

Midcoast Community Council

*An elected Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
representing Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton, and Miramar
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Date: April 12, 2023
To: Nicholas Calderon, Hannah Ormshaw - San Mateo County Parks Department
SMC Planning Commission, SMC Planner- Michael Schaller
From: Midcoast Community Council
Subject: South Fire Road in Quarry Park

The Midcoast Community Council has reviewed the proposal to build an additional fire road in Quarry Park. After engaging in outreach with the local residents most likely to be directly affected by this fire road, our determination is that overall the surrounding community is supportive of building it. Therefore, given this feedback and the articulated concerns of members of the coastside beyond the immediate area of the fire road, the MCC has determined that we will support the construction of the fire road but have the following three suggestions:

- 1) **Erosion:** substantial evidence exists that fire roads like the one proposed in Quarry Park substantially increase the amount of hillside erosion as a direct result of the construction of the road itself. The MCC requests that there be specific mitigations designed to minimize the amount of erosion in the park related to the fire road.
- 2) **Natural feel:** maintaining the natural feel of the park is a consideration of deep emotional significance to many of the Midcoast residents that frequent the park. Many construction decisions at the margin can increase or decrease the natural feel of the park. The MCC would like the project parameters to contain a specifically articulated commitment to maintain the natural look and feel of the park wherever this is practically possible. Here are some specific recommendations:
 - **Gravel:** Provide an earth tone Class 2 Base Gravel for the road surface or top coat the common grey gravel with an earth tone material so that a lasting better blend with the existing environment is achieved.
 - **Recycling vegetation:** Where possible, use the timbers taken down during construction of the fire road to create retaining walls or benches in appropriate locations. Any excess wood should be converted to wood chips and spread in the surrounding area to improve hydrology and accelerate the growth of vegetation. Where possible, please save and set any established vegetation that is uprooted, so that where practical it can be replanted later.

- 3) **Cul-de-sacs:** The MCC recognizes that emergency vehicles will need areas to turn around, and that CalFIRE has specific regulations governing them. We request that for the 96' diameter cul-de-sacs, a vegetation island be placed at the center of the cul-de-sac. This will greatly reduce the visual scarring created by the cul-de-sac without compromising the ability of emergency vehicles to execute their turns. If the addition of the island sacrifices required space, we suggest adding additional square footage at an appropriate location, so that requirements are met without creating a single vast open space.

With these suggestions, the MCC is fully prepared to support Parks and CalFIRE in the construction of the South Fire Road in Quarry Park.

s/Gregg Dieguez, Chair