

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Land Use and Transportation Committee Meeting Notes: July 2, 2014

Present: Susan Stompe, chair; Priscilla Bull, Nona Dennis, Don Dickenson, Rick Fraites, Randy Greenberg, Jana Haehl, Jack Krystal, Paul Minault, Kate Powers, Judy Teichman, Ann Thomas, Doug Wilson. Guests: Mike Arnold, Bill Clements, Jim Schmidt. Met 9 AM to Noon.

June 4, 2014 Meeting Notes. These are approved as distributed.

Agenda. Approved with addition of USACE Corte Madera Creek Flood Control Project and request for letter of support re: federal funding for feasibility analysis & environmental review.

Announcements. 1) The invasive weed management plan for county agricultural lands, which this committee endorsed in November 2013, continues to be stalled. 2) Assemblyman Levine's bill, AB2042, for which this committee agreed with the underlying concept, has been amended such that it no longer includes provisions we supported. 3) MCL member Clint Kellner identified an endangered tiger beetle in a salt *panne* at the Mira Monte marsh restoration project and he is notifying SMART about this. 4) Susan reported that the FAA has expressed concern about a marsh restoration near Gness Field airport. 5) The Easton Point development is not on a county agenda for the next six months as planners await applicants' response to recent discussions.

Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) Oversight/Grand Jury Reports. Mike Arnold and Jim Schmidt, who have monitored rail district meetings and activities for several years, reviewed some of their findings and those of the Marin and Sonoma county grand juries. Both grand juries faulted the district for slack oversight by board members on operations and finances, ineffective citizen oversight committees, and tardiness in updating financial analysis and projections. Mike and Jim suggested MCL support the jury recommendations, including strengthened citizen oversight and input on the Strategic Plan, increased board education about operations and finances, and creation of citizen advisory groups to review issues relevant to users.

Land Use members noted that MCL was skeptical at the start that the rail district would achieve projected environmental benefits, that it had the potential to damage North Bay wetlands and that diversion of limited transit funds could reduce existing more viable local transit options.

Recommendation. M/S (Ann/Randy) to recommend that MCL communicate with SMART officials in support of concerns raised by the Sonoma and Marin county grand juries regarding lax financial planning procedures, poor citizen/board oversight, and lack of transparency.

Whaler's Point Hotel Proposal/Richardson Bay. Randy reported on the latest version of a long-running proposal to construct a hotel in Richardson Bay. The current application, to be reviewed by the BoS on July 8, is for abandonment of public streets to the project which would increase the dry land available for project floor area ratio calculations that make the project consistent with Tam Valley Community Plan FAR standards. Land Use members noted that BCDC projections for sea level rise put significant portions of the property under water by mid-century, but the merits of the proposed construction are not currently an issue. The major issue at this stage is that it is premature to consider street vacation for a project for which there is not yet a complete application on file.

Recommendation. M/S (Judy/Jana) and approved that MCL write to the BoS, outlining issues that need to be considered, or that are not fully resolved at this time, including the precedent that the right-of-way vacation would establish. Randy and Nona will confer on a letter to the BoS and Jana, Susan and Nona may attend the meeting.

USACE Corte Madera Creek Flood Control Project/Request for Support. Several county officials will travel to Washington at the end of July to meet with our Congressional representatives and other decision-makers, seeking to secure federal funding for planning and environmental work on the final leg of the Corps' project – the Unit 4 through the Town of Ross. They have asked MCL and other civic and elected groups for letters of support in order to demonstrate broad community support for completing the project, which was authorized in 1962. The county program requires completion of the Army Corps' project in the lower reaches of the creek through Ross and Kentfield, in order for the local Ross Valley Flood Protection and Watershed Program to fully operate and obtain the benefits for which it is planned. MCL has not monitored the Corps project but previously endorsed the associated Ross Valley project.

Recommendation. M/S (Ann/Jana) and approved to recommend that MCL endorse the updated USACE project and write a letter in support of federal funding to complete Unit 4, as consistent with prior MCL actions. Ann to draft letters of support to Congressional representatives.

Solar Energy Working Group. Susan has attended meetings of this ad hoc committee, which was established by Supervisor Rice to discuss ideas for a county ordinance. Susan said the group so far has heard from a Sonoma county planner, ranchers and reviewed other solar ordinances.

Representative Huffman Transportation Summit. Susan attended this recent workshop and noted that \$20 million in earmarks is still allocated for Port Sonoma development.

Community Marin. Priscilla reported that the reorganized CM group is in the process of encouraging cooperation and collaboration on SLR action among jurisdictions.

Canalways Controlled Burn/Invasive Plants. MCL was contact by San Rafael Planner Paul Jensen regarding input on city plans to work with fire officials on controlled burns to remove extensive pampas grass fires created by homeless campers in the Canalways. Nona will draft a letter with several suggestions from Land Use attendees.

At 11:35, the Land use Committee adjourned and several members reconvened as the **Agricultural Land Use Committee working group**. Present: Nona Dennis, Jana Haehl, Kate Powers, Susan Stompe, Judy Teichman, Ann Thomas.

The group reviewed and approved Judy's draft agenda for the July 25 full committee meeting in Pt. Reyes, to include a number of West Marin members or interested parties for whom it is not realistic to attend meetings in San Rafael on a regular basis. There was also a review and discussion of the June 29 member program in Nicasio on the Marin Carbon Project, and plans for two additional West Marin farm/ranch educational outings for MCL members: August 17 or 24 and October 19. One program would be on natural fibers, and another on composting.

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