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Civil Engineering • Land Surveying

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(SENT PDFs BY E-MAIL)

Carmel Area Wastewater District Board of Directors
3945 Rio Road
Carmel, CA 93923

Re: Carmel Highland Sewer Connections to Force Main
Keig properties at 70 Coast Highway 1 and Corona Road

Dear Board Members:

This is to request on behalf of Dan and Dasha Keig that the following matter be heard by the Board of Directors at the soonest available board meeting. We are seeking a determination by the Board of Directors of the Carmel Area Wastewater District (CAWD) regarding a recently discovered "double-standard" relating to new connections to your sanitary sewer systems.

In particular, district staff is now asserting that the new connection from the Keig properties to the existing force main in Highway 1 must be restricted to only contain septic system effluent. This requirement would require them to maintain their existing septic systems. The CAWD receives raw sewage from all other customers. We are told this would also apply to all properties on Highway 1 that are southerly of Ribera Road, that must connect to the force main for sewer service, although this request is for the Keig properties, (that were already approved for connection to the CAWD).

The CAWD Standard Plans and Specifications, Ordinance 2019-02, does not contain any provisions for direct connections to sanitary sewer force mains. The CAWD Code of Ordinances does not require pre-treatment of Domestic Wastewater. The annual fees for customers do not allow for discounted amounts for those customers who are required to continue to shoulder the expenses of maintaining their septic tanks.

As a matter of background, the following should be taken into account:

- From 2008 to 2010, the Keig gas station & store, the Carmel Highlands Fire District property, the Tydings property, and the O'Boyle properties were annexed into the CAWD. A combined Coastal Development Permit was obtained for the sewer connections and annexations.
- The Carmel Highlands Fire District joined this process after Dan Keig had already begun pursuing the annexation and permits for the gas station property.
- There was an agreement to have a single connection to the existing CAWD force main, shared by the Fire District and Keig, and the costs of that connection would be equally shared.

- The Carmel Highlands Fire District completed their connection and abandoned their old septic system.
- The Carmel Highlands Fire District has not honored the original agreement with Keig insofar as they will not allow a connection to the stub-out that was originally installed to serve that very purpose.
- Dan and Dasha Keig have lobbied to get the Corona Road Assessment District formed as another available method to connect their properties to the CAWD. The assessment district vote failed due to its high cost.
- The plans for a private pump for the Keig properties have been submitted to CAWD for approval. The plans now show the Keig connection within Highway 1, where the fire district has no jurisdiction, because the pipes in the highway are owned by the CAWD.


We then discovered that the CAWD engineer would not approve the plan submittal unless the existing septic systems were retained. This is the "double-standard" that has been imposed by the CAWD staff. And in addition, there is no provision in the district's regulations to compensate for the extra expenses of maintaining septic tanks.

Furthermore, it is clear the objectives of the state and county health departments are to eliminate septic systems. The concept of the CAWD staff to only accept treated effluent from septic systems is contrary to that objective. It is the exclusive right of the Board of Directors to establish such policy for the district.

We request that this matter be heard at the scheduled November 21, 2024, meeting so the CAWD Board of Directors can make a determination regarding the Keig properties connection. We request that the original designs for the Keig project be approved, as those plans specify the use of grinder pumps so that only macerated sewage would be injected into the existing force main.

In addition, we request that the Board adopt a policy that addresses future hook-ups to the force main south of Ribera Road and to direct staff to return at a later date with policy language for the Board to consider and approve. Contact us if you have any questions, or need additional information.

Sincerely yours,



Steven C. Wilson

cc: Barbara Buikema, General Manager
Patrick Treanor, District Engineer
Dan & Dasha Keig, property owners