

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Land Use and Transportation Committee Meeting Notes: June 4, 2014

Present: Susan Stompe, chair; Priscilla Bull, Nona Dennis, Don Dickenson, Rick Fraites, Randy Greenberg, Kate Powers, Judy Teichman, Ann Thomas, Doug Wilson. Met 9 AM to Noon.

May 7, 2014 Meeting Notes. These are approved as distributed.

Agenda. Water Issues report added.

Cooley Solar Farm Use Permit and Design Review. This is a proposed free-standing 1.98 MW photovoltaic solar facility on 13.5 acres of the agriculturally-zoned Cooley Quarry site. The entire property, including the quarry, is 952 acres. The project would be about 144 feet from the south property line, 3,811.5 feet from the north line, and more than 100 feet from the top of the nearest stream bank. The facility would include 96 dual-axil trackers with 40 photovoltaic modules each plus 4392 fixed mounted arrays. The system would be connected to the existing PG&E Stafford substation.

Several committee members plan to attend a public site tour Monday. MCL's North Marin Unit has concluded this is an appropriate site for solar. Land Use members expressed concern about the county processing this before a solar ordinance is adopted, but the county has to process submitted applications. It was recommended that Planning Commission review of this project include the following: 1) address the implication of an approval for the A60 agricultural zoning and provide conditions that are protective on this zoning; and 2) include a condition regarding the eventual closure, removal and/or reuse of the equipment.

Pt Reyes NS Ranch Mgmt Plan EA. Judy, Sally and Nona compiled scoping comments and submitted them on June 2. Several board members attended scoping workshops on May 6 and 7.

Larkspur SMART SAP DEIR. Jana coordinated comments to compile a 24-page letter detailing incompleteness items and merit recommendations, turned in to Larkspur on June 2.

Corte Madera Inn Rebuild Project/NOP for Draft EIR. A scoping letter was submitted and it will probably be two or three months before there is an EIR on which to comment.

Community Marin. Priscilla, who is currently convening this multi-organization group, reported that due to SPAWN and Sierra Club objections to proceeding as a group on an ongoing advocacy campaign regarding sea level rise adaptation, a few of the other participants met informally and have agreed to proceed in another manner. This group plans to meet in mid-June to discuss next steps. Doug said his Climate Action Group is looking at using policies in *Community Marin*, which have been adopted by MCL.

Corte Madera Ecological Reserve Expansion Project. Marin Audubon signed a purchase agreement with owners of the site known as Madera Bay Park, hoping to acquire and restore it to tidal marsh then donate it to the State Department of Fish and Wildlife for permanent protection as part of the Reserve. Fundraising is underway. There was some discussion about how MCL will assist the effort, since the board approved support.

Letter of Appreciation. We learned that Coastal Conservancy staffer Tom Gansbury, who has worked on several major projects in Marin, will be relocated to the Central Coast. Committee concurred that MCL should send a letter of appreciation to Tom's work on projects in Marin, including the Hamilton restoration and the Bay Trail.

Novato General Plan. The City is currently working on the housing element and on design of Redwood Blvd. Susan reported there seems to be support for reducing Redwood from two lanes in each direction to one lane in each direction, with additional land given over to passive uses. They are also considering narrowing the usable sidewalk right-of-way in order to allow for encroachment for outdoor seating and other business uses.

Marin Open Space Trust (MOST) and Sky Ranch. MOST is in contract with owners of the Sky Ranch property on Bald Hill to purchase the three parcels, located in both San Anselmo and Fairfax. The vacant site is about 16 acres and is between MMWD and Marin County Open Space lands. MOST directors have asked for MCL's endorsement of their effort. Nona will put this on her Parks and Open Space agenda for a recommendation to the MCL board.

Greenbrae Greenway/SMART. Jana reported the Town of Corte Madera and several other entities will request the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SNART) district to end leases on several businesses located on their right-of-way near the end of Industrial Way. These businesses, including a junk yard and several others, create visual blight and leach pollutants into the adjacent Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. Land Use committee members agreed that MCL should similarly request that the leases be terminated.

Water Issues. Water and Land Use Committee chairs have agreed that water issues will be dealt with as part of the Land Use Committee as the current Water Committee is working only as a speaker program series and not an issue committee. Several water issues that are being or will be tracked: 1) Marin LAFCO's study of the county's water supply agencies with a draft report expected in late summer. 2) MMWD's review of options to secure a reliable water supply in the event of extended drought, including a currently proposed consulting study on the feasibility of a pipeline over the Richmond Bridge to tie in to the East Bay system. 3) The DEIR for the water district's Wildfire Protection and Habitat Improvement Plan, due out at year end. 5) The County's Stream Conservation Area ordinance, currently on hold due to litigation but with progress on the associated work program expected sometime this fall.

June 29 Ag land Use Member Program. Judy discussed plans for the June 29 native grass ranch tour in Nicasio to view a program underway to use compost on grasslands to remove carbon from the atmosphere. Two sessions are planned. Judy or Jon will introduce the program. Susan will staff an MCL information table for the morning session; Kate offered to come for the afternoon and to try to recruit more volunteers at Friday's Climate Action Group meeting. RSVPs will be requested and Judy tentatively decided that it would be good to set a maximum cap for visitors to each session. She will work out logistics with Dru.

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