

Accepted/approved
11/18/2010

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Parks and Open Space Committee Meeting
October 14, 2010
Meeting Minutes

ATTENDEES: Betsy Bikle, Priscilla Bull, Nona Dennis, Robert Eichstaedt, Delos Putz, Roger Roberts, Jean Starkweather, Steve Schoonover, Susan Stompe.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1) MCL Walk Into History – Mt, Burdell, Saturday , Oc. 16th (9:30 AM to 1PM); 2) MOST/MCOSD Benefit with Baywood Artists at the Bay Model, Sausalito, Friday, Oct 22d, 6-8PM Opening Reception.

APPROVAL OF THE POSC MEETING MINUTES for September 9, 2010: The revised Draft POSC Meeting Minutes of September 9, 2010 were accepted and approved as presented.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Response to the California State Parks Program EIR Meeting on September 25th regarding Changes in Trail Use.

An active discussion of the Program EIR Workshop took place. No Program EIR Scoping Comments were taken at the workshop which was used only to inform the public attendees about the Roads and Trail Change In Use Program EIR (PEIR) effort. Since no record of oral comments or public testimony was taken, the approximately 20 public attendees were informed that any comments regarding PEIR scoping must be submitted in writing by November 30, 2010. A Public Review of the Draft PEIR is expected in the late summer/early fall of 2011 with the Final PEIR and Notice of Determination and CEQA Findings to be completed in the late fall of 2011. The workshop presented information of Standard Project Requirements and a listing of Potential Effects that will be generally addressed covering Biological and Geophysical Resources plus effects on Recreation and Land Use.

Once the PEIR is certified, it appears that the primary responsibility for the implementation of Trails Policies will be at the District/Sector Park Units which will also be responsible for completing comprehensive Unit Trail System Plans for each park unit when feasible and appropriate. District Superintendents apparently will be responsible for addressing trails issues brought to their attention by staff or the public within the District. However, the PEIR process does not appear to provide any guidance on exactly how the CEQA review process will ensue for specific trail use change proposals.

Committee members expressed concerns over the following:

- a) The Noticing procedures to be followed under the PEIR for Trail Use Changes that are proposed,
- b) The specific project review process for proposed Trail Use Changes under CEQA,
- c) The need for the public to have knowledge of and access to the supporting analysis done in connection with the project survey reports.
- d) How trail use conflicts and safety issues will be addressed in the process since that is not a required element under CEQA.

MCL will provide a Comment Letter before the November 30th deadline and POSC Committee members will need to provide further input for that letter By November 15th.

DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION ITEMS:

1. Roger updated the Committee on the Status of the "680 Trail" which is now estimated to cost upwards of \$450,000 including all the costs of planning, CEQA compliance, permits, and project construction including the necessary mitigations. The response to comments on the Initial Study and Negative Declaration have been prepared by LSA Associates and are under review by MCOSD staff. They are expected to be made public during the week of October 18th. A tentative date for the public workshop on the proposed project and possible amendments to the project and accompanying mitigations is set for November 3d at 6:30PM at the Manzanita Room in the Civic Center Exhibition complex.
2. The State Parks Ballot Initiative (Proposition 21) Campaign effort continues with stations at the Farmers Market and other major shopping sites. Campaign signs have been received and are being placed at selected locations in high visibility areas. More voter reminder cards have been ordered from the campaign headquarters in Sacramento.
3. The Smith Ranch Pond Restoration project is still proceeding. Derek Cavasian has taken water surface elevation measurements over the past month which indicate that water level has dropped from evaporation and transpiration effects by 1 foot - three inches. That appears to indicate that there is no significant groundwater feed into the pond. The depth measurements of the pond are still to be done. The alternative of removing the splash boards at the outlet to allow the pond to become a seasonal wetland over time would require an updated environmental review plus the approval of the neighboring property owners since this would be a major change over what had been previously approved.
- 4 Nona Dennis reported on a Angel Island State Park Visioning meeting that took place in Belvedere on October 13th. The purpose of the meeting was to update the Interpretative Master Plan for the Angel Island State Parks where the

volunteer docent program of the Angel Island Association has collapsed. The Interpretative program must now be done by State volunteers. Angel Island State Parks has the lowest level of use within the system and State Parks is planning to update its Interpretative Plans to increase use and meet The needs of a variety of user groups plus create a better Public Communication Strategy. A Report is expected in February, 2011.

5. A discussion of MMWD's plans for creating a non - profit Friends of the MMWD Watershed took place. It is an ambitious plan to create a visitor center plus a 5 member staff within 5 years and raise \$500,000 per year to fund various land management and education programs . MMWD has already applied for a Prop. 84 \$3.5 to \$5 million grant to construct the Visitor Center. Committee members questioned the viability of the proposed plan and generally felt that while it is worthwhile to increase public awareness and sense of ownership of MMWD's watershed lands, it could be accomplished at much less cost . It was also felt that this proposed organization would likely require the financial and staff support of MMWD over the long term. Roger and Nona will prepare a letter to MMWD expressing MCL's concerns.
6. Nona informed the POSC of the status of the extension of oystering operations in Drakes Estero. An EIS will be required and scoping sessions will be held this month on October 26th , 27th , and 28th in Pt Reyes Station, the Bay Model in Sausalito, and in Berkeley. Roger and Nona will be attending the scoping Meeting at the Bay Model on the 27th between 6-8PM. Others are encouraged to attend.

The POSC meeting adjourned at 5PM.