

### Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council (River MAC)

December 16, 2021 5:30 - 7:30 pm

In accordance with AB 361, Governor Newsom's March 4, 2020 State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors Resolution 21-0399, the River MAC meeting will be held virtually. The meeting will be on Zoom and on Facebook live, links below. After the event, videos are available both on Facebook and on YouTube under Sonoma County 5<sup>th</sup> District: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCy7u\_uF73\_2htucfV3Sc7gA

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/j/92294019561?pwd=ZnBWMzJDUFo3MnM2ZzBveUlydmFyQT09

Passcode: 332876 Or One tap mobile:

US: +16699009128,,92294019561# or +13462487799,,92294019561#

https://www.facebook.com/supervisorlyndahopkins/

#### **AGENDA**

The River MAC welcomes you to its meeting. Your interest and participation are encouraged and appreciated. Questions and comments may be entered in the zoom Q&A or by raising your hand during public comment. Due to time constraints, public comment is limited to 2 minutes per speaker.

Call to Order MAC Clerk/Mary Agneberg
Pledge of Allegiance MAC Clerk/Mary Agneberg
Roll Call MAC Clerk/Mary Agneberg

A. **Approval of Agenda** Chair Pip Marquez de la Plata

- B. Statement of conflict of interest
- C. Correspondence None
- D. Consent Calendar

Approval of October 21, 2021 Minutes

E. Public Comment on Matters Not Listed on the Agenda.

Comments are restricted to matters within the River MAC's jurisdiction.

- F. District Update from Lynda Hopkins
  - 1. 2022-2023 Representative selection announcements
  - Redistricting
- G. Regular Calendar Items
  - Permit Sonoma updates on Events Application Process Bradley Dunn
  - Vacation Rental Ordinance Update Gary Helfrich VR Ad Hoc – Vesta Copestakes, Chair
  - 3. Russian River Strategic Plan

#### **H. Committee and Staff Reports**

- 1. MAC Communications/Outreach Committee Lisa Nahmanson, Chair
- 2. Trash Lisa Nahmanson, Chair
- 3. Land Use Committee Report Kyra Wink, Chair
- 4. Staff Report Elise Weiland
- Proclamations none
- J. Call for agenda items
- K. Adjournment

#### Documents related to open session agendas:

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council regarding any item on this agenda after the posting of this agenda and not otherwise exempt from disclosure will be made available for public review at 575 Administration Drive, Room 100-A, Santa Rosa, CA, during normal business hours.

#### Disability Accommodations:

special needs due to disabilities. Please email <u>District5@Sonoma-County.org</u> or contact the 5th District Field Representative at 707-565-2866 during regular business hours at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to ensure necessary accommodations are made.

#### Lower Russian River MAC Meetings

Even months - Third Thursdays

Thursday, February 17, 2022, Location TBD, 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 21, 2022, Location TBD, 5:30 p.m.

#### Lower Russian River Land Use Committee,

Odd Months - Fourth Thursdays

Thursday, January 27, 2022, 5:30p.m.

Thursday, March 24, 2022, 5:30p.m

Please visit the Lower Russian River MAC website for agendas, including meeting location and time:

Sonomacounty.ca.gov/Irrmac



## Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council Minutes October 21st, 2021 5:30-7:30pm

\*Video recording on the 5<sup>th</sup> District YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqKIKs0XO4M

Call to Order at 5:31pm Chair/Pip Marquez de La Plata

Pledge of Allegiance Vesta Copestakes

Roll Call MAC Clerk/Mary Agneberg

Present: Pip Marques de La Plata, Vesta Copestakes, Jeanette Dillman, Mike Nicholls, Nic Pereira, Kyra

Wink, Lisa Nahmanson, Alice Teeter

Late: Naomi Huffstutter

A. Approval of the Agenda

B. Statement of Conflict of Interest – No reported conflicts of interest

C. Correspondence – Bruce Robinson memo of 10-14-21

Dubrava Village Community Letter of 9/26/21

#### D. Consent Calendar

Approval of the August 19, 2021 minutes

Motion to approve the minutes as stated by Mike Nicholls, seconded by Nic Pereira, passed 8-0.

#### E. Public Comment -

Jackie Brazieal – Appreciates the work of the MAC to involve the community in issues with a special shout out to Vesta, Lisa and Alice. A press release stated emergency generators are considered for the Forestville yard which is prospective site for Skatespot. The site still not confirmed, but if the yard is selected it offers and opportunity for a partnership with Skatespot and increased resiliency and an opportunity for the community to get together during emergencies with water, bathrooms, and shaded seating area. Ms. Brazieal invites the fire safe council or anyone working on the generators to contact her.

**Vira Fauss** – Has heard that bathrooms are being considered for various places and that the Guerneville Park and Ride may be a rest stop with bathrooms. Trash and the homeless situation all need to be talked about and the good work coming out of Keary and Sally Sorenson working with West County Community Services.

**Roberta MacIntyre** – Advised that she is President & CEO of Fire Safe Sonoma, the county-wide Fire Council and she is available to answer any questions about Fire Safe Councils.

**Eric Koenigshofer** – Introducing himself – he was recently appointed to the Planning Commission, he applauds the formation of the MACs by Supervisor Hopkins, thinks they are beneficial and he plans to make full use of them to engage in the community discussion. He will sit in and listen to the discussion about the Guernewood Park resort proposal.

**Cynthia Strecker** – How are the meetings noticed? People have wanted to go to the land use meetings but they don't know how to find out about them.

#### F. Opening Comments from Supervisor Lynda Hopkins

**Supervisor Hopkins** is excited to announce \$300,000 has been allocated to the 5<sup>th</sup> District this time around from the **Tourism Impact Fund** and the application is live on the 5<sup>th</sup> District website. The criteria established by the River and Coast MAC will be utilized for awarding grants. Please go back to your communities and get the word out about the application. She expects there to be renewed interest in Fire Safe Councils and disaster prevention work and hopes to support some Fire Safe Councils and Fire District projects this year.

She serves on the Sonoma County Transportation Authority Board and is happy to report that funds have been approved to finish the **missing mile of the West County Trail**. Once completed the project will fix those two areas that currently drop you into traffic and ruin the experience of the bike ride.

**Eric Koenigshofer** introduced himself earlier – he is also a representative on the **redistricting commission** which will draw new district maps. There are maps under consideration which split the river district and give the coast to the 4<sup>th</sup> District and she is not in favor of these. She thinks they have narrowed it down to five maps. The Board of Supervisors vote on the districts will happen in December and she encourages everyone to let their voice be heard. The next meeting to solicit public feedback is tomorrow.

Tens of millions of dollars have been allocated to Sonoma County from the **American Rescue Plan Act** (ARPA) to support recovery from the impacts of COVID-19, vulnerable populations, enhanced disaster services and disaster resiliency. ARPA funding will come before the BOS on Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> and in December. Right now they are establishing the goals of the funding and identifying projects. If you have any thoughts please participate in the process.

#### MAC Comment -

**Rep. Mike Nicholls** is on the redistricting website and is unable to tell which of the maps are the five selected. Supervisor Hopkins found an interactive map with five maps but she isn't sure they are the correct maps. She will confirm with staff and send that information out in a newsletter. This topic is of keen interest to anyone who lives and votes in the west county.

**Rep. Vesta Copestakes** – Asked if the link in the chat was for the meeting tomorrow and this was confirmed.

**Rep. Kyra Wink** asked who is going to replace Alisha as the **ombudsman on the CAG? Supervisor Hopkins** stated it was a sudden departure and they are in the midst of the process of drafting of a new job description and the recruitment. More information will be forthcoming soon.

Chair Marquez de La Plata asked if the ARPA funding is strictly Covid-related? Supervisor Hopkins said the purpose of the funding is broadly defined and the Board of Supervisors has an interest in broader purposes and projects such as safety net and social services, "human infrastructure" possibly rental assistance, help to families hard hit by the pandemic. Eligibility issues are under consideration. The board is also discussing \$10 million dollars in PG&E funds earmarked for climate work benefits fire risk reduction, carbon sequestration, forest management, etc. These types of projects will come before the Board in February.

#### **Public Comment -**

**Eric Koenigshofer – (20:21 on the YouTube video)** The **redistricting process** has been truncated due to the failure of the previous federal administration to finish the census process and issue results, which created a severe impediment on public review. The Board of Supervisors is statutorily required to adopt

a map no later than December 15<sup>th</sup>. The redistricting commission received the five maps from the consultant on Monday, suggested modifications, the next meeting is Friday and then again on Monday for the final action on which map should go forward to the BOS. Mr. Koenigshofer explained the districts won't be re=mapped for another 10 years, as well as complexities involved with the drawing of the maps in unincorporated areas versus incorporated areas with their own city governments looking out for their interests, and a "city dominance" where the voice of unincorporated areas is diluted. Link to maps: https://ndcresearch.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=be8ba62ab82c4b03ad7c891d0bfe24d3

**Gregory** – No access to chat- where is the map? Supervisor Hopkins advised him to Google "Sonoma County Advisory Redistricting Commission" and to click the draft maps link on the left.

#### G. Regular Calendar Items

#### 1. Fire Safe Council

**Lois Lebowich (30:06 on the recording)** - Fire Safe/Safer West County — no "council" it is Fire Safe Guerneville. Mission is to area are to promote wildfire prevention, educate residents about evacuation preparation, build community cooperation, minimize risks to life, homes, natural and human-made resources and forge strong partnerships with first responders and other fire safe organizations. Here are some areas of interest for the groups:

- Green reflective address signs at Sonoma County Fire District (needs a grant)
- Evacuation tags for evacuated residences so law enforcement knows you are gone. Call to ask for one 869-0202
- NOAA Radios access information during an emergency
- Marine Foghorns these are loud and will let people know there is an emergency
- Use radios when evacuated
- This weekend "storm watch" net using GMRS radios
- Strong Relationships with first responders fire and sheriff. Planning a meet & greet.

The main focus is fire suppression not fire protection – let's stop the fires before they start.

**Alina Haigler (37:22 on the recording)** – Discussing challenges and qualities of the diverse geographical features that create micro climates and micro communities with needs unique to different areas. Some goals for coping with the lovely topography include:

- Focus on Neighborhoods sometimes the closest neighbors are 2 miles away in timber
- Home hardening assessments- and suggestions for neighbors
- Neighbors working together to influence insurers and all agencies
- Environmental sensitivity
- Water tanks ready on ridgetops
- Maintain fire roads
- Fire Safe Sonoma can be fiscal sponsor
- Look at Marin County as a model with elected officials, fire officials, stakeholders and funding plans.

**Elizabeth Lawson (41:38 on the recording)** – Safer West County and Fire Safe Occidental are looking to teach neighborhoods how to be resilient. Green signs worked with Fire Safe Sonoma on assessments. Became an NPO for a wider area, was already working with the Camp Meeker Fire Safe Council. We live in a "fireshed" and a watershed, and protection plans should also include earthquake and flood. Fire Safe Occidental now has sixteen neighborhoods participating and a Groundswell of community building is needed. They have received grants from the state council for educational materials and had successful educational programs.

They became a nonprofit in order to get insurance for events like workdays and they help other fire safe groups with similar challenges, and so they expanded to become Safer West County and now work with several neighborhoods/communities. They want to create a safer, more resilient west county.

#### **MAC Comment -**

**Rep. Lisa Nahmanson** asked where to go for green signs, and Lois Lebowich replied that they have been \$25 each and they are looking for a grant.

**Rep.** Mike Nicholls stated there is a local source for the green signs.

Chair Marquez de La Plata – Safer West County Meeting - How to start it and have a meeting of the councils? Contact info@firesafeoccidental.org.

#### **Public Comment -**

**John** – Alina Haigler brought up the proposal to improve fire roads as escape routes. Is this on the radar for the Guerneville Fire Safe committee? Some are impassable and have locked gates. Permit Sonoma does not allow gates on public roads. How have these people been able to do this? Contact Permit Sonoma with the addresses of the gates for follow-up.

**Elise Weiland** stated that Mac alternate Sherrie Owens and Representative Naomi Huffstutter both expressed an interest in mapping and prioritizing repair of the deteriorated fire roads. – **Lois Lebovich** received evacuation maps and fire personnel ingress routes from Chief Turbeville from 2017 & 2018 and has them on her computer. Forestville to Cazadero.

**Jill Templeton** – should not be just fire, should be flood and other emergencies too. Review the maps & routes used in emergencies.

**David Rosen** stated the Occidental Hardware hand-makes signs every Sunday. The trigger the Fire Safe was an emergency that made them aware they had no way to tell neighbors. Working on emergency contacts, neighborhood leaders. Could look into an autodialing service

#### Q&A:

**Lisa** - How are we addressing getting the word out to people who are not internet savvy? Suggests a buddy system.

Vira - Water tanks for ridge tops?

**Tia R** - Map with escape routes be published?

Vira - Can Moscow Road be cleared and be restored to two lanes going to Duncans Mills?

John – has questions about water logistics

Alina – responds to Vira – already looking at water catchment tanks in the ridge tops

**Matti** – Would like to see more support for renters who are not responsible for perimeter. Make sure renters are fire safe, and that landlords are not taking advantage of increased insurance rates. **Elizabeth** – we have been working on it. Task force has been challenged by covid - you can't gather renters together – knows it is an issue. Will continue to develop.

#### 2. Selection process for MAC representatives

**Elise Weiland** – three openings, Forestville, Rio Nido and Pocket Canyon which included south Guerneville/Vacation Beach/Drake area. Take a look at the map. Would love to have more engagement.

Same timeline as last year until October 31<sup>st</sup> – then ballot – vote by end of November. Info is on the LRR MAC page on the county website, in the newsletters, or call or contact district5@sonoma-county.org. MAC rep. application is online, and we need to get the word out. It is not available in Spanish. Translator has just been put under contract.

#### H. Committee and Staff Reports

#### 1. Land Use Committee Report (79:11 on the recording) - Chair, Kyra Wink

There was a special land use meeting on 8/18 which covered the permit process for events and the main issue identified is the lack of timely notice. Ministerial events may be of concern to the Coastal Commission. May want to limit permits and open fires during fire season. Overlapping events. Our Land Use Committee meeting was 9/27 – future meeting time will be 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays, except for November, and Land Use committee communications and noticing will follow Brown Act rules. There will be a new slightly different Land Use logo. We are working to find the best way to notice meetings and get the word out, and we will be asking MAC reps to help with their areas. **Projects of interest:** The next hearing for the **Lok Development** has been set for October 28. We covered it in a couple of meetings and Information was given to Georgia McDaniel, the project planner at the county. We discussed **timberland to cannabis conversion** in Forestville. The **Monte Rio gas station** is in complete and stalled. Also discussed the need for rezoning sites for affordable Housing (LUC Report attached).

Chair de la Plata – Land Use has been hard thing to figure out and to coordinate with the county, Permit Sonoma and staggering meetings & scheduling and there has been a lot of work done and thank you to Chair Kyra Wink for taking it on. It is not the end all be all say yes or no for projects – but it is on its way to being a resource the community can use to get information and give feedback.

**Rep. Kyra Wink** – This has been a learning curve with finding out who to work with at the county, what the process is and how to with it. Lok Development is the next topic and we will be taking reviewing the document that came out today, pay attention to the hearing on October 28<sup>th</sup>, and this is something we will have a healthy discussion at the next LUC meeting.

#### **MAC Comment:**

**Rep. Jeannette Dillman** – Progress with the LUC is coming along nicely.

Chair de la Plata - Thank you Kyra, Mike, Nic, Elise, Gary everyone- it's coming along

**Rep. Vesta Copestakes** asked for timelines for various projects, public meetings, noted re-zoning has been going on for over a year.

**Rep. Kyra Wink** –We will follow every single project of interest for updates and discussion particularly during the critical time of public comment.

**Rep. Vesta Copestakes** Are you following projects that haven't file for a permit? Like Forestville skatepark that doesn't have a site yet but that the community really wants? **Kyra Wink** – Reports she will take the idea to the committee.

#### **Public Comment:**

**Lawrence Wilcox** – 10/28 Permit Sonoma meeting ink in documents did not work. He was advised to visit the Hearings and Events section to find the link on the Permit Sonoma website.

#### 2. Communications/Outreach Committee - (92:57 on the recording) Lisa Nahmanson, Chair

Has had great input from Nic Pereira and Naomi Huffstutter, and all the reps have now gotten back to her. The final report is being drafted with input coming in from the MAC reps about the best places to hang posters. Where's the best place for a Luddite to go get information? Also collecting information about social media – Nextdoor, Facebook, etc and also the county website. The goal is to get all the information in one document. **Elise Weiland** is also collecting information about groups who can help get the word out, and states there will be a big push for a Russian River MAC and Land Use newsletter.

#### 3. Vacation Rental ad hoc committee - Chair, Vesta Copestakes

**Gary Helfrich, (96:21 on the recording)** 30-year Camp Meeker resident, 22-year volunteer fireman, and long range planner for the county assigned to the Local Coastal Plan and the Vacation Rental Ordinance Update. Would like to solicit input, share input to date, give insight toe, what we're planning to change and get more suggestions and recommendations to make a good ordinance, and to fix the problems. **Rep. Vesta Copestakes** points out the vacation rentals are a big part of the economy but also have a huge impact on our neighborhoods.

There currently is a cap on new vacation rentals with some VR permits available. Hosted rentals have their own rules and are treated differently. VR ordinance update will deal with un-hosted rentals.

#### Issues the VR Ordinance Update needs to fix:

- Complaint system is ineffective and frustrating for the public to use.
- Website is out of date and hard to navigate
- Negatively impact the character of neighborhoods
- Blocking emergency access and evacuation routes,
- Housing stock is reduced
- Housing prices are increasing because
- Limit or prohibit vacation rentals and high-fire severity zones.

Direction received from the workshop with the Board of Supervisors:

- Create a business license program to regulate vacation rentals.
- Study the impact on single family housing supply
- Improve our reporting and our monitoring system. and our enforcement process

**Gary Helfrich** has solicited feedback throughout the county from varied interests in order to hear all sides of the issues. He is available to groups who would like to set up a Zoom meeting with him.

#### Recommendations:

- Switch to a twenty-four seven 800 number complaint hotline with documented response and follow-.up (can be done as an internal performance action rather than via ordinance)
- Increase accountability of property managers with heavy penalties for failure to act
- Property managers must educate guests about appropriate behaviors and emergency evacuation at the warning stage
- Availability of parking will limit occupancy and there will be rules for on-street parking
- Regulate density ratio of VR/non-VRs and their proximity to each other
- Apply the same lighting standard used in the permit process (no light past the property line that is brighter than one lux (equivalent of a full moon).

Next step is to take comments and ideas and create a draft for a Planning Commission workshop on November 18 for discussion and refinement before draft goes before the Board of Supervisors in January.

**Rep. Vesta Copestakes** asked a follow-up question about the application of rules for proximity and density with an example of the woman who is surrounded by vacation rentals on Gray's Court. **Gary Helfrich** states this will be a policy decision of the Planning Commission and there is no cookie-cutter answer that can be applied across the county. Santa Rosa has 1000 feet, but it may be better at 300 to 500 feet in West County. Planning Commission will consider best practices from different areas, and they want it to be context sensitive.

The ordinance should be flexible, reasonable with flexibility to both accommodate itself to how the neighborhood is situated, constructed, and operates but at the same time giving the property owners a reasonable ability to responsibly rent their houses out on a on a temporary basis. **Rep. Vesta Copestakes** asked if there would be data available about the impact of vacation rentals on school enrollment, and was told this was not a part of the scope of the study by Dr. Eyler and it will be difficult to get actionable data on school enrollment.

#### **MAC Comment:**

Rep. Kyra Wink – 1. What is the difference between short term and long term rentals? 2. Where can the draft for public review and comment be found? 3. How can our constituents find out about hearings and get engaged?

- 1. Short term is defined as 30 days or less.
- 2. Draft is not ready yet still doing analysis. There will be policy options rather than a draft ordinance at the Planning Commission. They will get direction from the Planning Commission and then draft the ordinance.
- **3.** Visit the Vacation Rental section on the county website and then use the email link for new vacation rentals and it will get to me.

**Rep. Nic Pereira** asked if the vacation rental agencies have been participating. **Gary Helfrich** - they have been positive about the idea of more enforcement and getting rid of bad actors that affect their business. They are sensitive to bad press.

#### **Public Comment**

**John** – Questions the terms proximity vs density, the significance of the measurements, and is the 11/18/21 meeting a public meeting? How to get more info about it? **Gary Helfrich** – Go to search for Permit Sonoma, Vacation Rentals. It's usually the first item that Google brings up. We will present different ways of determining the distance between rentals and that's one of the policy decisions at the forum. **Steve Trippe** - Thank you for the presentation. He appreciates the focus on property managers since his

experience with property managers has been negative and they have been non-responsive. He even had to put out a fire in a fire pit during a red flag warning. He suggests renters/property managers sign up for Nixle. During the fire evacuation there were tenants who would not believe him when he told them about the evacuation. Also has aggravations from the way garbage is managed and dogs roaming free. **Gary Helfrich** – These concerns are already in the regulations except for dogs which fall under animal control. Once the 24/7 complaint line is launched the vacation rental managers need to be responsive or they will lose their license.

#### 4. Trash - Lisa Nahmanson, Chair

The committee has the Trash Talker materials at the end of the packet. Thank you to Elise and Alice. Will hit the highlights. **Rep. Alice Teeter** - put the link to the TPW adopt a road 2 miles in one of both sides of

a one-mile-stretch. It's fun and easy and will keep some of that stuff out of the river. <a href="https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/TPW/Roads/Services/Traffic-Engineering/Adopt-A-Road/">https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/TPW/Roads/Services/Traffic-Engineering/Adopt-A-Road/</a>

Funding trash – \$7500 to Keary & Sally Sorenson and \$20,000 to the Russian Riverkeeper

Tarping loads from Republic – need better enforcement

Clean California - public art on trash cans with an open call for artists

Tri-bins - Grants for trash/compost/recycling need help finding locations, criteria for placement

Mowers – cause micro-plastics to fly everywhere and wind up in the river

Some sound issues – the trash talker spreadsheet is attached for reference

**Elise Weiland** – We've been working on **The Trouble with Trash** for about a year and going after each of the elements by following up on projects, funding and different ways of looking at the issues.

#### **MAC Comment:**

**Rep. Vesta Copestakes** – Her Revitalization group assembled a list of public restrooms and trashcans. There is an app that you can use for finding them that you could add to the Trash Talker spreadsheet.

**Rep. Nic Pereira** – Have you reached out to the chamber, Rotary and other groups? He will adopt the road across from his business.

**Ad Hoc Chair Nahmanson** agreed that is exactly the thing they need to do – to promote it, to walk through town, go to businesses and find volunteers to do it.

#### 5. Staff Report - Elise Weiland

The BOS has an upcoming funding consent item on 12/4 for funding a local services study - trash, bathrooms, parks. She found a source of funding to bring in a team of people to study issues and help us work on solutions with local control over local services. It's exciting that this is moving forward!

#### **MAC Comment -**

**Jeanette Dillman** – Are you talking about beginning special community district? **Elise Weiland** stated there is no goal in mind. We will be identifying and mapping community service districts and talking about which ones are there, their role, etc.

#### I. Proclamations – none

#### J. Call for Agenda Items

- CAG report
- Election for chair and vice chair
- Vira Keary & Sally more money

#### K. Adjournment

Chair Pip Marquez de la Plata asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kyra Wink made a motion to adjourn, Lisa Nahmanson seconded and the motion carried 8-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

#### BECOMING: FIRE SAFE GUERNEVILLE

Extreme drought in Sonoma county, wildfires rampant across California for the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row, Guerneville ranking 4<sup>th</sup> among fire risk areas, arson fires being set repeatedly in Guerneville: all these are reasons why the residents and merchants of Guerneville are ready to form FIRESAFE GUERNEVILLE.

To do this, we will build on PAST WORK by our residents, and plan new projects to assist in preventing fires.

Following the Tubbs fire in Santa Rosa in Oct., 2017, we started in November, 2017 at the Russian River Fire District with a Disaster Evacuation Planning Committee. This consisted of Forestville Fire Chief David Franceschi, Monte Rio Fire Chief Steve Baxman, Russian River Fire Capt. Ryan Lantz and Capt. Rob Cassady, CalFire Battalion Chief Marshall Turbeville, Sonoma County Sheriff's Community Liaison Charity Koch, Cazadero Community Services District Chairman Mike Nicholls, RRFD board of directors President, Jason Weaver, RRFPD CERT director Marilyn Fox, and Guernewood Neighborhoods Assoc. President Lois Lebovich, We met monthly for almost 2 years, creating evacuation maps, flyes and go-bags. We mailed a large postcard of emergency contacts and directions to residents and held 2 community town halls at the Guerneville Elementary School in the spring of 2018. The committee was finally disbanded in mid-2019.

#### Forestry Improvement Projects already completed – B1411 area

Upper Old Cazadero Road, Guerneville

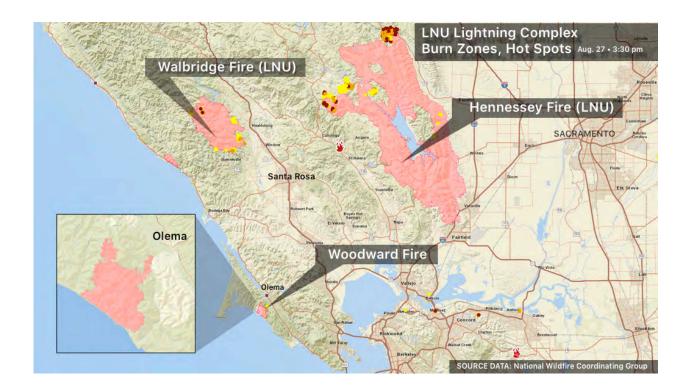
- 1. Finn CFIP 2014
- 2. Finn CFIP 2016
- 3. Haigler CFIP 2017 (35 acres)
- 4. O'Leary CFIP 2007, 2009, 2012, EQUIP 2016, 2020, NBFIP 2021 (in progress) Total acres107

#### B1411 area – LNU Fire Plan 2019 – Public Safety & Reducing Ignition

 WUI (Wildland/urban interface) fuel breaks - created by residents on Upper Old Cazadero Road – Walbridge Fire, Aug.17 – Oct. 2, 2020

#### B1411 AREA - LNU FIRE PLAN 2019 - Tactical work

1. Ridgetop fire break bulldozed/ useful as fire vehicle access dirt road on Upper Old Cazadero Road - Walbridge Fire, Aug. 17 – Oct.2, 2020.



#### PROJECTS CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS:

- Guernewood vegetation management grant application submitted by Environmental Resource Solutions, Inc. and Annabelle Breakey, member of the Guernewood Neighborhoods Assoc. on May, 2021. Fuel break of 157 acres in portions of Section 31 T8N, R10W,MDBM; Section 36 T8N, R11W, MDBM; Section 01 T7N, R11W, MDBN - Duncans Mills Quads, USGS
- 2. Alina Haigler is working with residents of Devil's BackBone area above upper Old Cazadero Road regarding adding water tanks for use by firefighters, maintaining the bulldozed fire break/vehicle roadway.
- 3. Multiple GMRS and amateur radio groups, including within the Guernewood Neighborhoods Assoc., to provide emergency communications, are working with the Sonoma County Office of Emergency Services.
- 4. Alina Haigler is compiling a contact list encompassing 55 households from upper Old Caz to Pool Ridge into the properties contained within Armstrong Woods Reserve is now active. These neighbors are mapping and sharing the information on existing water sources. These are the water sources used to fight the Walbridge Fire. Unfortunately, the 2year drought is leaving people with springs and wells which are drying up. A very important project we plan to do is to create a water catchment and storage system to be used for fire suppression along the ridges.
- 5. Mapping the back country: Tom Finn met with Chiefs Baxman and Turbeville to map roads opened with bulldozers during the Walbridge Fire in early winter 2020. They drove the back roads using GPS to map the area. These areas represent

- very difficult terrain to access by emergency vehicles and are completely on private property. Some of the property owners are letting CalFire keep these roads for future access to fires.
- 6. GMRS radios are now at many of the households in the back country area and 2 repeaters are on ridge tops at Wildwood Retreat and the Overlook (Haigler property). The radio operators successfully stayed in touch during the September 2021 lightning event. A group on Pool Ridge monitored lightning strikes and looked for smoke from starts and then communicated to the Overlook Repeater station radio operator.

#### **NEW PROJECTS TO BE UNDERTAKEN:**

- 1. The Board of the Cazadero Community District indicated support for re-opening the stretch of Old Cazadero Road from Cazadero across East Austin Creek for emergency use in a letter to TPW director Johannes Hoevertsz on June 14, 2021. Maintaining Old Cazadero Road between Guerneville and Cazadero is a high priority project as it is the only road for fire fighters to access Devil's Backbone Ridge and was a critical road during the Walbridge Fire 8/2020.
- 2. Alina Haigler and residents of upper Cazadero Road are working with Good Fire Alliance to do permitted prescribed burns of slash materials when conditions allow.
- Create a website for FIRESAFE GUERNEVILLE to include: maps and
  information on completed, pending and proposed projects and a suggestion box
  for other projects; a sign-up page for volunteers to help with running the council,
  or working on a specific project and links to agencies and other fire related
  resources.
- 4. Join SaferWestCounty which is a 501(c)3 non-profit group.
- 5. Create bylaws for FIRESAFE GUERNEVILLE, elect a board of directors, compile a membership list.
- 6. Map Your Neighborhood projects by areas within the county MAC boundaries of Guerneville.
- 7. Ongoing education as to vegetation management projects, how to form local evacuation groups, how to prepare for evacuation.
- 8. Other projects to be suggested by interested residents and merchants.

Submitted to FIRESAFESONOMA, and to Sonoma County Supervisor Lynda Hopkins by:

Lois Lebovich – Imlebovich@yahoo.com 707-869-5676

Alina Haigler – alinahaigler@gmail.com 949-423-5585

Residents of Guerneville

### **READY, SET, GO!**



#### **Safety Checklist**

Tips To Improve Family and Property Survival During A Wildland Fire

Yes	No	Home
		<ol> <li>Does your home have a metal, composition, tile or other non- combustible roof with capped ends and covered fascia?</li> </ol>
		2. Are the rain gutters and roof free of leaves, needles and branches?
		3. Are all vent openings screened with 1/8 inch mesh metal screen?
		4. Are approved spark arrestors on chimneys?
		5. Does the house have non-combustible siding material?
		6. Are the eaves "boxed in" and the decks enclosed?
		7. Are the windows double-paned or tempered glass?
		8. Are decks, porches and similar areas made of non-combustible material and are they free of easily combustible material?
		9. Is all firewood at least 30 feet from the house?
Yes	No	Defensible Space
		Has dead vegetation been removed from the defensible space zones around your home? (Consider adding distance due to slope of property.)
		2. Is the required separation between shrubs maintained?
		3. Have ladder fuels been removed?
		4. Is there a clean and green area extending at least 35 feet from the house?
		5. Is there a non-combustible area within five feet of the house?
		6. Is the required separation between trees and crowns maintained?
Yes	No	Emergency Access
		1. Is the home address plainly legible and visible from the street?
		2. Are trees and shrubs overhanging the street trimmed to 151/2 feet?
		3. If your home has a long driveway, does it have a suitable turnaround area?







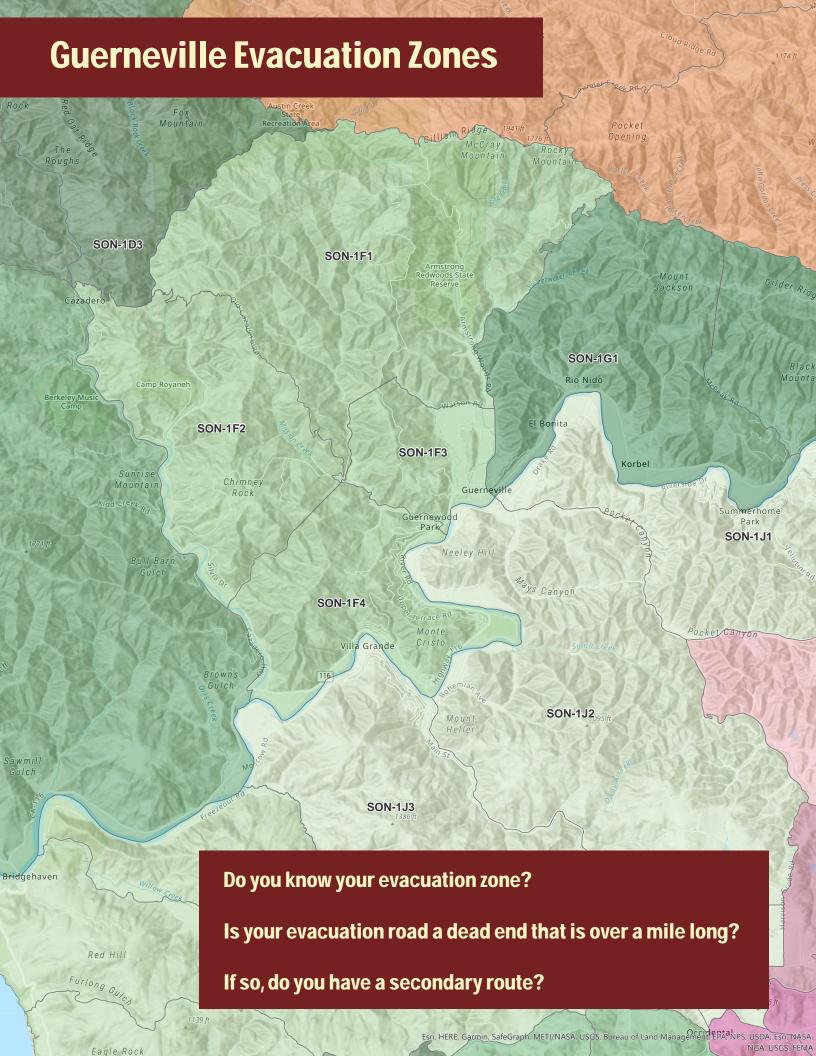












### ¡En Sus Marcas, Listos, Fuera!

#### Lista de seguridad

Consejos para mejorar la familia y la supervivencia de la propiedad durante un incendio forestales

Si	No	Su casa
		1. ¿Su casa tiene techo de material no combustible (como metal, tejas de composición o de barro, etc.) con las aperturas tapadas?
		2. ¿Está su techo y canaletas de lluvia libres de hojas y ramas?
		3. ¿Están todos los respiraderos cubiertos con malla de alambre de 1/8 pulgada?
		4. ¿Tienen sus chimeneas supresores de chispas aprobados?
		5. ¿Tiene su casa el revestimiento de paredes de materiales no combustibles?
		6. ¿Están los aleros de su casa cubiertos con material no combustible?
		7. ¿Son las ventanas de doble panel o cristal templado?
		8. ¿Son las terrazas y cobertizos de materiales no combustible? ¿Están las áreas libres de materiales y artículos combustibles?
		9. ¿Está toda la leña por lo menos a 30 pies de su casa?
Si	No	Espacio defendible
		<ol> <li>¿Ha eliminado la vegetación alrededor de su casa de acuerdo con las recomendaciones de las zonas de espacios defendibles? (Considere agregarle más distancia al tomar en cuenta el declive de su propiedad.)</li> </ol>
		2. ¿Existe la distancia recomendada entre los arbustos?
		3. ¿Ha eliminado los combustibles en escalera?
		4. ¿Hay área limpia o césped que se extienda 30 pies de su casa?
		5. ¿Está la zona no combustible establecida y mantenida?
		6. ¿Hay la separación recomendada entre los arboles?
Si	No	Acceso de emergencia
		1. ¿Está visible la dirección desde la calle o el camino?
		<ol><li>¿Los números de la dirección están hechos de material reflectante y no combustible?</li></ol>
		3. ¿Está el camino a su casa libre de vegetación por lo menos a 10 pies de las orillas en ambos lados y libre de ramas que cuelguen?
		4. Si el camino a su casa es largo, ¿tiene suficiente espacio para que un vehículo de emergencia pueda darse la vuelta?







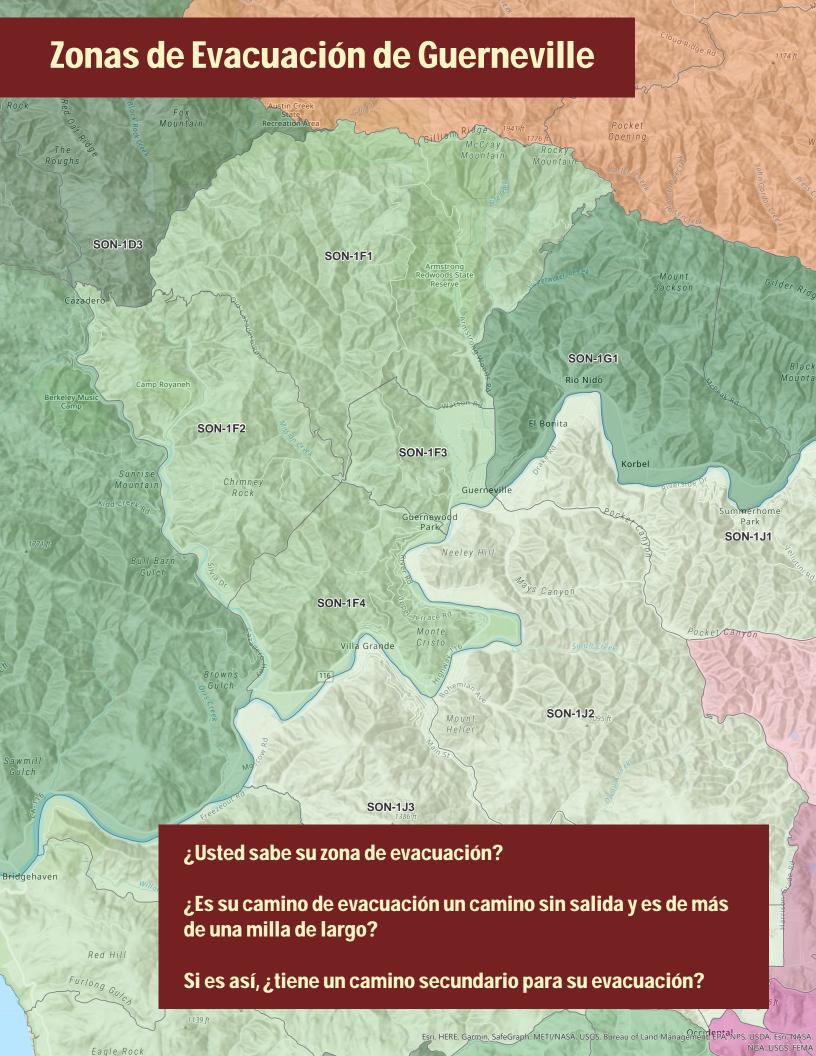














#### Lower Russian River Land Use Committee Report to LRRMAC, October 21, 2021 Respectfully Submitted – Kyra Wink, LUC Chair

There have been (2) Land Use Committee meetings

**There was a <u>Special Meeting</u> called August 18, 2021 (**involved Coastal and LRR MAC Land Use Committee Members)

➤ The goal for this special meeting was to get input from the Coastal & Lower Russian River LUC on the current permit process and suggestions for improvements for Supv. Lynda Hopkins ahead of a meeting with Permit Sonoma

Feedback from the Meeting and info provided to Supv Hopkins was,

- MAC LUC Members / chairs should receive instant notification from Permit Sonoma when an application comes in to Permit Sonoma
- There should be not less then 90 days notifications before comment periods / deadlines of any sort for all events / permits to enable public engagement.
- On the permit form there should be a check box if any road involved in an event or permit is a one-way in/ out roadway.
- Permit Sonoma should have a list of MAC Reps and should communicate permit and event information (with comment period dates, etc...) specific to their affected areas (or it all goes to LUC and LUC communicates to MAC Reps)
- Maybe limit events during fire season or red flag events / seasons
- No ministerial permits for Coastal MAC due to Coastal Commission / State Regs
- Must track event permits for overlaps

The Second LUC meeting (first one for LRR MAC) was held on September 17, 2021

#### Three topics were discussed.

- 1) The Meeting schedule was decided. The LRR LUC Meetings will be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every other month (opposite the LRRMAC Meeting). The next meeting however will be on MONDAY, November 22, 2021 (due to the Thanksgiving Holiday) at 5:30pm. The meeting schedule for 2022 will be published on the website.
- 2) LUC Communications, notice requirements and outreach using Brown Act requirements, meetings will be noticed and community outreach will be modeled after the MAC Format. Suggestion for a LUC Logo was discussed (see top of page) LUC will elicit assistance from MAC Reps to communicate (via FB/ Nextdoor) and

- post notices regarding events / permits happening within their respective communities.
- **3)** Permits and Projects of Interest Discussed.
  - a. Lok / Guernewood Park Development (Permit Sonoma File No. PLP18-0012)
     Public comment ended at 5pm. All public comments expressed at the two prior MAC meetings were given to the responsible Permit Sonoma planner.
     The Hearing is set for October 14<sup>th.</sup> (Update Hearing Now set for Oct 28, 2021).
     Staffs report due before October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021
     Planner is Georgia McDonald. Georgia.McDaniel@sonoma-county.org
  - b. Permit for Timberland conversion to Cannabis cultivation (File # UPE21-0056) This project is at the beginning of the permit process and the progression will be monitored by this committee and shared with the community.
  - c. Monte Rio Gas Station (Permit Sonoma File # PLP21-003)
    Permit for 24-hr fuel station with 3 dispensers to an existing mini-mart along a scenic corridor on a 0.32-acre parcel. This permit application is incomplete & stalled since March. Planner is Doug Bush <a href="mailto:doug.bush@sonoma-county.org">doug.bush@sonoma-county.org</a>
  - d. Re-Zoning sites for affordable housing (Permit Sonoma File No. PLP20-0018) Notice went out and Planner is Nina Bellucci (707) 565-1236

#### 10-21-21 LRRMAC Short-term Vacation Rental Committee Update/Report

The work of our committee is coming to a close as Permit Sonoma gathers community input from citizens and Municipal Advisory Councils throughout Sonoma County. Although we are focused on the Lower River area, this new ordinance has to be written to apply to all Sonoma County unincorporated communities. Santa Rosa has also been revising the City's VR ordinance, so conducted citizen and industry surveys to get a feel for how communities want to address what has increasingly become a neighborhood-impact issue.

Our committee specifically tried to address VR density in neighborhoods in order to seek a balance between commercial properties and homes for locals. Defining neighborhoods continues to be a challenge, but as Fire Safe Councils get established along the Lower River and West County, their neighborhood boundaries might be useful for our cause. Permit Sonoma is mapping for fire and emergency safety, so their maps will help identify licensed businesses and therefore define properties within neighborhoods.

So far, Permit Sonoma sees moving this commercial business from Land Use oversight to Business License jurisdiction. Currently, coast communities do not have a vacation rental ordinance, so this change could bring ordinance oversight to a larger area that is dominated by the tourist industry. This change could also make ordinance enforcement more effective.

As Permit Sonoma closes in on what does and does not work with the current ordinance, opportunities for locals to ask questions and voice concerns is vital to rewriting this ordinance. Gary Helfrich is here from Permit Sonoma to hear from our neighborhoods and answer any questions you have.

Gary will give us an update on how Permit Sonoma is addressing community concerns with current proposed revisions to the ordinance, then we'll open this to our community for questions and comments.

### Trash Tracker

Subject	Assignment	Status	Point Person	Comments	Partner or Project	Community engagement
Adopt a Road	Promote and sign up road sponsors	Sales	Alice	reduce trash and mowing plastics	TPW - Clyde Gallantine	Sign up/Promote
Funding Pick up	2 grants in progress 1) \$7,500 for Keary and Sally/Everclean 2) \$20,000 for Russian Riverkeeper	CAO process	Elise	downtown Guerneville cleaning and river clean up	Riverkeeper and Everclean	volunteer with Riverkeeper!
Republic Issues	covered loads, security to stop trash stealing	need feedback	Lisa	CHP agreed to spot enforce. Any progress?	CHP, Rivekeeper	Cover your loads, get trash service from Recology
Clean California	Public Art and trash/clean up of public spaces, connect Philip Tymon River Arts	building a proje	Alice and Elise	November grant opening https://cleancalifornia.dot.ca.	River Arts & Media	
Trash Cans	Grants for tri-bin cans	need to locate	Alice and Elise	Possible part of Clean California or separate grant	Zero Waste Sonoma grants possible	
No mowing trash	Policy change at both TPW and CalTrans	half hearted agı	D5	need to push policy change	TPW/ CalTrans	
unhoused and trash	1) Funding pick ups, 2) IMDT teams providing materials and trash staging, 3) SAC crews				Riverkeeper, IMDT	
Education	Russian River Revitalization -remove single use plastics, provide POS education, pick up bags/programs		Elise et al			Will have opportunities when the project rolls out
Education	Leave No Trace - SCTB, Regional Parks, Leave No Trace partnership	launching in ear	Meda	Regional Parks		All of us, leave no trace and pick up trash when leaving a beach
Education	Sonoma Coast Pledge	2022	Rodoni	3 county effort to stop trashing the coast - Marin, Mendocino, Sonoma	Marissa Montenegro	
Local control	CSD /Strategic plan launch December 4 BOS	2022/2023	Elise			Engage in conversations about how to provide local services in unincorporated West County - to come in 2022

Subject	Assignment	Status	Point Person	Comments	Partner or Community Project engagement

### **Special Event Permitting Reform**

## Lower Russian River MAC Meeting December 16, 2021





### **Project Goals**

- Make events in the public right-of-way safer;
- Improve community event calendar so event planners can minimize conflicts;
- Make events more sustainable with waste diversion requirements; and
- Enhance intergovernmental communication and collaboration.

# Background: Special Events in Sonoma County

- From 2016-2019, annual event averages were:
  - 55 events in the right-of-way
  - 108 special events on private property through the Fire Marshal
  - 7 athletic events with 2,500 or more participants

## Making Events in the Public Right-of-Way Safer

 The current Special Events Ordinance has an exemption for bicycling events that obey the California Vehicle Code (CVC)

 Unpermitted events prevent collaboration with law enforcement and first responders to protect public safety.

Permitting allows agencies to recover their costs.

# Making Events in the Public Right-of-Way Safer

- With Board direction potential ordinance revisions that Permit Sonoma could explore include:
  - Requiring any event that has a timed component or awards a winner;
  - Applying the current 50-person limit for other events to cycling;
  - Requiring that all events that participants pay for are permitted;
  - Some combination of these restrictions; and
  - Any suggestions from the Board.

## Improve Community Event Calendar to Minimize Conflicts

 The Special Event Calendar provides a centralized repository for special events

 Permitting a greater percentage of events makes the calendar more effective

## Improve Community Event Calendar to Minimize Conflicts

Currently event promoters can apply for a permit one year in advance

 Allowing event promoters to reserve dates up to five years in advance helps plan accordingly

# Make Events More Sustainable with Waste-Diversion Requirements

- Permit Sonoma is working with Zero Waste Sonoma,
   Sonoma County's Waste Management Agency, to
   implement Zero Waste Event best practices:
  - Implementing waste diversion requirements at events,
  - Requiring large events to hire a Zero Waste greener
  - Creating a Zero Waste events how-to guide,
  - Developing an annual Zero Waste best practices training for event promoters and event contractors.

# Make Events More Sustainable with Waste-Diversion Requirements

 Zero Waste Sonoma and Permit Sonoma will be working with municipalities to align regulations.

 Permit Sonoma will work with Zero Waste Sonoma to consider whether to delegate regulatory authority or enshrine changes in the ordinance.

## Enhance Intergovernmental Communication and Collaboration

 Permit Sonoma will consider implementing a multidepartment and agency standing committee to create best practice standards and apply them to permits.

 Other jurisdictions like San Francisco and Seattle reported that the centralized committee improved communications.

 100% of permittees survey respondents said that such a committee would either be helpful or very helpful.

### **Guidance from the Board**

- Which bicycle event thresholds for permits should be implemented?
- How long in advance should an applicant be able to reserve dates? Should there be additional requirements to secure multiple years of dates?
- Are there other environmental regulations the Board would like Permit Sonoma to consider?
- Does the Board have guidance on operation or formation of the Intergovernmental Committee?
- Are there additional areas the Board would like Permit Sonoma to consider?

### Next Steps

- □ Community Engagement Q4 2021
- Identify Accompanying Internal Process
   Improvements Q4 2021
- □ Draft Ordinance Q1 2022
- □ Planning Commission Q2 2022
- Board of Supervisors Q2 2022

### Questions?







### 2021 Year End Report Vacation Rental Ad Hoc Committee Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council (MAC)

Committee Members: Vesta Copestakes, Chair; Nic Pereira; Lucy Hardcastle

Permit Sonoma/Sonoma County Planning Commission has been tasked with updating the Short-term Vacation Rental ordinance to better address current and future needs of our communities and this industry which relies upon using homes in residential neighborhoods for tourists/vacationers/short-term renters.

Over the last year the Planning Commission held numerous public workshops throughout Sonoma County to gather public input. Updates to the ordinance need to apply county-wide. The next public workshop will be held on January 20, 2022 for your input on changes the Planning Commission will be recommending to the Board of Supervisors.

Two years ago our LRRMAC VR committee conducted surveys of neighbors who live near vacation rentals, and people who rely upon this industry to make a living: owners, managers, maintenance personnel, and others. Challenges with the current ordinance were evident for both neighbors and tourist-dependent businesses. Our goal was to gather input and offer collective input to the Planning Commission that they could use when drafting the new ordinance.

**Top-of-mind for most people was enforcement of ordinance regulations.** Unlicensed operators competing with licensed businesses, and out-of-the-area managers who are unresponsive to neighbor complaints, noise, bright lights at night, barking dogs, parties, etc.

In response to these issues the Planning Commission hired a web-scraping company to find unlicensed operators to bring them into compliance, and is in the process of establishing a 24/7 complaint hotline for reporting problems. Resolution of the problem is reported back to the complainer and if the problem is not fixed within the ordinance timeline, managers/owners are cited with a strike against their performance record.

Both of these solutions to industry and neighbor complaints should help ease conflicts that scar the reputation of the industry as well as create better neighborhood environments. Our committee suggested local managers who can respond in a timely manner would help solve some of these problems.

**Density of VRs in neighborhoods** is still an issue in search of a fine-tuned solution. The Planning Commission has proposed examining each new license application by location, proximity, concentration, and potentially limiting the number of rental days per year. There is no way to generate one rule that applies to all situations so it would have to be a neighborhood-by-neighborhood appraisal before issuing a license.

**Emergency procedures for short-term renters** has also been addressed since too many neighbors felt that renters are left out of the emergency notification system and therefore pose a danger to themselves and neighbors when evacuations, etc. must be enacted. Procedures are being written into the new ordinance to cover how to address these concerns.

**Impact of housing availability for locals keeps coming up.** There is a study being conducted to determine how much impact losing residential homes to licensed vacation rental businesses is impacting neighborhood character as well as school enrollment. Since the housing market is volatile for many reasons, this is a challenge to identify but at least an attempt is being made. Under consideration to potentially lessen the impact of too many VRs is to limit licenses to two per owner.

Land-use/Zoning Permit vs. Business License oversight appears to be a potential solution to numerous problem issues. Using systems established in other communities as a model, both property owners and property managers would need to meet license standards to have the license reissued.

**Parking requirements** are especially relevant in our river communities where high-density housing on narrow roads is common. Requiring a minimum road width for on-street parking and off-street parking requirements on narrow roads for a limited number of cars would provide space for emergency vehicles as well as solve neighborhood problems where vacationers take up resident's parking spaces.

The Planning Commission is drafting a revised Vacation Rental Ordinance to present for public review in January 2022. After the next level of review and revision, the draft ordinance will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for review.

We feel our committee has helped the Planning Commission find ways to solve problems when this industry negatively impacts our Russian River neighborhoods. Since our local economy is very dependent upon tourism, finding solutions to how tourism can live in concert with our communities is essential as we move into the future. This revised ordinance must not only address current issues, it must anticipate potential problems as the pressure on rural communities to provide respite for urban dwellers increases in the coming years.



### County of Sonoma Permit & Resource Management Department

**FILE:** Vacation Rental Ordinance Update (ORD21-0005)

**DATE:** November 18, 2021 **TIME:** At or after 1:20 p.m.

STAFF: Gary Helfrich

#### **SUMMARY**

Supervisorial District(s): All

**Location:** Countywide

**Description:** Vacation Rental Ordinance Update Workshop **CEQA Review:** This public workshop is not a project under CEQA

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

This report provides background, describes current efforts and identifies next steps to develop an updated Vacation Rental Ordinance (Section 26-88-120). This is an informational item to provide information and policy options for consideration by the Planning Commission as directed by the Board of Supervisors at their July 20, 2021 workshop. Staff request that the Planning Commission receive public comment and provide direction to staff for preparation of a draft Vacation Rental Ordinance tentatively scheduled to be heard on January 20, 2022.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On March 15, 2016, the Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance 6145, establishing the current regulations of vacation rentals in unincorporated Sonoma County outside of the Coastal Zone. Regulation of vacation rentals in the Coastal Zone would require amendments to the Local Coastal Plan and Coastal Zoning Ordinance. Ordinance 6145 also established the Vacation Rental Exclusion Combining District (X-Zone), which prohibits vacation rentals in certain areas to preserve housing stock, protect neighborhood character, and avoid adding vacation rentals to areas with access limitations and high fire severity. The current ordinance can be found in Attachment 1.

#### **Direction from the Board of Supervisors:**

On December 15, 2020, the Board of Supervisors adopted an urgency ordinance extending a more refined temporary cap on vacation rentals in specified locations within the unincorporated areas of the 1st and 5th Supervisorial Districts, as well as directed Permit Sonoma staff to return to the Board on July 20, 2021 with additional data and recommendations to improve the Vacation Rental program. After considering staff recommendations and input from stakeholders at the July 20, 2021 meeting, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to:

- (1) Conduct public outreach and informational workshops with stakeholders to help inform policy development.
- (2) Study the potential impact that Vacation Rentals may have on housing prices and housing availability.

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- (3) Identify process that will shift from a zoning permit to business license program that will apply uniform standards countywide, including the Coastal Zone.
- (4) Improve tools for applications, reporting and resolving complaints, neighborhood notification, and enforcement of standards.
- (5) Improve standards for parking, road access, emergency response, water and wastewater capacity, and wildfire risk.
- (6) Develop land use policies to address Vacation Rental proximity and concentration in areas where high levels may adversely affect public health and safety, or neighborhood character.

Staff has developed policy options and process improvements based on a 3-month long public outreach program and research into best practices in other jurisdictions for consideration and recommendation by the Planning Commission. Based on direction received at this workshop, staff will prepare a draft ordinance and conduct additional public outreach in anticipation of bringing a draft Vacation Rental Ordinance to the Planning Commission on January 20, 2022.

Policy options materials from the July 20, 2021 Board of Supervisors meeting, including staff report and video of the hearing are available at: <a href="https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5028766&GUID=8D2A9DC4-B392-47B9-9404-6D8B696CB155">https://sonoma-county.legislationDetail.aspx?ID=5028766&GUID=8D2A9DC4-B392-47B9-9404-6D8B696CB155</a>. Policy options, and summary of regulations in surrounding areas is also provided as Attachment 1 to this memo.

#### **CURRENT REGULATIONS**

The Board of Supervisors adopted the current Vacation Rental Code in March of 2016 (Ordinance 6145, Section 26-88-120 of Sonoma County Municipal Code). Key provisions are:

- 1. Defines "vacation rental" as the short-term rental of homes for less than 30 days at a time where the primary owner is not in residence;
- 2. Establishes performance standards that include limits on occupancy and guestrooms; maximum number of guests and daytime visitors, parking, trash facilities, amplified sound, and neighborhood notification; · Allows only one rental per parcel;
- 3. Does not allow vacation rental permitting of accessory dwelling units, multi-family units, affordable housing units, farmworker housing, farm family units, or on lands under a Williamson Act contract; Tents, yurts, RVs, and other provisions intended for temporary occupancy are not allowed as a part of a vacation rental; and
- 4. Rentals must have a certified property manager who lives within 30 miles of each rental and must respond to complaints within 60 minutes during the day and 30 minutes during quiet hours during any rental period.

Fiscal Year 21/22 fees for a vacation rental permit are \$638 with an annual monitoring fee of \$224. Property managers pay a onetime \$67 certification fee, and changes in property management is subject

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to an \$88 fee. Per County Municipal Code Section 12-11, permitted vacation rentals must remit payment of Transient Occupancy Tax, which is 12% of lodging revenue paid quarterly.

Ordinance 6145 also established Vacation Rental Exclusion Combining District that prohibits vacation rentals in the following areas outside the Coastal Zone:

- 1. Areas where there is inadequate road access or off-street parking;
- Areas where the prevalence of vacation rentals is detrimental to the residential character of neighborhoods;
- 3. Areas where the residential housing stock is to be protected from conversion to visitor-serving uses;
- 4. Areas where, because of topography, access or vegetation, there is a significant fire hazard;
- 5. Areas where residential character is to be preserved or preferred; and
- 6. Other areas where the board of supervisors determines that it is in the public interest to prohibit the establishment and operation of vacation rentals.

#### **REGULATION IN THE COASTAL ZONE**

The current County practice to regulate vacation rentals through land use would require amending the Local Coastal Plan and Coastal Zoning Code, then have these amendments certified by the Coastal Commission as being consistent with the provisions of the Coastal Act. The Coastal Commission considers lodging provided by vacation rentals to be an important component of coastal access, and Commission staff has indicated that a Coastal Zoning Code amendment restricting vacation rentals on the basis of protecting housing or preserving neighborhood character would be difficult to certify. Commission staff indicated that a business license program establishing and regulating performance standards, without limiting location or number of Vacation Rentals, would likely be consistent with the Coastal Act, allowing inland performance standards to be applied in the Coastal Zone.

As there are not currently any provisions in the Coastal Zoning Ordinance regulating vacation rentals, the only current requirement to operate a vacation rental in the Coastal Zone is to obtain a Transient Occupancy Tax certificate and pay taxes on a timely basis. The County has no other regulatory mechanism at this time in the Coastal Zone.

#### **RESPONSE TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DIRECTION**

#### **Public Outreach**

Permit Sonoma Staff has presented workshops at meeting of Sonoma Valley Citizens Advisory Commission, Springs Municipal Advisory Council, Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council, Sonoma Coast Municipal Advisory Council, Geyserville Planning Committee, The Sea Ranch Association, Mission Highlands Homeowners Association, and Gehricke Rd Fire Safe Council. Outreach to industry stakeholder groups included North Bay Association of Realtors, Sonoma Coast Vacation Rental Owners, Sonoma County Coalition of Hosts, and The Sea Ranch Hosting Coalition.

Topics and comments raised during public outreach include:

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- 1. Support for a licensing program was high among all groups, as was improved enforcement of standards. Industry groups were especially strong in support of a limiting Vacation Rental license to no more than two licenses per person.
- 2. Establishing a 24- hour complaint hotline, similar to the system used in Marin County, enjoyed near universal support from the public and industry stakeholders.
- The public and industry stakeholders expressed concern regarding businesses that own and
  operate multiple Vacation Rentals. There was support for strengthening the existing policy
  prohibiting corporate operation of Vacation Rentals and limit licenses or permits to two per
  person.
- 4. The public and industry stakeholders support better enforcement of current Vacation Rental standards. Industry stakeholders also supported creating additional performance standards for property managers.
- 5. Industry stakeholders felt that the application process could be streamlined and simplified.
- 6. Process for neighbor notification of a Vacation Rental is inconsistent.
- 7. Vacation Rentals may interfere with evacuation during emergencies, especially during wildfires in areas with limited access. Renters should be provided with an evacuation plan, and property managers should be responsible for making sure that guests have left the premises when an evacuation order is issued.
- 8. The term "business license" may create problems with interpretation by home owners associations and CC&Rs that restrict business use of homes.
- 9. Regulation of vacation rentals by location, proximity, concentration, and rental days remains controversial. Residents who live near Vacation Rentals were strongly in favor of additional limits on vacation rentals, and industry stakeholders are skeptical that limits can be fairly implemented and are necessary in most situations.

#### **Vacation Rental Impact on Housing**

Through a Department Head authorization, staff has selected the services of Economic Forensics & Analytics to conduct a study of the impact of vacation rentals on the County's housing stock. An administrative draft has been prepared, but gathering data necessary to generate actionable recommendations has proved more difficult than anticipated, as data sources with similar spatial boundaries are not available in all cases. Additionally, the housing market is influenced by multiple inputs, making it challenging to isolate the impact of Vacation Rentals on the housing market.

Economic Forensics & Analytics is in the process of gathering and analyzing additional data and report is still under review by County staff. It is anticipated the draft report will be released later this year.

#### **Business License Program**

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Sonoma County remains the only jurisdiction in the Bay area that lacks a comprehensive business license program, and the only license program currently operating in Sonoma County is the Sonoma County Tobacco Retail License (Attachment 2). The significant advantage a license offers as compared to a Zoning Permit is streamlining enforcement and providing additional tools, such as progressive civil penalties, license suspension, and administrative revocation that are not available with a Zoning Permit.

Permit Sonoma Staff is proposing to use the Tobacco Retail License program as a template, and is recommending that the license be referred to as a "Vacation Rental License" rather than "Business License" to clarify this is a residential use.

Permit Sonoma staff recommends that a Vacation Rental License program be a component of the Vacation Rental Ordinance update with the following provisions in addition to those found in the current Vacation Rental Ordinance:

- Vacation Rental Licenses automatically expire one year after the date issued and must be renewed. Renewal may be denied for Vacation Rentals with more than three violations within 12 months of the renewal date.
- 2. Vacation Rental Licenses are limited to one license per parcel
- 3. A Vacation Rental License shall not be issued to property owned by a corporation, as defined in Section 100-195 of the California Corporation Code.
- 4. No more than two Vacation Rental licenses shall be issued simultaneously to an individual.
- 5. Zoning permits issued for vacation rentals will automatically convert to a business license at least one year, but not more than two years from the effective date of the ordinance. Conversion will be on the same calendar day and month as the Zoning Permit was issued. Permits issued on February 29 of a leap year will convert on March 1. No fee is associated with the initial conversion, but fees will be required upon renewal.

#### Monitoring, Performance Standards, and Enforcement

#### **Complaint Hotline**

Permit Sonoma is currently evaluating vendors to provide a 24/7/365 complaint hotline. This is a process improvement that can be implemented under the current ordinance. The Vacation Rental hotline is a staffed central point of for all short term rental complaints and provides a simple easy to use reporting system. The hotline will log the call or text, contact the property manager, record the action taken, and contact the complainant to verify that problem has been resolved. Information collected will go into a reporting database, allowing Permit Sonoma to monitor performance of both Vacation Rentals and property managers.

#### **Property Manager Performance Standards**

Under the current ordinance, the property manager has limited accountability for resolving complaints. While Vacation Rental owners may have their permit or license revoked for non-compliance with

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standards, there is not a similar mechanism in the current code to revoke certification of property managers that fail to meet standards for responding to and resolving complaints. Staff recommends adding a performance standard section for property managers. This section would establish thresholds for suspension or revocation of a property manager certificate for repeated failure to adequately respond to and resolve complaints.

#### **Hazards and Evacuation**

Staff recommends the following additions and modifications to the Vacation Rental Standards found in the current ordinance:

- Evacuation plan: Vacation Rentals shall provide guests with a written evacuation plan identifying
  the Vacation Rental evacuation zone, evacuation route, and the Calfire Evacuation Checklist.
  Guests shall be informed that they are required to leave the property when a Voluntary
  Evacuation Order is issued by Calfire for their evacuation zone. The property manager is
  responsible for verifying that guests have been evacuated.
- 2. <u>Emergency evacuation</u>: Vacation Rental license or permit holders and Certified Property Managers of a Vacation Rental that does not comply with a voluntary or mandatory evacuation order are subject to permanent revocation of the Vacation Rental license and/or permit, and/or and permanent de-certification of the Certified Property Manager.
- 3. Additional restriction on outdoor fire areas: Outdoor burning, other than gas-fired appliances and gas-fired barbecues, is prohibited during Calfire Declaration of Fire Season and during Red Flag warnings outside of the Declared Fire Season.

#### **Proximity and Concentration**

The only regulation currently available to limit vacation rentals is the Vacation Rental Exclusion Zone. Staff has found this to be a limited tool, and often has the effect of concentrating Vacation Rentals in nearby areas. At this time there are also temporary caps on Vacation Rentals in the burn zones, and specific areas of Sonoma Valley and the Lower Russian River. Evaluating the success of these measures has been difficult due to the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism industry, but staff feels that other tools, such as limits on proximity, concentration, and rental days, are better suited at balancing the needs of Vacation Rental owners and the neighborhoods where they are located.

Proximity is the distance between vacation rentals, concentration if the percentage of homes within a given area being uses as Vacation Rentals, and rental days is a limit on how many days per year a Vacation Rental may operate. Staff is not recommending specific guidelines at this time, but review of other jurisdictions show the following standards:

- 1. <u>Proximity</u> A proximity standard is generally applied in areas with high residential density, with the intent to prevent individual residents from being surrounded by Vacation Rentals. Proximity is not an effective policy in areas with large parcels. Staff recommends a proximity limit of 300-500 feet between Vacation Rental represents an effective distance.
- 2. <u>Density</u> A density of 10% was used by Permit Sonoma staff to establish the recent Vacation Rental Cap in the Guerneville area. Density is an effective tool for managing Vacation Rentals in areas where Vacation Rentals are distributed evenly and the goal is to preserve neighborhood character.

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3. <u>Rental Days</u> – Many jurisdiction limit all Vacation Rentals to a specific number of days per year, and the most common limit is 90 days per year. Rental day limits reduce the intensity of Vacation Rentals and may be an effective alternative to proximity or density limits.

#### **Parking**

Off street parking is limited in many areas of Sonoma County, and often these areas are served by extremely narrow roads where on-street parking may interfere with emergency response. Additionally, the current ordinance is not clear on how a parking space is defined. Staff recommends the following standards for parking:

- 1. One on-site parking space for a Vacation Rental with up to two guestrooms or sleeping rooms
- 2. Two on-site parking spaces for a Vacation Rental with up to four guestrooms.
- 3. Three on-site parking spaces for a Vacation Rental with up to five guestrooms.
- 4. Off-street parking areas shall conform to standards of Sonoma County Code Section 26-82-030(q) Where on-site parking is limited or unavailable, one on-street parking space may be substituted for the required off street parking. Vacation Rentals with no on-site parking are limited to four persons.
- 5. Vacation Rentals may not block or obstruct parking on public streets, and signs may not be posted that "reserve" on-street parking for Vacation Rental guests or in any way indicate that parking on a public right of way is reserved for private use.
- 6. Vacation Rentals using on-street parking must demonstrate that adequate space is available on the public road for vehicles to be parked at least six feet from the road centerline, and provide a space that is twenty-four feet long by eight feet wide, consistent with Section 26-82-030(q). Where the roadway is less than twenty feet wide, evidence of adequate on-street parking area, in the form of photographs and/or drawings, shall be provided as part of the license application. Vacation Rentals are not permitted where no on-site parking exists and on-street parking is prohibited, or road width is inadequate to allow vehicles to park at least six feet from the road centerline.

#### **Recommendations and Next Steps**

- Provide staff with direction on incorporating policy options identified in this memo to develop a
   Draft Vacation Rental Ordinance
- 2. Staff will review the Draft Vacation Rental Ordinance scope and conduct environmental review consistent with the requirements of CEQA
- 3. Public outreach will continue throughout development of the Draft Vacation Rental Ordinance.
- 4. Staff anticipates bringing the Draft Vacation Rental Ordinance back to the Planning Commission on January 0, 2022 for public hearing.

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#### **Attachments:**

Attachment 1. Current Vacation Rental Code Section 26-88-120

Attachment 2. Ordinance 6149 Tobacco Retail License

Attachment 3. July 20, 2020 BOS Regulation Summary and Policy Options



# 2021 Year End Report Outreach and Communications Ad Hoc Committee Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council (MAC)

**Members**: Lisa Nahmanson (Chair: Forestville); Naomi Hufstutter (Guerneville)

**Objective**: To create a resource that allows the Lower Russian River MAC to better communicate with constituents. This will include locations to post notices, neighborhood group contact information, moderators of online neighborhood groups, etc.

**Result**: The MAC may roll out a LRRMAC Newsletter on social media and in print media to reach as broad an audience as possible. The bottom line is that people in our communities obtain information in many different formats from reading a flyer on a bulletin board at the post office or in a dog park, to picking up the Gazette or the RR Times, or viewing a post on Instagram or Facebook.

- Solicited Input from all MAC members and alternates
- Created a google slide deck compiling all of the information received, including (but not limited to):
  - LRRMAC WEBSITE
  - LRRMAC YOUTUBE CHANNEL
  - LRRMAC FB PAGE
  - LRRMAC INSTAGRAM: TBD
  - LRRMAC NEWSLETTER: TBD
  - DISTRICT 5 SUPERVISOR'S NEWSLETTER
  - NEXT DOOR GROUPS
  - LOCAL FB GROUPS (CAZ LOCALS/RIO NIDO NEIGHBORHOOD COLLECTIVE)
  - o PRINT MEDIA
    - SOCO GAZETTE
    - RR TIMES
    - PRESS DEMOCRAT
    - SONOMA WEST TIMES
- CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE/MERCHANTS ASSOCIATIONS
- LOCAL GROUPS (FRN/FOVG/HIA/FPA)
- FLYERS POSTED AT POST OFFICES AND OTHER KEY LOCATIONS IN EACH COMMUNITY (PARKS/BULLETIN BOARDS/SENIOR CENTERS)



## 2021 Year End Report Trash Ad-Hoc Committee Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council

Members: Lisa Nahmanson (Chair: Forestville); Alice Teeter (Hacienda); Avi Gordon (Guerneville)

**Objective**: Work with staff at District 5 to connect community clean-up efforts with available resources and ideas to address trash challenges.

**Result**: This is a vibrant and dynamic Ad Hoc with myriad ongoing challenges. We would like to strengthen our impact in 2022.

#### Trash Challenges started in 2021:

- Adopt-a-Road
  - Promotion Phase (Alice/Avi)
- Funding Trash Pick Up
  - o Grant Recipients Everclean North (Keary + Sally); Russian Riverkeeper
- Republic Issues
  - Enforcing uncovered loads
- Clean California
  - Public Art and Trash: building a project
- Trash Cans
  - o Locations for bins that have 3 components: landfill/recycling/composting
- Mowing Trash
  - Coordinating adopt-a road clean ups with mowers to avoid microplastics in the River and surroundings
- Unhoused and Trash
  - Funding Pickups + Supplies + Trash Staging
- Dumped Mattresses
  - Bye Bye Mattress Program and the Illegally Dumped Mattresses Collection Initiative
- Russian River Revitalization
  - Launched project and merchandise available for holidays

#### Additional Trash Challenges for 2022:

- Leave No Trace
- Sonoma Coast Pledge
- SB 1383: Composting



# 2021 Year End Report Land Use Committee Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council (MAC)

Members of the LRR MAC Land Use Committee: Kyra Wink (Chair: Monte Rio/Villa Grande); Michael Nichols (Cazadero); and Nic Pereira (Guerneville)

The Lower Russian River and Coastal Municipal Advisory Councils, in consultation with, and by the direction of Supervisor Lynda Hopkins, decided in May of 2021 to appoint Standing Land Use Committees.

**Overall Goal**: To amplify local voices and empower the community to influence land use decisions being made for their neighborhoods.

#### **Overall Guidelines:**

- The Land Use standing committees will meet once every two months (opposite the MAC Meetings)
- They will review permit applications and determine timing / planner / and scope of each project.
- Decide what action to take to open applications:
  - Decline to review application of lesser significance
  - Provide notification to MAC reps & to the community of Permit Sonoma hearings or next steps
  - Invite the permit applicant to provide a presentation at either a full MAC Meeting or at a special meeting
  - Compile and provide public comment data from presentations back to Permit Sonoma
  - Vote to have full MAC Recommend approval or disapproval of a permit
  - Tracking the projects if further action is required
  - The Chair shall review any event permits, which can have timelines of under 30-60 days when they are received and convene a special meeting if necessary
- The Land Use standing committee may make the determination of how each permit is to be reviewed based on perceived interest to the community, timing and other factors unique to the permit under consideration
- The Land Use standing committee will follow all public meeting regulations, policies, and procedures, and minutes will be kept and published on the Sonoma County website
- The Land Use Co will work with District 5 staff to set up timely notifications of meetings, communications with Permit Sonoma and community members

#### **Summary of Land Use Standing Committee work for 2021**

- <u>August 18, 2021:</u> A Special Meeting was called of the LRR and Coastal Land Use Standing Committees to discuss the permit process specific to Event Permits
- September 27th, 2021 Within this meeting, it was agreed that the LRR LUC meetings would be held on the 4th Thursday of the month starting in January 2022. The November 2021 Meeting would be held on the 4th Monday due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. Communications about and from LUC will be through MAC Representatives, County/MAC Newsletters, LRRMAC/LAND USE Webpages and through Supervisor Hopkin's FB page. Permits of interest were reviewed

•	October 27th, 2021 - The Land Use Committee, by way of invitation from Eric
	Koenigshofer, Sonoma County planning commissioner for the 5th District, met with the
	Lok Property owner, architects, planners, lawyer and Efren Carrillo to survey the site of
	the proposed Guernewood hotel and resort. The purpose was to understand visually the
	footprint and height of the resort and to discuss community concerns

•	November 22nd, 2021 - Within this meeting there was a presentation regarding	g the
	Project Homekey program by Dave Kiff. There was an update and discussion rega	arding
	the Lok /Guernewood Resort project and permits still in process or	new
	projects/applications of interest were reviewed	



### 2021 Year End Report Residential Parking Permit ("RPP") Ad-Hoc Committee Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council

**Members**: Kyra Wink (Chair: Monte Rio/Villa Grande); Lisa Nahmanson (Forestville)

**Objective**: To gauge potential interest in and provide feedback for a Residential Parking Permit (RPP) program directed to alleviate parking issues by non-residents within Lower Russian River (LRR) Beach communities.

**Result:** After surveying LRR Beach Communities, there was not enough overall interest to move forward and support funding for a County-wide RPP Program. The Hacienda area strongly supported the RPP Program concept with the Forestville areas coming in second. Lynda Hopkins hopes to find support for the funding of 2 Parking Enforcement Officers (PEO).

- **FEBRUARY MEETING PRESENTATION**: Ad-hoc Chair Kyra Wink presented a synopsis of the RPP survey which ran from 12/17/2020- 2/5/2021; 336 Responses to the survey; Survey structure received some constructive criticism and produced some conclusions for us to build on moving forward.
- MARCH 2021 AND APRIL 2021: Ad-hoc committee sent outreach emails to all self-identified "Champions" from the survey: Forestville (17 people) Hacienda (13 people) Guerneville (7 people) Monte Rio (2 people):
  - Forestville Champions held meeting on zoom on 3/23/2021; Elise Weiland (Supervisor's Field Representative) explained percentages needed for countywide ordinance drafting and next steps for Champions; Phil Grosse (President of Hacienda Improvement Association) discussed the power point presentation that he has shared with the County
  - Forestville Champions held second meeting on zoom to watch presentation from Phil Grosse and HIA on 3/26/2021

#### SINCE APRIL 2021

- There were some Champion led meetings in Forestville & Hacienda, however there was not enough interest within the LRR areas together or with other MAC/ Field Reps districts to support a County Residential Parking Permit Program.
- Lynda Hopkins, in support of all the parking problems in the LRR, has proposed a County budget ask for (2) parking enforcement officers, funding through CHP, for the 2021-2022 year budget. The budget was said to have been finalized by the County Supervisors on 6/18/21 or before the end of the year.
- The RPP Program Ad Hoc Co. meetings ended by mid-year due to lack for support/ interest by the LRR Communities.