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Cc: [Barbara Hooper](#)
Subject: Information for LH PAWG to consider
Date: Friday, January 24, 2020 2:22:01 PM
Attachments: [B. Hooper - LH PAWG information to consider for LHCOSP access.docx](#)

EXTERNAL

Tina and Melissa-

Thank you for all of the documentation you have provided for the PAWG as we consider options for access to the LHCOSP. I have been following this project for a few years and appreciate the background and detail we have received in the project binder and at each PAWG meeting. That being said, I'd like to share some items with the PAWG which stand out to me which members may want to consider as we discuss which parking and trailhead options should be forwarded to Midpen's Planning and Natural Resource Board Committee for consideration.

As a follow up to my comments during the PAWG meeting on December 12, 2019, regarding the Red Barn, public feedback, and traffic studies and collision information, I have attached summary information on those items, as well as other items to consider. The first-page highlights eight items and the following pages include additional details. There are weblinks in the word document so that additional information can be accessed easily. My preference was to save the Word doc as a pdf but I wasn't able to do that on my computer today.

Thanks, in advance, for sharing this e-mail and the attached document with the PAWG.

Regards,
Barbara

Information the LH PAWG may want to consider while evaluating La Honda Creek Preserve public access options:

1. La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve Master Plan:

a. *Preserve Vision Statement*

- i. *The Preserve will ... serve as a **picturesque backdrop** of the Coastal foothills ... and surrounding community, **both present and future.***
- ii. *Focus ... on ... the **historical and cultural features that are reminiscent of past uses**; continuing ranching activities and **preserving scenic rangeland landscapes characteristic of rural San Mateo County.***

b. *Historic and Noteworthy Structures – Red Barn*

- i. *The Red Barn ... is the **most prominent Preserve monument and an important local landmark visible from Highway 84.***
- ii. *The District will... **protect and enhance the historical significance** of the site, ...address **potential restoration of the adjacent former pond**, ...ensure that future improvements ... **enhance the rural character** of the Red Barn.*

2. Public Feedback

- a. *MROSD Board Meeting in La Honda, June 12, 2018 - 136 people attended, 33 people spoke in opposition to proposed access at the Red Barn on Highway 84*
- b. *Petition submitted to MROSD, June 12, 2018 - 893 opposition signatures*
- c. *Comments at Board meetings, e-mail, voicemail, and letters*

3. Traffic Studies and Collision information

- a. *Data from: **California Highway Patrol, CalTrans, San Mateo County Sheriff***
- b. *“The collision rate and injury rates on the SR 84 segment along the project frontage are **higher than the statewide average** for similar facilities.”*

4. Measure AA Ballot Language: *protect and preserve scenic beauty*

5. MidPen Coastside Mission: *protect and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character*

6. County-designated scenic corridor - where LHC Open Space Preserve is located on Highway 84

*“Public views within and from Scenic Corridors shall be **protected and enhanced**, and development shall not be allowed to significantly obscure, detract from, or negatively affect the quality of these views.”*

7. Good Neighbor Policy: *The District will make every effort to cooperate with neighbors, to take into account their perspectives, address their concerns, and engage and involve them in the process of making decisions regarding the public preserves.*

8. Definition of preserve: *maintain, conserve, protect and care for*

BTH – LH PAWG background information

1* LA HONDA CREEK OPEN SPACE PRESERVE MASTER PLAN

– revised June 2012

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Preserve Vision Statement

The vision statement for La Honda Creek OSP is consistent with the District's overall mission statement and the mission for the Coastside Protection Area. It also responds to the desires and issues raised by members of the public, including environmental organizations seeking the protection of the natural resources, trail user groups asking for expanded access and additional trails, and local communities hoping to connect directly to the Preserve to expand their local recreational opportunities. The vision presents a long-term picture for the landscape, management, and use of the Preserve, and serves to guide all aspects of the Master Plan. The goals, objectives, and actions listed hereafter are all tools to realize this vision, which states:

*La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve is rich with unique ecological, historical, and cultural resources. **The Preserve will continue to serve as a picturesque backdrop of the Coastal foothills and will serve as an example of how the District harmoniously blends recreational and ranching uses for the benefit of the land, wildlife, and surrounding community, both present and future. The stewardship of this public Open Space Preserve shall be the highest priority, followed by the practice of ecological agriculture and ranching, and finally improved trail connectivity and access. Focus will be placed on protecting and enhancing the Preserve's diverse plant, wildlife, and native habitats; protecting and interpreting the historical and cultural features that are reminiscent of past uses; continuing ranching activities and preserving scenic rangeland landscapes characteristic of rural San Mateo County;** lending to the viability of agriculture on the Coast; expanding the available access and interior trail connections within the Preserve; and building connections to surrounding open space lands and Coastside communities.*

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Historic and Noteworthy Structures

Figure 10 shows the location and characteristics of the three most important cultural assets found at the Preserve.

Red Barn

-The Red Barn area is part of the former Weeks Ranch, to which Ronald J. Weeks and his family moved in the 1850s (Stoltz, 2002). None of the initial buildings from the ranch, which included a residence, agricultural buildings, and a hotel, are still standing. **The Red Barn was built around the turn of the twentieth century and has undergone few major alterations (Stoltz, 2001; 2002). It is the most prominent Preserve monument and an important local landmark visible from Highway 84.** In 2002, the District completed a restoration project for the Red Barn that involved structural repairs, re-roofing, and re-painting as well as reconstructing a lean-to on the north side of the barn, which was previously destroyed during the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake.

-**The District will hire a qualified architectural historian to formally evaluate the Red Barn for possible inclusion on the California Register of Historical Resources and the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, with the input of a preservation architect, the District will prepare a detailed site specific plan that will include management practices to protect and enhance the historical significance of the site while incorporating public access and interpretation.** The site specific plan will address a number of priorities, including: use and maintenance of the Red Barn; potential upgrades and use of an existing garage for environmental education; **potential restoration of the adjacent former pond;** use and maintenance of the corrals; parking; trailheads; picnic areas; special events; interpretation; the Red Barn as bat habitat; and the re-introduction of grazing. **The site specific plan will incorporate design guidelines to ensure that future improvements in this area correspond to and enhance the rural character of the Red Barn.**

- The District will also prepare a maintenance plan for the Red Barn that includes a timeline for future repairs such as re-roofing and re-painting, and specifies appropriate work timeframes so as to not disturb existing resident bat colonies.
- The Red Barn area offers a number of exciting interpretive opportunities that are discussed in detail under the Environmental Education and Interpretation section. Because there is a high potential for archaeological finds at this site, public access improvements and other projects involving landscape modification shall be conducted with sensitivity and in accordance with the Environmental Protection Guidelines as listed in Appendix C.

2* Public Feedback to MROSD

- MROSD Board Meeting in La Honda, June 12, 2018
 - o 136 people attended
 - o 33 people spoke in opposition to Red Barn access on Highway 84
- LH petition submitted to MROSD, June 12, 2018
 - o **893 opposition signatures** gathered in less than one month;
 - **526 signatures from La Honda, San Gregorio, Pescadero, and Loma Mar** – 28% of the total population (1,898) of these communities
 - Other San Mateo county signatures:
 - **106 - Woodside** (Skyline)
 - 45 - Half Moon Bay, El Granada, Moss Beach, Pacifica
 - 117 – San Carlos, Belmont, Portola Valley, San Bruno, Redwood City, Menlo Park, Burlingame, San Mateo
 - Santa Clara County: 63 - Palo Alto, Mountain View, Los Altos, Sunnyvale, San Jose, Campbell, Los Gatos
 - Santa Cruz County: 12 – Santa Cruz, Aptos, Boulder Creek, Davenport
 - Other: 31- San Francisco, Berkeley, Gilroy, Newark, Fremont, misc.
- Communications submitted to MidPen
 - Letters, e-mails, voice mails, and public comments at meetings through June 8, 2018: https://www.openspace.org/sites/default/files/20180612_RedBarnSitePlan_R-18-64.pdf
 - pages 24-77
 - Mayall letter – April 27, 2018 – page 61
 - McReynolds letter – June 7, 2018 – page 69

3* Traffic Studies and Collision Information

- **MidPen LHCOSP Traffic Studies** – PAWG binder, section 8
Interim Transportation Circulation Technical Memo for Red Barn – February 3, 2017 (W-Trans)
 - The collision rate and injury rates on the SR 84 segment along the project frontage are **higher than the statewide average** for similar facilities.
- **California Highway Patrol (CHP), CalTrans, and Sheriff information**
 - o **CHP Traffic Incident** data from MROSD LH PAWG – 9/12/2019 meeting
LHC PAWG - Supplemental Materials CHP Traffic Incident #190913AL.pdf
 Report run on: 7/31/2019 - **Total Count: 308 collisions**
 #190913 2009 - AV. **2017/2018/2019 COLLISIONS ON SR 84 BETWEEN SR 35 AND SR 1, SAN MATEO COUNTY**, 51 pages
 - o B. Hooper comments / letter – 6/12/2018, MROSD Board meeting
 - **Concerns about increased traffic to Highway 84 area**
 - **CHP officers are not assigned to specifically patrol traffic on Highway 84 from Highway 35 to Highway 1.**

- **County Sheriff** monitors this area for crime but not traffic. Both agencies do respond to incidents as requested.
- This is the exact stretch of road where MidPen proposed to add a driveway with cars, buses, motorcycles, bicycles, and pedestrians.
- **Traffic documentation on Highway 84 from Highway 35 to Highway 1:**
 - **CHP** – for previous 5 years to date, **provided 32 pages of collision records** and recorded traffic violations (drunk driving, excessive speeds, wrong side of road, etc.) which increased from **21 in 2013** to **37 in 2017**.
 - **CalFire** – responded to **84 traffic accidents** from January 2016 to date – May 2018.
 - **California Department of Transportation** – from 2013 through 2016 reported **101 injuries** and **7 fatalities**.

4* MEASURE AA – from MROSD website 11/25/19

BACKGROUND

Measure AA is a \$300 million general obligation bond approved in June 2014 by over two-thirds of District voters. Proceeds from bonds, which will be sold in a series over approximately the next 20-30 years, will be used to:

- **protect natural open space lands**
- **open preserves or areas of preserves that are currently closed**
- **construct public access improvements such as new trails and staging areas**
- **restore and enhance open space land, which includes forests, streams, watersheds and coastal ranch areas**

BALLOT LANGUAGE, AS APPROVED BY THE VOTERS

To improve access to hiking and biking opportunities, protect and **preserve** redwood forests, natural open spaces, the **scenic beauty** of our region and coastline, critical wildlife habitat, restore creeks to protect water quality, and reduce forest fire risk; shall Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District be authorized to issue up to \$300 million in bonds, at a tax rate not to exceed \$3.18 per \$100,000 of assessed value of property owned, with expenditures verified by an independent citizen oversight committee.

5* COASTSIDE PROTECTION – from MROSD website 11/25/19

YOUR COASTSIDE OPEN SPACE

Midpen is celebrating 15 years of partnership with the Coastsides community. Since our boundaries expanded to include the San Mateo County Coast in 2004, Midpen has protected more than 11,000 acres of natural and agricultural lands that contribute to the area's rural identity, natural beauty and quality of life.

MIDPEN COASTSIDE MISSION

To acquire and preserve in perpetuity open space land and agricultural land of regional significance, **protect and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character, encourage viable agricultural use of land resources, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.**

COASTSIDE PROTECTION AREA

In the 1990s, as development pressure threatened the Coastsides' scenic beauty, rural character and agricultural heritage, Coastsiders expressed their support for extending the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District boundaries to include the San Mateo County Coastsides. In 2004, the coast to ridgeline, from Montara to the San Mateo Santa Cruz county line, officially became Midpen's Coastsides Protection Area. Our **Coastsides Protection Area Service Plan**, which we spent more than seven years developing in collaboration with Coastsides residents and agricultural community, guides our work in the region.

6* County-designated Scenic Corridor

MidPen LHC Preserve Parking and Trailhead Access Feasibility Study Site Development Assessment Criteria - September 12, 2019

Table 2. Project Goals and Objectives

- Design elements to reflect the **rural character of the site and the Red Barn**
 - o Design aesthetic should acknowledge rural nature and ranching history of the Preserve.
- Provide **safe public access**
- **Protect scenic views** of and from the site
 - o The Preserve is located on Highway 84 which is **County-designated scenic corridor**. The project should be compatible with the aesthetic of the surrounding and rural environment.

Access to San Mateo County definition:

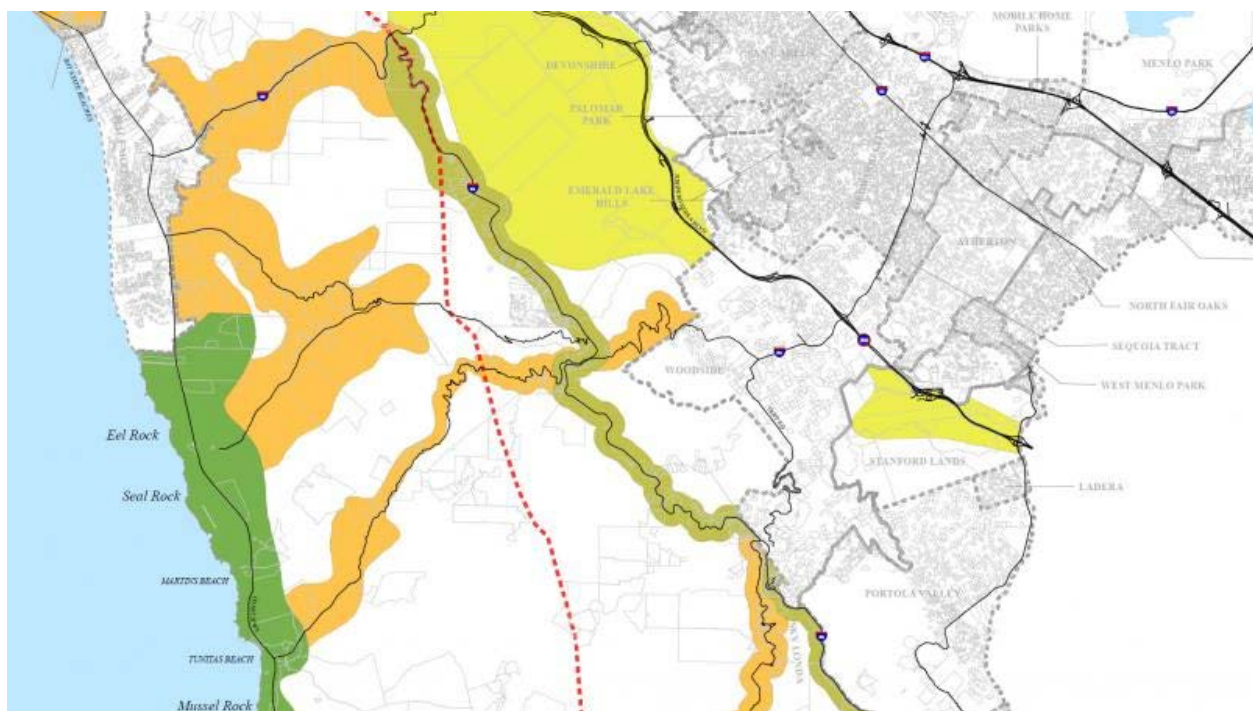
<https://planning.smcgov.org/documents/san-mateo-county-scenic-corridors>

San Mateo County | Scenic Corridors

Public views within and from Scenic Corridors shall be protected and enhanced, and development shall not be allowed to significantly obscure, detract from, or negatively affect the quality of these views. Vegetative screening or setbacks may be used to mitigate such impacts. Development visible from Scenic Corridors shall be so located and designed as to minimize interference with ridgeline silhouettes.

Access to SMC Scenic Corridor map:

https://planning.smcgov.org/sites/planning.smcgov.org/files/documents/files/GP_Scenic_Corridor.pdf



7* GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY – from MROSD website 11/25/19

The purpose of the Good Neighbor Policy is to establish guidelines and principles for ensuring good relationships between the District and its neighbors. In both the day-to-day conduct and in the long-range planning for public open space preserves, the District will make every effort to cooperate with neighbors, to take into account their perspectives, address their concerns, and engage and involve them in the process of making decisions regarding the public preserves.

- [Download Good Neighbor Policy](#)