

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

Land Use and Transportation Committee Meeting Notes: February 4, 2015

Present: Susan Stompe, chair; also Priscilla Bull, Nona Dennis, Don Dickenson, Rick Fraites, Sally Gale, Randy Greenberg, Jana Haehl, Bob Johnston, Pat Nelson, Kate Powers, Judy Teichman, Ann Thomas. Met 9 to 11:45.

Agenda: Canalways moved to “back burner”.

January 7, 2015 Meeting Notes. Approved with one edit: David Lewis was not present.

Marin Local Coastal Plan/Policy Statements. Following a January 23 workshop for MCL members and other interested parties, and a January 30 quarterly Agricultural Land Use meeting, Judy and Sally prepared a draft list of recommendations/comments on the Coastal Conservancy’s revision of the County-approved Local Coastal Plan (LCP) development code. Their initial intent was that the comments would be in a letter to Coastal Commission ED Charles Lester, but committee discussion considered that this was premature until the issues had been discussed by the MCL board. Further, comments to the Commission are not due until April.

The LCP is a required document to guide development and protect resources in the state’s 1,100 mile coastal zone, an area that varies in width from several hundred feet to up to five miles inland, and extends three miles offshore. Marin’s Coastal zone includes more than 82 thousand acres, including about 34 thousand acres owned and managed by the National Park Service. About a third of Marin’s coastal zone is in agriculture, some of these lands being in the Park.

Randy reminded committee that as the Commission has already approved the LCP’s land use plan they are currently concerned only with refining the development code to be consistent with, and clarify as needed, the land use plan. It is too late to modify the land use plan. Nona noted that the recent MCL meetings, including people actively engaged in ranching or farming, has been helpful in identifying issues that need to be clarified.

Most of this Land Use Committee meeting was devoted to discussing and editing the draft letter into a statement of positions that could be reviewed by the MCL board and then used as the basis for a letter to the Commission. Judy took notes and was to incorporate changes and circulate the edited draft to today’s participants over the weekend.

M/S (Sally/Rick) and approved that a document based on the revisions agreed upon at today’s Land Use meeting will be prepared for MCL board approval.

Pt Reyes National Seashore Ranch Mgmt Plan Update. Judy stated that Park Superintendent Cicely Muldoon emailed her that the testing of elk in the pastoral zone for Johne’s disease is proceeding well. Park staff collected elk fecal samples for several months, from both D Ranch and Limantour herds, for testing at the University of Wisconsin and all 137 samples tested negative for the disease. Seashore staff, Ms. Muldoon reported, are in discussions with California Department of Fish and Wildlife regarding next steps.

EAC Request/Housing Size. Susan reported having received an email from Amy Trainer regarding her organization’s interest in suggesting adding language to the already-certified LCP land use plan, limiting all new development in the coastal zone, except for the C-APZ district, to the overall size of 3,500 square feet plus up to 500 square feet for a garage.

Transportation. Bob said the Transportation Authority of Marin certified the Measure A oversight committee’s report.

Novato General Plan Update. Susan reviewed comments that the North Marin Unit have made to Novato staff regarding the City's general plan revision. The Unit comments included the following: urged improved stream/creek definition including acknowledgement that human-made ditches are often creeks that have been relocated but continue to serve their original functions; create a creek baseline; urge extension of the Baylands Corridor; continue to apply CEQA review for any major repurposing of land or raw land development; check with other cities for tree replacement policies; retain non-residential development fees for Park and Recreation; consider ephemerals as streams. There was general approval of the Unit's approach.

Gallinas Creek. Kate reported that some area residents are concerned about unpermitted work done by the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) district near Gallinas Creek. In 2013 SMART halted work in order to obtain required permits. In recent rains sediment washed into the creek near the area where SMART is working and a group of Rafael Meadows neighbors has asked SMART for copies of permits and construction documents.

Stream Conservation Area (SCA) Ordinance Update. Ann reported that the courts are about to issue a final writ requiring the County to do a supplemental EIR on the 2007 CWP focused on cumulative impacts on salmonids in the San Geronimo Valley. The court action leading to this order was filed by Salmon Protection and Watershed Network (SPAWN) following the County's adoption of an SCA ordinance in 2013 which SPAWN did not support. Since the suit was filed the 2007 CWP has continued to apply in all unincorporated areas except the San Geronimo Valley, where the 1994 CWP policies regarding creeks and streams applies on an interim basis. This will continue to be the case until a supplemental EIR is completed. The County Community Development Agency is considering steps to implement the court order and whatever is decided will be made public in the context of the FY budget where the department's work plan for the coming year will be described. In the meantime the County is continuing the mapping of ephemeral streams, which will be an important component of any subsequent SCA ordinance.

Agricultural Land Use Committee.

Present: Judy Teichman, chairing; also Nona Dennis, Sally Gale, Jana Haehl, Bob Johnston, Kate Powers, Susan Stompe, Ann Thomas.

LCP Comments and Preparation. The group briefly discussed the LCP and Ranch Management Planning activities.

Program Ideas. Some suggestions were made for possible future field trips to West Marin, with the intent of engaging residents of eastern Marin in the agricultural part of the county. Some ideas were: climate change activities, Tomales Bay, ranching in the Park, tours of the Mendoza or Spoletta ranches, elk situation, and organic farming operations.

The dual committee meetings (Land Use and Ag Land Use) adjourned at 12:15.

Notes: AT