



**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW BOARD (ERB)
Unincorporated Coastal Zone, Santa Monica Mountains, Los Angeles County
Meeting of 20 May 2013**

(Approved as amended by electronic mail on 12 June 2013)

Persons in Attendance

ERB Members

Rosi Dagit
Ron Durbin
Suzanne Goode
Margot Griswold, Ph.D.
Travis Longcore, Ph.D.

Regional Planning Staff

Richard Claghorn, Planner
Rob Glaser, Planner
Shirley Imsand, PhD, Coordinator

Project Applicants / Representatives

Item 2: Khalsa Residence, 24573 Piuma Road, Malibu, R2006-02357, p.2

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MINUTES

A. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minutes of 15 April 2013 were approved by electronic mail on 17 April 2013.

Motion: Rosi Dagit, 2nd Ron Durbin, Ayes: Unanimous.

NOTE: ERB meetings are informal working sessions. Members are appointed as volunteers to serve in an advisory capacity. Minutes are prepared by planning staff from notes and tape. Visitors are advised to take notes or record the meeting. New or clarified information presented in biota revisions may raise new issues and require further analysis. Minutes are generally approved via electronic mail. Draft minutes may be requested but are subject to revision. Meetings are open for public observation, and brief comments may be made by the public about the biology of the project sites.

NEW BUSINESS

B. Khalsa Residence, Piuma Summit Estate, 24573 Piuma Road, Malibu
Project No.: R2006-02357
Permit: RPP201300382
APN: 4453-025-003
Applicant: Jai Pal S. Khalsa
Planner: Richard Claghorn

Proposal: The project proposes a single family residence pad of 8600 sq.ft. on the high knoll of the 8.7-acre parcel which will accommodate a 5279 sq.ft. house of two stories and 31 feet height. The attached 3-car garage is 800 sq.ft. Guest quarters are also attached. There will be a pool, spa, decks, retaining walls, and 1800 cu.yd. of grading, cut only, but grading is to be balanced onsite. The existing 3600 sq.ft. pad will be graded downwards 5 ft. to create the 8600 sq.ft. pad. A septic system will be installed. The dirt access roads and 3600 sq.ft. of building pad predate the Coastal Act of 1977. For the same plan, approvals received include a conditional Coastal Development Permit (hearing was August 2007; staff report contains conditions), County of Los Angeles Fire Preliminary Fuel Modification Plan Approval, County Department of Regional Planning Approval in Concept, Los Angeles County Department of Health Services approval of septic system, County Fire Department approval of driveway, access road, and turnaround; County Environmental Review Board recommendation of 'consistent after modifications' on 28 January 2002. An unpermitted construction trailer will be allowed to remain for construction and will then be removed. The applicant has proposed dedication of an open space conservation easement on the undeveloped area of the parcel, which will go to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA).

Resources: The project site is in the SERA of the **Malibu-Cold Creek Resource Management Area**, and the southern fork of **Dark Canyon** passes through the northern portion of the parcel. A small upland drainage traverses the southwestern area of the parcel which is part of another tributary of Dark Canyon. The third tributary of Dark Canyon is on the eastern side of the parcel. The parcel is in **the Malibu Creek State Park Buffer SEA B5** (Significant Ecological Area). The residence will be visible from both the Backbone Trail and the Cold Creek Basin. The site is predominantly vegetated with mixed chaparral. An **ESHA** (Ecological Sensitive Habitat Area) described as 'Oak Woodland' on the parcel is adjacent to Dark Canyon, and is actually **Mainland Cherry Woodland**. Dark Canyon has a **stand of California bay trees** (*Umbellularia californica*). The proposed grading will not impact the protected zone of any jurisdictional oak. The BCA (Biological Constraints Analysis) of 2001 reports species that are now considered sensitive: Southern **California black walnut** (*Juglans californica*) and **Catalina Mariposa Lily** (*Calochortus catalinae*). The house site "mesa" has a surrounding patch of an unusual **manzanita**, possibly *Arctostaphylos crustacea* ssp. *subcordata*, in the Santa Monica Mountains known only from the area of Saddle Peak. It occurs otherwise in the northern Channel Islands and not on the mainland. The manzanitas will largely be removed during excavation of the house site. The area is probably a **linkage area** for wildlife and plants, as it has three drainages, a variety of supporting habitats ranging from oak and walnut woodland to non-native grassland, riparian areas of Dark Canyon, and is within 0.14 mile of a significant ridgeline. There are no recorded occurrences of Braunton's Milkvetch Habitat. All of the project occurs within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone from Title 32 of the County Code (Fire Code). The location is outside a 100-yr. FEMA flood zone but is entirely within the landslide zone of seismic hazard. There are no significant ridgelines on the parcel. The project parcel is about 100 ft. **southeast of State Park Land**.

Request: **Review plans for the proposed residence and recommend additional conditions, if needed, to the conditions in the Coastal Development Permit and the concept approval of the Dept. of Regional Planning under RPP 201000251.** The ERB recommendations will be used as guidelines for the Conditional Use Permit and as part of any necessary environmental review of the project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Projects normally exempt from CEQA are subject to environmental review when in sensitive locations [PRC §15300.2(a)].

Applicant's presentation: The applicant provided maps of the proposed open space conservation easement. He stated that State Park land is about 500 ft. distant from the planned residence. New landscape plans show fuel modification at the standard distances of Zone A 20 ft out from structures, Zone B 30 ft beyond Zone A, and Zone C 150 ft. beyond Zone B. The applicant stated that the previous owner of the parcel planted the southwestern drainage with coast live-oaks and California black walnuts because road work had removed the original vegetation, and these plantings are doing well. The project will be working on culverts under the street to slow water running into the drainages on their parcel. City will supply the domestic water. The applicant stated they need to construct a septic system 30 x 8-ft. diameter

that will do tertiary treatment and be under the driveway. They have worked previously with the company Invisible Structures for water storage and containers. A problem they face is that the substrate is solid rock.

ERB Comments and Recommendations:

1. The *Coreopsis* sp. and *Echium candicans* (Pride of Madeira) shall both be removed from the landscape plans. They are not local natives.

Recommendation: Travis Longcore, 2nd Rosi Dagit, unanimous concurrence

2. Any manzanita that can be preserved in place during house pad preparation shall be left in place and protected from construction impact by fencing. These manzanitas will enhance the house landscaping and in addition have significant wildlife value.

Recommendation: Travis Longcore, 2nd Suzanne Goode, unanimous concurrence

3. Any manzanitas that need to be removed for the approved pad must be both (1) propagated by cuttings and/or seeds and (2) transplanted by the method of lifting the plant, with roots in soil, into boxing. The propagated and boxed manzanitas shall be transplanted beyond the fuel modification zone into appropriate sites for aspect and soil. Good places to consult on techniques and tips for this are:

- a. Catalina Island Conservancy Nursery, Peter Dixon, pdixon@catalinaconservancy.org
- b. Mountains Restoration Trust Restoration Specialist Tom Hayduk, thayduk@mountainstrust.org

Recommendation: Suzanne Goode, 2nd Rosi Dagit, unanimous concurrence

4. The hydroseed mixture needs to be revised to replace species that could be flammable. Replace the following plants (strikeout): ~~*Atriplex lentiformis* "Breweri"; *Cleome isomerus*; *Ceanothus horizontalis*; *Encelia californica*~~. Use local natives from the S.Nelson BCA report. Eliminate the non-natives (marked *). Do not use flammable plants such as buckwheat (*Eriogonum* spp.) and sumacs (*Rhus* and *Malosma* spp.) Possible replacements include Monkeyflower (*Mimulus longiflorus*; Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*); and (with irrigation near the residence) Needlegrass (*Stipa lepida*). Golden-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium californicum*) could work near house, though it is not locally native.

Recommendation: Suzanne Goode, 2nd Rosi Dagit, unanimous concurrence

5. The southern drainage plantings should NOT be sycamore trees (*Platanus racemosa*), which require lots of water and maintenance. Instead plant oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) and walnuts (*Juglans californica*), which are already doing well in that location. Oaks are best for minimizing fire hazard.

Recommendation: Rosi Dagit, 2nd Margot Griswold, unanimous concurrence

6. Plans need to show capture of first 3/4 inch of rain from all impervious surfaces, and 1 inch capture or more is best. Cisterns work well for both irrigation and fire-fighting. Tree People has designs for walls filled with water and links to a cooperative working on water storage (<http://www.treepeople.org/how-capture-rainwater>). Oasis Design's Art Ludwig (<http://oasisdesign.net/>) has a website and materials available on water storage and use of grey water.

Recommendation: Rosi Dagit, 2nd Ron Durbin, unanimous concurrence

7. Rodent control shall be eliminated from the landscape plan. Use of poisons with anticoagulants is injurious and deadly to many parts of the food chain.

Recommendation: Travis Longcore, 2nd Ron Durbin, unanimous concurrence

8. Exterior night lighting shall be minimized using low intensity (lights not exceeding 800 lumens are recommended), low stature fixtures (2.5-3 ft.). Lights shall be directed downwards with full shielding against projection into the nighttime sky, surrounding properties, and undeveloped areas. If DPW does not require public lighting, then none shall be used. Security lighting, if used, shall be on an infrared detector or a motion sensor. Refer to the Outdoor Lighting District Ordinance for restrictions on shielding, height, intensity, and encroachment, especially Section 22.44.540.A-D:

http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/rural_outdoor_lighting_district_ordinance

Recommendation: Travis Longcore, 2nd Rosi Dagit, unanimous concurrence

9. Consider windows that are non-glare, non-reflective glass to minimize bird deaths from birds mistaking reflections as open flight space. Overhangs can minimize reflection as well as regulate temperature in the buildings. Ornilux is especially good for breaking up reflections. A reference for bird-friendly construction practice is: www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/BirdFriendlyBuildingDesign.pdf

10. The goal for fuel modification should be a shaded fuel break, using shrubs with lower branches (“fire ladders”) trimmed off, and ground fuels removed in zone C. Preserving the manzanita goes well with this design, because most of the manzanita is downslope away from the residence. The Fire Department will be strict in requiring the shaded fuel break all the distance to 200-ft. from the residence because of the very high fire hazard at this site: a hill bordered by three drainages (“conductive chutes”). Although sumac (*Rhus* and *Malosma* spp.) are not usually recommended, they can be used to complete the shaded fuel break. Planted oaks might be good for a north-facing slope. Plants should be grouped with some space between groups according to the rule: flame length can be two times the height of the shrub. So groups of 10’ shrubs should have 10-20 ft. spacing between groups. Pruning should be staggered and be in different years for adjacent groups.

Recommendation: Ron Durbin, 2nd Suzanne Goode, unanimous concurrence

11. Fuel modification plan should be initially structured to the standard Zone A 20 ft. from structure, irrigated; Zone B 30 ft. beyond A, irrigated; Zone C 150 ft. beyond B to 200 ft. from structure. County Fire will then revise, and they will probably extend Zone B to at least 100 ft. for this location.

Recommendation: Ron Durbin, 2nd Suzanne Goode, unanimous concurrence

12. A good site for recommendations for building design in areas of high fire hazard is the site of the Topanga Coalition for Preparedness (TCP, www.t-cep.org) This site covers boxed eaves, an aid in preventing ember entry to structure; double-paned windows giving 1 hour of fire security; triple-paned windows; insulation; door handle treatment; basement fire shelters; fire-safe alliance.

ERB Meeting Date:	20 May 2013		
ERB Evaluation:	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consistent after Modifications	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent	<input type="checkbox"/> No decision	

Recommendation: Rosi Dagit, 2nd Ron Durbin, unanimous concurrence

Staff Recommendation:	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consistent after Modifications	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent	<input type="checkbox"/> No decision	

Suggested Modifications: Comply with all ERB recommendations.

OTHER MATTERS

C. Public comment pursuant to Section 54954.3 of the Government Code:
No Public Comment was made.