

FILE/SEA RANCH

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Architects and Planners
Research and Design

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14 May 1965

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LAWRENCE HALPRIN & ASSOCIATES

Mr. Don O'Leary
Oceanic Properties Inc.
13th Floor, Crown Zellerbach
One Bush Street
San Francisco

Re: The Sea Ranch

Dear Don:

I am writing to express my deep concern about the way in which so many of the planning and design goals have been compromised and negated by first, a great many of the things that are offered for sale in the Store and second, almost everything about the way the house on Lot 9 has been furnished. I consider the issue so serious that I simply cannot permit the use of our name in any photographs that may show interiors of the Store as it now is or the interior of the demonstration house on Lot 9.

I simply do not have the time to describe in detail all the things that I think are wrong; rather I will attempt to state a few principles as I see them.

First, I do not think we should offer for sale in the Store things that we would not tolerate in the houses or things that infer a design standard that the architectural committee would refuse to approve. Second, what happened to the idea that the Store was to somehow reflect those things that were appropriate to the Sea Ranch or either essential or desirable for the kind of life we talk so much about at the Sea Ranch? I find it difficult to find anything that distinguishes the Sea Ranch Store from any tourist gift shop in Tiburon or Sausalito.

I think the interior of the house is perhaps an even more serious issue because I find absolutely no understanding of what the house is all about or of the basic design premises of any part of the Sea Ranch. One of the characteristics of

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the kinds of design decisions that are made throughout the demonstration houses, condominium and restaurant and in fact all the planning is that it is clear that there is a foundation for these decisions in the local environment and that this foundation is significant and understandable. Not only is it extremely difficult to find any basis for the kinds of decisions that were made in the furnishing of the house but where there is some glimmer of revelation what unfortunately comes through is a point of view so counter to the design premises we have struggled so hard with that I think serious damage is done to the entire Sea Ranch image.

I hope you will not think that my objections are personally directed or that they are entirely subjective; I have heard too many complaints from too many people (and not all of them by any means are architects or other design professionals) to suggest that this is a narrow and limited view and not one quite broadly held.

Sincerely,

Joseph Esherick

JE/ds

copies to:

Boeke
Halprin ✓
Moore
Stauffacher