

## Midcoast Community Council

An elected Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors  
representing Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton, and Miramar  
PO Box 248, Moss Beach, CA 94038  
<http://www.MidcoastCommunityCouncil.org>

Michelle Weil, Chair  
Claire Toutant, Vice Chair  
Len Erickson, Treasurer  
Dave Olson, Secretary  
Gregg Dieguez  
Jill Grant  
Dan Haggerty

### **Minutes for Meeting of August 11, 2021**

#### **Call to Order (7:04pm)**

All Council Members present. This meeting was conducted virtually in compliance of State and County COVID-related orders.

#### **1. Board of Supervisors' Repo**

Lena Silberman reported on grant opportunities from the US Small Business Administration. The County Emergency Rental Assistance Program continues with a County-specific portal for both landlords and tenants. The County week will launch a survey and application that businesses can complete to be matched with local, state and federal grant opportunities as they become available, and the information collected will also be used to better meet the needs of local businesses. The survey will be available online until August 30th.

A public workshop on the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan will be held tomorrow at 4pm. Since her last report, the Bay Area and most of the country have seen substantial COVID-19 transmission. Safe and effective vaccines remain our most powerful tool to protect against Covid-19. All individuals (age 2 and older) regardless of vaccination status must wear face coverings when indoors in public settings and businesses, per a San Mateo County Health Order dated Aug. 2, 2021. She mentioned the California Vaccine Registry. 90%% of total eligible County population (12+) is vaccinated, and 89% of those are fully vaccinated

Dan mentioned his concerns about the fire station lighting. Lena said she had passed Dan's concerns on to Supervisor Horsley and Director Monowitz each week.

Claire said she understood that the County was saying the issue at the firehouse was between the MCC and the Fire District. Lena replied that it was a correct summary. Claire also raised the issue of the Surfers Beach maintenance and the Parallel Trail because another project is in the queue. I understand the other project is the repair of the steps at surface beach, and asked if there was any documentation about the responsibility. Lena said that an agreement was drawn up, but never signed, but that Caltrans wasn't aware of it. The County has elevated the issue at Caltrans to avoid having independent projects interfere.

Michelle Dragony spoke on the urgency of completing the Medio Creek bridge, due to the detour being unsafe. She would like Mirada Rd (west of Hwy 1) to be closed off to traffic if the bridge will be delayed another year. Lena will pass that on.

(7:18pm) Harvey Rarback said that Attorney General Bonta has declined to take up a review of the Sandra Harmon shooting last year. He summarized the public safety meeting. The city now has a web page that gives access to public safety reports. He said that the first Thursday event will continue until December. The Short Term Rental ordinance will be on the next city council meeting agenda.

#### **(7:22pm) 2. Public Comment & Announcements**

Maureen Fleming spoke about the proposed changes to require electrification in the city of HMB; she very much prefers using natural gas for heating. There will be a public meeting tomorrow at 2pm on this issue.

Gregg reported on a Mayo Clinic study of the Pfizer (42%) and Moderna (76%) effectiveness against the Covid delta variant, and the implications for herd immunity.

Keith Mangold reported on a petition he started requesting that the Board of Supervisors fund removal of eucalyptus from Quarry Park. He has over 300 signatures, with a high positive rate among the people that he has talked to. He has heard that funding may be in process, and requests that it be transparent, and that the MCC be involved.

(7:29pm) **3. Consent Agenda**

a. **Approve minutes for July 28, 2021 Regular Meeting**

Pulled by Dave because incomplete.

**4. Regular Agenda**

(7:30pm) **4a. El Granada/Quarry Park Scoping Project**

Sheena Sidhu, San Mateo Resource Conservation District talked about the project to use \$75,000 in Measure K funds to develop the scope of fire resiliency work in El Granada and surrounding areas. She reported that the grant from the Coastal Conservancy to do fieldwork to trim trees in Quarry Park. They hope to begin this summer or fall, and complete early next year. She reported that the chipping program was quite successful in 20 neighborhoods over 30 days. They have also started on a 400 acre project with a \$2.5 million grant from Calfire at Wunderlich, and a Girl Scout camp.

She said that while 3/4 of the eucalyptus are in Quarry Park, the other quarter is not, so it's not just a Quarry Park issue. The idea is to hire consultants to help map out projects, and scope them, from the large (Quarry Park) to smaller, so they have estimated costs. That includes fire breaks, vacant lots, etc. It will be a collective and collaborative process. RCD (Sheena), MCC (Michelle), Lena, Ustin from County Fire, Director Calderon from County Parks. They plan to have regular meetings, with community input.

(7:40pm) **Council questions**

Len said the concern for El Granada is fire burning through the community, similar to Greenville in the Dixie fire; it's not just eucalyptus, the homes themselves provide fuel, as well as landscape trees.

Dave said that many houses are hardened to a degree, because they use cement-board siding, and that's fire-resistant. The fire department is also having seminars on how to have a defensive perimeter.

Gregg said he would like the fire department to have an ordinance that would allow the fire department to issue abatement orders on eucalyptus. He hopes that won't have to wait for a consultant. He's concerned that if there is a crown fire, that firebreaks and thinning won't help.

Dan said he thought that some of the thinning and shaded fuel breaks had already happened. He asked Sheena if she could summarize the current state. Sheena said that was correct, but the existing work didn't take out hazardous trees, and the new work will widen the fuel breaks from 100 feet to 200 feet. Dan asked if they would be applying herbicide on other invasive species. Sheena said that she wasn't sure, and would have to research and get back to him. Dan asked for before and after pictures. Sheena said that the grant was requesting that, so they would do it. Dan asked if the public could attend the meetings. Sheena said that they had not intended to have public attendance, but they will make sure that there is community engagement.

Len said that there is fire behavior modeling in progress, and it has been discussed at the Fire Safe meetings, with some good presentations. He asked how hazard trees were defined, because the community would like to see large trees in general removed. Sheena said that the County Arborist (Dan Krug) would make the determination; generally dead or in poor health. Len asked if more matching funds would be required for future grants. Sheena said yes, if needed, but it's far enough in the future that they haven't worked on it yet.

Claire was concerned that delaying until next spring was after the current fire season. She is in favor of good planning, including evacuation planning. She's concerned about climate change, so we need to keep at least some of our vegetation, and it's hard to re-plant in a drought.

Jill asked if there were plans to work on the medians after the trees were cut (that is, would the consultant work on that issue)? Sheena said that's a good issue for the committee, but she can't speak for the committee as a whole.

**(8:00pm) Public Comment**

Susan Casey was concerned about the community engagement plans, and the issue Gregg raised about eucalyptus abatement. She said she had brought up weed abatement in the past, and brought it up again, saying that they still have not responded to her after it was referred to the Board of Directors. She said that there had been plans to walk El Granada Blvd, and that still hasn't happened. She raised the issue that the shaded fuel break to the south of El Granada Blvd wasn't done as part of the Parks project, and it isn't in the Parks 5 year plan. Michelle said that Austin Seely had said earlier today that they are working on contacting the owners of the vacant lots, and that the district will do a one-time removal on those lots if the owners do not do it themselves. That would include removing some limbs to 6' above the ground, but trees will not be cut. It's one time, and still being developed, then needs to be approved by the board before it starts.

Maureen mentioned the funds (billions of dollars) that PG&E has allocated to underground power lines. She asked if Sheena and Lena could write to PG&E on behalf of the RCD and the County that some of that money be spent here. She's concerned that spending money on consultants could perhaps be better spent on actually cutting trees. Even where eucalyptus has been cut, there are still pine trees that could go up in a fire. She hopes that perhaps some agency could offer to cut the trees for the property owners, in exchange for a lien on the property.

Graham Wood said that upper El Granada Blvd has often been the only area with PSPS outages, while other areas are not affected. That means PG&E realizes it's a higher risk area. He asked Sheena for more details and priorities on the Quarry Park project (same issue Maureen raised), so they have some idea what is most likely to be done.

Susan Casey asked if the MCC could provide a link to Austin Seely's letter. Michelle said she would check, but could probably do it. She wants to see a transition plan to deal with ground fuels, then move on to larger trees. She wants to see a restoration plan also. She is worried by the statement that the fuel abatement would only be a one time event, given climate change.

**(8:15pm) Council Discussion**

Len reported that the El Granada Blvd walk was postponed once the other projects got started. He asked Sheena if the consultant would do fire behavior modeling. Sheena said that could happen, but she thinks it may not be necessary, and that it is probably a different project, but it might tie into some of the projects.

Gregg requested that the consultant endorse the use of modeling in the future. He thanked her for handling a lot of questions that weren't really related to the consultant and scoping project. He'd like to see focused governance of all the fire issues be part of the consultant's efforts. Michelle said she agreed, and had raised that. Sheena said that could be another future project, but not part of the immediate project.

Dan said that there are a lot of eucalyptus trees in Golden Gate Park, but they aren't too noticeable, because they are blended with other trees, including cypress trees. He no longer wants to see a clearcut of the Quarry Park eucalyptus, but still wants most of them cut to reduce fire load, along with replanting of appropriate trees, as long as fire danger is reduced. He suggested trying to use logs on site to reduce cost. Sheena said where possible they will use chips to help with erosion control, but a lot of it will have to be removed. RCD is looking into the possibility of composting eucalyptus, and using it on agricultural lands.

Len asked Sheena for a planned timeline. Sheena said it is long-term planning, saying that for example large-scale eucalyptus removal would likely be very long term. She doesn't expect to have a detailed timeline coming out of this first process.

Claire just received new chairs, and they are made out of eucalyptus (an existence proof of other things that might be able to be done with the cut trees).

Jill mentioned that GG Park uses cut eucalyptus to line trails and roads, and in trenches to stop invasive plants.

#### (8:30pm) **4b. MCC Website Initial Exploration**

Michelle summarized the earlier discussions, and thanked Michelle Dragony for introducing a web developer, and showed a one-page summary on how the funds would be used to do a test site on Wordpress, and look at cloud storage options.

Dave said the issue with SSL was that Squarespace 5 didn't support it (at least at the time it was tried). The builtin export for backup from squarespace works, but it doesn't get all the files or images. He did a backup by walking the website, and it took about 25 hours. He said he'd prefer we not create a new website that is just a mirror of our current website, that some rethinking and redesign is needed. Michelle said she agreed, but getting a mobile optimized site quickly was worthwhile. Dave said he supports the fund allocation.

Gregg supports the project, but was curious about why the cloud storage issue is listed.. He likes the idea of trying wordpress, but we need to be sure it's maintainable. Dave answered that the current site has unlimited storage, but that Squarespace 7 does not.

Len asked about the intent of the discussion, whether it was just for a vote.

Dave asked if there was some timeframe or prioritization on experimenting with the funds we are allocating.

Gregg moved to approve the use of up to \$250 in MCC funds to engage with a web developer to explore options to upgrade the website, 2nd Jill, passes 7-0

#### (8:45) **5. Council Activity**

Len reported on conversations with Caltrans on the Virginia crosswalk. Lease ran out on the large signs; they may sign a new lease.

Claire asked about the concrete discussed at the last meeting. Len said it was in the diagrams that Caltrans showed us. It's for the electrical equipment, Len said; it was shown in the diagram that Caltrans showed us last November.

Gregg spoke on the LHMP. He has started looking at it, but it's quite long. He has heard from a number of people in Pacifica that they are unhappy with the draft. He spoke with the executive director of the Tuolumne River trust about water and the drought. He'd like to have more at a future meeting. Gregg said that after reading the article on SAM a he wasn't clear on the source of the information about the breweries being a cause of the Biological Oxygen Demand. He thinks it may be a combination of drought, new businesses, etc. He has attended housing meetings and said that SB9 and 10 will increase new housing demand and the cost of water. He reported that Caltrans responded to MWSD about the Bypass lands that they would thin some of the trees, but nothing about cutting trees. Also didn't mention demolishing the house on the bypass land.

Dave reported that we had received a 3rd PRA request on the upper Miramar issue, from a lawyer.

Dan attended the Harbor District Master Plan meeting. They took some polls, and will continue to work on it; he encouraged the community to be involved.

Michelle reported on a meeting of the 3 MACs to discuss issues faced by all 3. No specific topics.

#### (8:55) **6. Future Agendas**

August 25th – Hybrid Meeting Planning

Len requested Virginia crosswalk at first September meeting

#### **Adjournment (9:03)**

Moved Len, 2nd Gregg, passes 7-0