

Marin Conservation League | Land Use & Transportation Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 5, 2015 – 9:00 am

175 N. Redwood Dr., San Rafael

Agenda

Announcements: MCL walk into Conservation History – Sunday, Aug. 9 at Roy's Redwoods 9:30 a.m.

Approval of minutes: July 1, 2015

Approval of Agenda

Action Items:

- a. Black Point – Green Point Community Plan – recommendations from the North Marin Unit to follow after NMU meeting – Plan available online: <http://www.marincounty.org/depts/cd/divisions/planning/black-point>
- b. Civic Center Drive coordination- Kate – draft letter attached

County wide planning issues:

- a. Transportation updates - Bob Johnston
- b. Water updates – Ann
- c. Develop background for recommending a position on artificial turf- potential speakers
- d. BioMarin new construction proposal
- e. Whistlestop proposal in San Rafael
- f. Greenbrae N/S greenway

Brief Updates:

- a. PRNS ranch planning - Judy
- b. Community Marin - Rick
- c. Novato General Plan Update – Rick
- d. Easton Point – Randy
- e. Hamilton Sports Facility
- f. Grady Ranch

Back Burner issues:

Canalways | Highway 101 projects | SMART or NCRA | Hetfield project, Lucas Valley | Golden Gate Baptist Seminary | Marin General Hospital Retrofit | Bon Air Bridge impact on wetland

Next meeting: September 2, 2015

**Agricultural Land Use Committee
Planning Subcommittee – Aug. 5, 2015
Meeting Agenda**

1 Update on County's discussions with Coastal Commission re LCP

2 Proposed "Compost and Climate" event – September 28, Wick-Rathmann Ranch

3 Update on NPS Ranch Management Plan and discussion:
Discussions "with interested parties" are ongoing. What would we like to see,
e.g.,
Carbon farm plans –
Elk management

4. Ag Policy
Subcommittee Meetings – Update on schedule

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Land Use, Transportation, Water, & Agricultural Land Use: July 1, 2015, 9 to 12:15

Present: Susan Stompe chair; Alan Bortel, Priscilla Bull, Nona Dennis, Don Dickenson, Rick Fraites, Randy Greenberg, Jana Haehl, Bob Johnston, Paul Minault, Kate Powers, Pamela Reaves, Judy Teichman, Ann Thomas. Guests: Susie Criscimagna, Eden Housing; Lori Schifrin, San Rafael.

Agenda. Added discussion on Letter to MEA regarding dairy energy audits.

June 3, 2015 Meeting Notes. OK as distributed.

Support for Dairy Energy Audit. Committee reviewed a letter that had been drafted by a Climate Action Working Group member and agreed that it seemed a reasonable request to ask Marin Energy to budget for energy audits of Marin County dairy operations. The ultimate goal would be to seek ways their energy usage could be reduced.,

Review Draft IPM/Invasives Policy. This meeting follows the June committee decision to expand the existing IPM policy, following BOS action June 2 to halt routine use of herbicides, notably glyphosate, on district lands. Ann, Nona, and Judy volunteered to draft an expanded policy. Committee today reviewed what began as a draft written by Ann, to which Parks and Open Space Committee member suggestions were added by Nona, who then passed it to a subcommittee on invasive plants within the Parks and Open Space Committee where there were further comments. Late comments were not included in the draft emailed to Land Use members the preceding weekend. There was some confusion about whether this was an IPM policy, an invasive plants policy, or a hybrid, which committee it falls under, and exactly what IPM entails. Work on a revised policy was deferred and comments to the BOS will use the existing policy.

It was approved that Paul would draft a letter regarding the IPM issue raised by the BOS, to be reviewed by Susan, then go the MCL President for signing. The letter would be addressed to Supervisors Rice and Sears, who are on a BOS subcommittee to re-examine the county's herbicide use, and be copied to the entire BOS and Parks Chief Linda Dahl.

Request for Comments on LCP Issues. Agreed on comments to be made on county and Coastal Commission recommendations regarding Marin's Local Coastal Plan (LCP) now under review. County Planner queried MCL Ag Land Use members for suggestions but as Land Use members had not had time to review all the information and documents involved, MCL's comments will focus briefly on these issue areas: thresholds for what constitutes a change in use, as opposed to a continuing operation, on agricultural lands; standards for retail sales, acreages suitable for viticulture (5 acres may be too much but do not have specific recommendation). Judy will draft a letter for Susan to review and then Kate to sign.

Transportation. Bob reported briefly on updates from TAM: the ped/bike bridge over East SFD has been installed; tracks are being reconstructed from San Rafael to the south of Civic Center Drive; TAM Oversight Committee continues to meet on an irregular basis.

Water Issues. LAFCO's final report with recommendations on Marin water agencies is due out in August or September. Executive Officer Keene Simonds spoke at the June 25 Water & Watersheds Program talk and was well received by about 30 guests.

Artificial Turf. Susan suggests developing a more thorough policy on artificial turf. Nona suggested that MMWD's Dan Carney has researched this perhaps more than anyone else and could be a resource for information.

Bio Marin New Construction Proposal. Lori Schifrin, a San Rafael Mahone Creek Watershed resident who has been monitoring the company's expansion plans for the San Rafael Corporate Center, asked that MCL review these plans. The biopharmaceutical firm, which purchased the San Rafael Corporate Center complex in 2014, proposes additional buildings on the 15.5 acre site. These include a new a four-story 72,396 s.f. office building and an expansion to the six-story parking structure currently under construction on Lincoln Avenue. The expansion would include approximately 312 additional stalls on six levels, including 41 stalls on grade. With the additional parking garage expansion, there would be a total of 978 parking spaces. The proposal has been reviewed as a conceptual design review permit and a Planning Commission hearing on the project, for which a Negative Declaration is proposed, will be August 24. Lori expressed concern, among other things, that the project would involve penetrating the brownfield cap on the former PG&E site, and that the BioMarin plans have been insufficiently noticed for the public. Don D, Kate, and Lori were appointed as a subcommittee to meet with San Rafael planning staff to review and assess the Bio Marin plans.

Whistlestop Proposal. Susie Criscimagna of Eden Housing, the developer for the Whistlestop building in San Rafael, spoke briefly about Eden's plans which she expects will be formally submitted to the City in about two weeks. After that it may be changed architecturally, she said, but would still include 40 units of senior housing for which no parking would be provided, and a retention of the existing services for which there would be parking on the site.

Civic Center Drive Area Planning. The BOS has approved a plan and specifications for the multi-use path and alterations for Civic Center Drive related to the SMART station, and SMART is expected to begin operations in spring of 2016. As was discussed at the last Land Use meeting, there is a master plan for the whole area, including \$2 million allocated for Civic Center Drive improvements, bike lane, traffic signalization, etc. It is not clear that all these plans have been sufficiently coordinated with roadway plans and drainage plans. The east-west ped crossing remain a concern.

Notes: AT

August 5, 2015

Marin County Board of Supervisors
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 308
San Rafael CA 94903

SUBJECT: Civic Center Campus Improvements

Dear Supervisors:

At this important time of Civic Center area transformation and in keeping with the spirit of Frank Lloyd Wright's architectural principles, Marin Conservation League would like to recommend that a concerted effort be made during current strategic planning and facilities assessments to consider the beautiful site and campus of the Marin County Civic Center in its entirety and that focus be placed on integrating the Civic Center buildings, the campus and the natural environment, into a human scale, unified and well-functioning whole. We would like to highlight the importance of good planning for three aspects of this important public space.

The need for increased safe pedestrian accessibility and connection for all users

It's important the County conduct successful public outreach in order to create pathways and connections that fit the real needs of users, including County staff. Emphasis on well-planned, safe, pedestrian pathways **integrating** the campus including comfortable, well-designed crossings of Civic Center Drive and Peter Behr Drive are critical. The campus would be significantly improved if there were an emphasis placed on pedestrian and bicycle circulation throughout, reduced contact with autos, disincentives for autos to use Civic Center Drive as a thoroughfare and prioritizing pedestrian and bicycle connection of the campus to surrounding infrastructure including North San Pedro Road, the SMART multi-use path, the Northgate Promenade, McInnis overcrossing, and pedestrian access for neighborhoods west of 101 via a pedestrian crossing or access along the south side of the SMART station.

The need for protection and restoration of Gallinas Creek

Water from Gallinas Watershed flows through the Civic Center site into the south fork of Gallinas Creek. Protection of the Creek's tributaries and wetlands, that run adjacent to and through the Civic Center site including the lagoon, is not only necessary due to state and federal regulation, but desirable. The Creek's tidally influenced channels provide habitat for egrets, rails, songbirds, and mammals and the marshes are feeding grounds for native predators.

Gallinas Creek has recently suffered destructive impacts, mitigated out of watershed, due to the construction of the SMART rail. The cumulative effects of further negative impacts, mitigated or not, will increasingly harm the ability of the watershed to recover and thrive. MCL recommends that all future paving, construction and maintenance projects on the Civic Center Campus prioritize the need to eliminate toxins, sediment and additional runoff into the channels of the creek. Further, it's time for a new approach. We urge you to adopt an approach of integrating **restoration** of natural systems into the campus' revitalization. This would require prioritizing the wisdom of the County's own MCSTOPPP and Watershed Programs purposes and goals.

Currently, it's of critical importance the County pay detailed attention to the monitoring and reporting of the mitigations enabled by the recent Mitigated Negative Declaration of the Civic Center Drive Improvements Program and to provide public transparency and accountability of those reviews.

Support for a permanent Farmer's Market

Finally, MCL supported measure B and continues to support the construction of a permanent Farmer's Market at the Civic Center site. It will create an important connection between East and West Marin and offer opportunities for the public to understand and value Marin's rich agricultural history.

All new or renovated structures on the site should protect views from and into the site, integrate with the natural environment and the campus as a whole, and align with Frank Lloyd Wright's vision and plans for a culturally rich center for the community.

In closing, plans to update and revitalize the areas of the Civic Center, including roadways, pathways, plaza, and buildings, have been long overdue. The area is a countywide icon. It is Marin's center for architectural excellence and innovation, for cultural and recreational events, and is Marin's political heartland. While the work may be done in stages, the overall planning must be coordinated, not undertaken isolated project by project, to ensure a cohesive, attractive, environmentally sound outcome. This requires leadership. It is a legacy project, and those who assume leadership will be remembered for this important achievement.

Sincerely,

Kate Powers, President