



SKYLINE FOREST HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

March 22, 2004

3/25/2004
#83

Monterey County Planning & Building Dept
230 Church St
P.O. Box 12308
Salinas, Ca 93902
ATTN: Thomas McCue

R.E: DEIR for the Pebble Beach Company's Del Monte Forest Preservation
and Development Plan (DMF/PDP)

Dear Mr. McCue:

The Skyline Forest Traffic & Safety Committee was formed in 1996 by the Skyline Forest Homeowners Association, the Monterey Vista Neighborhood Association, and the Skyline Ridge Neighborhood Association. Its mandate was to address the traffic & safety problems associated with drivers bypassing congestion on Holman Highway by way of Skyline Forest Drive and associated residential streets. (Note that Skyline Forest Drive is classified as a local collector, NOT a minor arterial.)

The Committee has addressed previous DEIRs affecting our neighborhoods, including the earlier development plans of the Pebble Beach Company as well as those of the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula (CHOMP).

The DEIR for the DMF/PDP is totally inadequate as pertains to traffic impacts on Skyline Forest Drive and its associated neighborhoods. The DEIR recognizes that the project's increased traffic has a SIGNIFICANT impact on traffic at the Skyline entrance. Unfortunately, it proposes to ACCOMMODATE that traffic with a signal at Skyline Drive rather than to MITIGATE it by adequate improvements to the Pebble Beach Gate at Highway 1, and by appropriate upgrades to the Pebble Beach road network.

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Our Committee takes issue with the DEIR contention that "...no project traffic is anticipated to be added to Skyline Forest Drive.." Any increased traffic on Holman Highway will encourage more traffic to shortcut through the neighborhoods and a signal at Skyline Forest Drive only makes it that much easier for that to happen. We also take issue with the argument in the DEIR that the signal will be required due to a lack of spacing in westbound traffic for drivers exiting from Skyline. The gap is currently provided by red time on the CHOMP traffic signal & that situation will not change as a result of this project.

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The Fehr & Peers study referenced in the DEIR notes that traffic between Highway 1 and the CHOMP entrance often averages only 5mph. The addition of a traffic signal at the Beverly Manor entrance can only exacerbate this problem, no matter how well the signal would be coordinated with that at the Hwy 1 off ramp or with that at the CHOMP entrance. The City of Monterey has completed several studies that support this conclusion. In addition, it is intuitively obvious that the addition of 2 more traffic signals on an already congested Holman Highway results in a clear PERCEPTION to drivers that traffic will be delayed more than it already is, making a bypass through the neighborhoods even more attractive!

Our Committee finds it necessary, once again, to request consideration of alternatives in which the Pebble Beach Corporation and CHOMP cooperate on an at-grade connection between CHOMP and Beverly Manor over Skyline Drive (17 mile Dr). Note that CHOMP owns Beverly Manor and that a connection between 17 Mile Drive and the new CHOMP parking garage has already been built! A simple crossover would allow eastbound Beverly Manor traffic to access/egress via the current CHOMP entrance negating the need for a new traffic signal on Holman Highway. If the Pebble Beach Company has a concern about uncontrolled access to 17 Mile Drive, there are a variety of ways it can address that problem, but that should not preclude fair consideration of this alternative.

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The current MST bus stops on Holman Highway at Beverly should be relocated to CHOMP. The CHOMP location is far safer for bus users, is about the same walking distance from Beverly facilities, and eliminates the need for signalized pedestrian crossings on Holman Highway when it is widened.

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The DEIR also proposes intersection changes at HOLMAN/HWY 1 that accomplish little more than facilitating access to Pebble Beach at the expense of mainline traffic on Holman Highway. The resulting delays for eastbound traffic can be expected to further encourage bypassing through our neighborhoods.

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Accordingly, our committee challenges the inadequate alternative analysis in the DEIR. The Pebble Beach Company has not considered mitigating the impact of increased traffic by an alternative that would modify the bridge at the HOLMAN/HWY 1 intersection to bring southbound traffic onto Pebble Beach UNDER the bridge rather than over Holman Highway. Though costly, this alternative would truly MITIGATE the traffic impacts and greatly reduce the red time on the off ramp signal. That red time is probably the single greatest cause of delay for traffic heading east on Holman Highway and for the dangerous backups on the HWY 1 off ramp currently experienced during peak hour traffic. This alternative would be consistent with the current PSR for that intersection which notes that a 4-lane bridge (with a below grade entry to Pebble Beach) is the ultimate solution to the problem.

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Finally, we also challenge the DEIR conclusion in Chapter 4.4 that claims to mitigate cumulative traffic impacts by merely adding 2 traffic signals and contributing to widening of Holman Highway between CHOMP and Highway 1. Our reasons are already discussed above.

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Please feel free to call me at (831) 625-6437 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



JAMES M. CULLEM, P.E.

Chairman

Skyline Forest Traffic & Safety Committee