

No to Del Mar Bluff & An Alternative to Development- Open Space/ Historical Park

The 16-acre Del Mar Bluff is presently zoned for 16-22 homes in accordance to Community Development Plan standards and values. The property is located at the southwest corner of Via de La Valle and Camino Del Mar. This is in accordance with the Community Development Plan. Zephyr and The Robert Green Company have a specific plan that calls for up zoning to dense commercial for a 251-ROOM HOTEL with Convention Facilities, 76 HOMES, 4 RESTAURANTS and a SPA. This will negatively affect the quality of life in the Beach Colony with a huge increase in traffic on 101 and Via de La Valle. I believe this also dishonors the donation of James Scripps for the serene 4+-acre natural space park on the south side of the bluff. It will impact air quality from construction dust and sediment runoff to the lagoon. How does increasing traffic on our streets support our Climate Action Plan goals? It doesn't!

The developers only have an option on the property; they do not own it outright. They are literally exploring their options. This is NOT a done deal like so many of my neighbors assumed.

The Traffic: City of San Diego Traffic Manual estimates 8 car trips per day per residence and 10 car trips per day per resort room, which equals 3,118 trips per day. Think about it: staff for cleaning, gardening, bell men, wait staff, cooks, line cooks, front desk, lifeguards, massage therapists. Every time a staff person goes to work and goes home- 2 car trips on the road. Count the deliveries for the resort and restaurants and spa of produce, meat, liquor, drinks, linen trucks and garbage trucks, Fed Ex. Imagine the construction traffic for 3+ years and what that will do to our roads. Imagine the dust and sediment from grading and digging 20 +feet down into the Bluff for 2 level parking garages and earthquake mitigation and the damage to the fragile bluff geology. Imagine this additional traffic at rush hour; peak beach times, when the Fair is open or the Track Season or KaBoo is going. There will be gridlock for Beach Colony residents and the condos of Solana Beach. Will EMERGENCY VEHICLES be able to reach our homes?

The only benefit that I can see is the possibility of TOT taxes. The amount is unclear on the developer's website. It has changed from \$6 million, to \$8 million, now they say: *"It's hard for us to give an exact estimate until the City consultant's economic analysis is finalized for the site, but the project will generate significant transient occupancy or "hotel" tax (TOT) and property taxes for the City of Del Mar that will greatly benefit the community."*

If you dig deeper into their website the developers ask that the City takes their TOT taxes to build new restrooms at Dog Beach which will need to be maintained by the city in perpetuity. This would be where the porta potties are located, which would be necessary for the increased foot traffic from the Resort's 251 rooms and 74 villas. Which would inundate Dog Beach, which can already is overcrowded on nice weekend days. So take the \$6 million in guestimated tot taxes, subtract \$2 million for construction and water line sewer line construction. This would be the first year. What about maintenance, vandalism repair, ongoing sewer and water bills for the City that will occur year after year in perpetuity. At the very least the developers should pay these costs. Does the City of Del Mar need this money so badly to sacrifice the quality of life of Beach Colony residents and the condo owners in Solana Beach? Is this fair?

There is a third alternative; something does NOT have to happen at the Bluff, it could be left alone as a natural preserve. Here's an innovative solution to protect the Bluff. Since citizens in both Del Mar and Solana Beach are impacted and adamantly opposed to this Resort, the two cities can jointly purchase this property and use it as a park and open space property. This would honor the Scripps donation and the entire bluff could be an open space natural area park. This could be a center for the Del Mar Historical Society. The Woodward estate house could be remodeled for a community center. The Alvarado House could be relocated there. The Historical Society was just gifted a beach house to relocate and the owner said she would purchase a lot to relocate it. The Garden Club could have demonstration gardens; maybe there could be a community garden.

By law governments must pay fair market value for properties. That doesn't mean a re-zoned value or what the developers are paying now. That means what it is worth on the open market as it zoned right now. Funding from the Historical Society donor, private donations, and city bonds could purchase the land. It could be managed and paid for jointly by the two cities with Bond money. There are ways to reduce the purchase cost by Bargain and Sale Deeds that do not diminish the net profit to sellers, but reduce the price to the cities. I respectfully request that this Open Space Project Alternative be included as an area of study in the Environmental Impact Statement, so we can truly weigh all of the alternatives. Citizens should have all the facts when trying to decide on a development, which will forever change the serenity of Del Mar.

Submitted by Debbie Hecht,
hecht.deb@gmail.com
808-989-3222