

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

www.MidcoastCommunityCouncil.org

Claire Toutant, Chair
Len Erickson, Vice Chair
Barbra Mathewson, Treasurer
Dave Olson, Secretary
Dan Haggerty
Michelle Weil

Minutes for Meeting of January 23, 2019

Call to Order (7:00)

Councilmembers present: Toutant, Erickson, Mathewson, Olson, Haggerty, Weil

Urgent agenda amendment proposed by chair to write a letter in support of a grant for a replacement bridge over Arroyo de en Medio. Moved by Erickson, second Weil, Approved 5-1, Olson dissenting.

1. Board of Supervisors' Report and Reports from other Government Officials

Elizabeth Dallman reported that the parallel trail segment south of Coronado is about to enter the construction phase.

Some deterioration of playground structure and warping of wood is occurring at Moss Beach Park. With input from community surveys, County Parks is designing replacement and will present to MCC.

Harvey Rarback, HMB City Council Mayor reported on large community involvement at public comment.

CHP Officer Barshini mentioned trees down, etc. from storms. Barbra asked about cones at bunker (blew onto highway). Officer will pass it on to the SF office, which still patrols it. No plans to change border between patrol districts. The CHP has noticed an increase in fatalities and injuries. Asked for community concerns. Council mentioned unsafe passing, and speeding. Call 800-TELL-CHP (1-800-835-5247) to report problems that aren't emergencies. Call 911 for emergencies including road hazards. Council asked if CHP monitors apps such as Waze, answer was no.

2. Public Comment & Announcements:

Barbara Dye – GCSD Described non-native plant removal on the Burnham strip, including the drainage canal

3. Consent Agenda: Motion to approve minutes for January 9th and 12th meetings by Mathewson, second Erickson, approved 6-0.

4. Regular Agenda

a. (7:20) – Presentation of Proposed San Mateo County Protected Tree

Ordinance. Presented by Joe LaClair, assisted by Dan Krug, county arborist.

2 year process. Replaces 2 existing ordinances. Remove some exotic trees from protection, prioritize indigenous trees. Add Heritage Tree Nomination Process (Large Indigenous Trees). Applies to Urban areas, Urban Coastal lands, Scenic Corridors, Within 100 feet of structures in RM/PAD/TPZ. Added more trees to indigenous species list. Streamlined, permit at counter for up to 3 trees/year, for some kinds of trees, with replanting requirements. Needs arborist report. Not subject to appeal.

Increases and Clarifies protection on development sites, with followup.

Made more consistent throughout county. Normally requires replacement with same species.

County does not requires permits for trees on county property (long standing state law). Within coastal zone, Parks, and DPW do need CDPs that are appealable to the CC.

Timeline: Revisions by March, then PC, then present revised versions to community, then Planning Commission again in June to Board of Supervisors in July.

Summary of feedback to date:

Development limitations not restrictive enough, and vague.

Penalties not severe enough (Joe said SMC are at high end).

In lieu fees too low.

Add policy language to protect high value trees

Limit replacement trees to fire resistant species

Clarifying questions:

Does ordinance cover trimming? Yes, for indigenous trees over 4" diameter.

Question about eucalyptus (spent whole meeting on this issue). Protected, but can be removed via over the counter permit.

Question about end of life criteria for eucalyptus? No good data for blue gum, native longevity 2-3 times history on Midcoast. Prone to syndrome called "sudden limb drop", not fully understood

Question about El Granada median eucalyptus. Dan said County DPW responsibility.

Joe said that county counsel has said that property owners have ownership rights up to center-line. County has taken view that street trees are responsibility of adjacent owners.

Barbara Dye spoke to that. Ongoing discussion between GCSD lawyers and County Counsel (because GCSD contract with County says GCSD becomes responsibility for areas that GCSD develops).

Barbra asked if counter permits require arborist report and photos. Answer is yes. No longer allow arborist doing review to be part of company doing tree removal.

Is onsite review done by County? Only for development tree removal.

Public Comment

Deborah Lardie, Montara. Asked if dead tree removal permit fee is new. Yes it is. It's \$100. Asked about permits to trim. Permit requires diagrams of what will be trimmed. Asked that leaving stumps not be allowed. Raised concern about property owner responsibility for trees in right of way, also about trees on other properties that aren't being maintained. Asked if policies to encourage removing the eucalyptus were considered. Concerned that by making permits more expensive for indigenous trees that some people might be tempted to plant non-indigenous trees.

Carl May. Doesn't like definition of indigenous trees. Wants limitation to natural habitats, not just species. [Listed in Table 2.1, not definition Carl was concerned about]. Doesn't want large trees allowed in some areas near neighboring house. Concerned about fire danger from trees (existing and newly planted), might prevent removing trees that could cause fire danger. Thinks there should be no restrictions on removing non-native trees, unless the trees are part of a community planned planting

Barbara Dye - would like clarification on county process for removing trees on county property.

Council comments:

Michelle - concerned about trimming permits, had recent occurrence where nearby property owner cut almost all branches on one side of the tree. Supports cutting non-indigenous trees and replacing with indigenous

Dave - thinks it's a good ordinance

Len - more on eucalyptus - easier to remove where fire danger. Wants GCSD and County to resolve concerns

Dan H.- question related to root systems being shallow, and more likely to blow over.

Dan Krug (arborist) replied that very trees have roots much deeper than 4 feet due to lack of oxygen. Usually when they fall, there is evidence of reason, such as fungal infections of roots that could cause tree to fall, especially in wind.

Asked about Monterey Pines, lots of trees dying due to bark beetles and fungal infections. Dan K. talked about the problems, and why they aren't regarded as indigenous trees in the ordinance.

Also wants resolution between GCSD and County.

Asked about public noticing process; Joe described typical process, including anybody who gave them contact info.

Barbra - Do tree trimming permits need an arborist report? Joe, it depends. If info presented that convinces Planning office that it won't damage the tree(s), an arborist report might not be required. Reiterated trimming permits are only needed for indigenous trees.

Joe: County plans to include rules to remove stumps. With regard to eucalyptus the county heard arguments that eucalyptus have habitat value. They are invasive and self-seed in some areas, including the coast. Committee did not reach consensus about eucalyptus for ordinance. To add/remove indigenous trees on ordinance in future would require an amendment to the ordinance.

The county considered trying to have rules on locality of indigenous trees, but very hard to define, and for urbanized areas, not as relevant, due to changes of development. Separate rural policies put on hold for the future.

Fire danger aspects are being considered for changes prior to final ordinance. There is language in the ordinance that would prevent trimming such as that described by Michelle.

Dave: Spoke on subdivision law and median vs subdivision maps, and hopes that this concern might final get a final determination.

Action:

Claire will write letter, with review by Barbra

b. (8:35) Urgent agenda item: Letter in support of grant for replacement pedestrian bridge over Arroyo de en Medio

Claire summarized letter from county asking for letter supporting grant and some of the issues raised in past MCC meeting.

Len summarized discussion with Eric Chen, and passed out email from Eric resulting from discussion. Len pointed out the bridge is part of the coastal trail. He is in favor of letter supporting grant application. Longer term should consider in conjunction with Mirada Road plans.

Dave spoke strongly against the grant and the entire idea as currently presented.

Michelle asked if we had any info about the amount of the grant. Nobody knew.

Dan asked for future briefing from DPW on history and plans.

Len moved (as amended) that the Chair write an email supporting the grant application, to fund developing a proposal, but not a specific project, to be sent by end of week. Second Michelle.

Passed 4-2, Dan and Dave opposed.

5. Council Activity (8:45) – Correspondence received & meetings attended

Barbra attended the MWSD meeting. There was discussion about water available to fight fires. Some concerns about Calfire. Hopes to have as a future MCC agenda item. Will attend Community Housing forum January 24th.

6. Future Agendas

Feb 13 – Letter on tree ordinance, county tenant protection ordinance

Feb 27 – Interview MCC applicants

Adjournment (8:50)