

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

Land Use, Transportation, Water, Agricultural Land Use: November 4, 2015, 9 to 11:15

Present: Susan Stompe chair; Nona Dennis, Don Dickenson, Rick Fraites, Randy Greenberg, Bob Johnston, Kate Powers, Judy Teichman, Ann Thomas, Doug Wilson, Periann Wood. Guests: Mairn County Parks Planner James Raives, consulting engineer Rachel Kamman.

October 7, 2015 Meeting Notes. OK as distributed.

McInnis Marsh Restoration Project. James introduced Rachel, of Kamman Hydrology & Engineering, who gave a PowerPoint presentation based on the feasibility study for planned restoration on the 180-acre site within McInnis Park. The project will remove bayland levees, possibly reconnect Miller and Gallinas Creeks, and restore tidal exchange between McInnis Marsh and Gallinas Creek, and reconnect lower Miller Creek to the restored baylands. The EIR will be done next. The existing levee trail has a short life due to pending rise in sea and bay water levels, so the outboard levee will be replaced with a horizontal levee.

The project is at the confluence of Miller and Gallinas Creek watersheds, an area that was historically one watershed. The project should create a corridor for steelhead upstream.

Rachel cautioned that with climate changes, the 8 foot maximum high tides observed in recent years could be as high as 9 or 9.5 feet elevation – with widespread flooding – in the near future.

Solar Carport Installation at Buck Center. This 82,000 square foot project (2 acres) project, which intrudes into the safety zone for Gness Field, is already approved so no action was taken.

Niebuhr Appeal of Design Review & Tree Removal. The North Marin Unit has recommended opposing this project if it goes to appeal at the BOS after having been unanimously denied by the Planning Commission. The proposal for a new 6,208 square foot residence on a vacant Black Point lot would involve removal of 109 trees, including 102 that are classified as protected per the County Development Code.

M/S (Ann/Rick) and approved to oppose this project. [Don did not vote on this motion.]

Transportation. Two items were reported. 1) SMART is requesting about \$50 million of TAM (Transportation Board of Marin) for shuttles to serve its 4 stations. 2) Workshops are being held this month for the public to review options for the Sir Francis Drake Blvd transit project. The project, to improve the SFD corridor from the Ross line to Hwy 101, began research in fall 2014 and continues in fact-finding mode; a preferred alternative design should be ready in early 2016, with environmental review anticipated in spring and summer 2016, detailed design initiated in fall 2016, and construction starting in fall 2017. The corridor traffic has increased five percent since 2011. Public comment so far supports prioritizing improved vehicle flow and crosswalk safety, particularly focused on school children safety as a top public concern.

Water Issues. MMWD's proposed rate revision and price hikes will be reviewed at workshops November 10 and December 3, with board decision December 8. There is insufficient time for MCL board consideration of comments for December 8 given the workshop schedule. Ann proposes, at this time, that MCL: support structure revision to comply with state law and the separate watershed fee to establish a stable funding base for watershed maintenance; express concern that the funding structure described is inadequately for projected watershed costs, given the decision to abandon consideration of herbicides, nor may it provide adequate funding for future conservation costs. A letter will be drafted after November 10 for the MCL meeting on the 17th with understanding it could be modified somewhat after final workshop.

MMWD directors on the previous evening also approved an ordinance to require that applicants for new or enlarged water service for substantial residential or commercial remodels install a gray water recycling system as part of the construction. Effective in 90 days.

IPM Update. Nona reported uncertainty regarding an EIR on MMWD's revised Wildfire Protection and Habitat Improvement Plan. She also noted that, based on public reports from Supervisor Rice, it appears the County is continuing with its existing program.

Strawberry/Seminary Proposal. Applicant North Coast Land Holdings has submitted an application for redevelopment of the 127-acre Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, on behalf of Branson School: a master plan amendment, a precise development plan, a use permit amendment, vesting tentative map, and tree removal permit to allow redevelopment of the existing seminary campus. The proposal would redevelop the site to replace or remodel the existing seminary graduate school buildings for a relocated Branson School, moving the secondary school from Ross where its enrollment is capped at 320 students; the relocation, if the plan is approved, would allow for a larger student body.

The proposal would remodel and enlarge existing seminary buildings, demolish most of the 209 existing housing units (except for three single family homes and ten three bedroom units located in four buildings), and develop 291 new residential units as follows: 55 studios, 75 one-bedroom units, 55 two-bedroom units, 106 three-bedroom units, and two four-bedroom units. This would increase the number of residential units on the campus, and the new units would be larger.

At issue is the extent of departure from the 1984 approved master plan. The proposal is opposed by some area residents, and will have to undergo environmental review that could take a year.

PRNS Ranch Planning. Judy referred people to the Park website for updated information on the status of the ranch management planning process. Nona reported on a series of meetings which began last year between environmental representatives, Parks spokespeople, and some ranchers. Nona attended and said she found the meetings, which were organized by EAC (Environmental Action Committee), to be helpful in having participants learn about each other's views. The groups were deliberately kept small and informal, she said.

Local Coastal Plan. Coastal Commission action is now deferred until August 2016.

Bio Marin. Kate reported the City Council adopted the negative declaration and resolution for changed use permit and a rezoning to allow another four-story, 67-foot high building on Lindaro across from the existing building. She recommends that MCL consider ways to improve the environment of the creek and seek a way to incorporate this into City plans.

Ag Policy Committee. The group, chaired by Sally Gale, completed work on a comprehensive ag policy, which will be reviewed at the November board meeting.

Community Marin Action Committee. Rick reported that group will meet on November 16 with Chris Choo who will be overseeing the vulnerability assessment for the bayshore.

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