

Marin Conservation League
North Marin Unit
Meeting Notes

January 10, 2013

The meeting was called to order at the Wilhelm home. Present were: Dorothy Thomas, Don Wilhelm, Gail Wilhelm, Carole Dillon-Knutson, Pat U'Ren, Frank U'Ren, Eleanor Sluis, Robert Belichick, Jay Framson and Susan Stompe, and guests Alan Berson, Ning Rosenthal and Joan Goode

Announcements included: Business Breakfast on Feb. 8 with Assemblyman Marc Levine and a meeting sometime on legislative aims on CEQA

The notes of the November 8th meeting were approved as distributed.

Sports Academy at Hamilton: Everyone introduced themselves before Alan described the concerns of the neighbors with the proposed 88 acre sports facility. He had an updated layout that includes 9 baseball fields, 4 soccer fields, 130,000 sq. ft. indoor sports facility (“hall of champions”), 40,000 sq. ft. hotel (“bunkhouse”) and parking for 1700 cars. The facility is for regional use and will be a commercial function. The neighbors are concerned about the lighted fields, noise, traffic, and dramatic change from the quiet nature that exists there now. Marin Audubon is opposed to it. There are wetlands on the site. Eight of the baseball fields are on Landfill 26 which the project proponent is leasing from the federal government for \$10/year. The neighbors have met with the developer, the city manager and a couple councilmembers. They asked the Units members for help on devising a strategy. Suggestions included: meeting with each city councilmember, contacting local Little League and Soccer groups to emphasize that it is not a local facility and it will cost them to use it, to get letters to the editor and OpEd in all the papers and Patch, to take pictures or identify some local parking lots that can accommodate 1700 vehicles, get more information about existing sports facilities they have visited in Sunnyvale and Pleasanton and be more visible to the general Novato population.

Novato land trade with SMART: There was some discussion about the fairness (or lack thereof) of the trade Novato is negotiating, if Novato “trades” some 6 acres to SMART for temporary use of less than an acre downtown for parking. It was recommended that Novato press for a more equitable arrangement.

Projects and Issues around Novato:

Housing proposals: Senior housing is proposed on the south side of Hanna Ranch hill, the former McPhail property. There was general consensus that it is a terrible site that would isolate seniors from everything. Fourteen units of family housing are proposed on the Henry Ohloff site on Nave Dr., that would be managed by Homeward Bound.

Millworks survey: Susan and Gail will get back on it this week.

General Plan revision: Novato received a letter from state Housing & Community Development about the Housing element. Ellie will summarize it and the city’s response for the next meeting.

MCL Island maintenance: Frank volunteered to do Feb. and Nov. Stompe does Jan. and Oct., Jay volunteered for June and Wilhelm agreed to continue to do August.

The next meeting will be February 21 at U’Rens.

Notes by SS