

[Draft] Minutes of the 24 July 2002 Midcoast Community Council meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chair Chuck Kozak at 7:45 p.m.

Members present: Sandy Emerson, Chuck Kozak, Paul Perkovic, Kathryn Slater-Carter, April Vargas, and Karen Wilson.

Member absent: Ric Lohman.

Public Comment

Mario Pellegrini (Montara) commented on the signs reading "Private Property / No Trespassing" on the land acquired by the Peninsula Open Space Trust. He commented that "now that they own it, it is no longer open." They have taken their dogs on walks for many years, he is concerned about the annexation proposal. When they bought their property and built here, they met all of the building and planning requirements. It took them two years to get their building permit, which was two years of appeals and hearings by members of the community, because it was too big, or because there might be red-legged frogs up there. The Coastal Commission, after those two years, gave them a 9-0 vote in favor of their project. He and his wife don't think that the effort to protect open space should be administered except by representatives elected by the people. He thinks that the role of the government is to protect private property rights and to uphold the rights of the people. Quasi-governmental, or home-spun authorities, should not be able to make arguments as if the rest of us are not also interested in clean air, water, and the environment.

Oscar Braun (Higgins Canyon Road) said that POST required the Giusti's to remove the boards for Arroyo Leon, not at the requirement of the State Department of Fish and Game. It is not true what was stated in the Half Moon Bay Review (article in today's paper). That land is 850 acres; the Giusti's farm 200 acres. Some of the other 650 acres have been used for landfill; this started by Westinghouse. He then commented on the posting of the Rancho Corral de Tierra by POST. Access to that property, he said, has been under siege for many years. POST has put up the signs for legal liability reasons.

Nina Pellegrini (Montara) walks over the POST land with her dogs for the past 17 years. She was surprised by the signs, too. No one from POST has returned her calls. She is continuing to walk the park, and will continue to walk the park, until they kick her out. She has been there for 20 years and has never seen a motorcycle or vehicle on the property. She is also opposed to the annexation of the Midcoast by Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District. She comes from Cuba and came here as a young girl. She is sensitive to rights being taken away. She came to this country because it represents freedom and individual rights. They moved here because they wanted the beauty of the coast, and they want to preserve that, too.

Leonard Woren (El Granada) was at the MROSD meeting last Wednesday at the Ted Adcock Center. He thinks that it is inconsistent for people to say buy the property, and then block the attempts to do so.

Paul Perkovic (Montara) announced that the Board of Supervisors will be taking public testimony on the San Carlos Airport Master Plan Update Draft Environmental Impact Report next Tuesday, July 30. This may be of interest to Midcoast residents because the form and content of the document is similar to what will be produced for the Half Moon Bay Airport.

Kathryn Slater-Carter (Montara) discussed some investigations she has been doing about work by California-American Water or individual property owners to extend water mains or install fire hydrants. Apparently some work is being done without all necessary permits. She is particularly concerned that the community may end up paying for these assets twice.

Board of Supervisors Report

PK Diffenbaugh (Legislative Aide to Supervisor Rich Gordon) announced that he will be leaving Supervisor Gordon's office, effective this Friday, to pursue a career in teaching. He will be teaching fifth grade in an Oakland school district. Karen Wilson had asked him to look into the situation regarding the reduction in school busing. School districts are not responsible for providing buses under law; SamTrans cannot have buses only for students. As school districts face budget constraints, many districts are moving school funds into the classroom, and eliminating busing. Supervisor Gordon must respect the decisions of the independent school district boards of trustees. It is highly unlikely that there will be any funding through the County Transportation Authority. Kathryn Slater-Carter asked whether SamTrans could provide one or more buses, at the least in the morning, that could be used by students. PK responded that this question should be directed to SamTrans. Kathryn suggested that it might be a mere matter of rescheduling existing shuttle bus service to accommodate the needs of the school children. She noted that the County and SamTrans made a commitment - to protect air quality - to increase public transit opportunities at the time application for grant funding for the Sewer Authority Midcoastside was in the works. Paul Perkovic noted that today's San Mateo County Times has an article about air quality issues potentially impacting highway projects. April Vargas thanked PK for his work on behalf of the Council over the past year.

Committee Reports

Omitted due to lack of time.

Consent Agenda

Approval of meeting minutes from May 22 and July 17, 2002. Deferred to next meeting.

Approve re-issuance of MCC letter regarding Highway 92 / Highway 35 interchange and request for Environmental Impact Report, and request for inclusion of representatives from MCC and Half Moon Bay City Council on project advisory panel. Deferred to next meeting.

Approve MCC's support of the X-Terra event to be held August 17 and 18, 2002, on the Midcoast; the event and route will be the same as last year's. Motion to approve recommendation by Kathryn Slater-Carter, seconded by Sandy Emerson. Approved by unanimous consent.

Regular Agenda

1. MidCoast Recreational Needs Assessment

Sandy Emerson introduced this item. We will be hearing a presentation by Sam Herzberg of the County Parks Department, and Peter Callander, of Callander Associates.

Sam Herzberg noted that the 1978 Community Plan called for examination of park needs. In 1998, a Fiscal Feasibility Study was done to explore the possibility of either annexation or incorporation for the Midcoast. The goal of this Needs Assessment Study was to look at what might be needed out here – parks, recreation facilities, trails, implementation strategies, operations and maintenance of facilities after they've been constructed. This plan will go to the County Park and Recreation Commission meeting in September, possibly at a special meeting on the coastside.

The County would like to seek input on the percentage of acreage per thousand population, funding mechanisms, etc. One of the unresolved questions is "Who is going to do this?" He introduced Mary Burns, County Director of Parks and Recreation; Dave Moore, Superintendent of County Parks; and Peter Callander and Steve Russell of Callander Associates.

Peter Callander explained that there are five communities – Montara, Moss Beach, Miramar, El Granada, and Princeton – that may need neighborhood parks. This is not a focus on County or State parks, but rather those that serve the immediate community. The Draft Mid-Coast Recreational Needs Assessment report is available on the County web site, as well as at the Half Moon Bay Library.

He explained that the report is divided into sections on summary recommendations, then details of how the goals, objectives, and policies were determined; a survey of existing

conditions; the needs assessment process itself; comparison of park sizes; a summary of needs; a park system plan and likely cost; and possibilities for funding the park system.

The planning process had a Needs Analysis and Financing Options Study done by the Strategy Research Institute available to jump-start the planning. This report was completed in August 2001 and represented the results of a carefully designed telephone survey. He described the process and sequence of steps, including community workshops, staff work, review by the Midcoast Community Council, approval by the County Parks and Recreation Commission, and finally approval by the Board of Supervisors. Following approval, the plan then goes into an implementation phase.

The existing park and open space facilities are listed in a table. Very few of them are related to community, neighborhood, or mini park locations. The existing population is about 10,600 people; the proposed build-out, under the Local Coastal Program, is about 17,000. The study looks at what is necessary to fulfill the needs of the existing population, as well as the additional facilities that would be needed to meet the needs of buildout population.

About 35% of Half Moon Bay's users come from outside the city. Currently, Half Moon Bay meets many of the needs of the Midcoast. Callander Associates conducted a number of focus group discussions. They interviewed both the previous and current Half Moon Bay Parks and Recreation Directors, and learned that about 70% of the funding came from user fees.

He then described the different park types. A mini park is usually one half to one acre, serving residents within about 1/4 mile. A neighborhood park is generally large, 4 to 12 acres, to serve residents within about 1/2 mile. A community park is generally much larger, about 20 to 50 acres in size, and serves a radius of about 2 miles. A community target for park space per 1000 residents might range from 6 to 10 acres.

Next, he turned to the costs of a park system, including acquisition, development, programming, maintenance, and management. The projection for acquiring the parks recommended comes to about \$30,000,000. A recreation center for the Midcoast should be about the size of the Ted Adcock Center and should include a gymnasium. They are proposing a trail system of about 6 miles for bicycling trails (class one – dedicated use) and 8 miles of hiking trails. To serve the additional population towards buildout, the costs for acquisition might total about \$20,000,000.

To accomplish all of this, one priority is to partner with other agencies or groups, such as school districts, the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), Golden Gate National Recreational Area (GGNRA), etc. Annual maintenance, programming, and management costs as proposed would be about \$142 per capita.

There is a table in the report showing possible funding sources, including Proposition 12 and Proposition 40. Another possible source would be a parcel task.

The report includes some of the priority tables from the telephone interviews.

Comments from the audience:

Mario Pellegrini (Montara) asked whether any of the funding sources might come from commercial activities, such as a miniature golf course or some other for-profit facility.

Leonard Woren (El Granada) had a number of comments and questions.

Carl May (Moss Beach) urged that the focus remain on the area within the Urban / Rural Boundary, and the needs of that urbanized area. From within the urban area, there are a number of vertical access points to the ocean, that serve the local communities. Some of these access points need further development work. Turning to trails, the proposed trail routes almost completely follow – and are within – riparian corridors along creeks. He is very concerned that trails will be interfering with riparian habitats. He also noted that in the County Trails Plan, there is a proposed Foothill Trail indicated as a north-south corridor that would be within the study area. Carl also said that non-profit organizations can accept funds. It is yet one more round that we've seen here on the coast, but it forms a pretty decent framework. Now we need to actually start doing something. Some of the trails might qualify for transportation funds.

Oscar Braun thinks the Parks Department did a very good job on their Needs Assessment. In response to Leonard's question of how the cost of a trail could be \$750,000 per mile, Oscar noted that there are all kinds of requirements, including environmental studies, safety issues, etc., that must be met. The County has the responsibility to see that the public's health and safety is protected. He also observed that taxes removed from the Coastside through the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District will generally flow to the other side of the hill, and will remove funds that could be used to support local parks.

Kathryn Slater-Carter began by praising the County. She then turned to the map showing undeveloped land, and took issue with the map. Many parcels are shown as undeveloped but in reality are already developed. Others are already scheduled for development, such as the Moss Beach Highlands site. One of the vacant sites shown as a potential park location was shown on Monday as a parcel that the County might rezone for commercial development. What is missing is the CalTrans right-of-way for the Devils Slide Bypass, which could provide a greenbelt or trail corridor through the community. She also thinks there may be existing rights-of-way or prescriptive easements that could be used for trails. She continued to discuss mini parks or pocket parks within neighborhoods. Perhaps if a Transfer of Development Rights program is adopted to help resolve the substandard lot issue, there will be an opportunity to develop small lots that might just need to have the grass cut and a picnic table installed.

Paul Perkovic observed that the existing undeveloped parcels within the urban area amount to about 40 acres per 1000 population. Thus, the perceived availability of open

space, where people can walk their dogs, let their children play, etc., on undeveloped lots within the community, will face a rude awakening as development converts those parcels into about 3000 more houses.

April Vargas asked what kind of an entity would be best to go after the funding for us. What will the actual implementation be for this? She supported Carl May's comments on a multi-modal trail to provide a non-motorized recreational and transportation connection between the Midcoast communities. The need is apparent.

Chuck Kozak wanted to clarify the scope of the report. It seems to cover the entire area from ocean to ridgeline, from the northern boundary of Montara to the southern San Mateo County boundary. He would like to see closer cooperation between this study and the Local Coastal Program Update being done by the Long Range Planning group.

Karen Wilson asked how quickly the different categories of funding could be obtained.

Sandy Emerson said that the Midcoast Community Council's Parks and Recreation Committee has been working closely with the Half Moon Bay Parks and Recreation Committee. Perhaps the next step is to examine how to create an entity that could administer funding sources.

Peter Callander suggested focusing on how to get an entity to implement the plan.

Kathryn Slater-Carter volunteered to assist in updating the maps to reflect parcels that are not vacant.

2. Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Coastal Annexation Plan

Chuck Kozak introduced this item. The report is available online at the MROSD web site.

April Vargas gave a brief background on the proposed annexation of the coastside into the District. MROSD was invited to a series of meetings in the late 1990s to discuss whether it made sense for the District to consider expansion to the coast. In 1998, an advisory ballot measure, Measure F, asked whether the community supported expansion of the District to include the coastside area. The advisory vote passed by 55%; the further north, percentages were highest on the north coast end, with about 65% voting yes in Montara / Moss Beach, about 50.1% voting yes in Half Moon Bay, and a smaller percentage on the south coast.

There is no immediate taxation effect of annexation. The District would have to place a separate parcel tax measure on the ballot in the area proposed for annexation, and such a measure would require a 2/3 vote. The District could expend funds from other sources for acquisition of land within the annexed area, whether or not a parcel tax was approved.

Following the approval of Measure F, there was a Coastside Advisory Committee set up by MROSD to try to answer many questions about how a proposed annexation would operate. Out of that series of meetings extending over about 18 months, the most well known result was MROSD's decision to forego the use of eminent domain for acquisition of lands in the annexed area.

Oscar Braun (representing the Coastside Fire-Safe Council) did a due diligence review of the Draft EIR. He offered a set of written comments on the Draft EIR. He asserted that MROSD does not have many of the elements necessary to comply with CEQA. In particular, his review panel was concerned that the environmental impacts of their proposed resource management or watershed management plans are completely missing. He included as an example how the San Francisco watershed management plan impacted the communities surrounding it. All of the rural land precincts – which consist of 93% of the area proposed to be annexed – voted against Measure F.

Kathryn Slater-Carter offered some comments on the density of development gradient, starting in San Francisco as basically solid structures; then Daly City, with some space between homes; then Pacifica, which has done a lot to protect the hillsides; then the Midcoast, which is even less dense; and finally the south coast. Tourists come to the area because of the visual amenities.

Leonard Woren (El Granada) debunked some of the claims made by Oscar Braun, noting that the 140,000 acres in the annexation area would not be acquired by MROSD, only a small portion of that.

April Vargas noted that an advisory vote has already occurred, and it is redundant to have a second one.

April Vargas moved that the Council draft a letter in favor of the annexation, with specific reasons why, including the ability for land management, preservation of open space on the coast for local residents as well as visitors, an increase in fire safety management, management of neglected open areas, management of private land trust lands, and would not add any further restrictions on development. The Council opposes an additional advisory vote. One letter goes to MROSD, with a copy to the Board of Supervisors and LAFCo. The second letter (opposing the special election), is to the Board of Supervisors, with a copy to MROSD and LAFCo. Seconded by Kathryn Slater-Carter. Approved by unanimous consent.

3. School Transportation Alternatives and Traffic Impacts

Deferred due to lack of time.

4. Midcoast Local Coastal Program Review Update

Deferred due to lack of time.

Update on Continuing Council Projects

Future Agenda

August 14, 2002 - Ted Adcock Center - possible short consent item before

1. CalTrans liaison committee

August 28, 2002

September 11, 2002

1. CalTrans liaison committee

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Paul Perkovic, Secretary.