

## Riley Rhodes

---

**From:** Alexandra Corvello  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 14, 2026 9:21 AM  
**To:** Lezanne Jeffs; Riley Rhodes  
**Subject:** FW: Written Public Comment in Opposition – Application #251417, 4520 Opal Cliff Drive

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Public Comment for 251417

Best,  
Alexandra



### Alexandra Corvello (she/her)

Development Review Planner  
Community Development &  
Infrastructure

**Phone:** 831-454-3209  
701 Ocean Street, Room 410



[Book time with Alexandra Corvello: 15 Minute Meeting](#)

---

**From:** Courtney Springbett <courtneyspringbett@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2026 9:00 PM  
**To:** Alexandra Corvello <Alexandra.Corvello@santacruzcountyca.gov>  
**Subject:** Written Public Comment in Opposition – Application #251417, 4520 Opal Cliff Drive

\*\*\*\***CAUTION:**This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*\*

To the Zoning Administrator, Santa Cruz County Planning Department

Thank you for your time and consideration.

To get right to the point, I believe removing the existing private gate to replace it with a rail is an unnecessary ground disturbance in an area susceptible to erosion.

I am submitting this written comment in opposition to Application #251417, the proposed development at 4520 Opal Cliff Drive (Opal Cliffs County Park), ahead of the public hearing scheduled for Friday, May 15, 2026.

I am a Santa Cruz resident and regular visitor to this coastal area. I grew up in the neighborhood and even worked as a gate guard at the park as my first job in high school. I support the routine maintenance of the existing park infrastructure, but I oppose the approval of new development in an actively eroding coastal zone without adequate environmental review.

My concerns are as follows:

#### 1. CEQA EXEMPTION IS INAPPROPRIATE GIVEN SITE CONDITIONS

The Opal Cliffs coastal bluff is actively and visibly eroding. This constitutes an "unusual circumstance" under California law, and courts have consistently held that categorically exempt projects must still undergo environmental review when there is a reasonable possibility of significant environmental effect. I respectfully request that the county document current erosion conditions and assess cumulative impact before granting any exemption. and if they are not willing to do that then they should not propose any developments that may cause further erosion.

#### 2. FENCE REPLACEMENT WILL INCREASE UNCONTROLLED FOOT TRAFFIC

Replacing a 9-foot fence with a 3-foot split-rail fence is unnecessary considering it is already open to the public yet it could encourage more foot traffic, accelerating erosion. No carrying capacity or erosion impact study appears to have been conducted in support of this change. The Coastal Act's mandate to protect coastal resources must be weighed alongside its public access provisions.

#### 3. INCREMENTAL DEVELOPMENT SETS DANGEROUS PRECEDENT

Each approved permit at this location establishes a baseline for future applications. Formalizing signage and infrastructure implicitly acknowledges and encourages increased visitation, which will generate future justification for additional improvements. I ask that the county consider the cumulative effect of this approval, not merely its immediate scope.

#### 4. EROSION BASELINE SHOULD BE FORMALLY DOCUMENTED

Before any approval is granted, I urge the county to require a formal erosion baseline assessment for this parcel. This protects the public interest, constrains future development at this site, and fulfills the county's stewardship obligation under both the Coastal Act and its Local Coastal Program.

The most sustainable infrastructure is the infrastructure that already exists. Our tax dollars are better spent protecting and maintaining this coastline rather than restructuring it.

I respectfully ask that this application be paused until a formal erosion assessment is completed, and that any future development at this site be evaluated against that documented baseline.

This place belongs to all of us. Please protect it.

Thank you for considering my comment.

Courtney Springbett  
4505 Opal Cliff Dr, Santa Cruz, CA