



Protecting Marin Since 1934

September 13, 2016

San Rafael Parks and Recreation Commission
c/o Carlene McCart, Community Services Director
618 B Street,
San Rafael, CA 94901
By e-mail: carlene.mccart@cityofsanrafael.org

Subject: Greenwood Avenue Lots – Offer of Dedication for Open Space

Dear Chairperson Ralph Mihan:

The purpose of this letter from Marin Conservation League is to support the recent offer of Dedication of two vacant lots at the end of Greenwood Avenue to the City of San Rafael for permanent open space. Marin Conservation League's Parks and Open Space Committee recently heard a presentation from representatives of Marin Open Space Trust, who are facilitating the dedication and transfer of ownership to the City. We have also reviewed the September 6, 2016 Council Agenda Report and visited the property. In light of this review, we believe that the City would miss an important opportunity if it turned down the generous offer.

Since 1934, MCL has consistently led efforts throughout Marin to preserve open spaces and, in so doing, ensure that diverse natural habitats are protected and that community resources for the enjoyment of present and future residents are preserved. Over the years, an incomparable wealth of parklands and open spaces in the County has evolved. In many instances, this has resulted from the incremental addition of small, strategically located areas of land that have been acquired as circumstances permitted. The three-acre Greenwood Avenue property is not only strategically located contiguous to the existing Oakwood Open Space, but it also contains a segment of the historic Makin Grade and it provides useful trail connections between neighborhoods.

Timing is important! Two residents have offered to meet the acquisition price, leaving no obligation to the City to raise additional funds. MCL understands why the City established a policy some years ago not to accept offers of land for permanent open space. However, this property presents compelling reasons to accept this offer. Notably, it meets many of the criteria for open

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space preservation outlined in the San Rafael General Plan 2020. These include, among others, preserving open space as wildlife habitat and as a visual asset for the community (Policy OS-1); encouraging open space areas that are adjacent to public open space (Policy OS-1b); protecting and preserving the natural value of open space while permitting it to serve as a community resource for enjoyment by residents of San Rafael (Policy OS-3); and encouraging provision of access to open space areas in the design of adjacent development (Policy OS-4).

MCL asks that the City fairly assess the limited liabilities inherent in adding these three acres to 30+ acres of existing contiguous open space. Furthermore, MCL encourages the City to move toward fulfilling the General Plan's goal of developing a management plan for the approximate 10,000+ acres of open space that it already owns (Policy OS-2a). In the meantime, **MCL urges the City to accept this offer!**

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kate Powers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Powers

President

cc San Rafael City Council