

<p>Midcoast Community Council <i>An elected Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors representing Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton, and Miramar</i> PO Box 248, Moss Beach, CA 94038 http://www.MidcoastCommunityCouncil.org</p>	<p>Michelle Weil, Chair Claire Toutant, Vice Chair Len Erickson, Treasurer Dave Olson, Secretary Gregg Dieguez Jill Grant Dan Haggerty</p>
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Minutes for Meeting of June 9, 2021

Call to Order (7:05pm)

All Council Members present, with Gregg Dieguez joining at 7:23pm. This meeting was conducted virtually in compliance of State and County COVID-related orders.

1. Board of Supervisors' Report

Lena Silberman reported that she will try to clarify what happens after the June 15th transition. 85% of eligible adults are vaccinated. County still activity working on vaccinating. Reported from Director Calderon that locked gate at the top of EG Blvd that focus is on emergency access only. The Parks Department is mapping unauthorized trails to decide which to decommission and which to make official trails. Fuel Load Steering Council had its 3rd meeting; creating a list of all grants that have been applied for and their status, as well as all active projects. Investigating emergency ordinance to simplify tree removal. Discussing tree removal along Caltrans-owned sections of evacuation routes with Paul Wilson. He's receptive, so discussions continue. She has heard that somebody is suing the property owner (who owns the gate at the top of EG Blvd), but has no details or confirmation.

Dan asked why Steve Monowitz isn't enforcing the lighting ordinance with regard to the fire station. Lena will check and get back.

Harvey Rarback reported that the HMB City Council will discuss the Jimenez-Rarback report on public safety at it's next meeting. Len asked how the community can be better informed on those issues (should MCC request a sheriff representative to address the MCC). Harvey said he has talked to the Sheriff department, and it has been made clear that they are not interested in the issue at this time. A San Jose State professor on criminal law will speak at the meeting, as well as a former SF police officer who is an expert in this area.

Claire requested clarification on non-interest from the Sheriff's Department. Harvey responded that Sheriff Carlos Bolanos is on record with that opinion. Harvey also said that there would likely be a special July 6 meeting on these issues. Claire further asked if there were still many options on the table, and Harvey responded that is correct.

(7:20) 2. Public Comment & Announcement

Fran asked about Quarry Park fuel reduction. Lena responded that they received a grant yesterday from the Coastal Conservancy to do additional work (details reported at an earlier meeting).

(7:25) 3. Consent Agenda

Claire moved to approve the May 26, 2021, and March 10, 2021 minutes, 2nd Gregg, passes 7-0.

(7:30) 4a. Regular Agenda - CoastPride

Jenny Walter (jenny@coastpride.org) of CoastPride gave a presentation about CoastPride, it's history, and their activities.

Michelle attended their grand opening yesterday.

Moved Dave, 2nd Gregg to approve the letter as written. Passes 7-0

(7:40) 4b. El Granada Medians Eucalyptus Removal Project

Khoa Vo SMC Department of Public Works showed a map of the project area. The project is to reduce fire potential by reducing fuel within the median islands along Ave Cabrillo and The Alameda in El Granada, funded with \$500,000 in Measure K funds. The project was initiated at Supervisor Horsley's request in response to community concerns. Project split into several zones, primarily for clarity with the contractor. Mostly will remove dead and dying trees, and in some areas prune limbs 2" and larger that extend over the street (lowest priority). Have had initial meetings with contractors used by County Parks. Likely 200-220 trees to be removed. Supervisor Horsley is requesting \$500K from the Board for this project, from Measure K funds. Hope to start before September, with completion by end of year. Removed trees will be taken off-site, and stumps ground down to below grade.

(7:47) Council clarification

Len asked how these areas were chosen, what steps might be next, what plans exist for other median areas. Khoa said areas chosen were based on community input, and would act as fire breaks if a fire started in Quarry Park and moved south and/or west. Calfire also provided input, and they concurred. No next steps at this point, because this is one time funding. If there is more community request, DPW would go back to the Board.

Len asked who will be responsible for the trimmed median areas after the work is complete. Khoa said he needs to confer with GCSD, County Parks, etc. before answering.

Len mentioned that he has talked to Caltrans, and they have no current plans related to eucalyptus, and have no evaluation work in progress.

Lena said that she is in contact with GCSD with regard to future work, and that the County is willing to discuss future collaboration.

Dan asked what will be the overall visual result after the work is complete. He's not clear on just what will be removed. He hopes it will be evenly distributed across each median. He asked Khoa if they had thought about that. Khoa replied that they met with the County arborist, and they discussed that issue. Work will be primarily limited by the budget. Will reassess 2nd priority areas after first priority clearing is complete. If money is left, final efforts will be to try to remove some trees that are in clusters. Dan further asked about removing trees, he asked if it might be cheaper to chip in place and leave the chips on the medians, or in Quarry Park. Khoa said that Calfire felt that caused too much fire risk. It's possible the tree contractor may be able to save some money by chipping at their facility and selling the chips. Dan

asked if a volunteer program to maintain the results had been discussed. But doing that would likely be under GCSD jurisdiction.

Gregg said that he had discussed cutting with Nicholas, and that the community may have to get used to the aesthetic shock of cutting many trees. He personally is not worried about that, but he wants as much money as possible spent in cutting trees, not in related work. He made the same point as Len, that there are many other areas in El Granada that need similar work.

(8:00) Public Comment

Nancy Marsh spoke as a private citizen. She gave the location of the agreement between County Parks and GCSD. It doesn't give GCSD any responsibility or obligation with respect to the medians in general, the purpose was to allow GCSD to add recreational or park facilities in the medians, and then maintain them. She thinks citizens near the medians who have previously expressed concerns may be concerned about this project to remove trees. GCSD put all median plans on the back burner due to concerns from median neighbors, largely around liability.

Maureen Fleming pointed out that there is a huge area not included in this project, and that is the biggest concern. She agrees with Dan, she'd prefer balanced cutting and thinning. She asked Khoa if DPW was responsible for fire hydrants. Khoa said no, but he would find out and report. Maureen said she worked for paper companies, and that they valued their forests and had a good management process. She asked if that kind of company had been contacted. Khoa said he wasn't sure what Maureen was asking. She clarified that she meant thinning as the trees grow. Khoa said he would ask County Parks.

Fran agrees with Gregg. She wants every cent spent on clearing as many trees as possible. Wait for replanting until we start getting rain again.

Barbara Dye of GCSD speaking as an individual made clear that they only have parks powers, they don't have the power to do fuel reduction.

Matthew Clark of GCSD speaking as an individual. He wants the County to be clear that neither GCSD nor the neighbors have control of the medians. GCSD has the right to get permits to improve the medians for parks and recreation, only. Doesn't include clearing trees, etc. He asked if the medians would need ongoing maintenance after the project. Khoa said the intent was no. Matthew asked if naming and numbering of areas implied priority. Khoa said no, it was random. Matthew asked how far the money will go. Khoa said it could be up to \$10K per tree, depending on size. Matthew said that he didn't think paper tree farms should probably not be

(8:20) Council comments

Dave said that he didn't think plantation paper trees were an appropriate model for an existing "wild" forest, although perhaps talking to local logging companies with good management practices might be worthwhile. However, since the RCD is an expert in this area and since they are already involved, he doesn't think that's necessary.

Dan summarized his earlier thinking that more balanced removal would be most likely to reduce future fire risk. On the wood chips, maybe community members could have

a chance to haul them away, rather than having the logs removed and then chipped. Maybe a smaller chipping size would be acceptable to Calfire. He agreed with Dan and Matthew about paper company forest management.

Claire is pleased that something is being done, and it's a good start. She asked Khoa if there was an update on the Medio Bridge. Khoa said that now that the Coastal Commission has approved the conditions, the engineering firm is working on changing plans to meet the conditions. He's not sure if there will be time to go through the bid process and start construction this year, but he'll check and get back to the council.

Jill said leaving chips was very common, as less than less than 5" deep, so she's not sure why it's not being considered here.

Dan raised a concern about the stumps sprouting, even after being ground. Maybe some chips could be left to act as mulch. Asked if any herbicide would be used. Khoa said no.

Len clarified that no further work is planned after this project, it's finished when the cutting, trimming, cleanup, and initial restoration is completed.

Michelle said she is happy that Supervisor Horsley is pursuing funding for this project.

(8:32) 4c. Mitigated Negative Declaration for PLN2017-00135 and PLN2006-00075

Jill gave a presentation on the issues with the MND, and the changes we request. She has been working on other projects on Montara Mt over the last 2 years. She stated that it will widen a 3.7 mile stretch of the access road. She described the plant communities, and that there are protected species including butterflies. The tower portion is after the fact, but the letter is only about the planned road work including turnouts and turnarounds.

(8:45) Council clarifying questions

Dave pointed out that the road is 12 feet wide over it's entire length. There is nothing in the plan or the MND about removing brush, except to provide 15' (implied) vertical clearance. Jill said that she measured 6'. After some back and forth, there was no agreement, but Jill was measuring brush, not just road.

Claire mentioned previous MCC letters with regard to work on Montara Mt.

Dan said that he thinks the brush will be removed as part of grading.

Claire clarified her understanding of Jill and Dave's back and forth.

(8:50) Public comment

Michelle Dragony raised issue of past work and SFPUC history, and said that they should be getting permits

Moved Gregg, 2nd Claire to approve the letter as is.

Claire appreciates the effort on this letter. She asked if the biological survey is the main thrust. Jill said yes. Claire prefers not to have detailed instructions in the letter, but just to point out the deficiencies.

Dan agrees with Claire.

Gregg really appreciates the effort that Jill put into this, he only helped in minor ways in reviewing. He thinks a CDP might be required. Most MNDs that he has seen seem to have significant deficiencies. He wants the oversight that Jill requests.

Dave made an amendment to add a request that no turnouts be allowed. 2nd Gregg. Passes 7-0

Michelle moves that we reorder 1.g through 4.d at the end to move ahead of the "Mitigation Measures" section, to have greater impact, 2nd Dave. Passes 7-0.

Dave moves to amend the letter to rephrase that if there is brush to be removed along the roadway, rather than to state that the road is being widened. Jill 2nd. Passes 7-0.

Some discussion on whether we should say anything about the CDP, consensus is unnecessary.

Claire moved to approve the letter as written. 2nd Michelle. Passes 6-1, Dave votes no.

(9:40pm) **4d. FIRE SAFE San Mateo County Representative**

Len reported on recent Fire Safe Council activity and requested his appointment as the MCC representative. The Fire Safe Council is reorganizing, so Len suggested waiting until that reorganization is complete. Meanwhile Len will continue as the Council's representative.

Michelle clarified that anybody can attend, including the councilmembers (up to a quorum). She thinks we need to continue to have a primary representative. She's happy to have Len continue. We aren't yet listed on the Fire Safe Council website, and she'd like to have us listed. She asked Lena to look into how to do that. Len said that after today's meeting he asked about that, and there isn't really a process at this point.

(9:35) **5. Council Activity**

Gregg has been working on wildfire issues and status updates. Now has 16 items. Michelle will post to the website. Local water districts have reviewed their Urban Water Master Plans. Cutbacks are possible if we reach the catastrophic drought level. He asked if there has been any response to the SAM or Fire station letters. He thinks a Fire Code ordinance change should be considered, and might be a future MCC letter. He heard reports that the metal bars preventing pedestrian access have been removed from the gate at the top of EG Blvd. Reported resident concerns about sparking power lines. Would like MCC to write a letter about undergrounding power lines in some areas.

Claire has some concerns on what's being covered under council activity, and we should discuss in future. She also thinks our editing letters at meetings is laborious, and has heard from community members that it's hard to watch. Michelle agrees that we have been somewhat pushing the limits on what is covered under Council Activity.

Len asked Claire if she had anything additional to share on the policing changes that Harvey discussed earlier in the meeting. She reported that an outcome of earlier

meetings that she was part of were to have a "warm-line" phone number at city hall for residents to communicate and ask questions of the city. She thinks we need to wait and see what the HMB Council does on this issue.

Dan has been talking to the airport folks about lots of circling planes and helicopters. Doesn't see a path to action, but perhaps a future agenda item.

(9:50) 6. Future Agendas

June 23rd – Wildfire Preparedness, Harbor District Master Plan and perhaps some issues from Gregg's list.

TBD – Quarry Park Fuel Reduction Grant, Letter requesting dedicated Fire Marshall, Wildfire input from MWSD and GCSD

(10:10) Adjournment

Moved Len, 2nd Claire, Passes 7-0