

From: [James Pruet](#)
To: [Birgitta Bower](#); [Melanie Hadden](#)
Cc: [Matthew Chidester](#); [Joe Butcher](#); [James Pruet](#)
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] The Coastal Act violation of the Harbor District & Pillar Point RV Park continues
Date: Monday, November 24, 2025 9:55:28 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Birgitta Bower, El Granada

Thank you for copying the District with your email. We will review it in detail, coordinate with the Code Enforcement Officer of Half Moon Bay, and provide a written response.

Your care for the community is commendable. I simply wish it was not so adversarial. You do not need to take everything to the Board first, you are more than welcome to come talk with me or another member of the staff with your concerns. Staff may be able to address any concern without Board involvement. Staff can provide you with more than two minutes to make your points or show us signs from other properties. We are also very open to walking with you on site to review your concerns. Just let us know.

As stated earlier, we are re-working the Boardroom and will send you a meeting invite to participate in the testing of the system. I hope you are able to join us.

@Melanie: Please add this email string to the public record for the Safe Parking Project.

Bcc: San Mateo County Harbor District Board of Harbor Commissioners.

With respect,

James B. Pruet, JD, CAPT (USCG (Ret.))
General Manager|San Mateo County Harbor District
504 Avenue Alhambra, Suite 200
P.O. Box 1449, El Granada, Ca 94019
C- 650-822-4144|D- 650-583-4400



** My working day may not be your working day. Please don't feel obligated to respond to my emails outside of your working hours.*

From: Birgitta Bower [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, November 23, 2025 1:57 PM
[REDACTED]
Cc: MC_SupMueller <SMC_SupMueller@smcgov.org>; gquiney@smcgov.org; midcoastcommunitycouncil@gmail.com; nmarsh@granada.ca.gov; bdye@granada.ca.gov; Melanie Hadden <mhadden@smharbor.com>; mdragony@coastsidebuzz.com; Matthew Chidester <mchidester@hmbcity.com>; Michael O'Neill <MJOneill@smcgov.org>; James Pruet <jpruet@smharbor.com>; holly@smdailyjournal.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The Coastal Act violation of the Harbor District & Pillar Point RV Park continues

** External Sender **

Hi Ashton and Peter,

I am enclosing my letter to Leslie Lacko, Development Director for Half Moon Bay, from 11/19/25, as a response to the article you wrote about the latest Harbor Board Meeting on Friday 11/21/2025, where the Harbor Manager is trying to discredit me. I posted my letter, 11/20/25, in a comment on NextDoor, after a person asked what could be done about lack of signage for public parking at the Pillar Point RV Park. I suggested to her to contact the Development Director, who opened a "code compliance case on 11/3/25, after my complaint of the RV Park non compliance with the Coastal Act and CDP to the City Manager of Half Moon Bay on 10/19/25. (I can add that I still haven't heard back from Leslie Lacko after my letter of 11/19/25.)

You (Ashton) are included in a second email from Harbor Manager Pruet to me 11/21/2025, 2:59 PM. I don't know if you were BCC'd on the first one at 10:40 AM, so I posted that below too. I think that a more in depth story by coastsideneews could help straighten out the facts around everything around the Harbor District and the Pillar Point RV Park, thus this lengthy letter.

The 11/19/25 Board Meeting was a disaster when it came to the zoom quality, Mr Pruet seems to agree about this in his first email on 11/21/25. But, at the Board Meeting, the public was told nothing about how the Harbor District had tried to address the issues or what they were considering to do about it. The public has instead been told "we are not technicians" or zoom is "just a courtesy" by the Board, when we can't

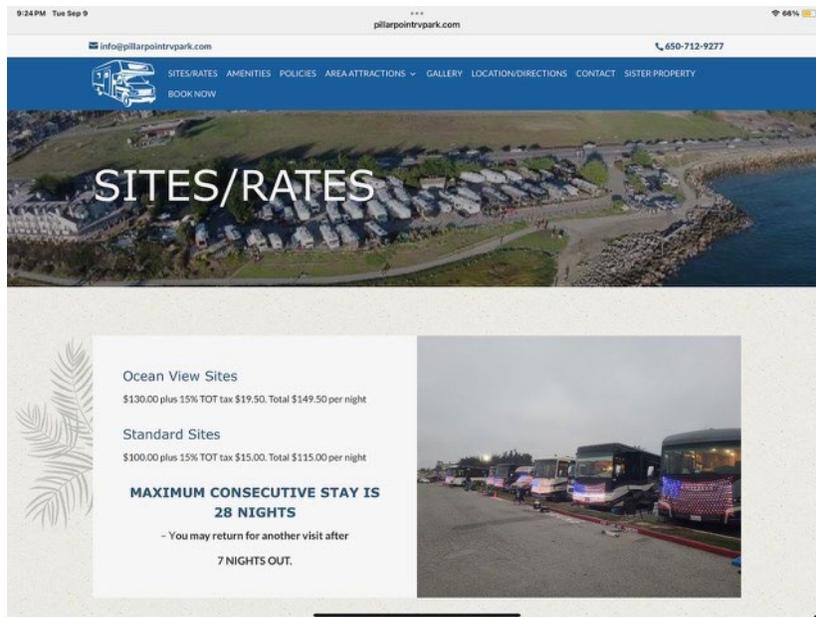
hear. So this seems to be the first time that the problem is even acknowledged to the community by the Harbor District, and I guess that is a step in the right direction. (Although, it was done combined with a personal attack.)

I was there at 10 am to have a "show-and-tell", illustrating what kind of signage the Ritz had to put up after their 1.6 million dollar fine in 2019 for denying the public parking to have coastal access. I could not be heard on zoom because the cord from the speaker mic wasn't plugged in by Mr Pruet until 7 minutes into the meeting, after Jane Brayer and I had done our public comment. We weren't allowed to repeat our 2-minute-comments by the Board President, even after a zoom caller asked for it. Janet almost didn't get to make her comment at all, because she had put in one slip for both "on agenda" and "off agenda", and the Board President did not want to accept that.

In his second email 2:59 PM Friday 11/21/25 Jim Pruet writes: *'I just learned that.....has some concerns with CDP compliance...I do not know what those concerns are as they have not informed us of the specifics...Once I receive the specifics of their concerns. I will share those specifics with you.'*

That is all very weird, since I'm the one who complained about 'the specifics' in an email 10/19/25, also shared with you, Ashton: "The Pillar Point RV Park is in violation of the CDP from 2019 and the Lease from 2024". The pdf in that email details the violations and includes photos and links that the allegations are based on. All of the Harbor Commissioners and the Harbor Manager, Jim Pruet, got that email. It apparently made no impression on them.

Someone did read that Complaint because the RV Park removed the 'stay 28 days, come back after 7' from their website (The CDP calls for max 14 days consecutively, max 30 days/year.) :



They also updated the RV Park map on line. But there is still no signage, identifying the parking as free day parking for public beach access:



(According to the CDP/PDP there should be "overnight stay limit monitoring" that should be reviewed by the Development Director. I have asked for it, but not received it. Also, there are 3 spots called "host", so 'residential', and not available to visitors.)

Since the October 19th Complaint of non compliance, the Harbor Manager has repeatedly assured, with great authority, that the RV Park (and the Harbor District, since they are co-permittees) are in full compliance with everything. Mr Pruet repeated this 10/27/25 Board Meeting while talking of 'misinformation'; some Board Commissioners chimed in, and Board President Kathryn Slater-Carter, called it 'a game of telephone'. They also said the Nerhans, present at that Board meeting, were the victims of all this misinformation, the specifics of the 'misinformation' wasn't revealed. Again, at the November 19th Board meeting, Mr Pruet is confident of total compliance.

In his email November 21 at 10:40 AM the Harbor Manager declares '*The Harbor District and Tenant are in full compliance with the CDP, including signage and the approved parking plan*'. 4 hours later, he writes that there are '*some concerns*'.

This is beyond ridiculous. It would be funny if it wasn't for the fact that the Harbor District is entrusted with 10 million dollars of tax payer money every year, and their various plans, such as a parking lot on the Burnham Strip, would negatively impact the Community.

The Board discussed the lease with the Pillar Point RV Park extensively during June of 2024, especially the June 13 meeting. They were very concerned with the legalities, they mention the word CDP a lot, but their discussions seem to be only concerned with the risk of potential

lawsuits against the District by Keet Nerhan.

It is unfortunate that the Harbor Manager and Board Commissioners never bothered reading PDP-18-006, because it cites the Coastal Act concerning maximum access that should be "conspicuously posted" and it should be **day** use. Instead it was used as excess RV vehicle storage, see the Harbor Managers Staff Report 10/27/25:

SUBJECT: Pillar Point Surfers Beach Safe Parking Project
(Formally known as the "Burnham Strip Parking Project")

The concept involves +/- 94 public parking spaces, and 15 RV spaces. The 32 vehicle parking spaces in the center of the lot would be converted to drive through spaces to handle truck and trailer parking in the event the existing launch ramp parking is exceeded.

Opportunity for Collaboration/Coordination

In developing options for the Harbor Board to consider, Staff has not been working in a vacuum. Staff is aware that as a requirement of the Coastal Development Permit for the Caltrans State Route 1 Multi-Asset Roadway Rehabilitation Project, Caltrans must provide a minimum of 75 public parking spaces. Staff is also aware that customer parking in support of Sam's Chowder House would be significantly impacted by the loss of public parking on the shoulder of Hwy 1, and the loss of parking resulting from the closure of the Dirt Parking Lot. In addition, Pillar Point RV Park also requires parking for trucks and vehicles associated with the RV park visitors. Each of the effected Stakeholders will need to address parking.

Recognizing an opportunity for collaboration, District Staff reached out to a coordinate a single parking project that would satisfy the requirements and needs of the Harbor District, as well as the other stakeholders, including Caltrans, Sam's Chowder House, Pillar Point RV Park, and the Public.

Caltrans has indicated that if the Harbor District's project meets the requirement of the CDP for the Hwy 1 Project, Caltrans would financially support the construction of the Harbor District's Pillar Point Surfers Beach Parking Project.

Sam's Chowder House has indicated they would support the parking lot with monthly maintenance fees in return for allowing customers of the Chowder House to park in the lot.

Staff does will not recommend any additional fees be charged to the Pillar Point RV Park as the RV park is already a tenant of the Harbor District and pays a monthly lease to the District. However, the additional parking in the new lot would provide an alternate parking area to the RV tenants, freeing up the six public parking spaces at Surfers Beach.

Summary/Recommendation:

Receive update and brief on the Pillar Point Surfers Beach Safe Parking Project (formally the Burnham Strip Parking Project) and discuss and approve the General Manager's Presentation for the October 27, 2025, meeting being hosted by San Mateo County Supervisor Ray Mueller and California State Senator Becker with Caltrans to discuss the Harbor District Pillar Point Surfers Beach Safe Parking Project.

I am trusting you to do some good reporting around this issue, because the Coastal Act should be treasured and protected by all Coastsiders. Furthermore, as journalists, you are 'the fourth estate' and hopefully you can ask for accountability without fear or favor.

Sincerely,
Birgitta Bower, El Granada

Begin forwarded message:

From: James Pruett <jpruett@smharbor.com>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Dysfunctional zoom at SMC Harbor Board Meetings
Date: November 21, 2025 at 2:59:13 PM PST
To: Birgitta Bower [REDACTED]
Cc: "lafco@smc.gov.org" <lafco@smc.gov.org>, MC_SupMueller <SMC_SupMueller@smcgov.org>, "gquiney@smcgov.org" <gquiney@smcgov.org>, "midcoastcommunitycouncil@gmail.com" <midcoastcommunitycouncil@gmail.com>, "nmarsh@granada.ca.gov" <nmarsh@granada.ca.gov>, "bdye@granada.ca.gov" <bdye@granada.ca.gov>, Melanie Hadden <mhadden@smharbor.com>, "mdragony@coastsidebuzz.com" <mdragony@coastsidebuzz.com>, Matthew Chidester <mchidester@hmbcity.com>, Michael O'Neill <MJOneill@smcgov.org>, James Pruett <jpruett@smharbor.com>, "holly@smdailyjournal.com" <holly@smdailyjournal.com>, Ashton Hacke <ashton@coastsidegroup.com>

Birgitta Bower,

I have just learned that the City of Half Moon Bay has some concerns with CDP compliance at the Surfers Beach Restroom and Greenspace/Pillar Point RV Park. I do not know what those concerns are as they have not informed us of the specifics. I can assure you that if the concerns are valid and required by the CDP, they will be rectified immediately.

Once I receive the specifics of their concerns, I will share those specifics with you.

As before, please feel free to share on Nextdoor.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Bcc: San Mateo County Harbor District Board of Harbor Commissioners.

With respect,

James B. Pruett, JD, CAPT (USCG (Ret.))
General Manager|San Mateo County Harbor District
504 Avenue Alhambra, Suite 200
P.O. Box 1449, El Granada, Ca 94019
C- 650-822-4144|D- 650-583-4400



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From: James Pruett
Sent: Friday, November 21, 2025 10:40 AM
To: 'Birgitta Bower' [REDACTED]
Cc: 'lafco@smc.gov.org' <lafco@smc.gov.org>; 'MC_SupMueller' <SMC_SupMueller@smcgov.org>; 'gquiney@smcgov.org' <gquiney@smcgov.org>; 'midcoastcommunitycouncil@gmail.com' <midcoastcommunitycouncil@gmail.com>; 'nmarsh@granada.ca.gov' <nmarsh@granada.ca.gov>; 'bdye@granada.ca.gov' <bdye@granada.ca.gov>; 'linfo@smharbor.com' <linfo@smharbor.com>; Melanie Hadden <mhadden@smharbor.com>; 'mdragony@coastsidebuzz.com' <mdragony@coastsidebuzz.com>; Matthew Chidester <mchidester@hmbcity.com>; Michael O'Neill <MJOneill@smcgov.org>; James Pruett <jpruett@smharbor.com>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Dysfunctional zoom at SMC Harbor Board Meetings

Birgitta Bower,

Thank you so much for your email and constructive criticism. The District is thankful you were able to attend the meeting in person to provide your opinion about parking signs on properties not owned or operated by the Harbor District.

The technical difficulties we have been experiencing are very frustrating. We have had the system professionally reviewed multiple times and tried several potential fixes, but again as you so politely pointed out, the system failed again. To address this issue, shortly after the meeting on Wednesday, we contacted our IT consultant to look into why the system crashed and implement a fix to eliminate the sound and conductivity issues. This may include replacing the entire system. I invite you to participate via a zoom sound and system check of the revamped system, your feedback would be appreciated. When we are ready to conduct a test, we will send you a zoom invite. I hope you will be able to participate.

On a separate note, the Harbor District does respectfully request that you stop harassing our tenants. It has been reported to us that you entered upon the Pillar Point RV Park, without notice or reservation, confronted the tenant's employee and were very aggressive and confrontational. This is not appreciated or helpful. If you have any questions or concerns with the lease, please contact me, I would be happy to meet with you are discuss each issue and concern that you may have.

Further, you have made multiple public statements and allegations that the tenant (Pillar Point RV Park) and Harbor District are in violation of the CDP issued for the Surfers Beach Restroom and Greenspace Project/Pillar Point RV Park. The Harbor District and Tenant are in full compliance with the CDP, including the approved parking plan and the approved signage plan. If you would like to make suggested changes to the approved plan, a plan that was publicly reviewed and approved by the City of Half Moon Bay, I would be very happy to meet with you to discuss and consider them.

Once again, I thank you for taking time to attend our Commission meeting and providing your input and for this email providing constructive criticism on our sound system.

Please feel free to post on Nextdoor. My offer to sit down and discuss the sound/zoom system, and/or any project or initiative at the Harbor District is involved with is an open offer to anyone who would be interested. Just drop me an email at jpruett@smharbor.com. I look forward to discussing the great work of the Harbor District.

Your email and this response will also be added to the public record under the Harbor District's Safe Parking Project.

Bcc: San Mateo County Harbor District Board of Harbor Commission

With Respect,

James B. Pruett, JD, CAPT (USCG (Ret.))
General Manager|San Mateo County Harbor District
504 Avenue Alhambra, Suite 200
P.O. Box 1449, El Granada, Ca 94019
C- 650-822-4144|D- 650-583-4400



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From: Birgitta Bower [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2025 5:20 PM
To: lafco@smc.gov.org; SMC_SupMueller <SMC_SupMueller@smcgov.org>; gquiney@smcgov.org
Cc: MCC <midcoastcommunitycouncil@gmail.com>; Nancy Marsh <nmarsh@granada.ca.gov>; bdye@granada.ca.gov; Info <info@smharbor.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Dysfunctional zoom at SMC Harbor Board Meetings

** External Sender **

For LAFCo and
Supervisor Ray Mueller

November 20, 2025

I believe that the San Mateo County Harbor District is failing the Community by providing a livestream and zoom that repeatedly loses sound and sometimes goes dark completely.

The Board Meetings take place at 10 am every 3rd Wednesday, and the Community has repeatedly pointed out that the timing is a great inconvenience for people working.

The Board didn't allow comments by zoom between October 18, 2023 and April 16, 2025. The concern for "zoombombing" was finally solved by not having the person commenting be on live video, and by being ready to turn off if the comments were inappropriate. It is surprising that it took 1.5 years for this strategy.

Not only does the system keep failing, but the Board is unconcerned and dismissive.

I'm submitting the example of the 11/19/2025 Board Meeting:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WrBjr5fpBgU>

It was a very important meeting for the Community because on the agenda was what the Harbor District likes to call: The Pillar Point Surfer's Beach Safe Parking Project (PPSBSPP).

Start of video. There is no sound check.

The initial 2 public comments in person are all garbled, and sometimes totally muted for people zooming in.

At 7 minutes - the Harbor Manager, Jim Pruett, can be seen moving around to connect the cord of the public speaker mic to the outlet.

At 8-10 minutes the caller is trying to know if he is heard... Dan explains the problem with the audio and asks for the problems to be fixed. He wants the previous speakers to get a second chance. He is just dismissed and told by the Board President that his time is up.

At 11 min the next caller, CID, agrees that the sound isn't working.

At 2:30:00 there is a presentation by a speaker, but whenever he wanders away from the podium, he can't be heard.

Around 2:46:00 there is a problem again with people calling in who don't know if they are heard in the room or not, causing confusion.

At 2:56:50 the sound goes out all together.

At 3:01:00 the image is also gone. The meeting goes on till 3:09:59. This is the part where the Commissioners discuss and vote on the PPSBSPP options.

This is a long standing problem and the Community deserves better.

Sincerely,
Birgitta Bower, El Granada

From: Birgitta Bower [REDACTED]
Subject: Update needed
Date: November 19, 2025 at 1:50:33 PM PST
To: Leslie Lacko <llacko@halfmoonbay.gov>
Cc: jo.ginsberg@coastal.ca.gov

Hi Leslie,

I do need you to make an update.

As I've been trying to inform the public that there actually is free public parking next to the RV Park, it has begun to sink in.

I saw two high school surfers parking in the EV spots, (they had EVs, but were not charging.) I then saw this woman come from inside the park, and take photos of the kids' cars. I asked her what she was doing, and she said very angrily "they come every day". I commented that this is public parking and there should be signage. she huffed and puffed and said she would have me removed from the premises. I was in the PUBLIC area, so it appears she doesn't know where the RV Park begins and ends. (A posted map would help.)

This is very disturbing, if this very disagreeable person is going to be harassing local youth. Also, if I look for it, I can find the board meeting where the current Board Commissioner President tells how she was accosted when she tried parking in the public parking.

I feel you should be able to tell me now:

Should there be signage up declaring there should be FREE PUBLIC PARKING FOR PUBLIC BEACH ACCESS here, and should it be CONSPIQUOUSLY posted? And then, why isn't there any?

I will call police, and get a restraining order, if I'm harassed by this woman again, and by not taking action you are creating an untenable situation. Local kids, or anyone, should not have to be accosted by her.

Today at the Harbor meeting I demonstrated the signage that the Ritz had to put up after their \$1.6 million fine.

The harbor manager has admitted, see email from Monday, that the Harbor & RV Park is using the public parking as storage for excess RV vehicles. It's egregious.

Thank you,
Birgitta Bower

DAY USE ONLY
PARKING AREA CLOSED
6 PM TO 7 AM
PACIFIC STANDARD TIME
8 PM TO 6 AM
PACIFIC DAYLIGHT TIME
VEHICLES IN VIOLATION
ARE SUBJECT TO FINE
AND/OR TOW
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10.50.10
HALF MOON BAY POLICE
726-8286

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PARKING
25
ADDITIONAL
PUBLIC ACCESS
PARKING SPACES
AT THE

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ONLY**

DAY USE ONLY!!!
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AFTER SUNSET
NO GOLF OR OVERNIGHT
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650-593-5555