

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Land Use and Transportation Committee Meeting Notes: April 3, 2013

Present: David Schnapf, chair; Priscilla Bull, Nona Dennis, Don Dickenson, Randy Greenberg, Jana Haehl, Karen Nygren, Roger Roberts, Susan Stompe, Judy Teichman, Ann Thomas, Doug Wilson. Met at MCL 9 to 10:30.

March 6, 2013 Meeting Notes: Approved as submitted.

Plan Bay Area 2040. The draft EIR for Plan Bay Area has just been released, following quickly the March release of the draft plan itself, and both are scheduled for adoption in summer 2013. Plan Bay Area is a long-range (30-year) transportation/land use plan to install a Sustainable Communities Strategy specific to the 9-county Bay region. The Plan is intended to accommodate projected growth of two million people, provide housing affordable to all income levels, and increase transit options, with the goal of meeting state-mandated reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks. The draft EIR includes 63 pages of proposed mitigation.

Committee discussed and commented on the Plan Bay Area:

- Although Marin County has been assigned fairly low population and employment growth goals in the plan, lower than those in the CWP, they are unrealistic and don't comply with historical data.
- The GHG reduction which is the Plan's goal would need an expanded transit system in Marin including shuttles to major transit points. but bus service is being cut and funding is scarcer.
- Marin has a need for improved intra-county transit but under the process unfolding Marin would not get much transportation funding relative to these needs.
- Nona noted that ABAG/MTC representatives appear to have assumed an advocacy role which is inappropriate for their position, using Plan Bay Area as a pulpit to advocate a view of CEQA modernization that is still undecided at the state legislature.
- The effect of inflated population growth numbers is to require opening more areas to development than should be needed; the plan does not prioritize how growth would occur.
- The plan focuses development on major urban areas including San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose and, in the North Bay Santa Rosa would be the major growth area.
- Marin's role in the region should be seen as providing parkland, recreation and agriculture and the county should get recognition and financial support for these contributions.

A sub-committee of Land Use members was appointed to review the plan and draft EIR and report back at the May 1 Land Use meeting. The subcommittee is comprised of Nona, Randy, David and Judy. David will work out a meeting time for the group.

Community Marin Supervisor Meetings. A group of the Community Marin organizational representatives have met regularly with some County Supervisors, the most recent meetings having focused on introducing lawmakers to the new *Community Marin*. Susan, Nona, David, Priscilla and Randy were among a group that met April 2 with Supervisor Kinsey and they reported that he had read *Community Marin* and said he agreed with many points. He affirmed his support for a maximum total house floor area, although he suggested some flexibility based on prior experience. Although in support of action to adapt the county's shoreline to rising seas he backed off from doing this in coalition with the cities and towns. As a member of the Coastal Commission, he noted that the Commission is working to address legal issues that will arise from coastal flooding but in general takes the view that the state cannot armor the whole coast but will have to let inundation proceed in some areas in a process he called planned retreat.

Solar Array Policy. Roger distributed copies of suggestions for an MCL policy regarding solar installations that were prepared by the Climate Action Committee; he, Nona and David were part of the group preparing the suggestions which, he emphasized, are very preliminary. Also there had been no discussion of shared community facilities, and the Climate Action Committee thought agricultural lands should not be completely off-limits in all cases.

Some L.U. comments included:

- The policy should recognize that MCL’s mission is to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural assets of Marin County.
- All undeveloped lands provide some kind of ecological services, e.g. deserts thrive with life.
- This is a young and rapidly evolving technology and we should anticipate changes.
- Policy should be in context of overall climate change adaptation, prioritizing conservation of energy, and could include alternative land uses that reduce climate change impacts, e.g. parking lots covered by tree canopies that sequester GHG in lieu of solar installation. Roger noted that the MCL solar policy being developed was not intended to detract from other efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as conservation.
- Sites suggested for ministerial review should not be uniformly exempt from a broader public review process. Each site is unique and there should be levels of discretionary review.
- Could provide a list of factors that MCL board would consider in review of projects.

Highway 101/Greenbrae Project. A seven-member working group has been appointed to consider alternatives. Group includes two Larkspur council members, two Corte Madera council members, Supervisor Rice, San Anselmo councilmember McInerny and San Rafael mayor Phillips, along with non-voting member Alice Fredericks who chairs TAM. An ad hoc citizens group, “Marin Deserves Better” is also working on developing one or more alternatives for the project. Both the TAM and MDB groups plan to complete their deliberations in three months.

Stream Conservation Ordinance (SCA). The first of two Planning Commission hearings on the draft ordinance was held April 1 and MCL spokesperson Priscilla noted the need for improved clarity of the draft provisions. The hearing drew a large audience.

Millworks Survey. Susan reported the North Marin Unit sent surveys to residents of the Millworks apartment development in downtown Novato to try to find out if transit-oriented development, which is how the Millworks has been portrayed, causes transit use. 10 surveys have been returned so far. Of these, six say they like living downtown, all but one have a car, six are retired and don’t commute, one rides transit to work, five commute and drive a car solo, and two say they look forward to SMART but do not use a bus.

Marin General Hospital Expansion Project FEIR. The FEIR for the hospital expansion project was released March 28. Ann reported it includes some changes and corrections from the draft but despite significant comments from MCL, Marin County DPW, Transportation Authority of Marin and others seeking improved transportation demand management (TDM) measures the EIR is tepid on this subject. The hospital has a solo driving rate of 89 percent and anticipates the project would result in 4,400 vehicle trips daily. MCL could continue to ask for a strengthened TDM program to help reduce the vehicle trips associated with the hospital.

Notes: AT