of the solar panels. To this we refer back to the LCP and the character defining features of Baywood Park. Both these project elements if implemented as proposed, will substantially degrade the visual quality and character of 3rd Street in the project vicinity.

With the information provided by the Project Proponent, I fail to see how approval could be considered without adequate drawings showing profiles of both these project elements in context. We should be provided with a CURRENT photo or 3-D visual superimposed with the proposed project elements as viewed from all four elevations. I had to provide elevation and section drawings when I applied for a permit to alter my residence by adding only 100 square feet! Personally, this feels like a totally uneven application of regulatory requirements. A development of this size should be subject to even more scrutiny especially since it is in the Coastal Zone jurisdiction.

### Light and Glare

In prior communication I have been assured that the pickle ball court would not be lighted for evening use and that use would be limited to hotel guests only. No such information was provided in the project plans made available and if this element is approved for implementation, we would like a Memorandum of Understanding that stipulates this use limitation.

As regards the same issue for the proposed solar panel covered parking enclosure, is night lighting proposed for the parking area and adjacent walkways leading to the Inn which is a substantial distance away? There is no lighting plan provided in the documents that I could find. Furthermore, without provision of any trees to buffer the view of this structure, night lighting will be a significant issue for our neighboring residential uses, not to mention the continual loss of dark skies and the cumulative impact on our protected estuary and its habitat.

Lastly as concerns the solar panels in this location, we should be provided with sight line drawings on a topographic map of the affected area to determine the glare that will be cast by the panels during certain times of the year as the sun is reflected off the surface. This could substantially impact existing uses both in the vicinity and farther away that are at a higher elevation than the project site. Again it is impossible to assess the glare impacts of the solar panels without additional information.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We look forward to working together toward resolution. Sincerely,

Tova Lelah

cc: Larry Bender, LOCAC  
Kerry Brown, SLO County  
Supervisor Bruce Gibson