

**Land Use & Transportation Committee Meeting  
Marin Conservation League  
Wednesday, September 3, 2014 – 9:00 am  
175 N. Redwood Dr., San Rafael**

**Agenda**

1. **Announcements:** Coastal Clean Up Sept. 20

2. **Draft minutes:** August 8, 2014 (Attached)

3. **Approval of Agenda**

4. **Action Items:**

- a. Gness Field – Merits hearing of extending the runway 1100' – speaker pending (refer to North Marin Unit meeting minutes, attached)

5. **County wide planning issues:**

- a. SMART draft strategic plan
- b. Other Transportation updates - Bob Johnston
- c. County Housing Element revisions
- d. Stream Conservation Area status – Randy
- e. Easton Point - Randy

6. **Brief Updates:**

- a. PRNS ranch planning – Judy
- b. Marin General Hospital expansion – Ann
- c. MMWD water storage improvement project (WSIP) - Ann
- d. Community Marin - Priscilla
- e. Novato General Plan Update
- f. RIAC at BOS 9/9 - Nona

7. **Back Burner issues:**

Corte Madera Inn rebuild  
Greenbrae interchange and Greenbrae greenway  
Larkspur Station Area Plan  
Highway 101 projects  
SMART or NCRA  
Hetfield project, Lucas Valley  
Golden Gate Baptist Seminary MP  
Hamilton Sports Facility  
Marin General Hospital Retrofit

8. **Next meeting October 1**

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Agricultural Land Use Committee  
Planning Subcommittee  
September 3, 2014 - 11 a.m.

- 1. Update on NPS management of Elk herd in PRNS pastoral zone and John's Disease testing.
- 2. Planning for October 19 Fibershed Event at Nicasio Native Grass Ranch:
  - a. Recruit volunteers
  - b. Publicity
  - c. Etc.
- 3. Planning for October 24 Quarterly meeting in Point Reyes
- 4. Adjourn

# **Marin Conservation League –**

## **Draft Minutes - Land Use and Transportation Meeting -August 6, 2014**

Present: Susan Stompe (Chair), Priscilla Bull, Nona Dennis, Don Dickenson, Randy Greenberg, Jana Haehl, Bob Johnston, Doug Karpa, Cheryl Longinatti, Kate Powers, Judy Teichman, Doug Wilson  
Guest: David Schonbrunn, President, TRANSDEF

### **1. Announcements**

Priscilla reported on the activities of the Marin Open Space Trust – MOST has a contract to purchase the Sky Ranch property between San Anselmo and Fairfax and the ongoing fund raising efforts to purchase the property is quite promising

The Draft Santa Venetia Community Plan is to go to hearing before the Planning Commission on August 27, 2014, with a possible hearing December 8, 2014.

Nona Dennis reported that for the improvement of Sir Francis Drake, the County will be CEQA Lead agency with a Negative Declaration expected.

### **2. Minutes adopted without objection**

### **3. Approval of Agenda:** approved unanimously

### **4. Action Item 1: Report from Friends of SMART on Grand Jury Report, David Schonbrunn (TRANSDEF)**

Steve Birdleough was unable to attend due to scheduling conflict. Mr. Schonbrunn wanted to comment to the committee regarding the Grand Jury report on the SMART board to provide a viewpoint favorable to SMART and its board. Mr. Schonbrunn reported that it appears that both Grand Juries only spoke to opponents of SMART in its citizen interviews, leaving the SMART staff and board as the only voices in favor of the project. Although there were two Grand Juries, they conducted a joint investigation but will produce two individual reports.

According to Mr. Schonbrunn, the key failing of the Grand Jury Report is that the Grand Jury focused on less substantive issues which are generic and obvious issues and are common to many if not all such boards while failing to address major issues under discussion between proponents and staff. For example, Grand Jury criticisms of the SMART Board as distant and staff are unfair as this is a common characteristic of virtually all boards, since most boards do not have the time or expertise to be probing all issues comprehensively the Grand Jury recommendations. In addition, the Grand Jury recommended the Board should develop a Start Up plan, but the Board is clearly aware of its duties to establish a start up plan. Among other generic recommendations were that the SMART Board needs to anticipate and plan for problems and unanticipated events, should update the strategic plan every two years, and should establish a citizen advisory board (which may or may not be useful since the Board Meetings are the current forum for citizen involvement.) The Grand Jury also recommended that the SMART Board need to consider the needs to ridership, which is difficult since there is no ridership currently.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Schonbrunn outlined several substantive issues, including

- Selection of the vehicle. The Heavy FRA-compliant vehicle is inappropriate, but was a risk adverse choice to keep consistent with freight railroad requirements. However, the rail authority has since created regulations allowing lighter European style
- Construction of high platforms requires a gauntlet track to allow freight traffic to stay away from the high platforms
- SMART insisted on going with level boarding on all stations.
- The 5,000 daily ridership number is reasonable? DS: It may be low in fact, although induced highway traffic from expansion may undermine traffic. In the EIR for the Sonoma Marin Narrows, there was a significant dispute regarding the Purpose and Need Statement between MTC, Caltrans and Fed Highways.

## **5. Action Item 2: Gness Field EIR– Susan Stompe**

Susan Stompe reported on a proposal of extending runway by 1100' and an August 19, 2014, meeting on the merits which has been cancelled. The Aviation Commission held a community hearing on July 17. The Board of Supervisors had committed to convening a stakeholder group when they certified the EIR to examine alternatives of lesser length, however the Aviation Commission seems to now have that role. Several significant issues remain regarding the interaction of this project with other local uses. For example, the SMART marsh restoration may interfere which would attract birds. The SMART wetlands mitigation is pending approval from RWQCB, in part because of a lack of sites for a rare tiger beetle found onsite. Since the runway would extend also closer to the dump, additional bird scaring measures would be required to prevent interference with the operation of the airport, but Marin Landfill is not interested. Finally, sea level remains an issue for the airport. The Final EIR acknowledged that the runway would require raised levees and increased pumping. Judy Arnold (BOS) has pushed the airport as an emergency facility, but after sea level rise this would be short-lived, as the cost analysis also doesn't include mitigation for sea level rise. Overall, the project is driven by securing Federal Aviation Administration funding for the project, which cannot happen without an approved project

## **6. SMART Mitigation for Gallinas Creek watershed – Kate Powers**

Kate Powers reported on SMART mitigation and measures within the Gallinas Creek Watershed for the 401 Water Quality Certification by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. (RWQCB has jurisdiction over state wetlands area under 401 Water Quality Certification regarding for Initial Operating Segment 2, but it is not clear that RWQCB has jurisdiction over the drylands area). SMART proposed a series of measures for the wetlands and the corridor near Rafael Meadows. Kate submitted letter urging the RWQCB to assert jurisdiction over several issues, including the Puerto Suelo to Civic Center corridor, the 80 marked trees within the corridor, the proximity to Rafael Meadows neighborhood, and the several small wetland areas and riparian vegetation in the corridor. The letter requested best practices in invasive removal, e.g. in compliance with county vegetation removal guidelines.

## **7. Other Transportation/ TAM updates – Bob Johnston**

Bob Johnston updated the committee on TAM issues, including the progress on the Narrows project, which includes a new access to Olompali. David Schonbrunn mentioned that TRANSDEF sued over the acquisition of lands for expansion (since purchasing and dedicating open space would be cheaper). However, there are strict federal laws governing property acquisition around rights-of-way.

## **8. Housing Element update:**

Don Dickenson provided an update on the Housing Element Update. The Marin County Planning Commission will next take up the Housing Element Update on August 25, 2014. Key issues included how HCD calculates density bonuses and how these will be handled, since in the Countywide Plan most of the unit numbers specified include the density bonus. The State specifies that the density bonus is an addition to the maximum units specified in the plan. Some properties included in the Housing Element site inventory may need to be revised downwards to accommodate this interpretation of the density bonus and stay within the maximum number of units specified in the Countywide Plan. Randy watched the previous meeting which reviewed all of the issues included in the Staff Report. Unit allocations for several sites were changed, including the removal of the Armstrong Nursery and old Chevron sites in Tam Valley.

Other key issues center on the number of units and number of affordable units at St. Vincent's. Also, there was discussion of developing a density equivalents program which would incorporate impacts that are related to size rather than just number of units. The Housing Element requires no rezonings since existing zoning allows well over the County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation. Finally, there was discussion of second units. Second units are included as affordable housing unit projections based on historical data regarding the number of second units built and rents.

## **9. Stream Conservation Area Status**

County is currently recruiting staff person.

## **10. Canalways – removing Pampas Grass update**

Nona provided an update on the Pampas grass clearing at Canalways. The goats are clearing vegetation, reduce invasives. Paul Minault is meeting with Paul Jensen to advocate for practices with removal, implement a program, to remove plumes, and remove rhizomes. Also, point was made that Fred Grange is liability for creating a public nuisance by allowing the vegetation.

## **11. Action Item: Participation in the “Choosing the Future We Want” Forums**

Bill Carney asked the committee on July 14 asking whether we want to collaborate in creating forums. Currently, groups involved include Marin Affordable Housing Collaborative, Sustainable San Rafael, CALM. Since this is a hot button issue, the potential bias in approaches advocated in the forum is a concern. Others suggested that failing to participate may suggest endorsement of a “no change” approach in the heated debate. On balance, there are concerns that there are significant difficulties with getting different perspectives into the forum, the forum may not achieve much, given the timing (the forum is to occur after the Housing Element update is submitted to HUD for review), and that there are alternative approaches to having an impact on these issues and this debate.

**Motion: Recommendation to the board not to participate. (M/S Nona, Jana Second, Motion carried unanimously)**

## **12. PRNS ranch planning –**

Judy Teichert reported on issues surrounding growth in elk populations at the Point Reyes National Seashore which is generating conflict between ranching and elk. (Tule Elk are native, but not federally listed and are no longer state sensitive.) Last fall, the Wild Lands Conservancy asked permission to move elk to be moved out of the park. The 1998 EA of the program provided that up to 70 elk could be moved, although the park required testing for disease prior to movement. Currently, 16 elk tested were disease free, but there is a second round over two years on a rotating basis. In the meantime the elk herds are expanding, and is now currently up to 176 elk. By the time the testing is finished, moving 70 elk will not reduce the population adequately given the population increase, creating ongoing conflict between elk and dairy operations. Alternatives discussed at a scoping meeting included proposals by ranchers to fence elk areas to prevent reduction in feed for dairy cattle. However, Park Service is not currently in support of fencing, given the cost and logistical issues. The management plan is not going to be updating the plan with respect to the pastoral zone.

## **13. Community Marin update**

Community Marin is focusing on Sea Level rise to encourage county officials to be more proactive on a county-wide level and encouraging communication between local town/cities and county. Lindy Lo and Sarah Richmond of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission gave an excellent presentation also to Water Committee and Board on studies of sea level rise. Bob Johnston has applied for CSmart, West Marin

## **14. Novato General Plan Update**

The Novato General Plan Update development is proceeding, albeit slowly with no upcoming events.

## **15. Local Coastal Program progress**

Recommendations have been received from Coastal Commission Staff on the Draft LCP on May 15. The Development Code needs to be amended to reflect the changes made through the Coastal Commission adoption. There are significant loopholes in Stinson Beach area raising some concern. The next steps are amendments to LCP at the Board of Supervisors. The Sierra Club is suing over the adequacy of the LCP.

## **16. Next Meeting is on September 3<sup>rd</sup>**

## **17. Meeting Adjourned 11:20**

Notes: DK

**Marin Conservation League**  
**North Marin Unit**  
Meeting Notes  
August 3, 2014

The meeting was called to order at the Wilhelm home. Present were: Ralph Webb, Rosalie Webb, Delyn Ries, Rick Fraites, Dorothy Thomas, Gail Wilhelm, Don Wilhelm, Susan Stompe and guest, Don Jensen.

**Announcements:**

**Notes of the July meeting** were approved as distributed.

**Dan Jensen, manager, Gness Field, Marin County Airport** answered questions about operations. He explained that there are flight protocols to keep the noise impacts down for nearby neighborhoods. Most of the problems are with transient aircraft not following the local protocol. In January 2016 noise restrictions will be enforced. The notice has been put on their website. There is now an audio feed so radio calls are recorded which helps him identify planes which violate the protocol.

There are 300 tenants at the airport. Five jets are based there, mostly individually owned, but also include Kelleher Lumber and Dolby Trust. There are 14 twin engine planes, the rest are single engine. 70% are local, 28% other general aviation, and 1% air taxi. 26,000 pounds is the maximum jet weight.

Extending the runway 1100 ft. is a safety issue (will make the runway safer). The critical aircraft is a Cessna 525 which logs 250 take offs and landings for a minimum of 500 flights a year. The purpose and need will allow existing aircraft, as represented by the critical aircraft at Gness, to operate at Maximum Gross Take Off Weight under hot weather and other adverse weather conditions. This plane cannot take off with a full load when the air temperature is 88 degrees or higher. The added length will also give more space for smaller planes to take off and land safely by providing extra wiggle room.

The airport budget is about \$700,000 a year. It is tight, but self-sustaining. Revenues come from renting hanger space, leasing ground space, leasing to 13 businesses (plus 1% of profit every 6 months). Businesses include 5 flight schools, a flight instructor, Scanlon Aviation commercial flying/air taxi, insurance, Direct Avianatics, upholstery, T.J. Neff, and a flight doctor who checks pilots every 5 years under 40 and every 2 years over 40. There are 85,800 operations per year (an operation is either a landing or a take off). Personal property tax goes to the county and to schools. Six cents tax on flight fuel goes to the county for aviation. Gness fees are fairly high compared to other small fields (almost twice Petaluma). Many long term leases expire in 2018, including the contract fuel concession.

90% of the expansion will be paid by FAA. The state can provide up to 2.5%. The cost of running Gness will not change much with the expansion.

After Mr. Jensen left the group discussed the merits of extending the field. Concern was expressed that FAA wants the Redwood Landfill to do more to discourage birds, and they want SMART to not restore any marsh at Mira Monte. Although providing added safety to local pilots, the safety record at the field is quite good.

**M/S/C (Dorothy/Rosalie) To recommend that MCL oppose the expansion of the airport runway at Gness Field.** Concern was expressed that the extension really satisfies the need of just one plane based at the field.

Although safety is the main justification, the airport has a good safety record so it seems to be more of a convenience issue. Not extending the runway would preserve the remaining marshes. Sea level rise could put the extension investment at risk, or cost the county much more trying to protect it.

**Novato General Plan:** There is a White Paper on the Bel Marin Keys Industrial Park. A couple more should be available soon. North Redwood Blvd. will be on the Planning Commission agenda August 18

**SMART** is not planning to put Quiet Zones in Novato. San Rafael is holding public workshops. Don agreed to investigate what is happening in Novato.

**North Marin Water District** – Rick reported Novato is doing well on voluntary cut back – use is down 27%

**IPM** – Delyn will let us know when it is to be on the City Council agenda

The meeting adjourned at 2:00

The next meeting will be at noon on Thursday, September 18 at Thomas's.