

Davenport

# Lone Star Gets Expansion Permit From Coastal Unit

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## Sentinel

Tuesday, May 16, 1978 — Santa Cruz Sentinel—15

Lone Star cement plant in Davenport got a coastal permit Monday to expand its facilities and convert to coal burning. The final vote came as two Central Coast commissioners accused their colleagues of "blackmail."

The accusation was made as five of the 12 commissioners present said they would not approve the project (it needed eight votes) unless the company agreed to pay up to \$50,000 to mitigate the "adverse visual impact" of the more than \$40 million expansion.

Commissioner James Hughes summed it up, "I think the applicant has been blackmailed."

His statement brought Commissioner John Bakalian to his feet, but before Bakalian could speak Commission Chairwoman Mary Henderson said, "Those comments are out of order, there is clear preference for this."

She did not convince Commissioner Ruth Andreasen, who said, "In exercising my right of free speech, this is not only blackmail, but I call it selling a permit."

She pointed out that the company had already agreed to put up \$40,000 to improve the water system of Davenport and \$50,000 to improve the coastal town's sewer system.

Commissioner Fred Lyon commented that if it were "blackmail" then the commission should not vote on the permit, and Commissioner Robert Franco voted against it because he was angered at the charge.

The permit was moved for approval by Commissioner Gary Patton, county supervisor representing the Davenport area, who noted that he was willing to vote for it without demanding the \$50,000 for visual impact mitigation.

Patton asked company representatives if they were willing to pay the additional charge, and Lone Star Attorney Jack Ritchey indicated that since the company was so close to getting its permit, it would accept nearly any condition.

Approval came on a 10-2 vote, with Andreasen voting "no" after saying it was blackmail, and Franco voting "no" because the charge of blackmail had been made.

The permit will make it possible for Lone Star to burn coal as a major fuel, a changeover

that will cut down from the present air pollutants that are discharged from the heavy oil now burned, the regional Air Pollution Control board has stated.

It will allow new facilities—a 180-foot pre-heat tower and a 135-foot new stack—that will increase production from 475,000 tons of cement a year to 775,000 tons a year.

An existing 235-foot concrete stack will remain, if the company can show through engineering studies that the stack can withstand a major earthquake.

As commissioners debated whether to demand the existing stack be torn down, Hughes pointed out that it is a beacon to ships and planes and is charted as a landmark on navigational maps.

Five small parcels of land were required from the company holdings "to be offered for dedication to the state," with Andreasen and Commissioner Norman Walters objecting that the seaward sites were a danger to the public in that they were access points to steep coastal bluffs.

A request by citizens that the company be ordered to cooperate in a town cleanup campaign to restore privately-owned homes that may have been damaged by cement dust failed to get approval after Commission Attorney Charles Getz pointed out that the problem of possible damage to private

property should be decided by the courts.

The company was directed to come up with a fire protection plan, a condition that came after townsmen pointed out on-site coal storage could pose a hazard in event of fire, and that the small Davenport fire unit would not be able to handle such an emergency.

Throughout its permit hearings—at the county level and before the coastal commission—the company pointed out that its new facilities "mitigated" present conditions, and Andreasen agreed, saying the coal burning would "improve the air shed of this part of California."

Lyons, on the other hand, urged the commission to impose air quality standards and controls "because a cease and desist takes six months." But his recommendation was not acted on as staff pointed out air quality control is under authority of the Monterey Bay Area Unified Air Pollution Control District and the state air pollution control board.

Ritchey told the commission that the company has 40 years of resources from the Bonny Doon Quarry at the accelerated production rate, but did not indicate if other quarry sites were being considered in the north coast area.