PLANNING & BUILDING
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING
Promoting the Wise Use of Land ◆ Helping to Build Great Communities

Date: July 25, 2013

To: Planning Commission

From: Ryan Hostetter, Senior Planner

RE: Revised Parking Area for the Cave Landing (Mallagh Landing/Pirates Cove) Project

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of a revised Development Plan/Coastal Development Permit/Variance DRC2011-00069. The revised plan includes parking for 70 cars in the existing parking area and around the proposed bathroom (which includes 3 ADA spaces). The approval is based on the revised Findings listed in Exhibit A and revised Conditions listed in Exhibit B and adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., and CA code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq.).

Summary

The project described in the May 23, 2013 staff report included improvements to the existing parking area resulting in a 35 car parking lot, drainage facilities, a vault restroom, and trail improvements. Based on comments received on the original project, County Parks at the May 23, 2013 hearing, presented a revised plan that included 51 parking spaces in the existing parking area. At the direction of the Planning Commission, County Parks worked with their designers and has prepared a further revised parking plan that includes 70 parking spaces, three of which are designated ADA spaces. This plan results in increased grading and reduced drainage improvement areas. All other components of this project including trails, signs, bathroom, and fencing remain as originally proposed.

On May 23, 2013, the Planning Commission reviewed the Cave Landing (Mallagh Landing /Pirates Cove) project that proposed the following improvements:

- A bike/pedestrian trail that connects Pismo Beach and Avila Beach,
- Improvements to the existing coastal access trail including stairs to the beach,
- Surfacing, striping and installation of drainage improvement to the existing parking area,
- A waterless vault restroom,
- Picnic tables, benches and bike racks,
- Interpretive signs.

The project described in the May 23, 2013 staff report included improvements to the existing parking area resulting in a 35 car parking lot. Based on comments received on the original

976 OSOS STREET, ROOM 200 • SAN LUIS OBISPO • CALIFORNIA 93408 • (805)781-5600
EMAIL: planning@co.slo.ca.us • FAX: (805) 781-1242• WEBSITE: http://www.sloplanning.org

project, staff presented a revised plan that included 51 parking spaces in the existing parking area.

The Planning Commission heard testimony that the proposed 51 space parking lot was not sufficient parking to meet demand. Discussion ensued about balancing the public need for more parking along with the constraints of the site including: a significant archeological site, slopes over 50 percent, an active land slide and coastal bluff erosion/drainage issues. Because of these issues the Commission continued this item and directed staff to:

- Consider a non-striped parking lot,
- Review other options to increase the number of parking spaces, and
- Consult closely with members of the public and Avila Valley Advisory Counsel.

Parking Lot Striping

At the May 23 hearing, questions were raised about the limitations of a non-striped parking lot as part of a County facility. This parking lot can accommodate up to approximately 77 cars with unorthodox parking and no striping. However, as a County project, this parking lot must follow the requirements for size of parking spaces, aisle width and turning radius which limit the number of cars that can fit into the parking lot. This question was posed to the County's Risk Management Officer and County Counsel. The response that was received clearly indicated that not striping the parking lot would create an unacceptable liability for the County.

Increased Parking Options

Parks' staff engaged the project engineer and the Planning Department regarding creating more parking while still honoring the Park and Recreation Element, the Local Coastal Plan, San Luis Bay Area Plan and the Coastal Commission's policies and regulations for protecting archeological resources and coastal bluffs, and minimizing the impacts to the site's fragile geology and aesthetics. Managing the drainage and runoff water is critical to protecting the coastal bluffs and the active landslide. The proposed drainage swales and basins accomplish this. To accommodate more parking on site, County Parks has developed a plan that:

- expands the area to be graded by the restroom by approximately 2000 square feet,
- reconfigures the existing parking area to maximize striped parking possible while meeting the parking regulations of the Coastal Zone Ordinance, and
- includes 14 compact car parking spaces (the Ordinance allows up to 20 percent of the parking spaces to be compact).

These changes have created a 70 space parking area at this site. This parking plan does not account for the 20 plus parking spaces currently along the ocean side of Cave Landing road right-of-way which will remain unchanged.

976 Osos Street, Room 300 • San Luis Obispo • California 93408 • (805)781-5600
EMAIL: planning @co.slo.ca.us • FAX: (805) 781-1242• WEBSITE: http://www.sloplanning.org

These project changes however are not without compromise. The previous 35 and 51 space parking plans did not require grading outside of the existing parking area or any impacts to vegetation. The 70 space parking area requires trimming of vegetation along the west edge of the parking area, and proposes some grading at the lower end of Cave Landing Road near the proposed restroom. This would result in an increase in the impact to archeological resources.

In addition, the 35 space parking plan allowed for a cohesive drainage area located at the edge of the site. This provided superior runoff water management which would likely prolong the life of the site because it would optimally handle runoff so as not to exacerbate the active land slide and bluff erosion. The proposed 70 space plan will adequately handle typical drainage and runoff, but would not be as effective as the original design.

A table outlining the differences in the three parking plans, including each site plan, are all attached to this report.

American Disabilities Act

The American Disabilities Act (ADA) does apply to elements of this project: bathroom, parking lot, recreation area and trails. The bathroom will be ADA complaint. The parking lot will comply by providing three ADA parking spaces. The parking plan allows for ADA loading and unloading areas, though not shown on plan. The ADA recreation area is the space with benches adjacent to parking spaces 1-10. This area will be level enough to allow a disabled person to get out of the car and enjoy the surrounding area and views. A sign at this area will inform people of ADA accessible beaches that are close by, making this recreation area ADA compliant. Creating an ADA accessible trail on this site with its steep slopes and cultural resources is very difficult and would require much more grading than proposed. Fortunately the ADA law has an exemption for ADA accessible trails on sites with steep slopes, biological resources and cultural resources. This project qualifies for this exemption.

Environmental Determination

The 70 space parking area is consistent with the existing Mitigated Negative Declaration and can be found consistent with the Parks and Recreation Element, the Local Coastal Plan, San Luis Bay Area Plan and the Coastal Commission's goals and regulations regarding protecting archeological resources and the site's fragile geological features and aesthetics. Beyond the 70-space parking design, any further increases may be inconsistent with these goals and policies and would not be consistent with the impact levels identified in the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Review by Other Agencies

This new parking plan has been reviewed by the Avila Valley Advisory Council, Chumash Tribal Representatives, County Public Works Department and the Whale's Cave Conservancy. The following is a summary of their comments on the new parking plan:

Avila Valley Advisory Council – None received by the date of this report.

County Public Works – Concerns about the parallel parking next to the retention basin (parking spaces 25-31). People accessing the passenger side of the car will be impaired by the retention area. The concentrated foot traffic may also impair the bio retention area. Angled parking would put the doors farther from the "cliff edge".

Northern Chumash Tribal Counsel- None received by the date of this report.

Tribal Chair, yak tityu tityu - Northern Chumash Tribe- Mona Tucker- Dismayed that native soil will have to excavated. Whales' Cave is a very important site to the Northern Chumash and once a site is destroyed it can never be replaced or repaired. The new excavation for 70 parking spaces will be in an area that is a known cultural site and every precaution is needed to insure protection of important cultural resources.

Whales Cave Conservancy –Mike Obayashi, Mildly supports the 70 car parking area providing the continuation of parking on the Southwest side (ocean side) of Cave Landing Road.

Conclusion

Staff recommends approval of the revised Development Plan/Coastal Development Permit/Variance DRC2011-00069 that includes parking 70 cars in the existing parking area and around the restroom based on the revised Findings listed in Exhibit A and revised Conditions listed in Exhibit B, and adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., and CA code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq.).

976 Osos Street, Room 300 • San Luis Obispo • California 93408 • (805)781-5600
EMAIL: planning @co.slo.ca.us • FAX: (805) 781-1242• WEBSITE: http://www.sloplanning.org

2-5

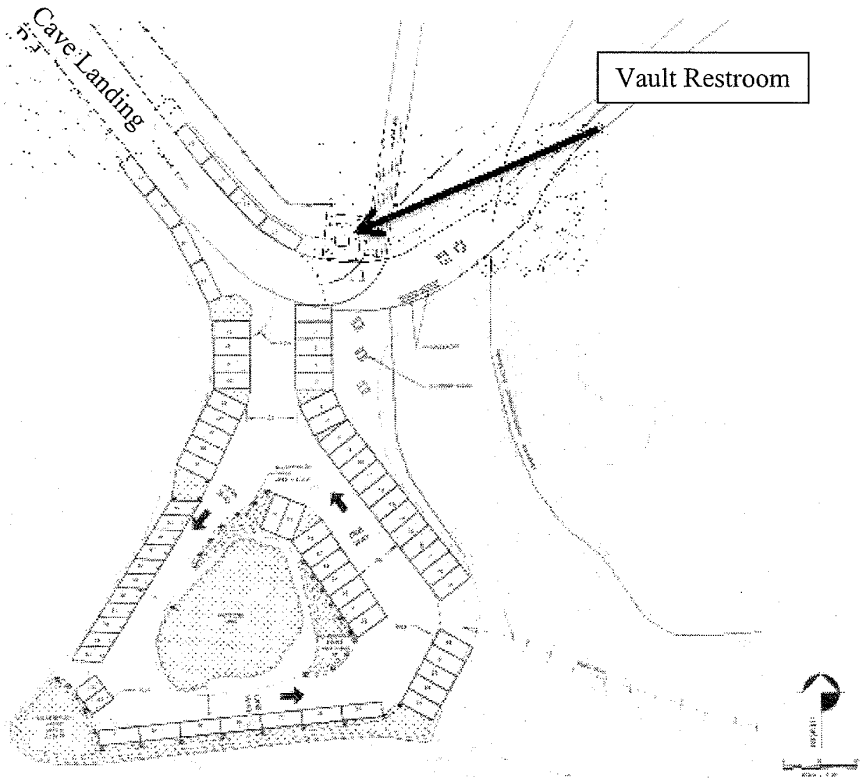
Review of Parking Proposals for Cave Landing Road

Parking Area	Amenities	Drainage Performance	Design Sensitivity to Environmental Resources	Aesthetic Value
70 spaces One way circulation through parking lot	Walkway ¼ of the way around parking lot Fewer vegetated areas	Adequate drainage management 4,499 sq. ft. of swales /basins for 17,000 sq. ft. of parking area	Grading impacts to archeological site Adequate drainage basin location Impacts to vegetation of site	Loss of vegetated areas Limits view of ocean and Ontario Ridge view from Road
51 spaces One way circulation through parking lot	Walkway ¼ of the way around parking lot Fewer vegetated areas	Adequate drainage management 4,499 sq. ft. of swales/basin for 15,000 sq. ft. of parking area	No significant grading in an archeological site Adequate drainage basin location	Tapered entrance to parking lot Less vegetated areas Retain ocean and Ontario Ridge view from Road
35 spaces No turn around in parking lot	American Disabilities Act walkway around parking lot Access to second view area Vegetated areas	Excellent drainage management 4,250 sq. ft. of drainage basin for 5,000 sq. ft. of parking area	No significant grading in an archeological site Optimal drainage basin location for geological features of site	Lots of vegetated areas in parking area Bottle neckTapered entrance to parking lot Retain ocean and Ontario Ridge view from Road

976 OSOS STREET, ROOM 300 • SAN LUIS OBISPO • CALIFORNIA 93408 • (805)781-5600
EMAIL: planning @co.slo.ca.us • FAX: (805) 781-1242• WEBSITE: http://www.sloplanning.org

2-6

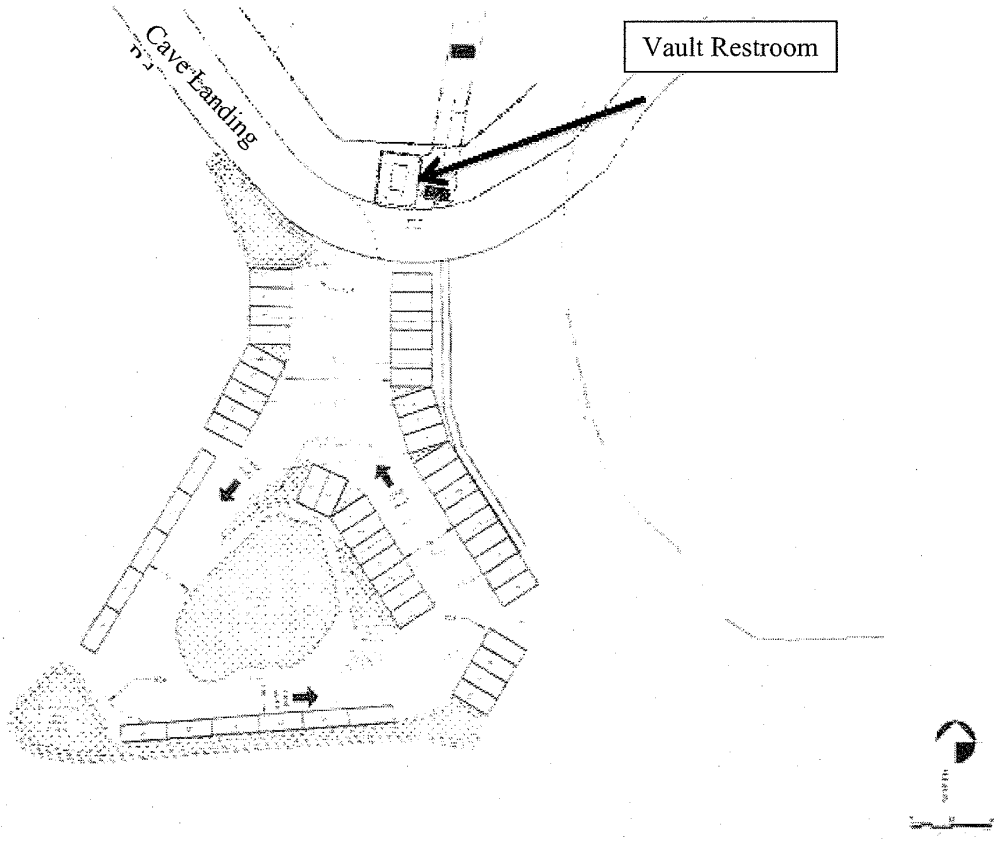
New Recommended 70 Space Parking Design:



976 OSOS STREET, ROOM 300 • SAN LUIS OBISPO • CALIFORNIA 93408 • (805)781-5600
EMAIL: planning @co.slo.ca.us • FAX: (805) 781-1242• WEBSITE: http://www.sloplanning.org

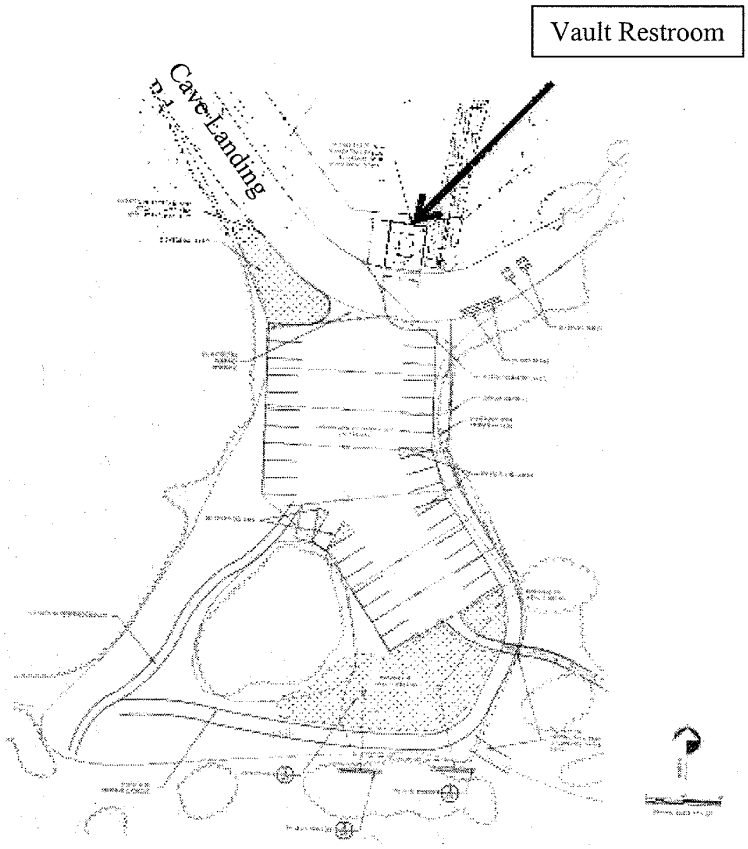
2-7

Previous 51 Space Parking Design presented on May 23, 2013 Planning Commission:



2-8

Original 35 Space Parking Design:



976 Osos Street, Room 300 • San Luis Obispo • California 93408 • (805)781-5600
EMAIL: planning @co.slo.ca.us • FAX: (805) 781-1242• WEBSITE: http://www.sloplanning.org