

# **Marin Conservation League**

## **North Marin Unit**

Final Meeting Notes

June 16, 2011

The meeting was called to order at the home of Dorothy and Josh Thomas . Attending were Joyce Applen, Bernie Meyers, Edith Piltch, Pat U'Ren, Frank U'Ren, Don Wilhelm, Gail Wilhelm, Dorothy Thomas, Josh Thomas and Susan Stompe.

**Announcements:** Transportation Authority of Marin meeting on June 23 at Marin Civic Center  
MCL Picnic on the Porch is on Sat., July 30

**Minutes:** The notes of the April 21 meeting were approved as distributed.

**Novato Housing Working Group:** Susan reported that the final meeting was held the previous week and 8 of the 9 sites were approved at 22 units per acre. The 8 sites would yield 274 units. 213 were needed to comply with the ABAG mandate. The report will be on the next City Council agenda on June 21. The 9<sup>th</sup> site was recommended to be included in the General Plan Steering Committee deliberation on North Redwood Blvd.

**Hanna Ranch Draft EIR:** The document has been released online or in CD form at City offices. Although only reviewing a fraction of the report, Susan commented on what she had read. The project is to build 136,500 sq. ft. consisting of retail (34,700 sq.ft.), office (21,200), 2 restaurants (10,000 sq. ft. total) and 116 room hotel (70,600 sq.ft.). The site is 19.7 acres. 3 acres will be landscaped and 11 acres will be "undisturbed". The document includes a 116 page attachment on traffic and an Urban Decay Analysis addressing the impact on existing businesses. The alternatives include No Project, office and housing mixed use, and a reduced project. The area between Vintage Oaks and the hill actually belongs to the City of Novato. That space, between the Bev Ehreth pond and the railroad tracks, is where the retail/office is proposed. Don Wilhelm took the CD and will review the traffic analysis. The Planning Commission will hold a hearing on July 18. Comments are due by July 25.

**Transportation issues:** The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) is considering providing \$8 million of their funds to SMART for the Initial Operating Segment (IOS). The Novato City Council addressed the issue at their meeting this week to give their representative on the TAM Board instruction on how to vote. Don and Susan spoke to discourage the transfer of money. The Council voted 3-2 for Carole to vote against the transfer. The TAM Board will decide on June 23.

Don reported that he and Gail attended a workshop on the Initial Vision Scenario sponsored by ABAG and MTC. They were discouraged by the format, since they allowed participants to vote only on predetermined scenarios. Most of the participants objected to the level of control the agencies were imposing. Don read up on other workshops in the Bay Area and found that other counties rebelled, too. Gail said that the California Senate may consider a bill (Steinberg) to require Redevelopment Agencies to implement SB375 if RDA's survive the current budget debate. This would help solve the problem for Cities and Counties who have complained that SB 375 is currently an unfunded program.

**North Coast Rail Authority:** Bernie confirmed that freight could start operating as soon as Monday (6/20). At the Monday NCRA Board meeting, the EIR is up for approval, as is the operating agreement between SMART and NCRA, as is an amendment to the Novato Consent Decree. Also on Monday the Board will consider an amendment to the lease between NCRA and its operator, NWP Co. He said that Bill Kier has been appointed to the NCRA Board by Humboldt County. Bill received the MCL Water Award before moving to Humboldt County.

Bernie continues to research the situation around the lease agreement between NCRA and NWP.

**Redistricting:** Gail introduced the potential of Marin's congressional and state senate districts being dramatically changed by extending from the Golden Gate to Oregon. A benefit may be that the Bay Area votes would outweigh the northern vote opening the way for a more environmental state senator.

Rosalie Webb offered to host the next meeting on July 20.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30.

Notes by S. Stompe