



Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council

Minutes

Other

August 24, 2023 05:30 PM

Guerneville Elementary School, 14630 Armstrong Woods Road Guerneville, CA 95466

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/lrrmac>

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by River MAC Chair - Rio Nido Representative Pip Marquez de la Plata.

A recording of the meeting can be viewed on the Sonoma County 5th District YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0krmGvwo4tM>

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Lead by River MAC Forestville Representative Vesta Copestakes

B. River MAC Roll Call

Coast MAC Present: Scott Farmer, Liz Gallagher, Che Casul (at Guerneville location)

Marti Campbell and Drew McCalley via teleconference from 2nd public location at The Sea Ranch (departed at 7:44); Ginny Nichols via teleconference pursuant to AB 2449 for just cause due to the caregiving need of a sibling; Caroline Madden arrived at 5:45 PM

River MAC Present: Chair Pip Marquez de la Plata, Vesta Copestakes, Betsy Van Dyke, Mike Nicholls, Vicki Clewes, Lucy Hardcastle, Kathleen Dahl, Patty Thayer (departed at 7:53)

C. Coast MAC Roll Call

Coast MAC Present: Scott Farmer, Liz Gallagher, Che Casul (at Guerneville location)

Marti Campbell and Drew McCalley via teleconference from 2nd public location at The Sea Ranch (departed at 7:44); Ginny Nichols via teleconference pursuant to AB 2449 for just cause due to the caregiving need of a sibling; Caroline Madden arrived at 5:45 PM

River MAC Present: Chair Pip Marquez de la Plata, Vesta Copestakes, Betsy Van Dyke, Mike Nicholls, Vicki Clewes, Lucy Hardcastle, Kathleen Dahl, Patty Thayer (departed at 7:53)

2. Approval of the Agenda, Chair Pip Marquez de la Plata Monte Rio / Villa Grande Alternate Patty Thayer motioned to approve. A second was made by Coast MAC Timber Cove Representative Scott Farmer. The roll call vote:

Aye River MAC Chair - Rio Nido Representative Pip Marquez de la Plata Aye River MAC Pocket Canyon / Guerneville South Representative Betsy Van Dyke Aye River MAC Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative Mike Nicholls Aye River MAC Hacienda Representative Vicki Clewes Aye River MAC Forestville Representative Vesta Copestakes Aye Coast MAC The Sea Ranch / Annapolis Representative Drew McCalley Aye Coast MAC Timber Cove Representative Scott Farmer Aye Coast MAC Jenner Representative Jill Lippitt Aye Coast MAC Bodega Bay Representative Ginny Nichols Aye Forestville

Alternate Lucy Hardcastle Aye **Guerneville Alternate Kathleen Dahl** Aye **Monte Rio / Villa Grande Alternate Patty Thayer** Aye **Bodega / Valley Ford Alternate Che Casul** Aye **Jenner Alternate Liz Gallagher** Absent **Coast MAC Fort Ross / West Cazadero Representative Caroline Madden**

3. Statement of Conflict of Interest

there were none

4. River MAC Consent Agenda

A. July 13 Minutes

The consent agenda was voted on at once, noting one spelling correction for the minutes.

River MAC Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative Mike Nicholls motioned to approve. A second was made by River MAC Forestville Representative Vesta Copestakes. The roll call vote:

Aye **River MAC Chair - Rio Nido Representative Pip Marquez de la Plata** Aye **River MAC Pocket Canyon / Guerneville South Representative Betsy Van Dyke** Aye **River MAC Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative Mike Nicholls** Aye **River MAC Hacienda Representative Vicki Clewes** Aye **River MAC Forestville Representative Vesta Copestakes** Aye **Forestville Alternate Lucy Hardcastle** Abstained **Guerneville Alternate Kathleen Dahl** Abstained **Monte Rio / Villa Grande Alternate Patty Thayer**

B. Bylaws Amendments

5. Coast MAC Consent Agenda

A. May 18 Minutes

The consent calendar was voted on all at once. Scott Farmer introduced the item and announced that Chair Leubitz will be forming an Ad Hoc committee to evaluate the current recruitment and recommendation process for the Coast MAC to determine what has worked and what needs modification.

Bodega / Valley Ford Alternate Che Casul motioned to approve. A second was made by Coast MAC The Sea Ranch / Annapolis Representative Marti Campbell. The roll call vote:

Aye **Coast MAC The Sea Ranch / Annapolis Representative Marti Campbell** Aye **Coast MAC The Sea Ranch / Annapolis Representative Drew McCalley** Aye **Coast MAC Fort Ross / West Cazadero Representative Caroline Madden** Aye **Coast MAC Timber Cove Representative Scott Farmer** Aye **Coast MAC Bodega Bay Representative Ginny Nicholls** Aye **Bodega / Valley Ford Alternate Che Casul** Aye **Jenner Alternate Liz Gallagher**

B. June 22 Minutes

C. Bylaws Amendments

6. Council Member Comment: on Matters not listed on the agenda

Vesta gave this update: Permit Sonoma's presentation of the final EIR on Sonoma County's Housing Element, which is included in the General Plan, was a proud moment of democracy in action. Our 5th District was well-represented, especially with people from Graton and Forestville. This is an imperfect plan but state mandates, and pressure from a policy called "Builders Remedy" which places development in the power of contractors rather than the public, pushed this EIR through a 5-0 board vote for approval. BUT, Forestville got some much-needed and important changes thanks to Lynda Hopkins' advocacy.

No one wanted FOR 4, at the end of a long driveway off a single lane road to be built into 60 units of housing, including the property owner. Although there is no Eminent Domain that would force this family to build, once zoning to high-density housing is established, it would be hard to go back to low density in the future, which basically forces this family to never develop their land for any housing. As Lynda stated, this property is a death trap in fire emergencies. There is no way this many people, in addition to those who already live on this road, could make it out alive if fire came raging up their hill.

Lynda Hopkins asked that FOR 4 be REMOVED from the plan in exchange for FOR 6 being put back in as a split-lot in order to accommodate both housing and Forestville's much-coveted Skatespot skatepark. The revised Housing Element went forward to a full vote of approval to head the the state for review. Forestville was saved from a mistake we don't have to live with now.

Forestvillians also came out in force for the environmental cleanup for FOR 1 - the Electro Vector plant next to Forestville School and Carr's Drive-in restaurant. This site is perfect for affordable housing, especially for seniors who prefer to live within walking distance of restaurants, shops, our downtown park

and West County Trail. The toxic site must be cleaned up. It is a visual blight as well as a hazard to our community.

Thank you every Forestvillian who attended and spoke up on behalf of locals who feel strongly about having a voice in the future of Forestville.

Betsy announced that Russian River Pride is moving forward October 13-15 and the event's planner Cleve Jones is here tonight.

7. State Update from Senator Mike McGuire and County Update from Supervisor Lynda Hopkins

Supervisor Hopkins' update included:

- Local Coastal Plan - The plan was recently unanimously approved by the Board of Supervisors and will now go to the California Coastal Commission. This has been in development for decades.
- Housing Element - The housing element update was also approved this week. Changes were made to remove some problematic sites in exchange for adding other more suitable sites.
- Wastewater Regulations - New septic system regulations are being developed to balance water quality with costs to homeowners. Exploring regional solutions.
- Vacation Rentals - Considering easing some restrictions, taking a neighborhood-by-neighborhood approach.
- Tree Protection Ordinance - A new tree protection ordinance is in development.
- Living Wage Ordinance - The living wage ordinance is coming back to the Board of Supervisors.
- Wildfire Prevention - A new tax could provide funding for wildfire prevention efforts.
- Insurance - Responded to concerns about homeowner's insurance cancellations and big rate hikes.
- Homelessness - Discussed progress on reducing homelessness through data-driven approaches.
- Infrastructure - Mentioned upcoming pedestrian safety projects and funding for local road improvements.

Senator McGuire's update included:

- Budget - California has record budget reserves. Investing in schools, college affordability, universal school meals.
- Wildfires - Significant state funding for firefighters, equipment, and prevention. Still need federal assistance.
- Climate Change - Passed \$51 billion climate budget focused on reducing emissions and transitioning from fossil fuels.
- Housing - Implementing Care Court system to provide support and treatment for those unable to care for themselves. Still need more affordable housing.
- PG&E - Requiring undergrounding of power lines in high fire risk areas. Pushing accountability reforms.
- Broadband - Investing billions to expand high-speed internet access across the state.
- Women's Health - Enshrined reproductive rights in state constitution. Investing in clinics.
- Infrastructure - Funding coming for various local projects like ADA improvements in Guerneville.
- State Parks - Acknowledged need for more maintenance, staffing, improvements in local state parks.

8. Public Comments

There was no public comment on items not on the agenda. With a motion from Vesta and seconded by Scott, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:05 PM