

DAMON CONNOLLY

SUPERVISOR, DISTRICT 1

MARINWOOD PLAZA UPDATE

March 2015



Dear Neighbors,

Below is an informational update on the status of the Marinwood Plaza property. Moving forward, we will be providing periodic updates or “newsflashes” relevant to this issue as developments occur. **If you would like to continue to receive updates specific to Marinwood Plaza, please click [HERE to SUBSCRIBE](#).**

One of our first orders of business in taking office in January was to assess the current standing of the Marinwood Plaza project, and to start planning a community outreach process that will lead to a successful project founded on community support. We found there to be some uncertainty and conflicting or incomplete information around the current status of the project, so we’ve set about meeting with the property owners, BRIDGE Housing, and other key agencies and individuals in a fact-gathering mission in preparation for a larger community outreach process.

Below is some information on where the project stands today; the chemical remediation process currently underway; the issues related to local schools; and the county regulations that are relevant to any future project.

We are currently planning for a process that will provide information on potential projects and solicit community feedback about what a desired project would look like, so that we are ready to engage in a robust community planning process in the future. We will use this channel of communication to keep you updated on these efforts.

Our goal is to manage a process that learns from past experiences, and results in a project that fits within the community’s guidelines and is also viable and successful.

To stay up-to-date on this issue, please subscribe to future updates by clicking [HERE FOR FUTURE INFORMATION](#)

Damon

What Is the Current Status of the Marinwood Plaza Property?

The most recent proposal from BRIDGE Housing is inactive. The owners of Marinwood Plaza have amended their offer for sale, placing the entirety of the Plaza property (four parcels) on the market, versus only certain parcels as had been offered in previous offers for sale. Currently, the owners are seeking applicants to enter a contract for purchase to explore a new project, and will entertain all offers.

If the owners enter a contract with one of the applicants to establish a purchase agreement, the next step would be for the applicant to create and file a Master Plan Application with the County’s Community Development Agency, which would review the plan for completeness and compliance with county planning and zoning regulations, and advise them on any needed adjustments. **(Cont. on next page)**

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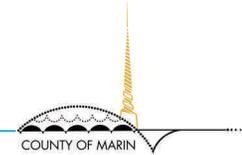
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What Is the Current Status of the Marinwood Plaza Property?

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Once the application is deemed complete, the next step will be environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which will likely entail preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR) for the project, including a public scoping session early in the process. Once the environmental review is complete, the Master Plan Application will go to the County Planning Commission for review and recommendation, and onto the Board of Supervisors for a final vote for approval. Any project will require a 'yes' vote from three out of the five County Supervisors.

Throughout this process we will be engaging the community at all levels. We can benefit from past experiences by working from the conclusions reached through previous planning processes and avoiding past mistakes.

It is crucial that the community process be inclusive and collaborative in order to achieve true community buy-in towards a successful project.

What Is the Status of the Remediation from the Former Dry-Cleaning Business?

In February 2014, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQCB) ordered the owner of the Marinwood Plaza site to complete an investigation of the extent of the contamination from the former dry cleaning business and to prepare a cleanup plan.

The property owners are currently engaged in this process using an independent, state-licensed engineering firm called Geologica. This process includes both on and off-site investigation and remediation. The CRWQCB reports significant progress in on-site remediation, but further testing of soil vapors is required to fully assess a long-term work plan. As for the off-site investigation, Geologica has already filed reports with the CRWQCB as part of an ongoing testing process to confirm definitively the total extent of the plume on the Silveira property before determining a long-term work plan.

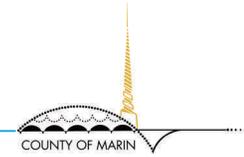
We are working to construct a timeline including all relevant documentation to navigate the history of this issue, which we will distribute in the future.

By the end of 2015 the owner is required to submit a "Final Action Plan" to the CRWQCB that maps out a plan from that point in time through the completion of remediation. Usually timelines for these processes are tied to the timing of development, but in this case the CRWQCB established a stand-alone timeline to ensure timely action by the property owners. Once a Final Action Plan is deemed acceptable by the CRWQCB, it will be put into action. The CRWQCB will ultimately be responsible for ensuring compliance with state regulations for the cleanup process.



These processes are advancing with the oversight and approval of the CRWQCB. The CRWQCB is keeping our office in the line of communication on all issues related to this matter, and we are closely tracking this process as it continues to proceed and develop.

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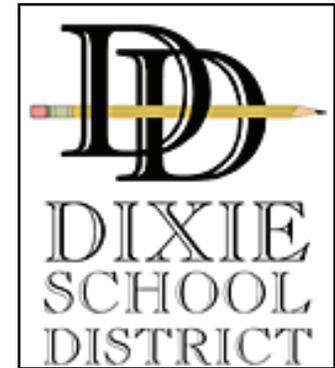


How Would New State Funding Formulas and New Housing Impact Dixie District Schools?

Like school districts across the state, Dixie School District is currently dealing with implementing a new funding system that has many moving parts. There are enough factors affecting this system to make increased student enrollment and changes in property tax base only pieces of a multi-dimensional determination.

It is also important to keep in mind that specific concerns around the details and outcomes related to the most recent BRIDGE proposal are no longer relevant, as this proposal is inactive. Any new proposal that comes forward will have different details which will have different effects on the issue of school funding.

Under the new state Local Controlled Funding Formula (LCFF), the state makes a funding level determination for every district based on a standard dollar figure per student by grade span (k-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-12), with bonuses for students that are English learners, low income or foster children.



Complicating this picture is that the state will not fully fund the entitlements laid out by the LCFF plan for another six years, or until 2020-21. The formula funds District entitlements with yearly increases towards the full entitlement, but with no guarantees that the state will fully implement the plan. That means that for now, the State is funding only a certain percentage of a District's funding levels, as determined by the new formula.

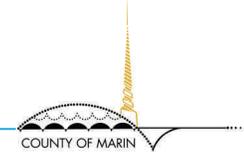
In past years, Dixie School District has come out of "Basic Aid" funding status. Basic Aid or "excess revenue" status means that local property taxes generated in the District exceed the District's funding levels as determined by the state. If the District is able to reach state designated funding levels without state funding, the state provides a small additional "basic aid" sum per student. Basic Aid status allows school funding to exceed state determined levels through the amount of excess property taxes. More recently Dixie School District has not been a Basic Aid District, and it is not projected to return to Basic Aid status in the foreseeable future. About 13% of California School Districts are Basic Aid.

Under the new LCFF funding formula, increased enrollment in any district results in a higher state funding level determination. While this increased enrollment means more funding from the state for districts that are **not** Basic Aid, it also places a greater gulf for **reaching** Basic Aid status for school districts like Dixie without additional property tax revenue. As a Basic Aid district there is only minimal additional funding for new students, so long as local property taxes exceed the State's funding determination. Increased enrollment without increased property taxes puts Dixie schools further away from Basic Aid status.



Regardless of funding scenarios or any new housing in the District, the Dixie School District will be forced to deal with consistently growing enrollment in the future. School districts across Marin County are experienced dramatic enrollment growth due to new families moving into the community. Dixie schools will have to critically assess their facilities in order to accommodate for current and future enrollment growth regardless of what happens at Marinwood Plaza.

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How Is Marinwood Plaza Zoned & What About AB 1537?

The Marinwood Plaza property is zoned as “Planned Commercial.” All areas zoned as Planned Commercial have a maximum density of 30 units per acre. There is a “Housing Overlay Designation” placed on the Marinwood Plaza site, which offers concessions for building a certain ratio of affordable housing. This overlay is part of the 2007 Countywide Plan.

AB1537 is a bill that reclassified Marin County’s default density to 20 units per acre. It does not affect the existing density in commercial and mixed use zoning districts. The Board of Supervisors took advantage of AB1537 by directing staff to rezone (to 20 units per acre) several sites that were previously rezoned to comply with Housing Element requirements in the last cycle. The Board’s action did not change the maximum density for Planned Commercial and other mixed use zones, which remain at 30 acres per unit, although this was considered. This is because many areas of the County rely on this ratio for neighborhood infill with smaller, low-impact housing. Marinwood Plaza’s maximum potential density of 30 units per acre is not affected by AB1537.

A larger factor is that AB1537 is temporary –this legislation only applies to the current housing element, unless the legislation is renewed by the state legislature years down the road. The Board wanted to avoid lowering default housing densities in general commercial and other mixed use areas only to raise them all years later if the legislation is not renewed.

What Does All of This Mean for the Future of Marinwood Plaza?

- **The most recent proposal from BRIDGE Housing** is inactive, and the property owners are currently considering new offers to enter a contract to establish a purchase agreement on the property.
- **Chemical remediation** is moving forward on several fronts with the oversight of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board—Supervisor Connolly’s office is monitoring developments and will continue to update community members as we approach a “Final Action Plan” by December 2015.
- **School funding** is a complicated issue, and the impact of any new project will depend on the new proposal from prospective new owner—however overcrowding is an issue that is already affecting Dixie School District regardless of Marinwood Plaza.
- **AB 1537** does not affect the Marinwood Plaza property, as it is zoned as “Planned Commercial” with a maximum density of 30 units per acre.

Be Sure to Sign Up for Future Updates Regarding Marinwood Plaza!

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Future information will be sent out through this dedicated channel, and we are relying on active engagement from the Marinwood Community for a successful public process. For immediate concerns or questions in regard to Marinwood Plaza, please contact **Chris Callaway**, Aide to Supervisor Connolly, who is staffed to this project via email at ccallaway@marincounty.org or at **(415) 473-7354**.