



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

June 12, 2018
Board Meeting 18-23

SPECIAL MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

La Honda Elementary School
450 Sears Ranch Road
La Honda, CA 94020

June 12, 2018

APPROVED MINUTES*

REGULAR MEETING

President Cyr called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Nonette Hanko, Larry Hassett, Yoriko Kishimoto, Pete Siemens, and Curt Riffle

Members Absent: Cecily Harris

Staff Present: Acting General Manager Ana Ruiz, Interim Assistant General Counsel, Gary Baum, Acting Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Acting Assistant General Manager Christine Butterfield, Planning Manager Jane Mark, Planner III Leslie Chan, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington, Real Property Manager Mike Williams, Engineering & Construction Manager Jay Lin, Skyline Area Superintendent Chris Barresi, Senior Planner Meredith Manning, Senior Planner Tina Hugg, Visitor Services Manager Matt Anderson

BOARD BUSINESS

1. Red Barn Public Access Site Plan (R-18-64)

Planner III Leslie Chan provided the staff report describing the history of the site, project goals and objectives, and proposed program uses for the site. Ms. Chan described the various site constraints: historic Red Barn, scenic corridor, active grazing activities, protected species, emergency landing zone, soil contamination, Weeks Creek, etc. Ms. Chan reviewed the La Honda Creek Master Plan process and Vision Plan, which both included public access to the upper portion of La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve and connecting lower and upper La

*Approved by the Board of Directors on June 27, 2018

Honda Creek. Additionally, for the Red Barn Public Access project, the District held several public meetings in 2017 to receive feedback on the two design alternatives.

Mark Brandi of MIG reported that in response to the public feedback received in 2017, a third design option was created to increase parking availability and limit the visual impact of the parking lot by locating it down slope from the roadway and away from the Red Barn. Due to roadway safety constraints and Caltrans requirements, the driveway cannot be relocated. Additional traffic studies are planned, which results will be provided to Caltrans to determine if additional safety measures are warranted. Mr. Brandi displayed visual simulations to demonstrate the proposed design alternative 3 and proposed measures to camouflage the parking area. Mr. Brandi described alternate parking locations as suggested by members of the public.

Director Riffle inquired regarding the previous traffic studies completed.

Ms. Chan described the previous traffic studies completed in 2016 and 2017 measuring the speed of vehicles traveling and not based on the posted speed limit. Additional traffic analysis will be included as part of a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) impact study. Nick Bleich, traffic planner from WTRANS described the type of speed and traffic analysis to be completed as part of CEQA analysis, including emergency access to the site, driveway analysis and evaluation, nearby traffic collisions, etc.

Director Riffle inquired if other potential access points are available to reach the interior of the La Honda OSP.

Ms. Chan reported all access points were studied as part of the La Honda Master Plan, and the Red Barn site was the only access point identified that met line-of-site requirements.

Director Riffle inquired if the Phase II site trails could be built without Red Barn parking access.

Ms. Chan reported if parking areas were not built at the Red Barn site, the District would likely not provide public access to the site due to the concerns related to potential illegal parking along Highway 84.

Director Kishimoto inquired regarding collision data collected and analyzed as part of the traffic study.

Mr. Bleich explained the data used as part of the previous traffic study was from May 2015 and additional potential traffic mitigations to the roadway will be studied.

Director Hassett inquired regarding use of the existing driveway for emergency landing zone access.

Ms. Chan explained the existing driveway could continue to be used for emergency landing zone access.

Public comments opened at 8:01 p.m.

Robert White expressed his concerns regarding bicyclist safety along Highway 84 and maintaining the view and rural character of the site.

Christian Bonner spoke regarding public access and the rural character of the area. Mr. Bonner spoke in opposition to public access and parking areas at the Red Barn area stating its potential negative impact on the community and the view of the site. Additionally, Mr. Bonner spoke regarding the negative impact on the traffic in the area.

Claudette Bergman spoke regarding the former pond at the Weeks Ranch and spoke in favor of restoring the pond instead of installing a parking lot on the site. Ms. Bergman spoke regarding the danger of pulling onto Highway 84 and in favor of a parking area at the Driscoll Ranch site.

Linda Huntimer spoke in favor of preserving of open space for the wildlife in the area for the residents and their children.

Richard Booth spoke in favor of the lack of parking lots between La Honda Elementary School and Alice's restaurant and spoke in favor of preserving the area's views. Mr. Booth also spoke in favor of creating a shuttle between the Driscoll Event Center and the Red Barn area.

Krista Kuehnhackl spoke regarding the dangerous traffic on Highway 84. Ms. Kuehnhackl spoke in opposition to the Red Barn parking area and spoke in favor of dog access on the preserve.

Ken Takara spoke regarding the number of visitors to the site and their potential impact on the community.

Mike Bushue spoke in favor of equestrian access to the La Honda Open Space Preserve, including at Sears Ranch Road and the Red Barn areas.

Ed Haazer expressed his concerns regarding increased traffic, loss of rural views, and increased problems that emergency vehicles would have to respond.

Sharon Dooley expressed her concerns regarding bus access and their potential negative impact on Highway 84 and the area. Ms. Dooley spoke in favor of relocating the parking area to behind the ranger residence, of locating a full time ranger at the site, and locating garbage cans at the site.

Jeff Croke spoke in favor of the area and Red Barn site staying the same.

Farmer John Muller spoke regarding the valuable legacy of the property and community and being a good neighbor. Mr. Muller spoke in favor of fundraisers and media surrounding the site to raise money for the site. Mr. Mueller spoke in favor of the community fire department.

Zoe Harrington spoke regarding increased traffic and vehicle collisions and asked if additional funding will be allocated for emergency services.

Dana Pitchon spoke in favor of the current beauty and rural nature of the site.

Barbara Hooper delivered additional signatures supporting the petition opposing the proposed design alternative and described the resident cities of those who signed the petition. Ms. Hooper spoke regarding the lack of traffic patrol by the California Highway Patrol and San Mateo County Sheriff's Office for the area. Ms. Hooper described traffic, collision, and fatality data for

Highway 84. Ms. Hooper spoke in favor District delivery of the La Honda Creek Master Plan goals.

Lilia Lopez spoke regarding the previous traffic study and spoke in favor of conducting a traffic study on a warm weekend. Ms. Lopez spoke in opposition to the proposed parking lot location.

Patty Mayall thanked the District rangers for their efforts, especially related to fire protection. Ms. Mayall spoke regarding illegal speeders and racing on Highway 84. Ms. Mayall spoke regarding high fire danger in the area during dry seasons, which fires are often caused by vehicles collisions.

Steve Jones spoke in favor of the view of the Red Barn and in opposition to the proposed parking area. Mr. Jones spoke in favor of preserving the Red Barn area.

Valerie Jones spoke in opposition to the proposed Red Barn public access area.

Kathleen Moazed spoke regarding the natural resources on the site, including wetlands and pallid bats and spoke regarding potential litigation related to the site if the project is approved by the Board. Ms. Moazed requested the District request data related to traffic and vehicle collisions in the area and encouraged the District to donate funds to the local La Honda Fire Brigade to help defray a potential increase in costs.

Nigel Webb spoke in opposition to the proposed driveway and spoke in favor of using Driscoll Ranch for an interpretive center and in favor of shuttle buses to provide access to other locations. Finally, Mr. Webb spoke regarding the dangerous location for the proposed driveway.

Jonathan Buser spoke in favor of limiting parking for the Red Barn site and in favor of potentially creating small parking lots in the area.

Gordon Ray spoke in favor of the staff work on the project and support for the project goals. Mr. Ray spoke in favor of creating a community group to study the options for the Red Barn public access site.

Nicholas Parker spoke in favor of accessible trails in the area and spoke in opposition to shuttle buses due to traffic safety concerns. Mr. Parker spoke regarding the dangerous nature of the current ranger driveway.

Hilary expressed her concerns related to a loss of a scenic view and the impact on the volunteer fire department. Hilary also inquired regarding the proposed location of the emergency landing zone.

Kathy Gill spoke regarding many visitors to the area that enjoy the serene view of the Red Barn and surrounding landscape. Ms. Gill spoke in favor of preserving the land and the wildlife living there. Ms. Gill spoke in opposition to picnic areas due to an increase in trash that will be created. Ms. Gill spoke in favor of parking at and shuttles from the Driscoll Ranch area.

Martin Eberhard spoke regarding the view from Allen Road, which will be of the proposed parking lot.

Marcia Castillo thanked the District for listening to the public and their time and effort on the project. Ms. Castillo spoke in opposition to the proposed project due to traffic concerns and potential emergency road closures affecting preserve visitors. Ms. Castillo spoke regarding the potential negative impact on the volunteer fire department.

Lynnette Vega spoke regarding traffic problems on Highway 84 and a blind curve near the proposed driveway location. Ms. Vega spoke regarding the high level of traffic on the weekends.

Vicki Skinner spoke in opposition to increasing parking at the Sears Ranch Road parking lot. Ms. Skinner spoke regarding preserve visitors parking at the La Honda Elementary School and other negative impacts on the school property. Ms. Skinner spoke in favor of locating parking at the Driscoll Ranch parking area.

Suzanne Galvez spoke in favor of balancing preservation and public access. Ms. Galvez spoke in favor of preserving the view and expressed concerns related to traffic safety.

Brian Domitilli spoke regarding hitting escaped cattle on the roadway and the need to close the gates to grazing areas.

Lou Bordi spoke regarding the need for a future traffic study because traffic continues to increase. Mr. Bordi expressed concerns regarding traffic safety and thanked the District for preserving the Red Barn property.

Pat Thomasson spoke regarding the proposed size of the parking lot and the increased traffic it would create. Mr. Thomasson spoke in opposition to a potential shuttle from Driscoll Ranch. Mr. Thomasson spoke regarding the lack of traffic patrol in the area enforcing speeding cars racing on Highway 84.

Kim Ray spoke regarding traffic and trash in the area.

Public comments closed at 9:20 p.m.

The Board recessed at 9:20 and reconvened at 9:29 p.m. with Directors Cyr, Hanko, Hassett, Kishimoto, Riffle, and Siemens present.

Public comments opened at 9:29 p.m.

Linda Fischman spoke regarding the potential number of visitors that would visit the Red Barn public access site.

Public comments closed at 9:31 p.m.

Director Hassett spoke regarding comments he has received from the public and a recent traffic study he completed at the Red Barn public access area and noted various traffic violations he witnessed. Director Hassett spoke against the proposed driveway location and spoke in favor of equestrian parking at the Driscoll Event Center and in favor of additional parking at Sears Ranch Road to allow hiking access to the Red Barn area.

Director Kishimoto spoke regarding the residents throughout the District who support the District's preservation of open space and spoke regarding the potential relocation of the proposed parking area.

Director Riffle spoke regarding residents of the District desiring to visit the Red Barn area and spoke in support of continuing to study the options for the Red Barn access area to allow preserve visitors to access the central area of the La Honda Open Space Preserve. Director Riffle spoke in favor of forming a community committee to look at options for the area.

Director Siemens spoke regarding public support for public access and expressed concerns regarding protection of the rural views. Director Siemens spoke in favor of increased traffic patrol by California Highway Patrol and increased traffic mitigation measures by Caltrans. Director Siemens spoke in favor of expanding the Sears Ranch Road parking lot, including equestrian parking spots. Director Siemens spoke in favor of increased access to the northern area of the La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve and spoke in favor of creating a committee of community members to look at the project.

Director Hanko spoke in favor of creating a committee of community members to look at project.

Director Cyr spoke in favor of public access to the central area of the La Honda Open Space Preserve.

Motion: Director Kishimoto moved, and Director Siemens seconded the motion to direct the Acting General Manager to hold off further work on the Red Barn Public Access Site Plan Alternative 3 and optional Phase II in order to evaluate the following parking options for consistency with the project goals and objectives:

- a) Expansion of the Sears Ranch Road Parking Area
- b) Development of a new parking area at the former Driscoll Ranch Event Center
- c) Other feasible options to access the central and northern areas of the La Honda Creek Preserve

Friendly Amendment: Director Riffle offered a friendly amendment to include study of optional equestrian parking spaces at the Sears Ranch Road parking lot.

Directors Kishimoto and Siemens accepted the friendly amendment.

VOTE: 6-0-0 (Director Harris absent)

Motion: Director Hanko moved, and Director Cyr seconded the motion to direct staff to return to the Board with information regarding options for establishing a citizens' advisory committee consisting of Board members and residents of the La Honda area.

VOTE: 6-0-0 (Director Harris absent)

ADJOURNMENT

President Cyr adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 9:56 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk