

# **Public Comments**

## **Agenda Item 5**

Written Comments Received By 12pm on 3/28/2022



*March 28, 2022*

*City Council Meeting*

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**From:** Julie Stock [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 26, 2022 5:15 PM  
**To:** Public Comment  
**Subject:** Talbot lot up for rezoning

**[CAUTION: External Email]**

This public comment is in regards to the lot up for rezoning at the northern top of Talbot Ave. My name is Julie Stock and I have been a resident of Pacifica since 2005. I moved here as a renter to raise a family and be close to my job as a public school teacher. I was fortunate enough to purchase my first home in 2009 in Pacifica Manor and continue to be able to afford to live here. I have enjoyed the community of teachers, shop owners, artists, friends, realtors, and neighbors who are mostly middle class.

I am moved to write this public comment as I have noticed over time that Pacifica has become increasingly unaffordable for middle class families, especially for teachers, to make their lives here. Several whom I have known have had to move out of the area to afford a home. I am a strong environmentalist and was involved with the artistic projects in Lindamar along the beach to artistically teach people about the diversity of life on the coast. I believe and act upon environmental issues.

I also know that San Mateo County needs to grow to allow families to live here and work here in a sustainable way. I am a part of HEART, Housing Endowment and Regional Trust, and I care a lot about the balance of environmentalism and growth as part of how we move forward as a city. Talbot Avenue already has substantial homes developed the entire way up the street. I saw the renderings of the proposed development and it is in keeping with the aesthetics of the area from several views. It would be suitable for a middle class family. I am fully satisfied that there is no negative visual impact and from this home and development of the property. I urge you to consider the positive impact of rezoning for another affordable home to continue growing our community in a way that allows one step forward in Pacifica's modest growth.

Thank you.

Julie Stock

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**From:** Eleanore Tapia <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 28, 2022 7:47 AM  
**To:** Public Comment  
**Subject:** new development on Talbot

**[CAUTION: External Email]**

Hello,

I am a bay area native, from San Francisco and have been a Pacifica resident for 14 years. As we all know the housing market in the Bay Area has become a difficult market for us all and as a renter I find myself fighting to stay in the area to continue to raise my son. I moved out of the city and to Pacifica to raise my son in this community because of the countless benefits it offers to families. I felt compelled to write in on this subject because I find it upsetting how difficult it has become or can become for people who own lots in the Pacifica to build home on their own lots. I support the building of the single family home on Talbot. As long as the new building does not have a negative impact on the direct neighbors, a negative impact on the community or the environment, the owners of lots should not have to spend years jumping through hoops to build on the land that they own.

I saw the same thing done when the owners of the lot on Salada Ave were trying to build on their lot. We are in desperate need of housing and people(families) who are in the position to contribute to this community by building new homes for themselves should not be stopped as long as they do it responsibly.

Thank you,  
Eleanore Tapia

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**From:** Christine Boles <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 28, 2022 11:29 AM  
**To:** \_City Council Group; Murdock, Christian; Wehrmeister, Tina; Public Comment  
**Cc:** Woodhouse, Kevin; Berman, Lauren; Nibbelin, John; Domurat, George; Godwin, James; Leal, David; Hauser, Samantha; Ferguson, Alex  
**Subject:** City Council agenda item 5 tonight, single family home at Talbot Avenue terminus  
**Attachments:** Boles letter to Planning re Talbot Avenue home 3.28.22.pdf

**[CAUTION: External Email]**

Please find attached letter noting additional geotechnical and landslide concerns for this project.

Mayor Bier and Council Members, if you have time before tonight's meeting, I'd really suggest you make a quick visit to the end of Canyon Drive below this property to get a visual understanding of the steepness of this hill with 100% slope.

With our outdated General Plan, our Planning Department and Planning Commission do not have the necessary tools to evaluate whether a project is in a hazard zone. Our 2022 draft General Plan is also currently inadequate with incomplete maps and data. For additional information, here is a [link](#) to my DEIR comment letter on landslides and geotechnical issues.

We must do better in our review of development projects to ensure we are protecting public safety and to ensure that approved projects do not become a public nuisance, potentially costing the city more tax money in the future for abatement.

If these issues cannot be resolved tonight I would respectfully suggest that you consider continuing this item to a later date.

Christine Boles, Architect

**Beausoleil Architects**

[REDACTED]

Pacifica, CA 94044

[REDACTED]

[www.beausoleil-architects.com](http://www.beausoleil-architects.com)

*"Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world." - Desmond Tutu*

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DATE: March 28, 2022

TO: Tina Wehrmeister, Planning Director/Assistant City Manager  
Christian Murdock, Deputy Planning Director



RE: Talbot Avenue project, APN 016-270-190

Dear Ms. Wehrmeister and Mr. Murdock,

As I was reading the staff report for the Talbot project this weekend I read the new letter from the downhill neighbor, Mr. Gerald King, on Canyon Drive who mentioned his concerns about drainage and landslides given the proximity of the Moana Landslide of 1982. That jarred my memory and I spent some time this weekend digging in my landslide records. I apologize that I did not read the geotechnical report or notice these issues when the project was reviewed by the Planning Commission. Fortunately, it is not too late.

You might remember that Pacifica suffered 475 landslides that winter 40 years ago that caused millions of dollars of damage and cost the lives of three children when their home was engulfed in a landslide as they slept. Of the 475 slides, the Moana slide was one of the 9 major slides that was studied in the Howard Donley (HDAI) report. That slide is located on the same hill as the proposed project, on the north face, less than 600 feet away.

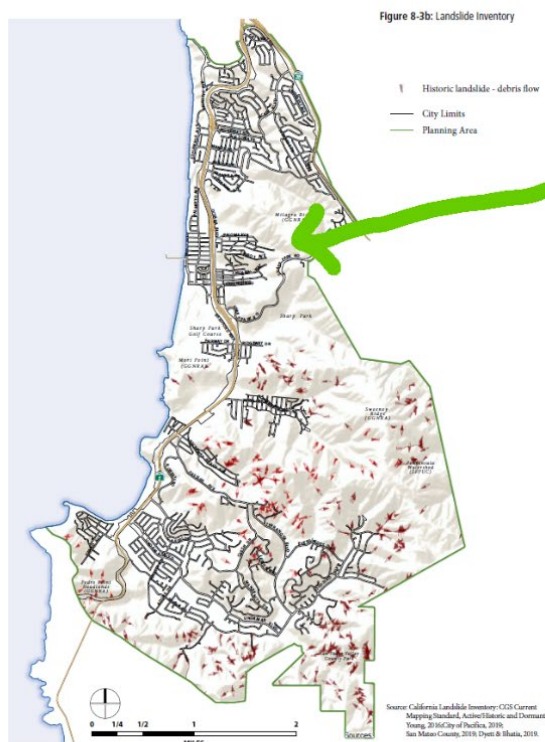
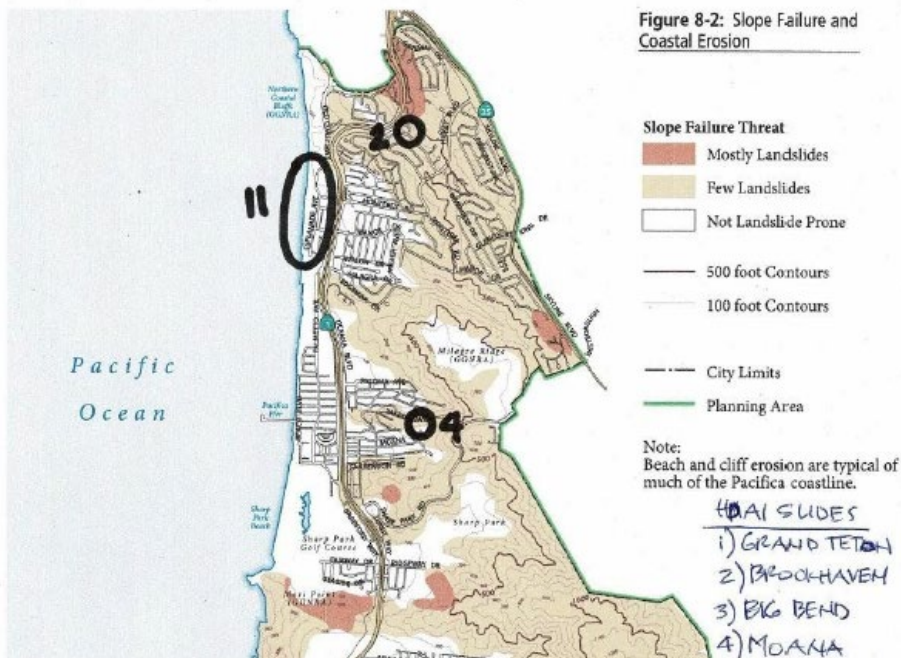
I have attached the relevant section of the HDAI report, including the location map and detailed plan and sections of the Moana slide. Talbot Avenue, built on the ridge of this hill, was extended and new homes built along the downslope sides after 1982.

I took a Google Earth image along Talbot that shows both the proposed property and the location of the Moana slide. See below. Except for the proposed driveway and upper section of the home, the slopes are identical at 1:1 or 100% slope.



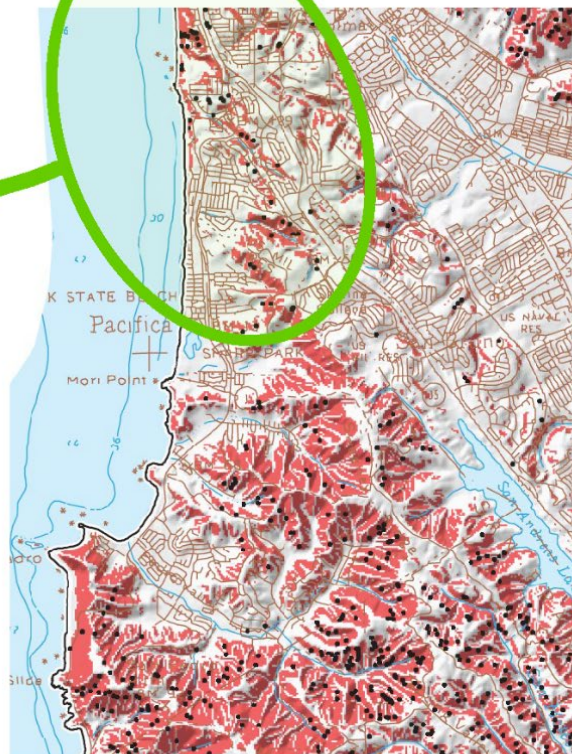


You might recall that I have informed the Planning Department and City Council on numerous occasions that our current General Plan Landslide Maps are inaccurate as the HDAI report called for new landslide maps to be drawn in 1983, but this work was never done. In my 2022 Draft General Plan/DEIR Comment Letter #2, dated 2/7/22, I also pointed out that the new landslide maps were inaccurate as they left out the historic debris flow landslides in the entire northern section of Pacifica, including the area of this project. See images below.



Pacifica Draft General Plan 2022

(red indicates historic debris flow landslides)



United States Geological Survey Map

(Red indicates debris flow risk areas, black dots indicate past landslides)



Yesterday I met with a neighbor at 708 Canyon Drive. He informed me of two other landslides on this hill during the 1998 El Nino winter. See highlighted areas below in yellow. He said the larger slide was caused by the construction of the Talbot Road extension and the new homes on Talbot. The two houses at the bottom of Canyon Drive, 676 and 684, on either side of a gap, suffered extensive damage and were red tagged as uninhabitable for weeks while repair work was done.



I am concerned that the very real risks of debris flow landslides have not been evaluated by staff or the geotechnical engineer for this project. I have the following questions for the geotechnical consultant, Summit Engineering, and the city's geotechnical peer review consultant.

- 1) The geotechnical report is dated September 19, 2018. This is out of date and would not be accepted in other Bay Area municipalities. Is there an update letter to the report that is missing from the agenda packet? The engineer's recommendations on page 6 specifically says to "update the report because of observed changes or delays".
- 2) On page 1, under geology, it says "Local land stability maps show the site to have medium to high susceptibility of seismic landslides". There is no mention of debris flow landslides anywhere in the report. We learned in 1982 that debris flow landslides do not require a seismic event to trigger this type of slide. According to a Pacific Tribune article interviewing Howard Donley in 1990, he says, "the key is that any time you have a rainstorm that exceeds 1" in a day, with rain before and after, that kind of rainfall completely saturates the earth, fills all the cracks and creates a buoyant effect when surface and groundwater meet. It's like sticking the soil in a bathtub, it lifts the soil up...Mudslides have a life of their own, it's like you've got your gun cocked. The only problem is you don't know when it will go off and what will trigger it." Donley recommended detailed studies not only of each project site, but of the hillsides around it. In fact the 1983 Safety Element requires an analysis of on and off-site hazards. This analysis does not appear to have been done for this site.

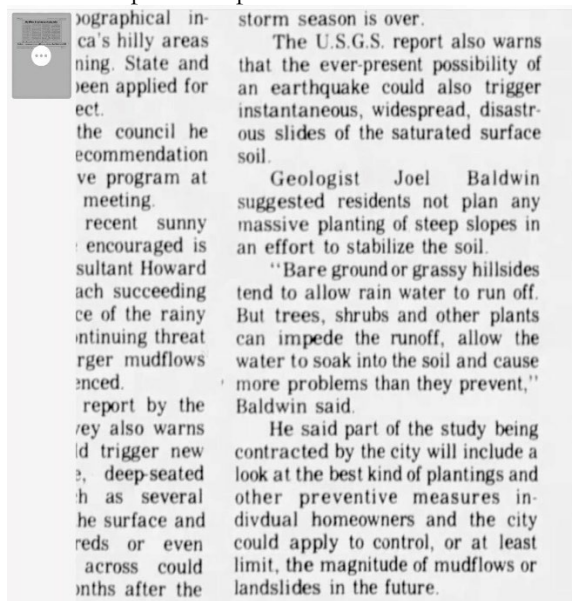
- 3) On page 1 of the geotechnical report the land stability maps referenced as data sources date from 1983. These only reference seismic events. Current geologic maps which, according to my source at USGS, do include debris flow risk can be found at the US Department of Conservation website: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/EQZApp/app/>
- As you can see in the screenshot below, this parcel is in an identified landslide zone, identical to the area of the Moana slide. Please confirm that state requirements for required investigations are met based on this landslide risk identification.



- 4) Page 3 of the report references 2016 California Building Code Seismic Parameters. Please update recommendations as necessary to comply with the current 2019 California Building Code. Changes may also be needed to the design drawings to reflect new code requirements.
- 5) The staff report acknowledges recommendations from the HIDAI report that plantings of trees and larger shrubs can increase the risks of debris flow landslides and yet the analysis to determine specific appropriate planting is being deferred.

With no analysis, the geotechnical report contradicts these recommendations on page 7 and the project plans continue to show trees being added on slopes of 100%.

Here is a clip from a newspaper interview with Howard Donley explaining why trees are not a good idea on slopes susceptible to debris flow landslides.





If I was one of the downhill neighbors, I would be worried as if this project is approved tonight, it leaves decisions that impact my property and my family's safety to staff with no opportunity for public review and input. Besides an updated geotechnical report and analysis of debris flow landslide risks and recommendations, I would also want to see a construction erosion control plan, which is very difficult to manage on such a steep site with 100% slope. The soils report calls for no grading to be allowed from October to April. I would also suggest adding language for strict compliance with grading moratorium dates as a condition of approval.

One of the main reasons Pacifica adopted the Hillside Preservation Ordinance is to protect public safety. The second item under "intent" in the ordinance says, "*Help protect people and property from all potentially hazardous conditions particular to hillsides*".

HPD only allows projects to be built on slopes up to 38%, and at that slope the size of the project is severely restricted. This site, with an average of 55% slope, increasing to 100% for the majority of the site, is a hazard, and the geotechnical investigations must be thorough, comprehensive and up to date with current codes if the city is to consider a variance. By considering variances to HPD without providing these detailed analyses, any approvals that contradict the language and intent of the General Plan and could be challenged.

I'd also like to point out again that the project plans continue to have incorrect fire hose lengths on the plan (166' measured versus 150' incorrectly noted) and the staff report is still missing official documentation from North County Fire stating that they have agreed to an exception to maximum length of 150'. I would have thought that the City Attorney would want to see such a document in the project file and/or conditions of approval to carefully protect the city from liability in case of a catastrophic fire. I have copied the relevant section of the current fire code below for reference.

*Section 503.1.1 Buildings and facilities [2019 California Fire Code]*

*... The fire apparatus access road shall ... extend to within 150 feet of all portions of the facility and all portions of the exterior walls of the first story of the building as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the building facility.*

*Exceptions:*

1. The fire code official is authorized to increase the dimension of 150 feet where any of the following conditions occur:
  - 1.1 the building is equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 ....
  - 1.2 Fire apparatus access roads cannot be installed because of location on property, topography, waterways, nonnegotiable grades or other similar conditions, and an approved alternative means of fire protection is provided.

I would suggest that this item be continued tonight so that these issues can be properly addressed before final approvals. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Christine Boles, Architect  
Principal

Cc: City Council Members  
Planning Commission Members  
City Manager Woodhouse

## MOANA SLOPE FAILURE

### Geographic Setting

The Moana slope failure was on a south-facing cut slope immediately north and upslope from single-family residential structures on Moana Drive as located on Plate 1. The slope failure was classified as an earth slump-earth flow. Earth from the failure flowed from the toe onto a residence downslope covering most of the lot to a depth of one foot. Fences were broken and buried while the house sustained minor structural damage by impact of the advancing earth flow. Details of the failure are shown on Plate 10, Moana Slope Failure.

The pre-failure slope appeared to have been an engineered cut slope, constructed during the development of the Moana Drive subdivision. The slope was inclined at approximately 1:1 and was 50 feet high. The top of the cut slope was traversed by a 2½ foot-wide concrete gutter that apparently dispersed runoff onto the affected slope. Presently, the unreinforced concrete gutter has been undermined by the failure, leaving a portion of the gutter spanning the headscarp without support. A metal culvert has been placed across this span to help channel runoff across the headscarp and away from the affected slope.

Vegetation across the slope consisted of annual grasses, brush, and some planted pine trees. Tree stumps were observed at the toe of the failure.

Water seepage occurred from the headscarp and right flank of the failure. Surface water from ponding was noted at the base of the slope within the hummocky landslide debris.

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#### Geotechnical Setting

Intensely fractured and weathered greenstone was exposed in the cut slope east and west of the slope failure. Pervasive geologic structures were not observed. Exposures adjacent to the affected area revealed bedrock overlain by approximately six feet of a dark brown sandy clay residual soil and in turn by four feet of dark gray silty clay topsoil. Residual soil and topsoil were also exposed in the headscarp; however, bedrock was not observed there. The basal failure surface occurred at the residual soil-bedrock contact as shown on Plate 11, Cross Section A-A', Moana Slope Failure. The landslide material was saturated, medium dense to loose, gravelly sandy clay. Farther downslope, hummocky landslide debris graded into smooth, wavy earth flow material. The earth flow material was saturated, loose, gravelly sandy clay. There was evidence of slope failures both east and west of the study area that occurred sometime before the January 1982 rainstorm.



### Slope Failure Characteristics

The Moana slope failure was characterized by a nearly square crown where the slide pulled away from the cut slope. The total slide scar area was 55 feet wide by 50 feet long and included an estimated volume of 600 cubic yards. The headscarp varies in height from twelve feet, decreasing in height along the flanks to the toe where it was less than two feet high. The height of the left flank was greater than the right. The gradient of the headscarp ranged from vertical to more than 100 percent.

The slide material deposited at the foot of the slope was very hummocky and displayed numerous transverse and radial cracks. The earth flow, which extended at least thirty feet from the source area, was very soft where wet, smooth and wavy, with a bulbous toe exposed near the side entrance to the backyard. Much of the slide surface was modified following the failure in order to provide surface drainage channels and to lay visqueen across the headscarp area.

### Mode of Failure

The Moana slope failure was classified as complex, consisting of an earth slump and secondary earth flow. Rotational failure of the earth slump occurred along a curvilinear slip surface located at an estimated depth of twelve feet near the crown. The toe of

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the failure occurred across the cut slope approximately twelve feet above the foot of the slope as seen on Plate 11, Cross Section A-A'.

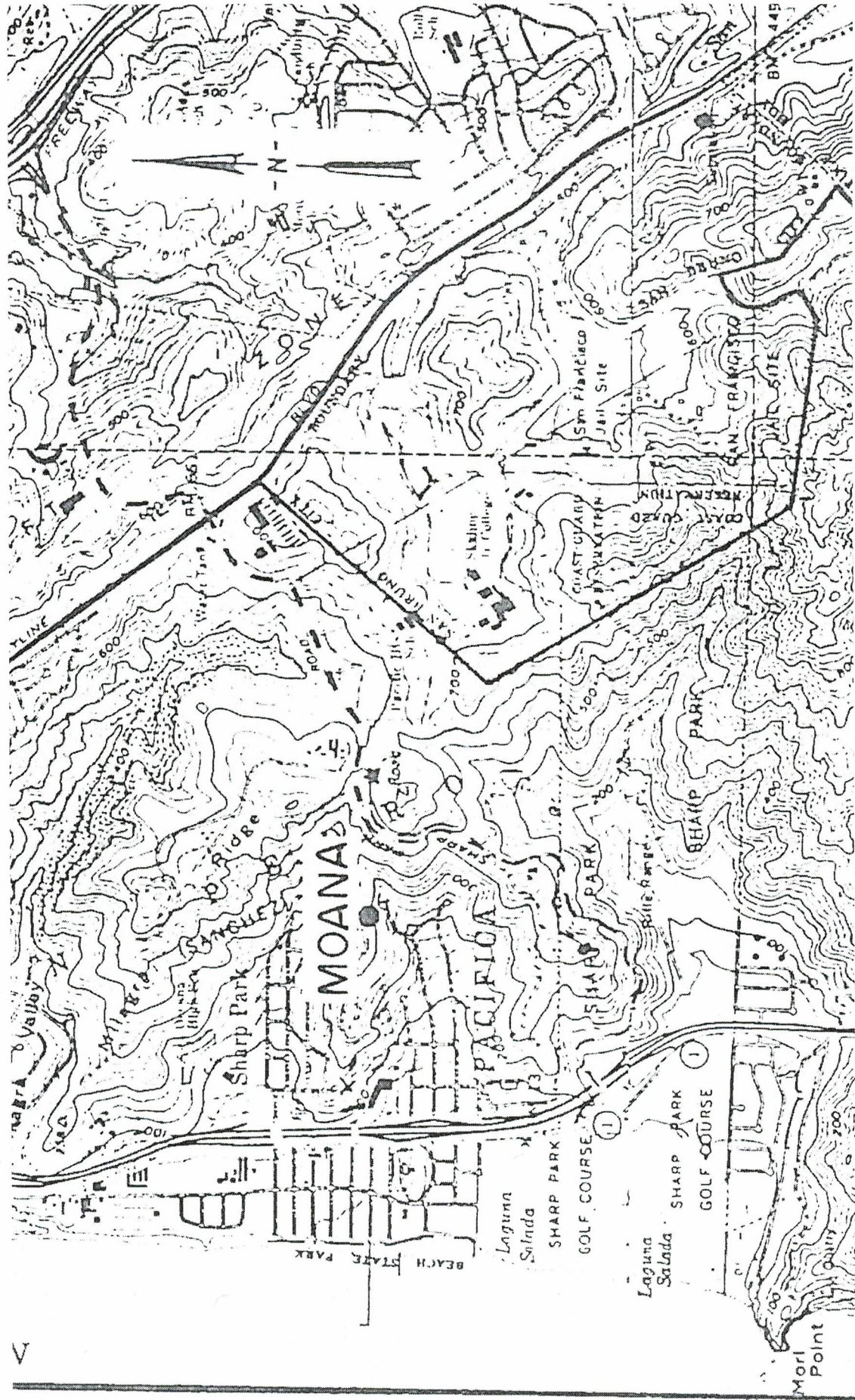
Following rotational movement, the lower segment of the saturated slide block disaggregated into a slurry of earth and water to flow downslope an estimated additional thirty feet where it broke down fences and shrubs and impacted a residence. The earth flow was probably relatively slow-moving and easily diverted by local obstructions. The advancing earth flow had a bulldozer effect on objects in its path and heaped them at its bulbous toe.

#### Mitigation Measures

Visqueen was placed on the affected area by the City to retard subsequent rainfall infiltration. Shallow channels were excavated into the landslide material to drain the ponded surface water away from the affected area.

We recommend that the unreinforced concrete gutter spanning the headscarp be supported until a permanent, more effective surface drainage can be developed. The existing concrete gutter should be removed as soon as possible as it poses a distinct hazard should it collapse. Mitigation measures 1 and 8 should also be considered.







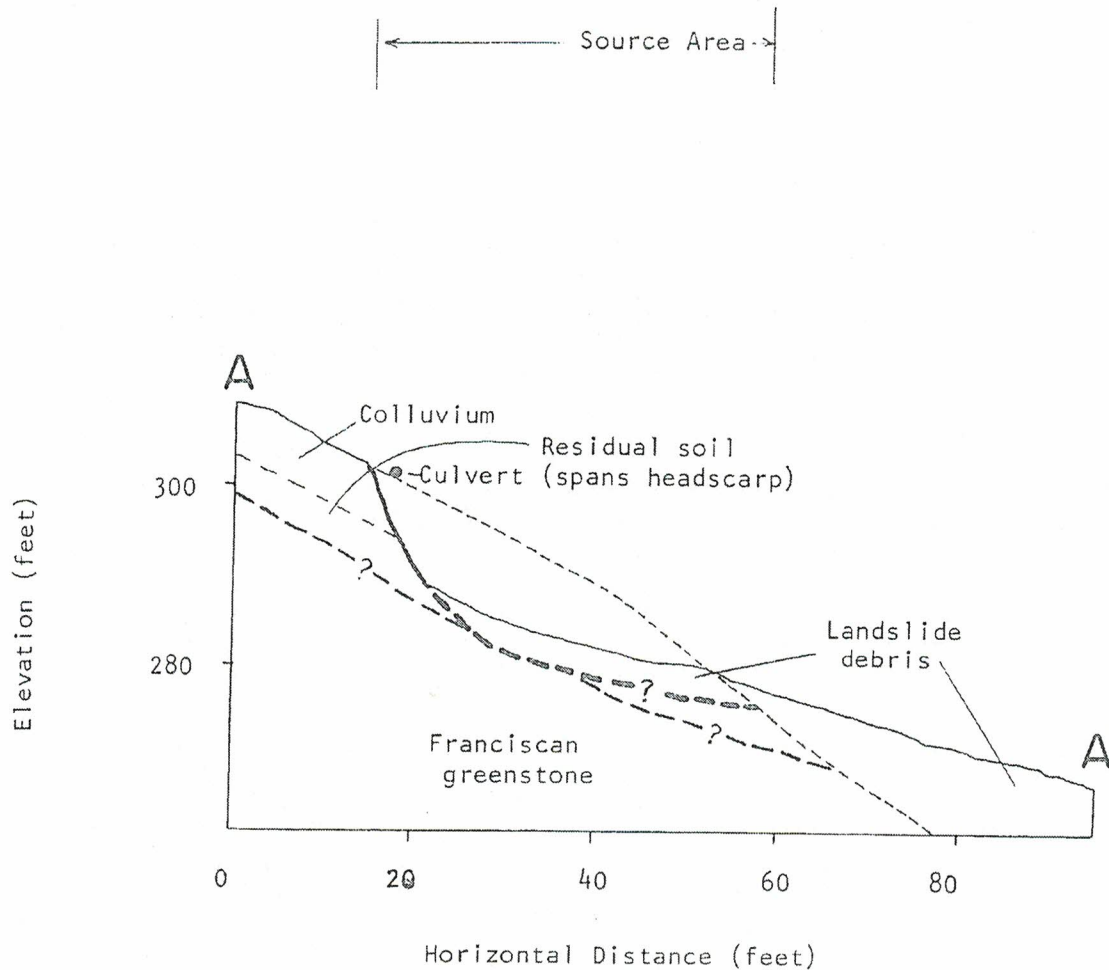
HOWARD • DONLEY ASSOCIATES, INC.  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS & GEOLOGISTS



REVISIONS  
BY \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

FILE 834.01 i 8/25/12

BY FL DATE 8-22  
CHECKED BY JLB



### EXPLANATION

- PREVIOUS GROUND SURFACE
- PRESENT GROUND SURFACE
- GEOLOGIC CONTACT
- RUPTURE SURFACE

CROSS SECTION A-A'  
MOANA SLOPE FAILURE  
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**From:** Marie Kazan-Komarek [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 28, 2022 11:58 AM  
**To:** Public Comment  
**Subject:** proposed building at end of Talbot

[CAUTION: External Email]

Hello,

This is Marie Kazan-Komarek and I live at [REDACTED] Talbot Ave. , Pacifica. I wish once again to comment on the proposed house by the Murphy's at the end of Talbot.

As I commented in the last Zoom comment period, I believe this most modest project should be allowed to proceed. The building plans are well within acceptable parameters and have allowed for all the requirements the city has asked including the driveway variance. I am perplexed by the recent contesting of this project due to run off by residents on Moana. I bought my home in Sept. 1989 shortly after the earthquake and have lived here ever since. To my knowledge there has never been any drainage, run off or flooding issue from Talbot. I see no reason why this lovely family cannot go forward with their project. I welcome them into the neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Marie Kazan-Komarek

[REDACTED]  
Pacifica, CA 94044

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# **Public Comments**

## **Agenda Item 7**

Written Comments Received By 12pm on 3/28/2022



*March 28, 2022*

*City Council Meeting*

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**From:** Mollie Sitkin [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 22, 2022 11:01 AM  
**To:** Public Comment  
**Subject:** Bike park 3-28

**[CAUTION: External Email]**

To whom it may concern,

Although I am unable to attend the meeting next week I would like to voice my support for the bike park in Pacifica. A bike park be a wonderful thing for my family! I hope you all will choose to move forward with the bike park.

Thank you,  
Mollie

Partner  
Old Dog Ranch Family Farm  
Certified Regenerative Organic  
[www.olddogranch.com](http://www.olddogranch.com)

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**From:** maryanna saenko [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 28, 2022 3:03 PM  
**To:** Public Comment  
**Subject:** March 28 2022 - Item 7: Consider Approval o f Preliminary Concept of a Bike Park

[CAUTION: External Email]

To whom it may concern,

As a resident of Sharp Park, I'm writing to voice my support of a Bike Park in Lower Frontierland Park. Biking is a central aspect of our lives in Pacifica, and mountain biking was one of the draws that brought us to live here and buy property here. Other residents are also keenly avid bike enthusiasts, evidenced by the number of trails and bike features spread throughout the trails around town. A bike park would create a safe environment for riders to practice their skills and inspire the next generation to engage in the sport. Frontierland Park is well set up to enable an influx of bikers, and it would help foster a sense of engagement and land stewardship among the town's large biking contingent.

Best,  
Maryanna Saenko  
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