

**Springs Municipal Advisory Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**September 24, 2019**

**1. Call to Order: 6:30**

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Chair Lely

Present: Willett, Paz, Conlan, Anderson, Wheatley

Excused Absence: Goldman, Lombard

Later arrival: Vice Chair Iturri 7:25

**2. Public Comment:**

(Limited to items not appearing on the agenda)

Anna Pier, 405 Solano Avenue, letter sent to MAC today. Suggested an emergency preparedness public meeting in Springs, to ensure well-being of community, to know what services would be available from County during earthquakes, fires, etc. Services could include: shelter, water, first aid, elder care, emergency alert systems & back up so Springs is notified. Appreciates MAC and looks forward to new levels of connection to services from the County.

Fred Allebach, 8<sup>th</sup> St. East, requested clarification from Staff or Council on difference between SVCAC's and MAC's purview over land use. Believes that MAC does not have this capacity.

Dave Ransom, Santa Rosa, RE: Sonoma Developmental Center, Oct 4, last day to submit name to their Advisory Committee, meets monthly, not a Brown Act group, closed meetings, inviting neighbors within 2 mile radius of SDC. He encouraged Springs MAC members to be involved.

Joanne Nelson, Solano Ave., 3 years trying to get a section of deteriorating road paved between Orange & Carriger. Lower Solano being paved, not upper. Has corresponded frequently with County, still no action. Encouraged by Liz to attend MAC meeting.

**3. Consent Calendar**

- a. **Approval of Minutes of August 27, 2019.** Councilperson Conlan moved to approve Minutes. Seconded by Councilperson Paz. Motion passed unanimously.
  
- b. **Approval of Springs MAC Updates** – Agenda item on October 15, 2019 County of Sonoma Board of Supervisor's meeting. Clarification: Change in By Laws re Ad Hoc, and area omitted on map. Councilperson Paz, Point of Order, on Consent Calendar, both items can be approved in one motion. Chair Lely and Liz Hamon, agreed for future. Chair Lely, to complete, Consent Calendar B, Springs MAC updates. Councilperson Willet Motion to approve, Councilperson Wheatley seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Lely announced presentation from Mid Pen, reminded all it is informational, not making a motion. Council directed to join audience for presentation.

**4. Presentation – Mid Pen Housing Corp**

Ali Gaylord, Mid Pen Director of Housing Development, introduced Bill Bloom, Norm Krug (Springs investors), Kristen Belt-Mithun, Jim McCalligan-JMA (architects) for the Verano Hotel and Verano Family Housing project.

Described location using Power Point slides. Verano Ave west of Hwy 12, across from Maxwell Farms Park. Described Mid Pen Community Outreach Plan: 3 open houses for neighbors, numerous one on one meetings. Described Housing and Hotel schedule: submitting PRMD Oct 1, expect approval by Dec 21. Described Mid Pen Housing: 50 years as nonprofit housing provider for lower income residents. This project for people earning 30-60% of Area Median Income \$22,000 - \$75,000. Other project: Fetters Apartments 60 units of Family Housing.

Bill Bloom reported as developer, with Norman Krug, both long term residents of Springs. This project first new hotel in Springs since SMI built in 1927, first new for 20 years in Valley. Described project: Midscale property, no restaurant for public. Will be a demand for this project, as Krug's Sonoma Best Western at 95% occupancy. Anticipate over a million dollars in TOT, plus additional sales tax, after ten years 2 million. Will contribute to neighborhood beautification, new parklette, provide community benefits, Little League field donation, enhance bike trail, contribute to new community pool at High School.

Kristen Belt-Mithun, Affordable Housing Architect.

Presented and explained Conceptual Site Plan: Housing plan 72 units permanently affordable housing and amenity spaces. 3-story walk up apartment buildings around existing trees. 96 parking spaces consolidated at rear of hotel. Hotel plan 120 units, 3 story building with 4 story elements. Housing goals: create quality, affordable homes, build healthy community, and enhance site ecology with green building features, services and amenities for residents. Network of open spaces connected by walking paths. Respecting existing Site Ecology: Preserve existing trees, residents can engage with natural world. Community comments: generally supportive of all housing elements, site plan and design character, affordable housing. Concerns: building heights, enough parking, site safety elements. Showed diagram for Housing Site Plan: balance of ecology, homes, parking. 35% of site dedicated to site ecology. 30% housing, common program spaces and pedestrian circulation. 35% parking and driveway.

More on Site Plan: smaller buildings between trees, natural ventilation on 2 or 3 sides reduce reliance on AC. Network of open spaces connected by pedestrian walks. Oak woodlands, preserving existing trees to support the community including creature habitat. Air quality, natural shading respects Sonoma heritage. Natural play spaces, community gathering spaces, environmental education spaces, after school programs, outdoor exercise spaces.

Jim McCalligan, Hotel architect. Description of design: respecting Sonoma Valley history and Spanish heritage. Good community outreach. Comments: building height, support for 3 stories, some concern for 4 story elements. Building design: support for modern interpretation of Mission Revival style. Site design: minimize night sky lighting, add trees to screen hotel, building set back, walls for privacy and quiet. Circulation: enhance pedestrian, public transit and bike connections. Separate driveways. Sustainability: use green building best practices, consider stormwater mitigation strategies and native low water use plants, minimize greenhouse gas emissions.

Demonstration of Hotel Site Plan: building center of site with good parking, abundant landscaping to minimize impact. Property line 6' tall masonry walls between hotel and Lazzaretto, hotel and Finnish American Housing Association (FAHA). Minimize large areas of asphalt. Ample parking in excess of county minimum. Friendly lighting. Showed Architectural Renderings/Hotel architecture: Spanish Mission heritage, minimize building mass, 3 stories. Improvements on Verano Street side.

Diagram for parklette development: work with Park Dept. Bio swales, planter and rain gardens collect and filter pollutants from stormwater runoff.

Community suggestions: expand bike path, more trees, xeriscaping garden paths, enhanced bus stop location, drinking fountain, bike repair station, street furniture, public art. Norm has offered to bring extras to enhance area, if Park Department approves.

Presentation concluded. Council returned to front.

Chair Lely expressed appreciation for effective public outreach by Mid Pen.

**Called for Council questions, then Public Comment. Chair will receive questions.**

Councilperson Wheatley, re parking, what size are apartments?

Mid Pen: mix of 1, 2, 3, Bdrm units, 18-3 Bdrm, 22-2 Bdrm, 32-1 Bdrm. apartments.

Councilperson Wheatley, are 96 parking spaces for apartments and hotel?

Mid Pen: 96 are just for housing, hotel has 135 parking spaces.

Councilperson Wheatley, how many hotel rooms? Mid Pen: 120 rooms.

Councilperson Willett, is there an additional pedestrian way out for residents in back?

Jim McCalligan, yes, showed driveway on Site Plan with bike/pedestrian path. Councilperson Willett, is that only one? Jim, yes. Also share emergency vehicle access on other side.

Councilperson Conlan, question about creek safety, pedestrian walkway - is any of this open to public or all closed off? Is there a wall at back or just on side? Mid Pen: wall only on side, property technically not open to public, as of now, no gate proposed, property management office in front corner, for entrance/access road, need to keep emergency access open.

Councilperson Conlan, creek access intended for residents? Mid Pen, yes, access limited, possible use of area under oak trees. Mostly a visual connection, left wild area, no wall.

Councilperson Conlan, question re hotel crosswalk in front - will there be pedestrian signals for safety? Blum believes there already are. Seth Dolinsky disagreed, there are no flashing lights.

Councilperson Anderson, is Ecology Center on board with creek restoration/protection? Mid Pen, still developing. Restoration possible, looking at permits, existing area is damaged with invasive plants, will restore/repair riparian corridor if possible. Councilperson Anderson, will kids have creek access? Mid Pen, possibly informally. Have talked to neighbors. Councilperson Anderson, how many trees will be removed? Mid Pen, not sure, will get back on that.

Councilperson Anderson, is it a location issue? Mid Pen, yes. In parking area probably can't save, most are towards the creek, that is driving their site planning. Removing eucalyptus, only a couple of scrubby pine, a couple oaks. Maybe 30 smaller trees. Larger native and healthy trees minimal removal. Councilperson Anderson, is parking up to code or are there zoning exceptions? Doesn't seem like enough parking. Mid Pen, yes, they are asking for a parking concession; part of approval is going through Affordable Housing Density Program by county; a couple of concessions can be requested. Used for parking area, worked to balance requirements. Went from 90 to 96 spaces, one Bdrm have 1 space, larger have more.

Councilperson Anderson, if counting correctly, that leaves only 24 extra spots. Mid Pen, yes. Added they work to encourage other modes of transportation besides cars, will be a connected site, with property manager on site.

Councilperson Wheatley, how many parking spaces will there be? 120 or 96? Kristen, requirement is 114. Councilperson Wheatley, is concession for hotel as well? Kristen, yes. Mid Pen, we are over parked for hotel. Councilperson Wheatley, so the housing concession was 20.

Councilperson Paz, question for both architects, re: design, any intention for LEED [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design] certification, do they qualify? Kristen, not pursuing LEED certification, but other kind of certification, under a new code cycle of energy requirements for multi-family housing that is rigorous, they are working on that. Buildings will be energy efficient. Councilperson Paz, re: design for gathering spaces in housing, what other features to support residents? Kristen, nonresidential program, generous community room, computer lab space, after school program space, shared laundry room, meeting spaces, exercise options, services around central courtyard as community hub, plus smaller, informal gathering spaces. Councilperson Paz, in relation to other projects like Springs Village Apartments, is there a similar central area? Will there be room for resident input after completion for smaller projects like community garden space? Kristen, yes. Design the places to be timeless. Simple but flexible use of space. There are community gardens at some other places. Councilperson Paz, for Mid Pen re: application process - comparing other models, offer room for other nonprofits services, like health centers? Ali Gaylord, yes, we'd like to do that. Have met one on one want to partner for services on site, looking at what's possible. Councilperson Paz, what will wage range be for employees? Ali, will employ a manager on site, and janitor, not sure of wage, but two full time employees. Councilperson Paz, re: job application process, to make it transparent and fair to residents, and protect housing laws. How will that happen? Ali, met with La Luz and others for broad and targeted outreach. Will be an open application process with lottery number assigned. Then lottery will be used to select.

Chair Lely, re: hotel, is there a conference center? Jim, no, but 3 meeting rooms. One large, intended for guests. Chair Lely, there is no public bar or restaurant? Jim, no. Chair Lely, perimeter hotel fencing stucco on both sides? Jim, yes, solid. On common fence, ornamental iron rail, more transparent. Chair Lely, what is perimeter fencing on Affordable Housing portion? Kristen, on Lazzaretto, a standing wall. Other side a cedar wood fence. Looking at how to make this feel seamless. Chair Lely, what are materials for housing portion - wood? Kristen, board and batten primarily, preferably noncombustible. Chair Lely, will there be a visual distinction between housing and hotel? Kristen, yes, hotel mostly stucco, different aesthetics, different sites. Character changes at sites but complementary. Chair Lely, how many acres? Kristen, housing 3, hotel 2 ½.

Kristen added correction: Referring back to parking issue. Code required for Affordable Housing 112 spaces, providing 96, concession of 16 spaces.

#### **Public comment 7:34**

Fred Allebach, will hotel and Mid Pen reps share comments from one on one meetings? Bill Blum, met with Richard Dale, Eco Center, supportive on creek restoration. Sustainable Sonoma, need for affordable housing. Boys and Girls Club, input from FAHA. La Luz - making application process accessible. Greenbelt Alliance, in-fill development. Teen Services for employment at events and fundraising. Sonoma County Parks Foundation put efforts to Maxwell Parks Master Plan, offered to donate space for meetings. Lazzaretto Park, Sonoma County Parks re parklette. Want to be good neighbors on all sides. Ali, heard many stories re housing crisis. Emphasis on need for new affordable housing.

Dave Ransom, comment re: the wall, suggested a way be made for pedestrian traffic on West side nearby. Will pedestrians use FAHA area to cross through? Also, how long is Affordable Housing Element good for? Does it expire after 30 years, or is it forever? Also what is Supervisor Gorin's position on project? Ali, 55 year affordability restriction on property, but

Mid Pen is a long term owner and operator of affordable housing. When project needs to be renovated, will revisit financing, so ends up being forever. Have been meeting with Supervisor Gorin all along, she is very supportive of Affordable Housing.

Neighbor, Robinson Road, does this project require an EIR? Or will it later fall under SSP (Springs Specific Plan) and no longer require an EIR?

Tina Wallis, attorney, working with Sonoma County Staff on CEQA components. Currently a Mitigated Negative Declaration. Determining what is necessary, it is a County decision. Re: SSP no specific info to answer that question.

Gary Tremano repeated previous question re: EIR for such a large project. Should be one, when will it happen? Question re: trees. Have they been using an arborist? Mid Pen, yes. Gary, commendable they are building around trees, but they need to be healthy with projection for longevity. "Plan before you plant." Mid Pen, arborist had been out several times over past year. There's a tree report and survey. Speaks to health, size, quality, etc. Good idea to evaluate tree health. Oaks in good health, long living. Evaluating for long life candidates using survey. Some are 'maybes.' Gary, sounds good. Mid Pen, today in 100 degree heat the trees were making it cooler in NE shaded corner.

Neighbor, if project is not part of SSP will it have its own EIR? Chair Lely, SSP is a guideline, not adopted yet by BoS. This project would be own separate from SSP. Tina Wallis, short answer is County decides CEQA, not every project rises to level of EIR. When subject to CEQA 3 things can happen: 1. project can be exempt for categorical exemptions; 2. a Mitigated Negative Declaration can be prepared. Can mitigate to a less significant level. 3. Project is not exempt. Mid Pen is making technical reports on air quality, traffic, four different tree reports, bikers, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, etc. Results of tech reports and County independent review will decide CEQA question. Haven't seen anything yet in tech reports to go beyond a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Tom Conlon, appreciates local projects like previous Lodge on Broadway, but that business now owned/run by Marriott. Understands that this Mid Pen project anchored in Affordable Housing for 55 years, but are there assurances developer of this hotel will hang on to it? Also, in favor of parking limits, need fewer parking spaces for future to reduce auto use. Agrees with comments on fencing on west side. Bike and bus users will need access, good idea to open fencing for safe access. Also, walls on both sides of property, creek will be open, will there be a fence on other side of creek, but important to allow for a wildlife corridor, Climate Change will impact all. In front of parcel there is a Class 1 bike path on interior, he sees people on Verano Bridge, not using Class 1 bike path. Hopes architects for this project will consider how to make this interface more bike friendly. There is a road sign, but concealed. Also, this is a high speed corridor in Valley, would like to see efforts to slow speed. Existing crosswalk will see increased use due to project, hopes Mid Pen will anticipate this challenge. Also, is there a bar on hotel 4<sup>th</sup> floor? Do we need more bars or dispensaries?

Norman Krug, developer/applicant. He developed Sonoma Valley Inn, long before Lodge at Sonoma. Son and daughter in law in the business, they are not developers who sell, they have longevity. This hotel not open to public, bar/restaurant for guests only. Not going to expand parking for public to use restaurant. Wants to be a complement to other local restaurants.

Colleen, concerned about this hotel/housing project in combination with proposed 20 unit Donald Street project. Are studies independent of each other? All projects need to be evaluated as a whole. Concerned about too much traffic increase.

Bill Blum, SSP does not have a Donald Street project, believes that site is identified for affordable housing. Colleen, that is not correct. Blum, his understanding is that the EIR will be for whole corridor, includes any area identified with traffic issues. SSP has a hotel portion, as well as Donald Street which has been controversial due to neighbor concerns. Feels that is Supervisor Gorin's purview. His understanding is that there will be an EIR once the whole SSP is adopted.

Chair Lely agreed with Blum's statement re: EIR once SSP is adopted.

Mario Castillo, appreciated Councilperson Paz's comments on employment application process for project. Glad it's being done. Asked project partners to bring potential clients to table, or hold an informational forum for community. Noted that his other concerns were not in report. Responded to comments on parking problems, good idea to decrease cars but pointed out that for neighbors who have to use the terrible Public Transportation to get to work, that this is problematic. Community needs to expand vision to consider this aspect.

Kristen, this presentation report focused on design and response to community, but there are more comments on website, there's a comprehensive list, including process, management, services, etc. Ali G, we want broad outreach; invite Mario Castillo to meet with them soon.

Supervisor Susan Gorin reiterated that the final version of SSP not complete. Plans still in session. Meeting with various property owners in SSP area including this applicant, to build in flexibility that allows progress and improve housing situation. Once SSP is completed with assessments and technical reports these will be included as part of EIR report, will address traffic speed concerns along Hwy 12 and determine final plan. A community meeting will be held; the Planners will discuss final findings before it moves on to other Commissions and Board. County hoping for completion by end of year, but taking longer. Working with neighbors and property owners to meet needs and find acceptance. Projected impacts along corridor will be evaluated in EIR. Community will have opportunity to look at the scale of what is proposed. Acknowledged Mid Pen for excellent presentation.

#### **Public comment closed 8:07**

Chair Lely thanked Mid Pen for presentation.

Liz Hamon conferred with Chair Lely. Called 7 minute break. Possible Agenda adjustment.

Susan Gorin announced PGE power not being shut off here, only a small area in county, Wednesday morning early, may be extended. Hazardous situation emphasizing need for more undergrounding of facilities.

Chair Lely announced Agenda change. Item 5 moved to next month. Need more MAC input on Action Plan Tools, and will have full Council next month. Item 6 - Formation of Ad Hoc Committees, come up with 2-3 tonight, develop, make Council assignments next month. Councilperson Conlan, re #5, can we continue to work on Item if it is submitted? Chair Lely and Liz, yes. Councilperson Conlan, can info be shared to allow for comments? Chair Lely, no, due to Brown Act. Submit info to Liz, she will compile and send to Council, then review at meeting. Councilperson Conlan, all info will be available for meeting? Liz, yes, it was ready for tonight but now will be for next time.

Councilperson Anderson, commented on Action Planning Tool, has good information but she would like to prepare a framework to use as model, based on her planning experience. Put in more user friendly format. Need six columns: actions, responsibilities, partners, timeline, funding, performance measures. Gave examples for this format. Offered to provide this model in next two weeks and bring back to group. Chair Lely welcomed Robyn's good idea, directed her to send info to Liz for eventual Council distribution.

**Chair Lely, Item 6 - Formation of Ad Hoc Committees.**

Councilperson Paz, Point of Order, this Item operating under general interest context. Clarified there are recurring standing Ad Hoc Committees, haven't dissolved them, haven't added anyone, some work done. Should address that now or later. Also, to move forward need more info on what Ad Hoc Committees will be. Categorize what is inward planning vs. outward planning.

Chair Lely, current Ad Hocs: Communication, Art?(no), Goals, Mission Statement. Goals and MS complete? MS yes, Goals not. July 23 meeting Goals listed and approved. That Goal Ad Hoc is complete. New Ad Hoc now to address the Goals, maybe add others, with MAC members who can interact with community members to drive Goals forward. E.g. Art Ad Hoc, meet with Springs Art Collective to create public art, criteria, how MAC will assist, reports at meetings by Ad Hoc committee on projects. Councilperson Paz, so will be Goals oriented? Chair Lely, yes but could be separate or expand.

Councilperson Conlan, if there are 3 Ad Hocs and 4 goals do they need 4 Ad Hocs?

Liz suggested that an Ad Hoc could encompass more than one goal, e.g. Plaza Implementation Plan, could be combined with other goals. Art Ad Hoc might be too narrow focus. Perhaps culture in general.

Councilperson Anderson, e.g. Goal One, Engagement in Outreach, action steps, Ad Hoc could focus on that action focus vs. goal focus. Develop action for each goal then decide Ad Hocs, how they will combine or focus. Chair Lely, yes, for a more direct approach.

Councilperson Anderson, e.g. outreach to Latino community could be a specific Ad Hoc.

Councilperson Willett suggested moving Agenda Items 5 AND 6 to next month. Chair Lely, possibly, need to streamline process. Liz, don't get bogged down in process. Too many Ad Hocs is inefficient. Councilperson Willett, need a broad term for all Ad Hocs to identify goals. What is framework for each goal? Continue to next month with full Council. Liz, yes.

**5. Develop Action Plans**

Chair Lely, a motion was suggested by Councilperson Willet to move Agenda Items 5 AND 6 to next month's agenda. Go forward? Discussion. Motion? Yes. Councilperson Paz made Motion, Councilperson Willett seconded. Unanimous approval.

**6. See Item 5**

Comment: Councilperson Conlan, Liz sent Fred's document ahead to Council. Referred to part of Goal 2, i.e. Educating MAC and community on development issues. Felt info was important and urgent about decisions being made in community she was unaware of. Can Fred's info and also Tom Conlon's info, about planning going on within Sonoma town community projects be added to this goal, considering the goal was a compilation. Need to educate MAC on decisions that impact all. Would add to MAC's understanding of UGB, General Plan, could bring in speakers, make part of Ad Hoc. Chair Lely, unsure how to address, procedurally. How would speakers come to MAC for future public forum? SVCAC will also be addressing. Councilperson Conlan, could be another bullet point within goal. Chair Lely, could re-draft it

then. Councilperson Conlan, or develop in action plan. Chair Lely, yes, it's important.

### **Public comment**

Tom Conlon, supports matrix oriented action plan idea. Good that MAC is working to develop identity. Other groups, Springs Alliance, Transition Sonoma Valley, asking where is education function on getting up to speed on important issues. Reduce car use, parking, pedestrian and bike safety. How will this community dialog happen? Under authority of MAC? Or by non-profits? Sustainable Sonoma? Otherwise will be clashing neighborhood positions.

Chair Lely, yes MAC could also become education forum.

## **7. Community Event Announcements**

Councilperson Paz, La Luz events, Plaza Saturday Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>, 12-6:30pm, plus workshops leading up to it. MAC encouraged/invited to table.

## **8. Consideration of Future Agenda Items**

Chair Lely, Develop Action Plan and Formation of Ad Hoc Committees.

Chairperson Wheatley, hears community asking where TOT goes, e.g. Mid Pen project. Can MAC obtain answers to educate community?

Susan Gorin, answer to come from County Speaker on how TOT is generated. Info from Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau, Sonoma County Tourism. Her district uses: parking enforcement, operation of MACs, note taker, rent for building, donation to KSVY video production, and all community organizations like La Luz. Distributes \$100,000 in community grants in her district and further out, but mostly organizations in Sonoma valley. Welcomes input from MAC on priorities, how to invest, support tourism TOT. Other uses: support for affordable housing, roads, fire services, other important county wide services. Would be a good discussion to have. Comment from Gina at Sonoma Democratic meeting - SMI generates allot of TOT, new hotel will too, how to keep money here? Essentially goes into County General Fund. District 5 generates the most TOT, District 2 & 3 generate little but have expensive amenities like Luther Burbank Center, Symphony, Green Music Center.

Chairperson Anderson, is Susan on General Allocation Committee?

Susan Gorin, on Board for 7 years, this small item on revenue produces most discussion. Board has decided that Community Investment Grants will be a \$100,000 per Supervisor, not a proportionate investment. Tourism Impact Funds meant to offset impacts of tourism is a larger fund. She invested in Boys & Girls Club, Teen Services, Mentoring Alliance, youth oriented and scholarships, career preparation. These are proportionate to amount raised in district.

## **9. Meeting Adjourned Unanimously at 8:46**

Contact: Liz Hamon, Administrative Aide to Supervisor Susan Gorin – [liz.hamon@sonoma-county.org](mailto:liz.hamon@sonoma-county.org)

*Materials related to an item on this Agenda submitted to the Springs Municipal Advisory Council after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection in the Board of Supervisors' Office located at 575 Administration Drive, Room 100-A1, Santa Rosa, CA, during normal business hours. Web*

Links: County of Sonoma: [www.sonoma-county.org](http://www.sonoma-county.org) select Boards and Commission

*The Springs Municipal Advisory Council represents the people of the Springs in Sonoma Valley as the voice of the community to elected representatives. SMAC is committed to engage with all community members in meaningful and inclusive ways to promote the health and well-being of the Springs*



