

November 19, 2017

I am sharing an email with all of you, which I sent on Nov. 12th to the DLAC via library staff person, Ivan. Note that I copied it to the City Council, City Manager and Library Director. I blind copied it to Jondi Gumz, the Sentinel reporter who was responsible for the article to which I referred. To date I have not heard from her.

The DBTL Update #8 will be forthcoming to alert you to a so-called public meeting on 12/3 (a Sunday).

Dear Downtown Library Advisory Committee ~

As you know, I have attended 8 of the 10 DLAC meetings of the past 5 months. I have only missed the two Los Gatos library tours.

I have been *skeptical* of the \$23 million estimate for a new downtown library from almost the beginning of the DLAC process, including in the report to the City Council last December 2016. Why so much?!

Later in the process, when Noll & Tam's estimate of \$37 million for a **Renovation Option** (required by a vote of the City Council), I was *really skeptical*.

This is why I asked for a **Renovation Light** estimate that would upgrade, remodel and restore the existing building without stripping it down entirely to its skeleton and tossing everything and buying all brand new.

Surprisingly, the Renovation Light estimate presented by Noll & Tam was \$23 million! Maybe not so surprising after all. Is there something magic about the \$23 million figure? Is it because that is the budget for the downtown library ... guaranteed money and so let's spend it?

Yesterday I read about another building project currently underway at the Boardwalk. Perhaps you read it also. If not, I have pasted the news article in this email.

Question: Why can the owners of the Coastview Inn on Beach Street expand their existing 61 year old motel into a *first class hotel*, with extra rooms, meeting space, banquet space and a rooftop deck for **\$7 - \$8 million**, while we can't get a first rate 50 year old library upgraded, remodeled and restored for less than \$23 million -- **3 times** the cost of the Coastview Inn project?! I think my question deserves an answer.

Something is clearly wrong with the estimates from Noll & Tam architects. Something is clearly wrong with the idea that we have to spend money just because we have it, going into bond debt with taxpayers footing the bill.

I hope the DLAC will not put forward the proposed Noll & Tam estimates at its planned

community event for December 3, where the public will be presented with questionable estimates for four options. To do so, in the face of what the Coastview project now tells us, is myopic in my opinion. If the public can be skeptical, so can the DLAC!

Sincerely,
Jean Brocklebank
[Don't Bury The Library](#)

Santa Cruz's Coastview Hotel underway

By Jondi Gumz, Santa Cruz Sentinel

11/11/17

<http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/business/20171111/santa-cruzs-coastview-hotel-underway>

SANTA CRUZ >> Just up the street from the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, a transformation is underway at a motel facing the ocean.

Hanging on a wall inside the office is a vision of what owner Prakash Babu wants to see: A white three-story Spanish colonial-style hotel with 24 balconies and a rooftop deck with a firepit overlooking the beach.

Babu, 50, said the Coastview Hotel project will add five rooms, meeting space and banquet space and cost \$7 million to \$8 million.

He has financing from locally owned Lighthouse Bank.

Nowadays hotels are in vogue, not motels, and the Coastview was built in 1956.

It is one of four major remodel and expansion projects in Santa Cruz involving motels built in the motor court style will become hotels.

“It’s been five years from concept to permit,” Babu said. “Our goal is to raise the bar in this area.”

He envisions the Coastview being booked for weddings for up to 70 guests.

Babu, who lives in San Jose, grew up in Santa Cruz, where the 32-room motel at 301 Beach St. has been in his family for four decades.

He graduated from Santa Cruz High and studied electrical engineering to go into the burgeoning tech field.

“The opportunities were there,” he said.

Some 12 or 15 years ago, his parents hired a contractor to do a remodel of the 32-room motel.

Now Larry Wong of WNGS Construction, that contractor's son, is in Santa Cruz to carry out this makeover.

"My family did hotel remodels for 40 years before I was born," said Wong, 34, of Sacramento.

After the motel closed Oct. 2, the work began.

Wong said local subcontractors will be needed.

Asked when the hotel will open, Babu said, "I'm hoping end of 2018."

To which Wong said, "We're playing with a tight schedule. I'm shooting for early 2019."

Babu, who also has hotels in Livermore and Pacific Grove, said he hopes to double the staff when the hotel opens.

"It depends on how busy Santa Cruz keeps me," he said.

Other motel-to-hotel projects in the pipeline in the city are:

- Courtyard Marriott, 313-321-325 Riverside Ave.: Construction of 151-room hotel underway after three old motels demolished.
- Lanai Lodge, 550 Second St.: Demolish 20 rooms and build 60 rooms.
- Mission Inn, 2424 Mission St.: Demolish 32 rooms and build 60 rooms.

The city approved plans in 2014 for a new 165-room La Bahia Hotel at 215 Beach St., a site rented as apartments but construction has yet to begin.

"We have all entitlements in place but as of today we do not yet have a date defined when construction will begin," Santa Cruz Seaside Co. spokesman Kris Reyes said Thursday of La Bahia. "We hope to have more information to share before long."