

Board Meeting Date: April 5, 2022
Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Steve Monowitz, Community Development Director

Subject: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Consideration of an appeal of the Planning Commission's denial of a Coastal Development Permit for the County Parks Department's Off-Leash Dog Recreation Pilot Program. The decision on this application is appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

County File Number: PLN2021-00333
(San Mateo County Parks Department)

RECOMMENDATION:

Uphold in part and overturn in part the Planning Commission's decision to deny the Parks Department's application for a Coastal Development Permit to implement the off-leash pilot program at Pillar Point Bluffs and Quarry Park, as follows: deny the CDP for the pilot program at Pillar Point Bluffs for the reasons stated by the Planning Commission, and approve the CDP for the pilot program at Quarry Park on the basis that it is in conformity with the Local Coastal Program, General Plan and zoning regulations, as conditioned by staff recommendation.

BACKGROUND:

On February 9, 2022, the Planning Commission considered a request from the County Parks Department (Parks) for a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) to implement an Off-Leash Dog Recreation Pilot Program in two Coastside parks – Pillar Point Bluff (PPB) and Quarry Park (QP). In October 2018, the Board of Supervisors amended Section 3.68.180 of the County Ordinance Code to allow on-leash dog access on designated and signed trails in certain San Mateo County Parks, including the two subject parks. At the same meeting, the Board of Supervisors directed Parks to develop a recommendation for an off-leash dog recreation pilot program.

On November 16, 2021, the Board adopted amendments to Section 3.68.180 of the Ordinance Code to authorize off-leash dog use subject to the implementation of a Pilot Program to study the effects of allowing said use in the two subject parks. Implementation of the Pilot Program, however, requires a Coastal Development Permit because it is a change in the intensity of use of land in the coastal zone.

At the February 9 hearing, the Planning Commission took testimony from the public both in favor and against issuance of the requested CDP. Testimony given in opposition to the granting of the CDP focused on potential impacts to biological resources at Pillar Point Bluff Park. During their deliberations on the requested CDP,

the Commission asked the Parks Director whether he would entertain a partial granting of the CDP, excluding Pillar Point Bluff from the approval. The Director stated that he did not have the authority to alter the Pilot Program in such a manner because the resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors in November directed the Parks Department to include both parks. As a result, the Planning Commission voted to deny the requested CDP on the basis that the impacts it poses to sensitive habitats at and adjacent to Pillar Point Bluffs does not conform to the Local Coastal Program (LCP).

On February 22, 2022 the Parks Department filed an appeal of the Planning Commission's decision. In the appeal, the Parks Department states that it desires to pursue the Pilot Program at Quarry Park and not at Pillar Point Bluff Park.

DISCUSSION:

The proposal to implement the pilot program at Quarry Park and not at Pillar Point Bluffs eliminates concerns that the program will lead to adverse impacts to sensitive habitats at and adjacent to Pillar Point Bluffs. As detailed by the staff report, the Pilot Program includes measures to prevent off-leash dog use of designated trails from impacting coastal resources or coastal access and recreation opportunities. These measures are incorporated into the recommended conditions of approval and achieve compliance with the County's Local Coastal Program.

County Counsel has reviewed this report as to form.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No Fiscal Impact