

# Marin Conservation League

## North Marin Unit

Final Meeting Notes

April 21, 2011

*Approved June 16, 2011*

The meeting was called to order at the home of Edith Piltch. Attending were Joyce Applen, Rick Fraiters, Bernie Meyers, Edith Piltch, Eleanor Sluis, Pat U'Ren, Frank U'Ren, Don Wilhelm, Dorothy Thomas and Susan Stompe.

**Announcements:** The next Novato Housing Working Group meeting will be April 27 at 6:30. Next Walk Into History – Ring Mt. April 30 at 9:30 a.m. A Public Forum on Housing co-sponsored by MCL – 5/18 at Pickleweed in San Rafael 7- 9:30 p.m.

**Minutes:** The notes of the March 16th meeting were approved as distributed. Two items were added to the agenda: downtown city offices and AB 1103

**Stafford Lake Bike Park:** Susan reported that the MCL Parks and Open Space Committee reviewed Don's report on the meetings and tours held about the Bike Park. A couple issues came up for him to take to the meeting to be held on Monday, April 25, in addition to the issues he had identified. Don said that he plans to attend the meeting and will bring up the issues of filtering the runoff to keep siltation out of the lake, maintenance of the filtering system, consideration of closure if erosion becomes excessive, dust control during dry months, and clarifying where they are with the process and when and before whom a hearing will be held.

**Novato Housing Working Group:** Susan reviewed 5 sites that are being considered for potential affordable housing sites and some of the pros and cons for each. The Housing Working Group will be reviewing more sites at the next two meetings on April 27 and May 4. May 11 has been set aside for public comment.

**Buck Center housing:** Although she neglected to bring the visuals, Susan described the latest submission the Buck Center has had reviewed by Design Review. The new plan is also for 130 units, but more detail is needed before Design Review will be finished with its input.

**North Marin Water District:** Rick reviewed the Aqueduct Energy Efficiency Project for which a DEIR has been produced. With the Marin Sonoma Narrows highway project the water pipe of NMWD must be moved. NMWD decided to increase the size of the pipe which will eliminate the need to pump the water from Kastania to Novato, thereby reducing greenhouse gasses and energy costs. MCL submitted a letter at scoping and it appears, from cursory review, that the questions were answered. The other NMWD issue was the proposed 11% increase in rates. Dorothy complimented Rick that the District letter to customers did a good job explaining the necessity. The hearing on the rate increase will be in May.

**North Coast Rail Authority:** Bernie said there was a rebuttal to his OpEd on April 7 (or thereabout) saying that the situation at the time the operating agreement was made must be taken into consideration. Frank pointed out that there was an article in the Novato Advance about the preparations that are being made for freight service to begin. Bernie confirmed that FRA has, or will soon, allow freight to start running even without SMART approval. SMART had argued that its approval was needed before the FRA could change the FRA order prohibiting freight trains from running, but the FRA determined otherwise. SMART and NCRA are working toward an agreement for dispatching the NWP trains.

**Transportation issues:** Don reported that the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) released the first cut for the RTP which allocates \$82 million for SMART. Per the TAM Board minutes of 7/24/08 SMART agreed not to seek funds normally going to TAM or Marin Transit. Thus the \$82 million appears to be contrary to this agreement.. The TAM Citizen Oversight Committee heard complaints about the raid as did numerous stakeholders. Don also confirmed that SMART is proceeding with the sale of bonds as reported in the IJ. There is a TAM meeting on April 28 in which a project priority list will be approved and forwarded to MTC.

Dianne Steinhauser later stated that the \$82 million would be used by SMART to backfill the \$88 million saving that SMART approved at their last meeting. AND complete the lines to Larkspur and Cloverdale. The total cost for this is \$ 350 million, consisting of the \$88 million and \$268 million from Sonoma County (Sonoma County has not agreed to pay the \$ 268 million, which would come out of their RTP.)

Regarding the \$21 million funding gap for the Initial Operating Segment, it is rumored that MTC will match dollar for dollar funds from Sonoma and Marin CMA's. These agencies have not approved an allocation to date.

**Downtown City Offices:** The Novato City Council last week agreed to support a two story office over parking on their downtown property (3-2). There will be a cost analysis of that design. The other options had a lower elevation roof in the garage or no garage.

AB 1103 was discussed pointing out the potential problems with the bill, including whether ABAG has the authority to change a city's designation from urban to suburban. It would be beneficial for Novato and Marin to achieve housing requirements.

Dorothy Thomas offered to host the next meeting on June 16.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20.

Notes by S. Stompe