

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

Parks and Open Space Committee Meeting April 11, 2013

FINAL MINUTES

ATTENDEES: Nona Dennis, Chair; Greg Zitney, Susan Stompe, Larry Minikes, Ernie Stanton, Jill Templeton, Delos Putz, Eva Buxton, Linda Dahl, and special guests Bill Long, President of MOST, and Bill Lukens, Erica Williams, and Jerry Riessen, of Tiburon Open Space Committee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND AGENDA ADDITIONS: April: Mt. Tam State Park Earth Day projects, April 13, East Peak; MCL Annual Dinner, with Jared Huffman, April 19, 5:30 – 9:00; Tour of MMWD water tank site, April 22 (must sign up as space is limited); EAC of West Marin, Annual Birding and Nature Festival, various venues, April 26 – 28. May – State Parks Trails and Greenways conference, May 8 – 10, Granlibakken conference Center, Tahoe City; Bay Area Open Space Council Annual conference, May 16, 8:30 – 4:30, Presidio, San Francisco; Olompali Heritage Day, May 19, 10 – 4; MCL Business-Environment Breakfast with Jamison Watts incoming Exec. Dir. of MALT, 7:30 – 9:00 a.m., June 14.

MINUTES for March 14, 2012 – Approved

ACTION ITEMS: Recommend to MCL Board to support in concept Tiburon Open Space Committee's campaign to acquire Martha Company property, Tiburon Peninsula, for public open space (See action below)

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1) MOST: Briefing on recent activities of Marin Open Space Trust

Bill Long provided some background on why MOST was formed and how it is structured. The non-profit began with a grant of \$10,000 from MCF, matched by a \$10,000 grant from the County to develop a business plan. The organizing group looked at other similar open space trusts as models for the plan. While the group accepts donations, it recognizes that fund-raising is most effective with a project as focus, such as the recent purchase of Manzanita Fire Road parcel adjacent to Giacomini OSP, for which MOST was able to raise a substantial portion of the local \$100,000 share. (Total purchase price was \$650,000)

MOST has received many calls from cities, open space committees, individuals offering either to donate land, or requesting help in acquiring lands, but must apply rigorous criteria before expressing interest or committing time. Several possible locales are of continuing interest. MOST's focus is on private lands that have been identified as having important future open space assets. Many of those areas are identified in Marin County Parks' Strategic Plan. The group coordinates with the public land managers like MMWD and County Parks to avoid competition for funds, and to pursue complimentary goals. In response to a question concerning maintenance of newly acquired lands, Bill responded that the goal is to raise enough money to set up an endowment to fund future maintenance costs

- 2) Martha Company Property and Tiburon Open Space Committee. Three representatives from the Committee were present. Bill Lukens introduced Jerry Riessen and Erica Williams, who showed a short video of the Martha Co. property, and (Jerry) gave a presentation of the many environmental features of the 110-acre property and efforts by the Open Space Committee since the 1990s to find a strategy to acquire and preserve all or parts of the property as open space. A Final EIR covering the proposed Easton Pt. development of the site is due to be released in late spring. In the meantime, the Tiburon committee is exploring a possible partnership or other relationship with GGNRA that would involve “packaging” several public and quasi-public properties to become “affiliated” with GGNRA. These could include: all or part of the Martha Co. land, Old St. Hilary OSP, Tiburon Upland Nature Preserve, Angel Island, the Tiburon Romberg Center (old Net Depot), and the privately owned Conservancy Garden in Keil Cove. The Park Service is unable to consider acquiring any more land, but the diverse biological, recreational, and cultural/historic resources represented on these lands otherwise meet GGNRA’s criteria for possible inclusion under an “Affiliated Area” approach. Such a “package” of properties would require a responsible managing entity; Marin County Parks has been suggested, in that they already own two of the adjacent properties.

The MCL Committee discussed various ways in which we could show our support for efforts to acquire and preserve the Martha Co. land. It was M/S/C by the MCL committee to support the efforts of the Tiburon Open Space Committee in concept, and to make that recommendation to the full MCL Board.

- 3) State Parks/ Friends of China Camp. Ernie Stanton, FOCC volunteer, reported briefly on the ongoing operations at China Camp SP, and also stated that he is helping at Tomales Bay SP to get volunteer activities going. He also reported on the Public Forum, April 2 at the San Rafael Corp. Center, put on by FOCC, Marin District State Parks, and MCBC. About 35-40 attended, mostly bikers, to learn from Ernest Chung the operational and fiscal details of running the Park. Briefly, the FOCC received matching funds from State Parks under AB 1478, and some of those funds are going to Olompali and Tomales Bay to extend their open days. It is apparent, however, that other sources of revenue will be necessary for the parks to remain open after the State-mandated two years. Head of Maintenance for the Marin Sector, Victor Bjelajac, and Supervising Ranger Ryen Goering, reported on maintenance needs of China Camp, and volunteer (name?) reported on the detailed trail inventory that he is leading to ascertain trail conditions. Volunteers are welcome under the State Park Foundation’s “Champions” program.

The Committee discussed the recently released Little Hoover Commission Report: *Beyond Crisis: Recapturing Excellence in California’s State Park System*, and agreed that we should study its recommendations as they might affect decisions in Marin County State Parks.

- 4) Marin County Parks Department. Department Director, Linda Dahl, was present and gave a brief update on the Draft Road and Trail Management Plan, whose EIR is being prepared concurrently, and the Vegetation Management Plan, whose EIR will begin “shortly.”. She said that she had resolved issues with the Mill Valley Fire Department over the unauthorized removal of brush on the County’s land on Blithedale Ridge. She

also reported that she will postpone appointment of the Measure A Citizens' Oversight Committee membership until a later date, since their services are not needed yet.

Greg Zitney, Chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission, reported on the Commission's March 21 meeting. The agenda and supporting materials will be posted on-line preceding meetings in the future. The Commission heard testimony and approved a request to rename the Manzanita path/boardwalk after deceased Supervisor Charles McGlashan. Laurette Rogers reported on activities of S.T.R.A.W. (PRBO Conservation Science, recently rename Point Blue Conservation Science). The Commission also established a policy with criteria permitting certain non-conforming uses on open space lands, such as buried pipelines, water tanks, and similar, as long as the facility serves public benefit, cannot be an another location, avoids impacts on resources, and complies with regulations.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Next meeting: Thursday, May 9, 3:00 – 5:00

Minutes by Nona Dennis