

Sonoma Coast Municipal Advisory Council
Scott Farmer, Chair
September 15, 2021, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Online Zoom/Facebook Meeting

Meeting Called to Order at 5:31 p.m.

Cindy Culcasi

Pledge of Allegiance

All

Roll Call – Present

Scott Farmer – Chair

Marti Campbell – Vice Chair

Ann Yagar (alternate)

Che Casul

Wanda Swenson

Brooks Rooney

Elizabeth Gallagher

Brian Leubitz

Paul Plakos arrived late. Ann Yager covered the meeting.

Abreanna Gomes was absent

Beth Bruzzond (alternate) was present

Annie Cresswell (alternate) was absent

Approval of Agenda

Marti Campbell moved to approve the agenda. Brooks Rooney seconded the motion. The motion carried 8-0.

Statements of Conflict of Interest: if any, from Council Members

None

Correspondence

There was one piece of correspondence included in the packet received via email from Jill Lippitt and signed by a number of other citizens regarding the LCP. Clerk Cindy Culcasi read the letter aloud to participants. See the appendix for a copy of the letter.

Consent Calendar

Brooks Rooney moved to approve the July Minutes. Marti Campbell seconded the motion. The motion carried 8-0 with the corrections below:

On page 13, vetments was corrected to read revetments

On page 4, the paragraph regarding Supervisor Hopkins response was updated to clarify that the services performed were more expensive and not necessarily as well done by Sonoma County Fire Services.

Public Comments

Cea Higgins - Saturday, September 18 is Coastal Cleanup Day. There will not be a huge event due to COVID, however, there will a table at Shell Beach where people can pick up supplies and help clean up the beach. People will also be taught how to use the Clean Swell app so items picked up can be tracked. Go to CoastalWalk.org for more information. You can also clean up a local beach near you.

There was a delay with people logging in due to an incorrect link.

Zoom - Eric Fraser - Link on county website, and on Facebook would not work. The link finally worked. Since, the official link was dead I think this may impact your legal requirements for community involvement.

Norma Jellison - Ms. Jellison also commented on the link and noted that there were a couple of links that were not valid. She added that the link is not fixed. She wants everyone to be able to speak in the meeting.

Jill Lippitt – Ms. Lippitt followed with similar comments regarding the link and the meeting ID being incorrect. The phone number ID was also wrong. She was concerned that many are not able to log in.

Chair Farmer – Mr. Farmer noted he needed advice on how to proceed. Staff Member Jason Wilson responded that there is a great increase of people logging in.

Amy Smith - Ms. Smith also commented on the problems that people are having getting into the meeting. She is looking for a solution going forward. She suggested that the person responsible for the County address this issue and establish a correct protocol.

Regular Calendar Items

Supervisor Hopkins - Supervisor Hopkins apologized for the technical difficulties and noted the team would ensure all links work for the next meeting. Responding to a previous public comment, she does not recall any issues in any previous meeting or any of the meetings for the MAC where there were similar technical difficulties. Staff Member Elise Weiland confirmed that the information has been corrected in all the sites and participation was now up to the number of callers in past meetings. She apologized for the error. The Zoom Meeting is also recorded and will be available for viewing.

Supervisor Hopkins spoke to redistricting.

- Redistricting takes place every 10 years after the Federal Census
- The lines for federal, state, counties, and other elected offices are redrawn based upon new population data, shifting populations, and demographics
- This helps ensure that Sonoma County's diverse communities are fairly represented and represented by someone from their community. The Board of Supervisors created the Advisory Redistricting Commission (ARC) to advise the Board of Supervisors while redrawing the district

boundaries. The Commission is holding a number of public meetings to solicit feedback from the public on the composition of maps. The Commission will select their preferred maps for presentation to the Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors will make the final map selection. This is the first time that there has been this level of solicitation for public comment.

- One thing being looked at are the communities of interest, which include overlapping sets of neighborhoods, their interests, views, cultures, histories, language, and values.
- Residents can draw their own maps and submit them to the ARC for consideration. There are a variety of tools on the redistricting website to use if you chose to draw your own maps.
- Submissions can be emailed to redistricting2021@sonoma-county.org. The deadline is October 15, 2021. If residents could submit by October 8, it would be helpful since there will be more time to analyze the maps.
- There are public meetings coming up regarding redistricting. Dates include October 5, 8:30 am (joint meeting with Board of Supervisors and ARC). The ARC will meet on October 18, October 22, and October 25. All the meetings are at 4:00 pm virtually. These are public meetings where the community can provide feedback.
- Supervisor Hopkins would like the MAC, in a future meeting or at a stakeholder engagement group, to discuss if the coast should have one representative or should there be multiple supervisors. What would this look like? Currently, most voters are located along the 101 corridor. Should the coast have their own representative(s)?

Herman G Hernandez - Consultant

Mr. Hernandez has been reaching out to the coastal area to find out how coastal area residents feel about the redistricting. He has been working with the County because the coastal area has been identified as a community of interest by the ARC, Board of Supervisors, and County Administrators. Supervisor Hopkins already discussed the details prior to introducing Herman Hernandez in this MAC Meeting. A Focus Group is being scheduled (6 people have already signed up). He's looking for people's availability by September 16, so he can schedule a meeting before October 8. The goal is to get at least 10 to 20 members for the Focus Group. If there are a number of participants there will be more than one Focus Group. If there is time and availability, Mr. Hernandez is happy to speak to different groups if invited. There will also be a number of virtual Town Halls (scheduled after work hours) that are open to the entire County at the end of the month. The main goal is to engage communities that are underserved and haven't been heard from in the past.

Posted in Zoom by Herman G Hernandez - The County is creating a Sonoma County Focus Group for our Coastal Region focused on the Sonoma County 2021 redistricting process. The County will be redrawing its supervisorial district maps and is asking for community feedback and input. The County and the Advisory Redistricting Commission (ARC) want to make sure that this process is intentional, inclusive and equity driven. Here is the google form to share with your neighbors and community, and please sign up yourself -- we want to hear from y'all! RSVP
here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfxOvgYDyZ3cWZ_68ZpEEq411pLOlf8oOIJxR9od7OR920GRQ/viewform

Supervisor Hopkins said that a COVID Update was on the agenda. She will entertain any COVID questions if asked.

Comments/Questions – MAC

Wanda Swenson – What would the Coast MAC look like if the coast were to break up into more than one district? Would the Coast MAC still exist? **Supervisor Hopkins** - The Coast MAC **absolutely** would exist since there is still a need for a unified coastal voice even if there were more than one Supervisor at the meetings. These are Supervisor Hopkins's ideas, but she is looking for the MAC's ideas.

Che Casul - Mr. Casul is excited about having more involvement regarding where the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) money goes.

Public Comment

Jill Lippitt – Ms. Lippitt asked what the coast would look like if it was divided? **Supervisor Hopkins** responded she wants to hear what the public thinks. She noted that the Coast has unique issues that others don't understand.

Eric Koenigshofer (Planning Commission) - Mr. Koenigshofer had a question for Herman G Hernandez. Mr. Hernandez mentioned people getting involved in the public committees, and asked how he is defining the coast?

Possible Coast Zone Definitions:

1. Coastal Zone as stated in the Coastal Act
2. MAC Boundary
3. General Plan Coastal Area

Mr. Hernandez responded the area is Valley Ford to Annapolis, the Kashia Area up to Gualala which includes all the hamlets and villages along the Coast. **Mr. Koenigshofer** suggested that a broader approach be taken since there are other communities of interest also. Mr. Koenigshofer suggested that Mr. Hernandez give him a call.

Supervisor Hopkins stated she has heard many of the concerns of the community and looks forward to working with Eric Koenigshofer and the MAC on the LCP to address some of those concerns.

Commissioner Eric Koenigshofer was introduced by Chairman Scott Farmer. - This is a dialogue about the LCP Draft as it is now and not a presentation. We are here to support Commissioner Koenigshofer as he represents us in this process.

Mr. Koenigshofer noted that in 1976, in anticipation of the Bicentennial, the nation did a mid-decade census for purposes of establishing the population at the Bicentennial. States and counties were given the discretion to redistrict if they chose to do that. Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, at the time, chose to redistrict. The most significant change was that North of Jenner became part of District 5. It was previously part of District 4. The 5th District gave up Cotati. At the time, the Coastal Commission was a big part of the Coastal Act, and the implementation was a hot topic. There was dissention among the Board regarding what path to take specific to environmental management and growth management. It was determined by the Board majority that the Sonoma Coast needs one representative to represent the entire North Coast for purposes of the Local Coastal Plan (LCP) and the Coastal Commission. Two representatives would diminish the impact to the Coast while one representative does not.

Commissioner Koenigshofer spoke to the Coast MAC and the River MAC regarding how he wants to make sure that he is fully informed through the Coast MAC. He wants to use the tool (the MAC) that Supervisor Hopkins created to ensure that the maximum amount of information is incorporated into the LCP through the MAC and other interested communities and individuals. This gives a better chance for Commissioner Koenigshofer's recommendations adequately reflect the input received. He wants to learn more from people who are at the Coast Zone all the time. The dialogue, comments, and questions will help him represent the interest of the Coast via the MAC.

Comments/Questions

- **Chairman Scott Farmer (MAC)** - Chair Farmer spoke to fuel load reduction and management and how difficult it is, and how the grant money that recently came out was not available to the Coast because of the permits required to qualify for the grants. Balancing the need to remove ladder fuels and dead trees and having the naturalness and habitat of the coast respected is important so the coast doesn't burn up but burn through.
- **Richard Charter (Public)** - Mr. Charter spoke to the LCP update. He has attended all of the webinars, all of the workshops, and read hundreds of pages of the LCP. He sent a letter in February 2020 with key points that have not yet been addressed. He believes the current draft of the LCP out for review isn't ready for primetime because it contains no oversight of vacation rentals, no control of pesticides, no rights of citizens to have input on coastal industrialization, and too much General Plan wiggle room and arbitrary discretion at a time when outsiders want to turn our Coast into a cash cow.
- **Eric Fraser (Public)** – Mr. Fraser commented on the technical issues and suggested that the link be posted a week in advance of the meeting. Mr. Fraser commented on the LCP stating there has been lackluster public involvement. He noted that visitors play a key role in how the LCP should be formed and there has been no outreach to visitors. District 5 doesn't recognize who uses the coast and Measure B was a play to demonize visitors. There is a misunderstanding regarding the role of visitors. He believes the LCP is defective as it stands because of the defective stance on the outreach.
- **Norma Jellison (Public)** - The current LCP has been so significantly revised that the time allowed for comment is not sufficient to allow meaningful public comment/community involvement. Ms. Jellison requested the MAC not allow this version to be adopted by the Planning Commission as recommended by County Staff. She believes the current draft to be flawed and does not allow the Coastal Commission to protect and preserve the Coast. Protective language has been deleted throughout the draft and some of the policy comparison tables show no change when this is not correct. Ms. Jellison requests that the Planning Commission remove the LCP agenda item and pause the process to allow more public comment.
- **Margaret Grahame (Public)** - Ms. Grahame had six questions
 - What is the key issue facing the Coastal community with respect to the LCP?
 - The Planning Commission has received public feedback on the LCP. It is not clear how feedback is used and actually incorporated into the LCP and voted on.
 - The LCP is designed to provide structure for the next 20 years. The LCP doesn't provide sufficient analysis of what is needed in the document, and she wonders what Commissioner Koenigshofer thinks about this issue?

- How does the LCP support the Coastal Zone and underlying priorities and recognize the growing impact of tourism and the tourism market to the coast and providing visitor services commensurate to the Coast?
- How does Commissioner Koenigshofer see affordable housing being addressed in the LCP? Ms. Grahame believes this issue to be very important.
- **Commissioner Koenigshofer responded** to all the questions. He is not currently prepared to answer these questions. The questions that were posed, and many others, are points of tension in terms of policy. Getting as close to the Coastal Act, relative to access and visitor serving facilities, etc., including the issue of work force housing, is the exercise. The questions are complicated. Looking at the first LCP, the current draft, and the future, we are always trying to look ahead 20 years. We are closer to having fully vetted what is on the draft. When there aren't so many questions, but discussion about the proposed approach, then we've gotten closer to a final draft. How do we manage the gem (Sonoma Coast) without killing the goose who laid the golden egg? We need to recognize what our public policy goals are within the carrying capacity of a place. Feedback indicates we are not close to a consensus of where the draft is. Regarding affordable housing, we may need to look at communities with access near the coast and consider enhanced public transportation.
- **Megan Kong (Public)** – She would like to delay the second hearing for the LCP. Her professional purview is pesticides. She noted that we have the opportunity to look at pesticides, insecticides, and rodenticides and how they are used in our Coastal Zone. Other counties along the coast have LCPs that go beyond what the state requires regarding restrictions. The restrictions apply to public and private land and have been upheld in State Courts. Permit Sonoma had scheduled a Public Workshop on pesticides, but it was cancelled, and they published a policy paper instead. Ms. Kong read the policy paper and believes it is not accurate. She is not advocating for a specific approach but wants the truth to be told.
- **Cindy Culcasi (Public)** - Ms. Culcasi stated in the LCP we need to have a fire abatement/fuel management policy that does not require a permit.
- **Rue (Public)** - Rue wanted to acknowledge what the MAC is doing. She noted that because it is a large document, you have to allocate enough time for a thorough review. Rue would like the MAC to ask the Supervisors and Planning Commission to allow enough time for a thorough review and public input. This includes the MAC having adequate time. She noted that water is critical on the coast and falls into class 4 availability (the worst availability). Rue thanked the MAC and encouraged them to allow time for additional comments.
- **Chair Scott Farmer (MAC)** - Chair Farmer said it is apparent the more time is needed for the LCP. A motion will be made by the MAC at the end of Public Comment to recommend additional time for review and feedback.
- **Kimberely Burr (Public)** - Ms. Burr commented on Scenic and Visual Resources, Policy C-OSRC-IB, subsection 7. She said it was vague and wishy-washy. She agrees with Richard Charter who made a public comment earlier in the meeting that general plan language is being used which is too general in nature. She is pushing for better mapping of ESHA and increased ESHA (environmentally sensitive areas) findings along the coast which take into consideration the past and future.

- **Carol Sklenicka (Public Comment)** – Ms. Sklenicka is a full-time resident of Jenner and professional writer/editor. She finds the LCP draft difficult to read and believes this is intentional. The language is not clear, and she worries about traffic and noise that will negatively impact Jenner and communities to the North and destroy our coastal zone.
- **Laura Morgan (Public)** - Ms. Morgan lives in Sebastopol but works in the Coastal Zone and has spent time there for decades. A couple of years ago for the first time, she got involved in a group of environmental activists. She has been reading the LCP for 2 years and has contributed regularly but sees no results of her input. The document needs proper public input with understandable language, good organization, and a glossary as examples. The Coastal Commission has called out some items as lacking in the current draft including a number of dropped policies. Ms. Morgan is concerned about environmentally sensitive habitat areas as an example.
- **Cea Higgins (Public Comment)** - Ms. Higgins supports the idea of giving the Planning Commission more time to review the document and to hear from the public. For 6 years, she asked Permit Sonoma for a searchable document so people could find what they needed in the document, and it took only one time for the Planning Commission to request a searchable document and it was produced in a couple of days. A complete table of contents and an index is still needed. There is no sequential index of policies, goals, objectives, and programs. There are no regulations on short term rentals, and they have been repeatedly asked for; no policy to regulate aquaculture; no study of water availability studies to limit development; no areas looking at critical areas of sea level rise along the entire coast; no recognition of the value of sea level marshes and no polices to protect them from development. There are no restoration efforts of impacted/depleted coastal resources and sensitive areas. The polices need to be reviewed because they are pushing tourism and not balance.
- **Beth Bruzzone (MAC Alternate)** – Ms. Bruzzone believes that more time is needed to review the LCP. She agrees with the majority of what others discussed tonight but doesn't agree that tourists have a say in the LCP. She did not see anything in the LCP about private property rights being infringed upon for public access although this issue is in the Coastal Act.
- **Reuben Weinzveg (Public)** - Mr. Weinzveg also asked the Planning Commission to thoroughly vet the LCP. He recently reviewed a letter from the District Manager of the Coastal Commission to Permit Sonoma outlining a number of omissions or problems with language and organization of the current draft of the LCP. A staff memorandum from Permit Sonoma was presented to the Planning Commission shortly after Permit Sonoma received the letter which did not include any of the issues outlined in the letter from the Coastal Commission. This is the same response that is given for community input. Permit Sonoma should have updated the LCP with the information. The information removed, e.g., includes, climate change, sea level rise, in addition to lack of organization of the LCP, confusion over implementation of policies.
- **Padi Selwyn (Public Comment)** - The speaker compared the Jersey Shore to the Sonoma Coast and noted the difference between the two. The Jersey Shore used to be pristine, but the coast was not protected from development. The speaker said the LCP is not protecting the coast when it was designed to preserve it. The county has held workshops but are they listening. The MAC must recommend that the all the time is allowed that is needed to get the LCP right.
- **Larry Hanson (Public)** - Mr. Hanson pointed out that the Sonoma County Coastal Zone is a very slender slice of the county with fragile and special eco-systems. The area should have special

protections from the normal economic impact that occur elsewhere. The LCP doesn't protect the forests, watersheds, and set climate goals. He believes that the LCP should have a goal and recommends a new section on forest ecosystems protection to address the watershed and addresses county climate goals. Trees and forests are found under timberland production which doesn't address forest protection and climate goals. He believes forests are best left standing with protection at this time.

- **Jill Lippitt (Public Comment)** - Ms. Lippitt appreciates that Chair Farmer will offer a motion to allow more time to review the LCP later in the meeting. She is disturbed that the Coastal Commission sent a letter with many suggested changes, and it was not addressed, and a different version was presented in a previous MAC Meeting than the Coastal Commission was critiquing. Ms. Lippitt noted that the Save our Coast Working Group circulated a letter to the MAC (see appendix A in these minutes) listing the critique points from the Coastal Commission that were not included by Permit Sonoma when previously shared with the MAC. She hopes the MAC stays involved so the Planning Commission gets it right regarding what should be included in the LCP.
- **Robin Rudderow (Public via Zoom)** - She would like to hear what else Cea Higgins has to say
- **Lawence Wilcox (Public via Zoom)** - what is a good email address for Eric K? I am working on a response to the CEQA for the RR Hotel near Dubrava and would like to forward a concern from many neighbors interviewed? **Elise Weiland (Staff)** responded to Mr. Wilcox.
- **Planning Commissioner Eric Koenigshofer response** – Commissioner Koenigshofer thanked the MAC for taking this on this evening since it was very helpful. He thanked everyone for the preparation done prior to making a public comment and the quality of input. Highlights:
 - The Board of Supervisors will look to Lynda Hopkins when this gets to the Board. This is Supervisors Hopkins district, and her preferences will weigh heavily on these matters. Commissioner Koenigshofer sees his role as the link to engage all of the concerns, research, and input and fashion it, so it is incorporated as much as possible into the document now and before it is heard at the Planning Commission.
 - His position is that the document is not advanced until he understands and embraces everything included in the LCP. Because the Commissioner is the Planning Commission member for the 5th District, that falls to him.
- Mr. Koenigshofer noted there is work to be done and he can't be prepared by October 7. He also doesn't think he can be prepared by October 7 after what's been outlined tonight. He is anxious to hear from the other Commissioners and the MAC regarding what was heard tonight.
- **Brian Leubitz (MAC)** - Mr. Leubitz asked about the sections that were deleted. Were the sections restored or what was update on this issue? **Eric Koenigshofer response** – He doesn't know if the sections were restored. There are two versions of what occurred tonight. One side said they are being heard and things are moving forward, the other version is what we are hearing tonight in the meeting. Mr. Koenigshofer said he has taken copious notes during the meeting and will doing much follow up
- **Marti Campbell** reminded members that at a prior meeting it was brought up that there is no red lined version of the LCP available. It is very difficult to determine what was added and deleted. At the time, Commissioner Eric Koenigshofer requested that Permit Sonoma create a red lined version for review.

Chair Farmer called for a motion for the Planning Commission to extend the date for consideration to allow for additional comprehensive community input and understanding of the document before it is taken under consideration. A motion was made by Brian Leubitz and seconded by Brooks Rooney. The motion carried 8-0.

Vacation Rental Ordinance Update - Gary Helfrich (Permit Sonoma Planner)

The presentation started at 1:36 on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ukc3z-6jSUQ>

Short Term Rentals

- Gary Helfrich is the Sonoma Staff member assigned to updating the County's short term rental ordinance, also known as vacation rentals.
- Includes home rentals of 30 days or less. Based on tax records, there are approximately 581 rentals in the Coastal Zone
- Currently short-term rentals are not regulated in the Coastal Zone. The LCP doesn't include the provisions for regulation or prohibition of short-term rentals.
- Currently the County Auditor-Treasurer-Tax Collector monitors vacation rentals. They run a web scrape program to see who advertising is but hasn't registered for the transient occupancy tax (TOT).
- The Coastal Commission considers vacation rentals as one of the components of coastal access, especially in areas where there is not a lot of traditional lodging.
- Short term rental standards include no more than 5 bedrooms; Total may not include more than 12 persons; Parking is limited to one on-street space; Noise must comply with the General Plan standards.
- Must register for TOT prior to applying for a permit. Inland rental must have a property manager within 30 miles of the property who can respond to complaints within a specific time frame.
- Neighbors within 300 feet of the rental must be notified.
- The complaint system is difficult to navigate. Permit Sonoma is looking into a single point of contact for complaints where a live person can be reached.
- There have been suggestions to limit or prohibit short term rentals in high fire danger areas. The County is looking into this but is considering the roads, access, and the ability to evacuate quickly.
- The final question is how short-term rentals impact the housing stock. The answer isn't clear. There are many variables that must be considered.
- Sonoma County is the only county without a business license requirement. Establish a business license program county wide, including the Coastal Zone. This would establish an enforcement tool for all existing vacation rentals. The current process involves a zoning permit and requires a public hearing to enforce in addition to other steps in the process that are onerous.
- The Board of Supervisors has asked that public hearing be scheduled throughout the County to hear from the public. This can't be a one size fits all program and Mr. Helfrich is looking forward to hearing input and recommendations from the public. The proposed ordinance would include looking at such things as septic systems in various areas and determining the carrying capacity when vacation rentals are present.
- Develop a vacation rental website that is transparent and includes all the important information regarding vacation rentals so people can find the information they need. This will include a complaint reporting system so people can monitor vacation rental homes near them.

- Gary Helfrich will conduct various meetings in October to present the proposed ordinance. The Planning Commission will schedule a workshop in late November.
- Contact information for Gary Helfrich is gary.helfrich@sonoma-county.org. His phone number is 707-565-2404.

Comments/Questions

- **Marti Campbell (MAC)** – Ms. Campbell requested a copy of the PowerPoint presentation. A copy will be sent to Elise Weiland (staff). She suggested that in the future, the presentation be included in the agenda. Additionally, Mr. Helfrich is said he is happy to give this presentation to any community groups, e.g. The Sea Ranch Association. He also added that any HOA restrictions on vacation rentals are considered development and will require a Coastal Permit. **Brian Leubitz (MAC)** asked for clarification regarding the restrictions and asked how the process would move forward in the future. **Gary Helfrich** clarified that HOA restrictions could potentially restrict coastal access thus a permit is required. Moving forward, there will be two tracks, the business license program (a new program) and the new ordinance. The business licenses will probably be rolled out separately.
- **Eric Koenigshofer (Planning Commission)** - Mr. Koenigshofer had two questions
 - Will the business licenses be limited to vacation rentals, or will it be broader? **Gary Helfrich** said the direction they received from the Board was that this applies to vacation rentals only.
 - Regarding the 1,900 vacation rentals inland, a couple of years ago the city of Petaluma hired a consultant to review the internet to look for vacation rentals. The review found that the 1,900 vacation rentals was only 19% of the total number of vacation rentals that the consultant found on the internet. Would the 1,900 number be low? **Gary Helfrich** noted that Permit Sonoma continuously runs web scraping programs. People not registering their vacation rentals receive a letter from Code Enforcement and a letter from the Tax Collector. In the last quarter, about 580 vacation rentals that were not registered were found. Most people after receiving the letters come in a apply for a permit and pay their back taxes. Some homes may not be permissible.
 - **Eric Koenigshofer** noted that he has spoken to some people in the Coastal Zone who own vacation rentals and believe they are exempt from the TOT tax. **Gary Helfrich** agreed that they need to make it clear that they must pay the TOT.
- **Lynda Hopkins** noted she is pushing Permit Sonoma to address this vacation rental challenge along the coast as soon as possible since we are already lagging behind the inland portion of the county. She keeps reminding the Supervisors every time the topic of vacation rentals comes up. She definitely heard in public comments that we need to see what can be done within the confines of the LCP to advance solutions to regulating vacation rentals and also moving forward with the business licensing program. Supervisor Hopkins wanted to acknowledge that Sea Ranch has been doing excellent research on this issue. The Coastal Commission has vacillated wildly regarding what they have allowed and not allowed local jurisdictions to do. It is strange that vacation rentals are considered coastal development because it is seen as visitor services and providing coastal access, as Gary Helfrich has stated earlier in the meeting. There is also impact on residential areas and sometimes vacation rentals contribute to stock loss of affordable

housing for workers in visitor services in the coastal zone. She added the people not paying TOT for the vacation rentals need to contribute to the TOT since that fund fire services, emergency services, and affordable housing.

- **Eric Fraser (Zoom Comment)** - I need to write my comment due to time:
I am happy to hear that Gary has updated his information regarding impacts re housing stock and price. They have been misleading on this issue all along starting in 2015. Gary does serve up plenty of fiction: there may be 1900 permits issued OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS but fails to mention how many are active. The X-zones have been a failure since they are not rooted in facts... it won't be long before they fail due to legal action. I must also add that the City of Santa Rosa's code enforcement team was caught fabricating negative impacts re STRs that don't exist; PED inflating numbers of STRs (allegedly illegal) - heck they even copied the River MACs maneuver of a bogus survey to really rile up people. It's time that facts are used exclusively on this issue (and LCP). And Gary, I do object to the term "vacation rental" for the proper "short term rental," just as the term "tourist" is used to describe your neighbors visiting their coast!
- **Mike Nichols (Zoom Comment)** - The County of Maui in the State of Hawaii requires that Excise Tax Numbers (Permit Numbers) appear on all advertisements for short term rentals and that the Permit be posted in the rental unit (usually on the inside of the unit door or next to the door).
- **Norma Jellison (Public)** - Ms. Jellison didn't realize there was an opportunity tonight to make comments regarding vacation rentals. She stated it is troubling that this is the only opportunity to comment since there is not a Coastal vacation rental ordinance in place. She commented on the areas around Bodega Bay and noted they deal with a shortage of water. Some areas have sewage facilities and others are on septic systems. This needs to be taken into consideration.
- **Cea Higgins (Public)** – Ms. Higgins wanted to point out that people in the Bodega Bay area who own vacation rentals pay a higher tax than residents. There are numerous vacation rentals not legally registered and not paying TOT, and they are denying revenue for the fire department. The rental ordinance is listed as a program in the LCP and not a mandate. She wants reasonable regulations on coastal resources and the coastal way of life that is a policy and not just a program so this is taken seriously. There are other examples of policies in the LCP.
- **Final Comments by Gary Helfrich** – Mr. Helfrich clarified that the 1,900 vacation rentals is within a couple of percent and is the number of active permits varies from week to week. The business licenses are an aspect of this and is a county wide program. The outreach program will be huge and will have to hit all 5 districts. Until the program is in the zoning code, it isn't actionable. Permit Sonoma could include in the current zoning code and incorporate it within the framework of the LCP.

Dave Horvitz, GMRS (General Mobile Radio Service)

GMRS is a radio service that doesn't require a test unlike a Ham Radio Operator which does, and thus has generated a lot of interest. The cost is \$70.00, good for 10 years and up to 10 people per household. There are about 80 users currently in the Western Sonoma County hills and coastal area. Numbers are growing almost by the day. There are also about 40 Ham Radio Operators and 9 ACS (Auxiliary Communications Service) members. ACS is a program that supplements government emergency services with professional unpaid staff. GMRS covers from Eunice Ranch to Plantation, to Sea View, Navarro, Gualala Ranches, and along the coast to Ocean Cove, from Fort Ross State Park and on into Santa Rosa.

Alan Beckwith, a Ham Radio Operator, called Mr. Horvitz last summer with the idea of setting up a GMRS network. His idea was to provide emergency response when landlines and cell phones were down, to provide connectivity to local residences. They wanted the system in place prior to the fire season. Currently there are 5 repeaters up and running along the coast. The repeaters are expanding up the 101 corridor. GMRS requires Ham Radio interface because of the lack of a test and radio protocol knowledge on how to function as a net control and how to do message handling. There are weekly check ins and an emergency communication plan in place which has been tested which integrates HAM and GMRS Radios. This process has been organic and growing on its own with no government process or official organization. This is just a group of likeminded members working together. It works and will work in an emergency. This function can be easily incorporated into any County emergency need.

What can the County do to help?

- Provide GMRS equipment at the EOC (Emergency Operations Center and ICPs (Incident Command Post). This will allow GMRS users to communicate directly to the EOC and ICPs to report emergencies and request assistance when needed for public benefit, especially when the usual communications are knocked out, e.g., an earthquake in August, knocks down power lines which start a fire and there is no other means of communicating the information.
- Promote digital communication such as Winlink Express which allows emails to be sent without the use of the internet using Ham Radio. This is similar to what Mendocino County already has in place.

A couple of months ago we had nothing in place, but now we have the means to communicate in Western Sonoma County when the normal channels fail.

Chair Farmer is part of this process. When the new cell tower went down, he was able to contact Dan in Santa Rosa to report the problem; Dan took his message and turned it in. Mr. Farmer said this has been wildly successful based on the great job that has been done.

Comments/Questions

- **Wanda Swenson (MAC)** - Ms. Swenson stated this is a great system and thanked everyone who helped put it together. It is reassuring to be able to talk to a large number of neighbors on the radio. She thanked Dave Horvitz for the presentation.
- **Supervisor Lynda Hopkins** - The Supervisor said she was inspired by this movement. Tourism Impact Funds are available from the County to support this effort. The County is moving forward with putting out some grants that will be available. If there are other unmet needs for GMRS access, please let the Supervisor or Staff know what the needs are. She wants to make sure that each community has a leader who can help during a disaster.
- **Eric Koenigshofer (District 5 Planning Commissioner)** – Mr. Koenigshofer asked if they have handles like truck drivers. **Dave Horvitz** responded that GMRS uses call signs assigned by the FCC.
- **Beth Bruzzone (MAC)** – Ms. Bruzzone thanked Dave Horvitz for his presentation and noted her call sign is KN6EQH. What is the difference with the GMRS handles? **Dave Horvitz** responded that the call signs are longer and that is the only difference. Ham Radio operators have a shorter call sign.

Chair Farmer thanked Dave Horvitz for his presentation.

Ad Hoc Reports – Scott Farmer

The Land Use Standing Committee met August 18 in joint session with the Lower River. Elise Weiland said a joint meeting was called to speak to events. Permit Sonoma is currently determining their event policies and the Joint Committee wanted to make sure they could provide input into the process. The notes from the meeting were included in the agenda packet. The input is important since it provides input regarding the impact to urban communities when roads are closed for an event. The notes were sent on to Permit Sonoma and Supervisor Hopkins since there will be a joint workshop discussing these issues in October. Ms. Weiland will report back on the event rule changes as soon as the information is available. There are regular Land Use Committees for both the Coast and the Lower River. The Coast Land Use Committee meets on the alternate month from the MAC Meetings.

Brian Leubitz has been appointed as the Chair of the Land Use Committee. There are 4 openings, and one is vacant so the member can be rotated. Chair Farmer thinks it would be good to have someone from the very Northern edge of the County to participate. Mr. Farmer asked for volunteers from the mid to Northern part of the Coast. Alternates can serve on the Committee also. Brian Leubitz noted that hopefully they can facilitate and get information to the community about events and potential events. He is looking forward to being a member.

In Person Ad Hoc Committee - Marti Campbell

There has been no meeting since the last meeting. Elise Weiland said the County is testing the Owl Meeting technology and so far, the tests have gone well. One meeting was tested that include a Zoom Meeting and the Owl technology where there were also people in person in the meeting. Multiple meetings will be tested shortly. They will try and allow for both types of meeting, Zoom only and the combined technology that allows both. Marti Campbell is very interested in looking at a hybrid technology that works.

Staff Report – Elise Weiland

- **Meredith Wharf** – The process to pick the artist has been completed and the artist has been selected. It is now in the County Council's lap (e.g., creating a contract, discussing intellectual property), but Ms. Weiland does not know who the artist is yet. The art project should start soon.
- **Guard Rail by burned down house in Bodega Bay** - This project is going through the permitting process and has gone to the Coastal Commission for approval. It should go up sometime soon.
- **Gate leading to the Jenner Highlands** – This is not completed yet. Elise Weiland and Mary Agneberg drove around on separate occasions and did not see the issue that a local resident has raised. Ms. Weiland will get back to everyone when she understands the issue.
- **Yacht Club** – Regional Parks is taking over the Yacht Club area and is currently working with the County General Services Team. The Regional Parks will be updating area including ADA access; boat access; events. They are looking into the possibility of kiosks for the Bodega Bay Association and also the Chamber of Commerce. Regional Parks is very open to the many suggestions. If anyone has suggestions or thoughts, please send them in. She expects a very nice facility there soon.

Council Reports – Scott Farmer

Nominations for the MAC

There are 4 members of the MAC whose terms are coming up soon. Marti Campbell, Scott Farmer, Liz Gallagher, and Brooks Rooney. This is a nomination process and in the past, each community has done the process in the way they have chosen. Chair Farmer wanted to discuss commitment and community to bring people into the process. Reach out to Elise, Scott Farmer, or any members of the MAC if you have questions.

Salt Point Landing has been nominated to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places. This includes the moorings of the ramps that reach 100 feet out in the coves along the coast. These were used in the early days when materials were loaded on schooners from the land.

Questions/Comments

- **Brooks Rooney (MAC)** – Ms. Rooney thanked Elise Weiland for getting the requested information and sharing it with the MAC.
- **Robin Rudderow (Public)** – Ms. Rudderow is the archivist with the Rancho Bodega Historical Society. She is very interested in the Yacht Club building. She noted it is a significant historical site in Bodega Bay and was the site of Smith Brothers Fishery and the building was the warehouse that they built out of logs. The logs were being shipped down from Washington and the logs broke free and the Smith Brothers went out and gathered the logs and built their warehouse with the logs. The original warehouse is the Yacht Club Building. Ms. Rudderow would love the opportunity to present to the public some brief displays acknowledging the history of the site. This is the first place where commercial fishing began in Bodega Bay in 1901. Ms. Rudderow will reach out to Elise Weiland with her email address so they can contact each other. Ms. Weiland thanked Robin Rudderow for reaching out.

Call for New Agenda Items – Scott Farmer

Chair Farmer wants this to be an open process. Any thoughts can be offered now, offered to your MAC representative, or Elise Weiland. All agenda items submitted are reviewed when the agenda is being created.

Chair Farmer thanked everyone for attending.

Adjournment - Cindy Culcasi

Cindy Culcasi asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brian Leubitz made a motion to adjourn, and Marti Campbell seconded. The motion carried 7-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Chen Casul had already signed off.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Culcasi,
Clerk

Appendix A - Correspondence

Dear Coastal MAC Member,

We are a group of concerned residents who for the past two years have been studying the proposed changes to the Local Coastal Plan. We made important recommendations to PRMD in order to strengthen and safeguard our coast from environmental degradation, over-development, and unchecked winery expansion---to name just a few of our shared concerns.

Unfortunately, Permit Sonoma drafted their final version of the revised Local Coastal Plan that not only failed to incorporate our detailed suggestions, but actually loosened restrictions and oversight in order to make it easier to obtain permits on the coast which would avoid public input, scrutiny, or be appealable to the Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, or even the Coastal Commission.

Policies such as these show the county's flagrant disregard for public input, particularly when the law requires there be meaningful community involvement in this process.

We understand that the Coastal MAC has also been working on this issue and that you may share some of our concerns, such as allowing *fast-track permitting* of:

- Commercialization of rural coastal communities and increased density without adequate evaluation of impacts or water availability.
- Expansion of vineyards and wineries on the coast
- More overnight tourism venues on rural lands

There are also no strong protections for endangered species, wildlife, and wildlife habitat. and no regulations of synthetic pesticides or rodenticides used in environmentally sensitive areas.

Many of these eliminations of previous restrictions and safeguards contradict what Permit Sonoma states to be "unchanged" in their current version of the LCP. We intend to offer many specific examples of what very real changes are actually in the fine print of the LCP when we have an opportunity to offer comments at the upcoming meeting.

Since the Coastal MAC is supposed to act on behalf of the coast, we respectfully request that you strongly advocate for delaying the Planning Commission's approval of this version of the LCP, which is now on their October 7th meeting agenda, urging them to further revise the plan to address coastal community concerns.

We feel confident that when you hear our long list of serious and specific complaints about this deeply flawed LCP draft you will agree with us that the Planning Commission should refuse to adopt it in its current form.

Hoping you will join us in using your best efforts and knowledge of the coast to stop this terrible LCP draft from moving forward as it is now written.

Respectfully,

Cea Higgins
Richard Charter
Rue Furch
Megan Kaun
Nancy Feehan
Padi Selwyn
Reuben Weinzveg
Laura Morgan
Larry Hanson
Kimberly Burr
Steve Birdlebough
Norma Jellison
Maggie Briare
Carol Sklenicka
Janus Matthes
Kate Fenton
Pamela Singer
Michael Singer
Dee and Peter Swanhuysen
Jill Lippitt