

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

Land Use, Transportation, Water & Agricultural Land Use: June 3, 2015, 9 to 11:45

Present: Susan Stompe chair; Priscilla Bull, Nona Dennis, Don Dickenson, Randy Greenberg, Jana Haehl, Pat Nelson, Kate Powers, Judy Teichman, Ann Thomas, Doug Wilson. Guest: Fani Hansen.

Agenda. Added discussion on Civic Center Drive, and updates on CWP issues and Grady Ranch.

May 6, 2015 Meeting Notes. OK with one edit: add Judy's name to those who volunteered to track the Grady Ranch application.

Civic Center Drive Circulation Planning. Fani Hansen, an architect who had worked on Marin County civil building upgrades relayed her concern that roadway planning, particularly with regard to pedestrian movement, Gallinas Creek and public safety, is not being sufficiently coordinated among the various projects planned for the Civic Center Drive area. Projects in the works include the train station, a permanent farmer's market complex, and Civic Center Drive upgrades. She asked that MCL pursue this with county and city officials. Don noted that the Civic Center Drive changes have been approved and are to be coordinated with SMART, and that design of the farmers' market complex should be based on what the County has already approved for the SMART station.

It was M/S (Doug/Judy) and approved that Kate research the status of the various program components and draft a letter to Supervisor Connolly based on the situation, letter to be approved by the MCL board.

Plan Bay Area. Randy attended the May 28 Plan Bay Area 2040 workshop in San Rafael and reported that it included displays, and ABAG staff available to answer questions. She was struck by the fact that although a major reason for the PBA program is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the different agencies involved in the planning process have different reduction targets. At the workshop, visitors were invited to indicate, via placement of stickers, the strategies they supported. As different interest groups simply commented in support of their own goals she believes that this was not an effective planning strategy. PBA is a state-mandated project that is supposed to integrate long-range transportation, land-use and housing plans to provide more housing and transportation choices and reduce transportation-related pollution. It is guided by ABAG and MTC.

Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs). Susan reported that ABAG staff seem unfamiliar with this process, which was developed as part of their program to protect crucial natural lands. She learned from the County Parks staff that the list of designated Marin County PCAs is not being changed.

Transportation. 1) Marin Transit will conduct a meeting June 22 regarding their short range transit plan. 2) The Ross Valley's Sir Francis Drake Rehabilitation Project, from 101 to the Ross town line has begun with a study of ways to improve vehicle flow, pedestrian and bike circulation. Major changes are unlikely to result, given constraints of the roadway. 3) The TAM (Transportation Authority of Marin) has recommended allocating \$1,400,000 in transportation sales tax (also known as Measure A) funds to Mill Valley for the Miller Avenue Rehabilitation Project. The project aim is to create a continuous Class II bicycle lane, and improve pedestrian access on sidewalks and crosswalks.

Water Updates. 1) MMWD has prepared a cost of service study, relevant given the recent appellate court decision in the San Juan de Capistrano water rate case and subsequent class action water rate structure lawsuit against MMWD based on that case. 2) MMWD also is preparing a poll to learn about public opinion on water pricing, as they will eventually need to institute higher rates, especially for Tier 1 users who have not been paying for their full cost of service. 3) The EIR for MMWD's Water Storage Improvement Project is being expanded in

response new information on Spotted Owl habitat, and to more fully consider impacts on local roads. The \$23 million dollar project would replace the aging Ross Reservoir and Pine Mountain Tunnel

with three new tanks holding 8 million gallons, double the current capacity.

Point Reyes Ranch Plan. Judy noted that the Center for Biological Diversity publicity on elk mortality (35 percent decline in 2013) focused entirely on Tomales Point and did not include the whole seashore, thus not clarifying the issue. The group appears to be using information selectively to create support for letting elk roam free in the pastoral zone – threatening the viability of ranching.

Community Marin. Rick, who is chair, was not present but Priscilla reported that group is still inching along and nudging officials to support a coordinated SLR adaptation effort.

Novato General Plan. The City is reviewing the land use in the Northwest quadrant, north and west of Grant Avenue, and looking at future uses that could be incorporated into the general plan revision. Susan noted that, independent of City general plan activities, builders have been putting up cottage groupings rather than large apartment buildings in this area for some time.

Greenbrae Multi-Use Path along SMART ROW. Funding for this was not included in the latest SMART budget. San Rafael and SMART officials are reviewing how this pathway could be worked out. One pinch point identified is the need to cross over a drainage area along Anderson Drive.

Easton Point. There will be no new hearing for at least another three months. Meanwhile, the Tiburon Open Space Committee is working to demonstrate to owners that there would be legitimate buyers with the ability to generate funding.

IPM/County Vegetation Management Plan. Several people reported on an open time session at the June 2 Board of Supervisors meeting at which two to three dozen speakers, who had been called out by an email posted by an Environmental Forum member, called for discontinuance of herbicide use on county open space lands. A fewer number of speakers, including several with professional credentials and representatives of environmental groups, supported the district's continued use of system herbicides as a last resort – in keeping with county policy. Nona noted that she is reviewing the County Open Space District's draft Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan, comments due July 8. Ann, Judy, and Nona volunteered to work as a subcommittee to develop an expanded MCL position paper on IPM, a treatment strategy that MCL supports.

Agricultural Land Use.

Committee members attended: Priscilla Bull, Nona Dennis, Jana Haehl, Kate Powers, Judy Teichman, Susan Stompe, Ann Thomas.

MCL Ag Policy Working Group. This group had a productive first session on May 18 (minutes available) at Sally Gale's, hearing reports on existing MCL ag policies and history, and UCCE reports. A second meeting will be held June 29 at Susan's home and Sally hopes to have a speaker from the Regional Water Quality Control Board at that meeting, along with UCCE's David Lewis.

Quarterly MCL Ag Committee. Speakers for the August 28 at Pt Reyes will include Tory Estrada of the Carbon Institute, Jeff Creque, and David Lewis. Future meetings: October, January, and April.

Ranch Visits. A program is set for June 20 at the Giacomini Ranch.

LCP. Judy reported Jack Leibster has not yet heard back from Coastal Commission staff regarding the County's issues, and the CC's meeting on the Marin update of both the land use and implementation plans is set for November 4-5-6; agenda to be posted October 23. Judy is concerned that is a short time frame for MCL to get its comments together on issues, e.g. crop rotation, conversion of use, viticulture (there is a county ordinance), roadside sales, burgeoning new uses such as probable marijuana and/or hemp cultivation and boutique farming, etc.

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