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Is any building project acceptable to our community?

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I've lived here now for almost 40 years and spent most of that time in real estate. Over this period, I've seen many projects proposed and opposed. Many of these projects have been expensive fights lasting decades.

I think the Pacific Ridge project off of Terrace Avenue in Half Moon Bay gets the award for being the longest one to get approved, taking over 25 years. The result was tons of money wasted on lawyers and countless studies that has made the 75 new homes expensive.

North Wavecrest was another 15-year battle with the developer finally selling the land to Peninsula Open Space Trust for around \$13 million. Both the developer and POST got what they wanted and the city spent a fortune fighting this with lawyers to then lose out on millions of dollars in lost property tax revenue over the years.

The Oceano Hotel andn Spa land was originally owned by Westinghouse, which built Ocean Colony and owned thousands of acres of land here. Westinghouse wanted to build something on this site in the 1970s. After several owners, the hotel was completed with other parts still undeveloped.

How can we forget the Beachwood fiasco and its \$40 million dollar judgment?

It does seem that several Mid Pen projects in the south end of Half Moon Bay have gone through without much protests, but that does to be the exception.

Almost every single proposed project is objected to on the grounds of endangered species, sensitive vegetation and traffic. It also seems every site is some "iconic treasure" that can't be developed because we are depriving the public of enjoying someone's property for free. Whatever is proposed isn't what people want there. In reality what they want is nothing.

The successful delaying strategy of lawsuits and constant appeals to San Mateo County and Coastal Commission over every detail guarantees adding years to the process. It doesn't necessarily stop the project, it just makes the development more expensive and those costs are then passed on in terms of higher home prices, as with like Pacific Ridge.

No question we need more housing, and luckily we have hundreds of acres that could be used for many projects. But the real question is what to build? Do we build tax-generating projects so are our financially strapped school district benefits? Or do we keep selling off our valuable assets to non-profit or tax exempt organizations depriving the community and schools of millions of lost property tax revenue every year. Leaving the land as it is also doesn't produce much tax revenue cause of low tax bases.

Now we have a new crop of projects on the drawing board like Dunes Beach, Big Wave and the Mid Pen housing development in Moss Beach. What caught my eye was the objection to an eight-unit project proposed in Moss Beach off of California Avenue. Complaints are its too tall and doesn't fit in with the other homes. A new objection in addition to the usual ones is that it's near an earthquake fault. Guess people don't care about all the other homes in Moss Beach that are on or near the Seal Cove fault, just these eight units.

But if you can't even build eight units on an infill lot, really, can anything be built here? While our elected officials complain about the housing shortage here, they constantly talk out of both sides of their mouths because their actions show they are really against almost everything. An exception is the Mid Pen project in Moss Beach which the county wants despite widespread community objections.

When people are against everything all the time using the same tired arguments, people tune them out because they've heard it too often for too many years. It reminds me of the little boy who cried wolf. At first people are concerned about the big bad wolf coming into their neighborhood. But when its repeated constantly, it has little impact.

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