

To:

City Clerk
City of Laguna Hills
24035 El Toro Road
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

Via Email: planning@lagunahillsca.gov

Re: Planning Agency Hearing – January 27, 2026
Project at 24422 Avenida De La Carlota (TPM / SDP / PP / PUP No. 0166-2023)

Dear Planning Agency Members,

I am the owner and resident of 24521 Christina Court, a single-family residence located downhill and across Los Alisos Boulevard from the project site at 24422 Avenida De La Carlota. My residence fronts Christina Court, and the rear of my property backs toward Los Alisos Boulevard, beyond which lies the project site. An existing retaining wall located along my rear property line separates my property from Los Alisos Boulevard and the elevated project site.

I am submitting this letter to formally place my concerns into the administrative record regarding the proposed project and, in particular, the applicant's request for a determination that the project is exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

1. Immediate and Site-Specific Impacts to My Property

My property is the only single-family residence in immediate proximity to the portion of the site proposed for new development. As I understand the proposal, the existing medical and office building at 24422 Avenida De La Carlota would remain, and a new multi-story residential structure, approximately 65 feet in height, would be constructed on the existing surface parking lot, which is the portion of the parcel closest to my residence.

This area of the site is located uphill and directly behind my home, across Los Alisos Boulevard, and would overlook my rear yard and rear-facing living spaces. Due to the site's higher elevation relative to my residence, the proposed structure would be visually and physically amplified, creating an overbearing mass behind my home. The elevation differential significantly magnifies impacts related to visual dominance, shadowing, and loss of privacy.

These impacts are not generalized; they are unique to my property due to the combination of proximity, topography, and the specific siting of the proposed structure within the parcel. The rear yard includes outdoor private-use areas, including a swimming pool, which would be directly overlooked by the proposed structure, resulting in a substantial loss of privacy.

2. Unusual Circumstances Precluding CEQA Exemption

While the applicant has requested a CEQA exemption pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.66, CEQA provides that an otherwise applicable exemption does not apply where there is a reasonable possibility that a project will have a significant environmental effect due to unusual circumstances.

Here, those unusual circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Construction of a 65-foot residential structure on the portion of the site nearest a single-family residence
- The elevation differential between the project site and my home, which amplifies visual, privacy, and shadow impacts
- The short horizontal separation between the proposed development area and my residence across Los Alisos Boulevard
- The absence of meaningful buffers, step-backs, or transitional design elements between the new structure and adjacent residential use
- The concentration of impacts on one immediately adjacent homeowner, rather than impacts distributed broadly across the surrounding area

These site-specific conditions distinguish this project from typical infill development and warrant further environmental review rather than reliance on a categorical exemption.

3. Construction, Excavation, and Subsurface Impacts

Because the existing office building would remain in place and the proposed residential structure would be constructed on the surface parking lot closest to my residence, the project raises reasonable questions regarding how parking demand for both office and residential uses will be accommodated on a constrained, sloped site, particularly given the limited remaining surface area. This suggests the potential need for structured or below-grade parking, which may require substantial excavation and grading.

The existing retaining wall located along my rear property line, which separates my property from Los Alisos Boulevard, is directly downhill from the proposed development area. I have previously reported cracking and signs of distress in this retaining wall to the City. Given the site's slope, the proximity of the proposed construction, and the likelihood of excavation and heavy equipment use, further evaluation of potential vibration, grading, and subsurface impacts is warranted prior to any determination that the project is exempt from CEQA.

Los Alisos Boulevard transitions to a bridge structure in the immediate vicinity of my residence and the project site, spanning Interstate 5. This contributes to elevated baseline vibration and structural sensitivity in the area and further underscores the need for careful evaluation of construction-related vibration and excavation impacts.

My primary home office is located on the side of my residence closest to the project site and is occupied during normal weekday working hours. As a result, my home would function as a noise- and vibration-sensitive receptor for the duration of construction activities, further supporting the need for evaluation of construction noise, vibration, and duration impacts.

The residence is also occupied by a young child, and the proximity of the project site to the home raises additional concerns regarding exposure to construction-related dust and particulate matter, supporting the need for evaluation of air-quality impacts and dust-control mitigation measures.

4. Request for Further Study and Continuance

Given the site-specific conditions described above, I respectfully request that the Planning Agency decline to rely on a CEQA exemption for this project and require appropriate environmental review, including analysis of visual, privacy, shadow, construction, air-quality, vibration, and geotechnical impacts as they affect my property.

At a minimum, I request that this item be continued to allow for:

- Visual simulations and line-of-sight analysis from my property at 24521 Christina Court
- Shadow studies accounting for elevation differences
- Construction phasing, vibration, excavation, and dust-control analysis, including any below-grade parking
- Consideration of design modifications to reduce overbearing impacts on adjacent residential uses

5. Reservation of Rights

This letter is submitted to ensure that my concerns are fully documented in the administrative record. I respectfully reserve all rights and remedies available under state and local law.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Bruce Schilder

Property Owner

24521 Christina Court

Laguna Hills, CA 92653

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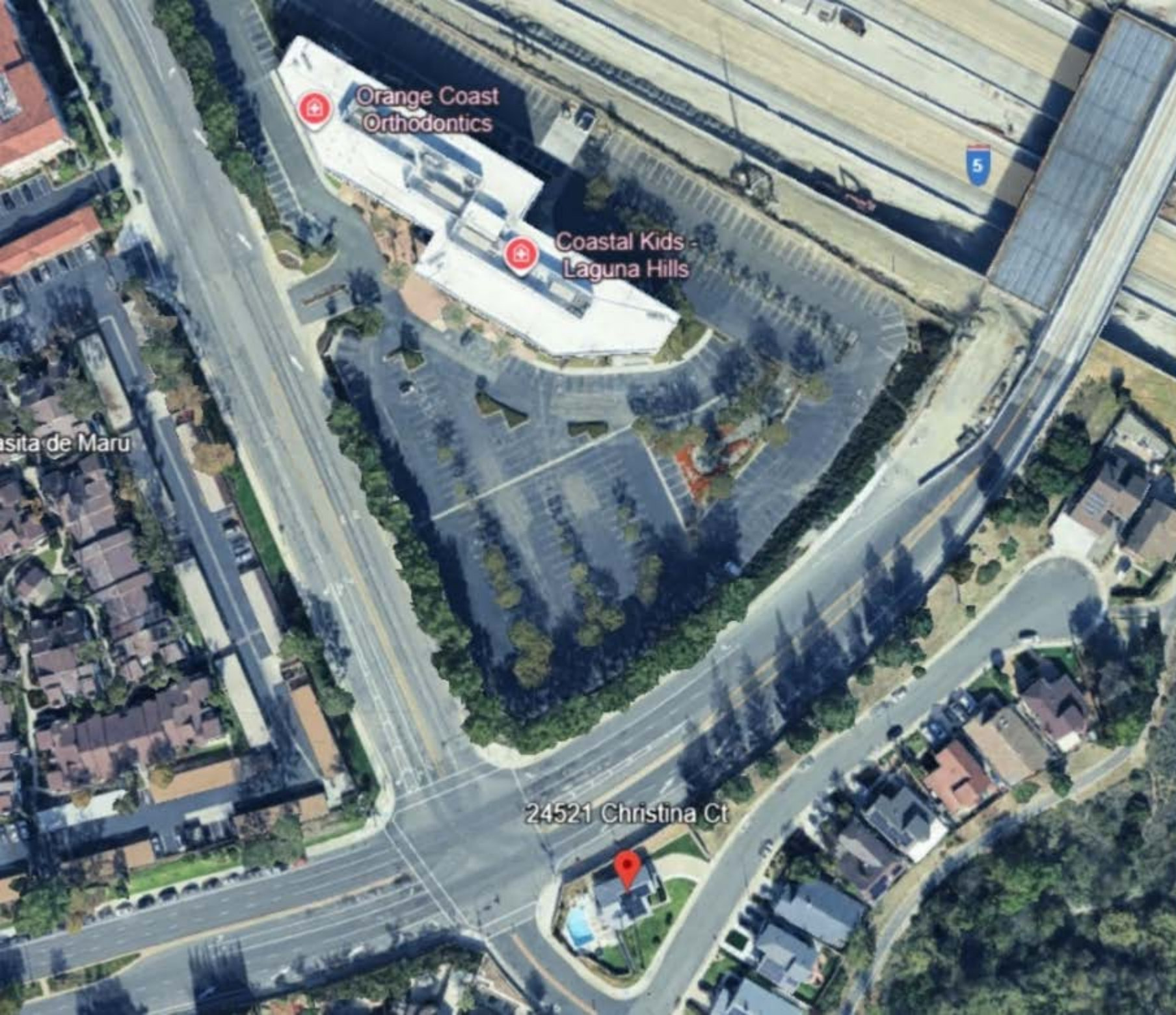
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