

Council Agrees that Blufftop Mansion and Access Road Need Enviro Impact Report

■ Big Rock Residents Win Appeal

In what appeared to be a victory for Big Rock residents who live on Seaboard Drive, the Malibu City Council, with Councilmember Sharon Barovsky absent, voted this week that an area blufftop mansion and its long and winding access road require an Environmental Impact Report.

The action was taken after both the applicant and a neighbor appealed the planning commission's decision approving the plans, but putting restrictions on the basement.

The planning panel had approved the two-story, 10,517-square-foot, single-family home with pool and tennis court that required several variances for the winding mountain driveway, but had put restriction on the plans for the basement. The applicant, the Breitmam family, was appealing those restrictions and neighbor Al Broussard was appealing the approvals for the home and driveway.

Broussard and many of his

neighbors, including Big Rock resident Lou La Monte, argued that there were many unanswered questions that had not been addressed by the Initial Study.

"It appears to be the development of four houses. It should require an EIR," said La Monte, who said he was speaking on behalf of the Big Rock Homeowners Association. "They overwhelmingly oppose this project."

Big Rock residents and their attorney told the council how there might be significant effects that were not at all studied.

They also discussed how the project was actually a small four-lot subdivision needing an access road. They accused the applicant of "piecemealing" development in order to avoid the cost and further scrutiny of an EIR.

The applicant and city planner insisted what was before the council was one house, not four, but did acknowledge there were three other buildable lots.

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City Hires Public Relations Firm to Try to Improve Its 'Image' Issues

■ Some Ask Whether Firm's Ties Might Be a PR Issue

Malibu city officials have hired a public relations firm that not only has close ties with other business interests in Malibu, but also worked with one of the city's foes, an LNG firm that had attempted to locate an offshore LNG facility within Malibu's line of sight.

Fiona Hutton and Associates, which worked for Malibu-based Weintraub Financial Services, when the real estate firm moved through the approval process for its Malibu Lumber Yard shopping mall on land owned by the City of Malibu, was hired by the city on a three-month trial basis, according to City Manager Jim Thorsen.

Both Thorsen and a spokesperson for Hutton brushed aside the notion that some of those former or current clients might pose PR problems for the city or the PR firm because they are connected to municipal policies that environmental groups are critical of and have taken legal action against.

"We have a strong and productive relationship with the environmental community," said Laura McCoy, who is a strategic com-

munications advisor for Hutton and a former journalist.

The PR firm also worked for Los Angeles Dodgers owner Frank McCourt, who has homes in Malibu, when he first pur-

"...we have huge issues on the environmental [front]."

chased the team.

However, it is Hutton's long-term association with Woodside Natural Gas, which chose Hutton, according to the PR firm's website, to develop its strategic planning, communications and media relations for the entitlement and environmental review process for its OceanWay LNG project that might raise questions in the of-

ferences of the groups that fought hard to oppose the now scrapped project and are also in the thick of local environmental issues, especially wastewater management and water pollution.

McCoy said Woodside is no longer a client of the firm. She noted Hutton and Associates are still affiliated with Weintraub, but are not working any longer on the Lumber Yard shopping center.

Thorsen said Hutton was hired to work on many issues but also especially the weaknesses on the environmental front that plague Malibu City Hall.

"It is not strictly related to environmental. But we have huge issues on the environmental [front]. We need a better PR presentation. There is nobody on the staff that can do that. I've known her work," said Thorsen.

The city was sharply opposed to the Woodside LNG ocean facility that would have been located within line of sight of the Point Dume shoreline and pitted Hutton against council members who

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Chumash Organization Seeks Special Status for Waters Off Nicholas

■ Only Recreational Fishing Would Be Allowed within a One-Mile Radius from the Shore

For thousands of years, the Chumash were the stewards of the Malibu area's coastal resources. Some of their descendants, in a proposal to the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative, are asking to resume stewardship, at least along a small portion of the local coast.

The Wishtoyo Foundation's proposal is for a Chumash co-managed State Marine Conservation Area to be located in the waters off of Nicholas Canyon Beach. Called the Sequit Marine Protected Area to reflect the name of the original 1802 Rancho Topanga Malibu Sequit Spanish land grant, the proposed MPA would encompass roughly one and half square miles of ocean, and approximately two miles of shore.

"This stand alone MPA proposal is intended to set forth and introduce parameters for a co-beneficial partnership between the Chumash people, all MLPA stakeholders, and the California Department of Fish and Game, that best protects and preserves the ecological integrity of our coastal waters and the culture of the Chumash people," the proposal to the MLPA Initiative blue ribbon task force states.

"Without protecting the ecological integrity of our marine eco-

systems, the culture and well-being of the Chumash people, and of all people in this local and global community to which we all belong, will continue to be severely threatened and will suffer greatly," the proposal continues.

Wishtoyo executive director Mati Waiya is quick to point out that the Sequit MPA proposal is not intended to replace a State Marine Reserve at Point Dume, but to compliment it. Waiya told the Malibu Surfside News that it is vital that the final South Coast region MLPA plan incorporate the waters from Latigo to Point Dume.

"People forget," Waiya said. "Point Dume is a sacred point for the Chumash. A shrine area. Point Conception is the westernmost boundary, with Point Dume at the other end."

"If we're going to establish MPAs, we need to support what they truly stand for," Waiya said, advocating for the highest level of protection at Point Dume. However, the MPA he is proposing for the Nicholas Canyon area would be closed only to commercial fishers. Unlike other SMCAs, sustainable species in the Sequit MPA would remain available to recreational fishers, including spear and surf fishers, provided that traditional methods of fishing



EYES ON THE WATER—The Nicholas Canyon Beach lifeguard tower keeps watch on waters once patrolled by Chumash mariners. A proposal that is part of the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative would create a Marine Protected Area at the location that would focus on Chumash culture and ocean traditions.

MIPL/Guzman Goldmann

are used. Waiya says he would like to see Chumash fishing techniques revived, such as abalone fishing hooks, and the ingenious traps made from native plant materials that were used to trap fish and spiny lobster.

"I would like to see us teaching that to some of our children," he

said, describing how such a program could be integrated into Wishtoyo's Nicholas Canyon Chumash Discovery Village education program, which he says, offers a hands-on introduction to Chumash traditions and culture to thousands of school children throughout Southern California.

"It's an opportunity for them to

become empowered," Waiya says. "It's a window of opportunity for stewardship."

It's also an opportunity for the Chumash people to continue to "maintain and revitalize" their culture, Waiya adds. A culture that came extremely close to extinction in the 20th century.

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First Annual Contemporary Art Fair Comes to Malibu Country Mart

A little bit of the city comes to the country when the first Malibu Annual Contemporary Art Fair comes to the Malibu Country Mart on August 28-30. Seven Los Angeles-based contemporary art galleries are going to the beach when they show their work at the art fair.

China Art Objects, Chung King Projects, Circus Gallery, The Company, Eighth Veil, Parker Jones and Sister are participating.

The art fair will showcase the work of over 40 internationally exhibiting artists. The event is free and open to the public.

The event will premiere for one weekend in the heart of Malibu and folks are insisting it is no gag-

geration to say the fair is bringing some of the most exciting contemporary galleries in LA to the beach for an art affair "the likes of which have not been seen in Malibu" a press release stated.

John Kruth of Circus Gallery, who is organizing the event, said he had come up with the idea for a different kind of program.

Kruth explained the gallery scene in LA in August is "notoriously slow," and this is sort of a way to "take the show on the road."

The gallery owner also said it is a "good excuse" for the artists and the other gallery owners to "get out of town."

"It is a grassroots marketing campaign," Kruth

said, adding he drove around Malibu looking for empty retail spaces, which he noted were aplenty, and came upon the empty classrooms at the Malibu Country Mart.

Michael Koss, who owns the Malibu Country Mart, said he was willing to contribute the space. "We thought it would be a nice community event. We encourage community activities at the Malibu Country Mart. It is all about the community," he said.

The art fair will be held in a 4000-square-foot space that once housed a high school. Each participating gallery "will commandeer and re-invent a classroom," and present works both from gallery-represented

artists and special projects made specifically for the Malibu festival.

The artists work in a variety of media (painting, photography, sculpture, video, drawing and installation), which will give the public a glimpse of some of Southern California's freshest galleries, Kruth says.

The event also will feature performance art projects and video screenings for visitors. A schedule will be posted on the website www.malibuannual.com.

A preview party takes place on Friday, Aug. 28, from 7 to 10 p.m. The fair is scheduled for Saturday from noon to 8 p.m. and Sunday, Aug. 29, noon to 6 p.m.

Chumash MPA

(Continued from page 3) our children's future," Waiya says. "To deny it from them would be unjust."

Waiya dreams of one day using tomols, the wooden boats of the Chumash, to help maintain the proposed Sequit preserve. He calls it "eyes on the water," and hopes that area residents, kayakers, surfers, swimmers and beachgoers could also participate, keeping an eye on resources and reporting concerns or changes to the DFG, which will be overseeing the entire network of MPAs once the MLPA Initiative process is

complete.

The proposal to close the area to commercial fishing interests may not go over well with lobster and squid fishers that frequent the area, but the Sequit MPA would only extend one mile into the ocean instead of the full three miles out to the state boundary.

Recreational fishers have expressed relief that the proposal would leave the area open. The kelp beds off of Nicholas Canyon Beach are popular with kayakers. Surf fishers are a frequent sight along the wide sandy cove. Divers say the area is not for beginners, the south swell that makes the beach famous as a surf break can be a serious hazard for

divers, but the waters offer experienced divers an unspoiled submarine landscape of reefs and towering forests of kelp.

"It's a tough swim out to the best diving," one diver told The News, "but it's worth it. I've seen bat rays out there, angel sharks, octopus, massive squid."

Locals say that even the elusive sea otter, rarely seen this far south, is occasionally spotted in the kelp beds, fueling the hope that one day the long-endangered marine mammal will make a comeback in local waters.

Waiya hopes that, with enough protection, many endangered and declining species will have the poten-

tial to make a comeback to the waters traditionally fished by the Chumash.

The Sequit MPA would also protect another endangered resource—submerged cultural artifacts from millennia—according to some archeologists, as much as 8000 years—of Chumash habitation in the Nicholas Canyon area.

"It is our responsibility to protect the land, water, and oceans we exist upon for the common good and to sustain our well-being, co-existence, and harmony with the world and the many diverse surrounding communities that we depend on," the Wishtoyo proposal concludes.

BY SUZANNE GULDENMANN

EIR

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Councilmember Pamela Conley Ulich started council deliberations by saying she was leaning towards an EIR because "we are looking at four homes."

Councilmember Jefferson Wagner said there was no information about how much stormwater flow and drainage was involved after creating non-permeable surfaces because of the long road and the housing pads. "We probably do need an EIR," he said.

Councilmember John Sibert asked City Attorney Christi Hogin what is required to trigger an EIR. However, the answer did not seem to satisfy Sibert since Hogin talked more about needing to evaluate evidence, evaluating if there is a fair argument for significant impacts and the threshold significance.

"It is a judgment call,"

Sibert concluded.

Mayor Andy Stern wanted to hear how and if the impacts of the any new homes would be on the assessment district in the slide areas of Big Rock and how construction traffic would be addressed.

Sibert said he was troubled by the 20-foot wide road which would not really be required for one house. "It did not need to be a 20-foot wide road even if it was two houses," he said. "It is an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area on both sides of the road. I have a real difficulty with that, whether it is one house or it is four houses."

The council discussed the costs of an EIR, if the applicant would be willing to condition approval for promising to built only one house on the four lots and how much surface was involved in a concrete 20-foot-wide road.

The planning staff kept

trying to assure the council that most of their concerns were addressed by the standard conditions imposed upon applicants in the approval process. However, most of the council members were not buying.

As a test, the council moved the staff recommended motion of denying both appeals, but that lost on a 4-0 vote.

It was Wagner, who repeated, "This needs an EIR." Sibert agreed. "We should require an EIR," he added.

Hogin said the council would have to voice the issues they wanted addressed. The council, on a 4-0 vote, agreed to require an EIR that studied the impacts of the 20-foot-wide road, or an alternative, the impacts of construction since plans call for a concrete and steel caisson road, and drainage issues.

BY BILL KOENEKER

PR Firm

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Thorsen was asked about that, but dismissed the notion of any potential problem when he was asked if Hutton's work would be handicapped by this association. "No, not at all," he said.

McCoy said Hutton's work through the years has given the firm strong ties to many of the environmental organizations throughout the state.

Other public entities on Hutton's client list, according to the firm's Web site, include the Metropolitan Water District, the Los Angeles Zoo, the City of Santa Clarita, The Delta Wetlands Project. The firm has also handled various initiative campaigns, including the Indian gaming propositions on the 2008 ballot; Yes on 71, a stem cell research measure; Yes on Prop 84, a conservation bond measure; and Yes on 50, a water bond measure on the 2002 ballot.

BY BILL KOENEKER

OBITUARY

Medora Mae Colberg

1916-2009



Medora Colberg, who lived in Malibu for 55 years, died at her home on Pt. Dume last week. She was 93 years old.

Medora was born in Crystal Lake, Ill., in 1916 and lived on her family's farm until she went to the University of Illinois where she met her husband, Schiller A. Colberg. They were married in 1940 and moved to Malibu in 1954, bringing with them their four children.

Many residents in Malibu and surrounding communities know of Medora's tremendous grace under extreme crisis when her daughter, Karen, was in a nearly fatal automobile accident on her honeymoon in Mexico in 1969. From that moment on, Medora put the welfare and rehabilitation of her third child first. In late 1969, Medora decided to bring Karen home from UCLA where she had been in a coma for nearly 11 months. Medora equipped her home on Point Dume with all the necessary hospital apparatus, and went to work rehabilitating Karen. She never gave up hope.

For 40 years Medora worked with Karen to improve her speech and ability walk. It was only in the last year or so that Medora has not dealt with all of the physical therapy and doctors' appointments by herself.

Medora was named The Malibu Times' Mother of the Year in 2008. Preceded in death by her husband, Schiller, in 2004, and her son Kit, in 1989, she is survived by three children, son Kent (Kay) Colberg, Karen Colberg, Kristine (Forester) Stewart and three grandchildren, Scott, Doug and Kelly Stewart. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Boy Scouts of America, 16525 Sherman Way C 8, Van Nuys, CA 91406.

In Memoriam

Tony van Renterghem



Former longtime Malibu resident, Tony van Renterghem, born June 28, 1919 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, died peacefully at his home in Sequim, Washington on Sunday, July 19, 2009. He is survived by his wife Susanne and son Pablo. He lived in Malibu from the early 1930s to 1990. Van Renterghem, in his own words, was "a writer, historical researcher, philosopher and general-

ist," who had studied history, art, photography, motion picture arts, and contract law. He was fluent in English, Dutch, German, and French. He served eight years in the Netherlands Armed Forces, and five years in the Dutch Resistance during the German WWII occupation of Holland. He was condemned to death by the Nazis, but was never caught. He worked extensively in high-level espionage, helped hide those fleeing Nazi persecution, and initiated and ran the film and photo units of the Dutch Resistance (known as the "Underground Camera"). For his wartime activities, he received numerous awards from the Dutch government, including the WWII Dutch Resistance Cross from Queen Beatrix, and the Israeli Yad Vashem "Righteous Among the Nations" Honor for his efforts in saving Jewish lives. In 1948, he emigrated to the United States, where he spent some 35 years in the motion picture and television industry, working in photo and cinematography and as technical, historical, and script advisor with Twentieth Century Fox Films, Cinerama, CBS, Four Star, and George Stevens Productions. Van Renterghem enjoyed what he called "the last golden days of Hollywood," telling wonderful stories about old-time greats such as Jesse Lasky, Sr., Sam and Frances Goldwyn, John Ford, Otto Preminger, Federico Fellini, Gary Cooper, Marlene Dietrich, Tyrone Power, Ingrid Bergman, Marilyn Monroe, Burt Lancaster, and many others. He lived on the beach in Trancas for over 30 years (from 1956-1990). He loved Malibu, calling it "the most beautiful beach in the world." He rented a garage apartment for \$35 a month at the time, offered to clean up the empty lot next door for the landlords and, over a period of 20 years, created a lush tropical beach garden that was used as a location by such filmmakers as Paul Mazursky, Clint Eastwood, and Oliver Stone, and for countless TV commercial and magazine shoots. After the ownership of his Malibu abode changed hands, Van Renterghem and his wife decided it was time for a change in their lives and they spent 10 years living abroad before returning to the United States, where they spent several years in Arizona before finally settling in Washington. He just completed the autobiography of his WWII Resistance memoirs, "The Last Hussar—Resistance without Bullets," to be published in 2010. Described as "a mountain of a man," van Renterghem's family said his "humor, honesty and enormous intellect was obvious to everyone who knew him, and he will be missed more than words can convey. He lived his life with great humanity, wisdom and integrity."

