



Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council

575 Administration Drive, Room 100A

Santa Rosa CA 95403

December 11, 2023

To: Lower Russian River MAC Representatives and Alternates
From: Michael Nicholls – Land Use Committee Chair
Subject: Land Use Sub-Committee Annual Report

The annual report for the Land Use Sub-Committee report follows for 2023. The Sub-Committee was challenged with truncated notifications and major issues scheduling meetings to comply with the Brown Act in order to provide timely input to Permit Sonoma in advance of their public meetings.

The Land Use Committee held a regular 1 hour 58-minute meeting on February 9, 2023, to approve the consent calendar and review one staff presentation and two issues, which allowed for public input prior to the regularly scheduled LRR Mac Meeting on February 16, 2023. Member Hernandez requested an excused absence and was unable to attend the meeting, however provided written comments which were read into the record of the meeting. The meeting was recorded, and a video is available on the District 5 YouTube website at <https://www.youtube.com/@sonomacounty5thdistrict/videos> A synopsis of the meeting follows.

• **Definition of Land Use and Staff Update on Moscow Road Repairs** – Land Use is defined as “*the management of land for beneficial use and regulates framework for permitted use*”. The Moscow Road discussion does not follow under the strict definition of Land Use, however District 5 Representative Elise Weiland reviewed the consolidation of projects on Moscow Rd which will be brought to the county Board of Supervisors in March or April for approval to move forward. The County team has been working hard with state, federal, and local partners on ensuring the Moscow Road dual slides are addressed promptly and without the years-long delay that we faced on the initial 2019 slide. Johannes Hoevertsz, Director of PI (Public Infrastructure), brought together representatives from Cal OES, FEMA, Sweetwater Springs, and Pi engineering and leadership team members. The first step was temporary stabilization which was addressed by Pi roads team adding to the pavement on the uphill side of the road at the new slide in order to re-open that section for traffic. For the permanent plan, the plan is to address both slides at the same time, sticking with the plan to begin construction in early summer on the 2019 slide as soon as the sites dry out and design for the new slide repair concurrently. PI has received agreement from Cal Fish and Wildlife to extend the environmental permit to cover both sites. The funding item will come to the Board of Supervisors in April.

Member Thayer also commented positively on the accelerated repair by consolidation of both the 2019 and current year issues. Thayer also voiced concerns during the construction process regarding access and/or detours. Public comment included the fact the current situation is ‘scary’ for drivers, detours requiring transit onto the narrow one-car wide Monte Rio Terraces is unsafe, and that repairs should be completed by summer prior to vacation visitors arriving that are unfamiliar with the area and evacuation routes. This item will be an agenda item for the full MAC Council meeting on February 16th including representatives from

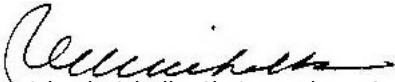
the County Infrastructure Department. It was moved to advise the full MAC Council the Communications Committee has been presented the item and for the record has electronically documented committee member and public comments. Motion passed on a 4-0-0 vote.

• **PLP18-0012 Guernewood Park Notice of Intent to Adopt A Revised Mitigated Negative Declaration Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)** – The committee was presented correspondence from California Department of Fish And Wildlife in the meeting packet. The public was advised the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) will be recirculated for a second time due to additional measures required by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Member Rogoff included concerns with traffic congestion, the site traffic surveys not including intersection of Old Cazadero, Guerneville Lane intersections, and the notification within the planning document stating one parking space requirement per 100 sq/ft parking for events. The concern rests with up to 500 event participants which wouldn't comply with parking spaces dedicated for events. Member Rogoff expressed concern with evacuation during natural and man-made disasters. Member Thayer commented the 2023 Housing Element DEIR is interrelated and needs to be considered. Member Nahmanson questioned the criteria used in clearing CDFW mitigations. (Permit Sonoma investigated and found no issues with the six bio-species CDFW concerns and will recommend moving forward.) Public Comment included traffic on normal days is congested at the hotel area, was concerned there wasn't a safe way for pedestrians to walk from the hotel site to town, the potential for drinking and driving from hotel guests driving back from an evening in town and the lack of public sidewalks between the hotel site and the Fife Creek Bridge. Again, public comment is encouraged on the Guernewood Park Hotel project and may be submitted to Georgia.McDaniel@sonoma-county.org prior to 5PM on March 6, 2023. It was moved to advise the full MAC Council the Communications Committee has been presented the item and for the record has electronically documented committee member and public comments. Motion passed on a 4-0-0 vote.

• **Overview of Housing Element** – Draft Environmental Impact Report – The committee had the opportunity to review the Draft EIR (DEIR) in the meeting packet prior to the meeting. Chair Nicholls encouraged public comment, however stressed the importance of written comments which would be included in the DEIR document. Written comments are to be addressed to PermitSonoma-Housing@sonoma-county.org and submitted no later than 5PM on February 13, 2023, for inclusion in the document. Member Rogoff commented on a lack of infrastructure, the necessity of upgrades, and public safety issues. The issue of the current zoning of the flea market and MD gas property allows for development but was not considered in the Housing Element. Member Nahmanson commented that local granular knowledge from public comment is vital as local community members have historical as well as current knowledge of impacts. Member Nahmanson also commented the deadline for public comment was 5PM on Feb 13 th not 11:50PM as stated within the board packet. Member Hernandez, a realtor in Guerneville for over 50 years, in his written comments was not able to support any of the sites due to minimum density issues for workforce housing described in the DEIR. Member Thayer commented the Governance Study indicated there were deficiencies noted in public services, road repair, sewer, water and transportation currently provided by the county which wouldn't support an additional 670 residents in Guerneville. Member Thayer also commented on poor cellular coverage and potential congestion on existing towers with added subscribers. Chair Nicholls commented whether or not the fragile west county PG&E Grid could handle the additional electrical load with added ratepayers on the grid. Comments from the public included a correction on the width of Sunset adjacent to parcel GUE-1 which is 8' not 18' wide, housing sites are not adjacent to public transportation corridors, lack of accessibility and compliance for ADA access, the need for Sweetwater Springs to expand their infrastructure on Sunset Av., January storms, created power outages on Sunset and Cutten of 5 and 6 days respectively. A negative impact of over 200% increase in population on Cutten in less than ¼ mile, water supplied in 6" main with 2"PVC pipe to Cutten Ct neighborhood, ABAG impacts of population increases of 40% to Guerneville, 110% to Forestville and 70% to Graton, the impact of narrow one-lane country roads during times of commute hours, school hours, evacuation; and distribution of housing percentage is basically the same for unincorporated areas of the county and the city of Santa Rosa. Some sites designated in Forestville aren't suitable to support dense housing due to lack of infrastructure and accessibility issues. Scott Orr of Permit Sonoma responded to questions cited, indicated the county appealed to ABAG regarding the housing allocation, however

the appeal was denied. Mr. Orr described the design review process which takes place for infrastructure impacts which hadn't been considered earlier in the Housing Element DEIR. The identification of sites does not mandate that the site will be developed. In fact several of the zone site selections were actually made in 2014 during the last housing element but not sold, rezoned or developed. If a site proceeds to the development stage, there are many steps from the conceptual design to actually building the project, which will require county as well as additional public input. This would include encroachment permits, building permits, grading permits, plumbing permits, etc. It was noted additional housing can trigger infrastructure development (i.e. bus stops, sidewalks, road widening, etc. which also requires public comment.) Flood Plain F2 sites do have some restrictions. Floodway F1 sites are non-buildable, period! Comments on the Housing Element DEIR comments will again be recirculated in the April/May timeframe for public comment and most likely will not move to the Board of Supervisors until late May or perhaps later. The state has pressured counties in denying certain funding streams should the housing element not formally be accepted by the County Board of Supervisors. It was moved to advise the full MAC Council the Communications Committee has been presented the item and for the record has electronically documented committee member and public comments. Motion passed on a 4-0-0 vote.

Sincerely,



Michael Nicholls, Chair, Land Use Sub-Committee
Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council