

From: [Midpen Public Comment Form](#)
To: [Clerk; web; Maria Soria](#)
Subject: I want my comment to be read into the record during the board meeting. (250 word limit) - October 21 - Board of Directors Meeting -
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2020 10:31:28 AM

EXTERNAL

Meeting Date *	October 21 – Board of Directors Meeting
Is this a comment about a specific board item? *	No
Subject *	LHCOSP
Please check one: *	Neutral
Name *	Barbara Hooper
City of Residence *	La Honda
Email *	[REDACTED]
Select a Choice *	I want my comment to be read into the record during the board meeting. (250 word limit)

Comments to be read into the record *

–As the chair of the MidPen La Honda PAWG, I want to thank the Board for responding to the La Honda community’s public safety concerns on June 12, 2018 by creating the regional Public Access Working Group to consider La Honda Creek Preserve access options.

–This was the first time MidPen created a working group and I felt fortunate to have been a PAWG member representing the La Honda and South Coast communities regarding LHCOSP access.

–As the La Honda Creek Preserve planning process proceeds, thorough feasibility and traffic studies should include input and data from all stakeholders, including California Highway Patrol, CalFire, California Department of Transportation, San Mateo County Sheriff, and La Honda Fire Brigade, to ensure public safety along the Highway 84 corridor.

–As MidPen is in the beginning stages of a multi-year endeavor of the LHC Project Development and Implementation Process, I encourage the Board to seriously consider Near-Term options such as docent-led hikes near the Red Barn and in other areas not yet open to the public. Additionally, prioritizing and completing the planned multi-use paths and loops throughout the preserve, as well as routes connecting Sears Ranch Road and Allen Road trails to the Red Barn, could immediately increase and expand public access to the preserve.

–As trusted caretakers, I urge the you to provide safe public access to La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve and protect the rural character of the historically significant Red Barn which is an important local landmark on Highway 84.

October 20, 2020

Board of Directors
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
330 Distel Circle
Los Altos, CA 94022

MROSD Board of Directors:

As the chair of the MidPen La Honda Public Access Working Group (PAWG) and a resident of La Honda, I want to personally thank you for deciding at the June 12, 2018 Board meeting to form a regional study group to consider LHCOSP access options. The well-attended meeting in La Honda and the petition in opposition to a proposed 75 car parking lot at the Red Barn emphasized the community's concerns about public safety on Highway 84. Thank you for responding by creating the La Honda PAWG.

This was the first time that MidPen created a working group for public feedback on a project and I feel fortunate to have been chosen as one of the PAWG members. I was honored to represent the La Honda and South Coast communities regarding LHCOSP access options.

As the LHCOSP planning process proceeds, thorough feasibility and traffic studies should include California Highway Patrol, CalFire, California Department of Transportation, San Mateo County Sheriff, La Honda Fire Brigade, and other stakeholder input and data to ensure public safety along the Highway 84 corridor.

Understanding that the Project Development and Implementation Process of LHCOSP is in the beginning stages of a multi-year endeavor, I encourage the Board to seriously consider Near-Term options such as docent-led hikes near the Red Barn and in other areas not yet open to the public. Additionally, prioritizing and completing the planned multi-use paths and loops throughout the preserve, as well as routes connecting Sears Ranch Road and Allen Road trails to the Red Barn, could immediately increase and expand public access to the preserve.

As trusted caretakers, I urge you to provide safe public access to La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve and protect the rural character of the historically significant Red Barn which is an important local landmark on Highway 84.

Sincerely,

Barbara Hooper



October 7, 2020

Board of Directors
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Administrative Office
330 Distel Circle
Los Altos, CA 94022-1404

To the Members of the Board:

I was honored to be able to serve as a member of the La Honda Creek Public Access Working Group. As a former public servant myself, I very much appreciated the excellent work put into effort by the Midpen staff, they were so professional and hard-working!

I filled out the online survey on the PAWG process, but as I know this is Midpen's first go at one of these working groups, I also wanted to convey my thoughts to you here as well, in the hopes that it helps you perfect what I think is already a very strong public service.

First, while I was happy to be able to represent La Honda on the PAWG, I was disappointed that local representation was outnumbered by those living outside the area. While I recognize that Midpen represents thousands outside the area, the impact of development of the Red Barn site, particularly with respect to the increase in traffic hazards, falls disproportionately on those living from Skyline/Highway 35 to San Gregorio /Highway 1. Government at all levels often gives greater weight to those more heavily impacted by its decisions. Midpen should do likewise.

Second, the two major concerns of the community writ large was traffic and aesthetics. On traffic, Midpen relied on outdated traffic and collision studies, forcing PAWG members from the community to come up with their own, amateur, 'studies', comprised of pouring through old data and standing by the side of the road for days on end. While I understand that Midpen might not have wanted to expend resources on traffic studies at this early stage of the Red Barn project, given the gravity of the proposal and the alarm that this stirred up, it might have been wiser to spend the money and have some answers. As it was, we spent months debating amongst ourselves, with those of us who travel these dangerous roads daily listening to theoretical discussions of traffic calming measures that were uninformed by either expertise or an understanding of actual traffic patterns and history or even knowledge of the laws and regulations governing state highways.

And with respect to the aesthetics of the Red Barn, it is no small matter of the locals just liking what they've always had. The Red Barn is an iconic image that has been captured by photographers worldwide and it is what draws the rest of you to our area. So, it should have come as no surprise that when the images of the conceptual design alternatives for the Red Barn showing a paved driveway running in front of the Barn and a parking lot for 70 vehicles were first projected on the big screen, it drew an audible gasp from the audience. Those same images should have been projected on a screen at every meeting of the PAWG until we voted to dismiss the idea so that the members from outside La Honda could have a graphic, visual understanding of why over 900 people in nearby communities signed a petition to protest development at the Red Barn. Without this visual reminder,

especially for those PAWG members who were not at those Midpen meetings in La Honda, the discussions about the Red Barn become dishearteningly academic and not about protecting beautiful and iconic landscapes.

Finally, the last session of the PAWG in which we voted on proposals to forward to the PNR was unnecessarily confusing and rushed, with some participants unclear as to exactly what was being voted on. We would all have benefited from taking an extra 10 minutes to have the proposals clearly restated before voting took place. To be clear, I was on the losing side, and I think I would still have been on the losing side even if everyone was clear on what they were voting for, but the process would have felt better and would have been more fair. Certainly the public would have felt that they understood what had happened and why. And, as I remind people from my days in government, it's not always about 'winning', sometimes it is about being heard and understood. I think we missed a little of that at the end of the process.

In any case, for me it was a very worthwhile process even though, as I say, I was on the 'losing' side in that a proposal for the Red Barn (even scaled down) remains in the mix. But I respect the process and, more importantly, I have an even greater respect now for the very important and quite difficult work that you all do. For that, you have my thanks, truly!

Sincerely,

Kathleen Moazed
La Honda, CA