

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

Land Use, Transportation, Water, Agricultural Land Use: February 3, 2016, 9 to 11 AM

Present: Ann Thomas, acting chair; Nancy Bell, Priscilla Bull, Bill Carney, Nona Dennis, Don Dickenson, Rick Fraitas, Randy Greenberg, Bob Miller, Kate Powers, Pam Reaves, Judy Teichman..

Announcements. 1) (Nancy Bell) The Environmental Forum will sponsor a panel discussion on wetland restoration on February 10 at San Rafael Presbyterian. 2) (Nona) MCL's next Walk into History will be March 12 at Mt. Tam East Peak; Gary Yost will be a speaker.

January 6, 2016 Meeting Notes. Deferred consideration.

San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Ballot Measure - AA. Save the Bay Climate Change Policy Campaign Manager Beckie Zisser gave the committee an overview of Measure AA, the nine-county regional measure placed on the June 7 ballot to enact a 20-year \$12 parcel tax for Bay improvement projects. The measure was developed by the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, a special district created by the legislature in 2008 and authorized to levy the fee.

Recommendation for MCL Board Action. M/S (Nona/Judy) and unanimously approved to recommend that the MCL BoD endorse Measure AA on the June 7, 2016 ballot.

Bay Planning Coalition (BPC) Sea Level Rise Meeting. Bob reported on the January 27 workshop held by the BPC, a maritime interests' group, regarding potential economic costs to Bay counties from climate change events. Presentations described the likelihood and consequences of large scale storms, based on findings in the 2015 Bay Area Council report *Surviving the Storm*. That report estimated that a 150-year storm event could affect more than 300,000 residents and result in \$10.4 billion in damages in the Bay Area. Santa Clara would be the hardest hit county but Marin would be #2 with \$1.2 billion in storm costs. Consequences of levee failure in the Delta could add up to \$20 billion.

In accord with their interests, the BPC supports Measure AA and also seeks to have the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) budget for using dredge materials for beneficial restoration.

Agricultural Reports

NPS Seashore Ranch Management Plan. (Judy) Issuance of the environmental assessment is delayed to August. Judy reported that John's disease testing in the free-range elk so far had been all negative. [Ed Note: subsequent to this meeting, it was reported that 5 elk had tested positive, thus complicating efforts to deal with the tule elk population expansion in the park by moving them to other reserves.)

Quarterly Ag Meeting. About 30 people attended the January 22 quarterly meeting at the Farm Bureau offices in Pt. Reyes, including representatives of MALT, UC Ag Extension, EAC, local press, and ranchers. There were presentations on bird population changes in an area formerly devoted to agriculture but where grazing was stopped several decades ago, and also an update on Coho spawning in local creeks.

Transportation Updates

San Rafael SMART Anderson Drive Extension. The City Council has approved extension of the SMART tracks south of downtown along Francisco Blvd West to an at-grade (ground level) crossing of Anderson Drive. This would eventually extend to Larkspur Landing. The at-grade crossing through Anderson Drive, chosen from six alternatives because of lower cost, will involve installation of lights, gates, warning signals, relocating pedestrian and bicycle movements, some traffic queuing, etc. When a Larkspur extension is completed it was estimated that 30 trains a day would travel this segment.

One wrinkle, that may not be fully settled, concerns a court decision on a lawsuit filed when the City extended Anderson Drive in 1997 and paved over the existing train tracks. At that time the courts agreed that a future Anderson Drive train extension should be above grade, or grade-separated. In the current analysis the grade-separated rail line was deemed too costly (\$100 million) and construction too time-consuming to be realistic. It is unknown if parties to the original lawsuit will pursue further action on the at-grade crossing.

Sir Francis Drake Rehabilitation Project. Plans are still being vetted for the SFD segment through Greenbrae and Kentfield, from Highway 101 to the Ross line. This project is funded by revenue from the \$10 vehicle fee add-on approved by Marin voters in 2010. Under consideration: 1) improving crosswalks 2) wider sidewalks on the north side in Greenbrae where children walk and ride bikes to school; 3) adding a traffic lane eastbound from about El Portal to 101; and 4) a second left turn lane from westbound SFD onto College Avenue, roughly in the stretch from Ash and Terrace Avenues, eliminating parking along that strip which serves local merchants, and feeding into a single lane on College Avenue.

Novato Train Stop. The City Council approved a new downtown station, at a \$5 million cost to the City, though it is not known if SMART will use the station. Downtown merchants (Chamber of Commerce) had urged support in hopes it would heighten downtown economic activity.

Water Updates.

Water and Watershed Speaker Series. County Senior Planner Chris Choo and Senior Engineer Roger Leventhal will discuss studies underway on impacts to Marin's bay shoreline from projected sea level rise in decades ahead at the next speaker program on February 25 at 4 PM. These studies, or vulnerability assessments, are a crucial first step to prepare the County's defense against encroaching waters.

Flood Control. *Novato.* Modeling results of the Novato Watershed Program's Novato Hydraulic Study will be presented at the Flood Zone #1 Advisory Board meeting this Thursday, February 4. The Novato flood control district is looking at plans for a new weir system in North Deer Island area. Rick is following. *Ross Valley.* There is a public meeting February 4 in Fairfax for the County to review planning for a detention basin at Lefty Gomez field. There was a well-attended meeting on January 28 to open public review of planning for completion of the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) long-stalled Corte Madera Creek flood control project in Kentfield and Ross (Ann is following).

Next Month. Note the March meeting is changed to Wednesday, March 9.

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