

**Dear Friends,**

As my second year in office as a Marin County Supervisor representing District 1 comes to a close, we remain hard at work on the issues facing our neighborhoods and community.

For regular updates on how we are working for you, please like my official County Facebook page by clicking here:

[www.facebook.com/SupConnolly](http://www.facebook.com/SupConnolly)

Damon



## Topics Addressed Below:

- Marinwood Plaza
- Medical Cannabis in Marin
- The Landlord Partnership Program
- Road and Trail Management Plan—RTMP
- Spotlight: McInnis Marsh Restoration
- Upcoming Local Office Hours
- San Rafael Village

## An Update on Marinwood Plaza – Demolition and Excavation Coming in October

The cleanup of toxins left behind by the former drycleaner at Marinwood Plaza is finally set to take a major step forward. In October, the entirety of the building aside from Marinwood Market will be demolished, and the soil below will be excavated thoroughly. Other than noise and some parking limitations, operations at Marinwood Market will not be affected.

This action has been many years in the making, and it is long overdue. Reports dating back to 2007 have shown concentrations of PCE, a commonly used dry-cleaning solvent, around the property. The standard approach of aligning cleanup with redevelopment of the property has resulted in unacceptable delays.

Demolition of the building will occur in October, and excavation of the contaminated soil will follow. The Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) has ordered that the Plaza owners must report back on completion of the work by February 1, 2017.

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## An Update on Marinwood Plaza – Demolition and Excavation Coming in October

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Demolition and excavation are the only means by which we can address the source of the contamination with certainty and finality, and thus fully eliminate the presence of toxins on the site that pose a threat to our neighborhoods and community.

The excavation will cover a **minimum** area of 25 feet by 30 feet, with a depth of 15 feet. Samples will be taken throughout the excavation to verify that all soil with levels of PCE above established cleanup standards is removed. If testing shows elevated levels beyond these planned dimensions for digging, the excavation area will be enlarged until cleanup standards are met.

There will be active, ongoing monitoring around the worksite for vapor levels of PCE to ensure that there is no exposure to the surrounding neighborhoods or the market and its shoppers.



*In February Sup. Connolly hosted a community meeting in Marinwood to review cleanup plans*

The Plaza owners are still working with the Regional Water Board and the Silveira family on a proposal regarding how to address contaminated groundwater that has migrated under the freeway to the Silveira Ranch, to the east of the Plaza. There have never been any groundwater issues to the west of the property towards the Marinwood neighborhood.

Marinwood Plaza has been one of my highest priorities throughout my time as your County Supervisor. For the past 21 months, I have been working to closely track the remediation process, facilitating maximum public engagement in that process, and advocating on behalf of the safety of my neighbors in the community.

Looking ahead, I will be doing everything that I can to achieve a successful transition of the property from a dilapidated shopping center – with a stellar market – into a valued part of the Marinwood community that fulfills the property’s great potential. Just as we’ve worked to build public input and engagement into the cleanup process, we must take the same approach to planning for a successful project at the Plaza.

We are well-positioned for a number of reasons, and can use the lessons of past experience to our benefit.

For example, we benefit from the “Marinwood Village Guiding Principles,” developed by the community in 2005-06, which lays out a vision for a mixed-use project featuring community serving retail, a public gathering space and housing with up to 50 percent affordability. We know that senior housing is a great and growing need in Marin County.

The Plaza owner is currently seeking out buyers. We remain in contact with the Plaza owners, and will continue to play an active role in working with the community towards a project that is a valuable addition to the neighborhood - and something we can all be proud of.

## Evaluating Applicants and Issuing Licenses for Medical Cannabis Dispensaries

The County of Marin will be issuing up to four business licenses for Medical Cannabis Dispensaries in the unincorporated areas of the county next year, with up to two in the Highway 101 corridor, and up to two in the Central/West Marin zone.

The County's Community Development Agency (CDA) is currently reviewing the 12 applications that were submitted, with nine locations in the 101 Corridor zone and three in the Central/West Marin zone. The 101 Corridor applications include three locations in the Black Point area near Novato, and five in the Tam Shoreline area. The Central/West Marin applications include two locations in San Geronimo Valley and one in Marshall.

The only application in District 1 is in Santa Venetia, at 70 San Pablo Avenue, across from Santa Venetia Market.

The review process is comprehensive and includes opportunities for public input before decisions are made. Here is an outline of the process, beginning with the current staff review phase:

- **Sept – Dec:** Staff Review of Applications for Completeness & Eligibility Requirements
- **Jan – Feb:** Public Hearings and Advisory Committee Review
- **Mar – Apr:** County Administrator's Office Review and Final Decisions

CDA has set up a dedicated webpage with information on this process, which you can explore by [clicking here](#). The webpage provides information about submitted applications, the selection criteria used in the process, links to the ordinance and other related documents, and will have the dates of public hearings. If you are interested, the best way to get information is to subscribe to this site and you will receive alerts when there is an update posted, which you can do by [clicking here](#).

If you have comments or questions on this application or process, including the proposed Santa Venetia site, submit them via phone or email to Inge Lundegaard at (415) 473 7023 or [ilundegaard@marincounty.org](mailto:ilundegaard@marincounty.org) so that they can become part of the official record and be taken into consideration.

Up to four licenses will be issued out of the 12 applications, and potentially fewer than four. Decisions will be made by the County Administrator's office, with the Board of Supervisors hearing appeals.

An overview of the applications that are under review can be found on the [Applications Under Review](#) page.

**Join Us on Oct. 5 as We Work to Preserve Affordable Housing in Marin**

*The below appeared as a "Marin Voice" column in the 9/25/2016 issue of the Marin IJ.*

In my role as County Supervisor, housing is both a long-term priority and a daily work item.

We have made progress following last year's series of Board of Supervisors' workshops – perhaps most notably in reframing the discussion around affordable housing on the county level. With a new focus on identifying strategies for preserving affordability and preventing displacement that are grounded in community support, we are moving forward and building consensus.

One of the key initiatives that emerged from the workshops was the Landlord Partnership Program, which our Board formally approved this summer. This innovative program aims to expand affordable housing opportunities by reworking our local approach to the Housing Choice Voucher Program in Marin, also known as Section 8.

In 2015, over 2,000 families and individuals used federally funded Section 8 vouchers to rent homes throughout Marin, bringing in over \$29 million dollars in rent payments. However, hundreds more were unable to find opportunities to use their vouchers in Marin. In fact, of the 192 new vouchers issued thus far this year, only 60 are being put to use due to lack of opportunities in the rental market.

After receiving many calls from constituents holding vouchers who were unable to find rental opportunities to use them, we partnered with the Marin Housing Authority and leaders from our local landlord community to examine this issue from a landlord perspective. We created the Landlord Partnership Program with their assistance and buy-in.

This new approach makes landlord participation in the Housing Choice Voucher program more attractive and feasible by addressing specific concerns that we heard during our outreach, and by making the entire program more streamlined.

While we frequently heard reservations from landlords around potential damage to units, we also learned that this is a non-issue in the vast majority of cases. The Landlord Partnership Program addresses this concern by offering a host of financial assurances that function as an insurance pool, including enhanced security deposit and coverage against further damage, as well as vacancy loss coverage. The program also includes incentives, such as access to special deferred, no-interest loans for unit upgrades of up to \$25,000 per unit.

We've also established a new "Landlord Liaison" staff position, complete with a 24-hour hotline that is dedicated to providing landlord assistance if needed. This new feature, which was specifically requested by landlords, is indicative of the broader, partnership-based approach that the Housing Authority is taking under the leadership of Director Lewis Jordan.

## Join Us on Oct. 5 as We Work to Preserve Affordable Housing in Marin

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I want to personally invite anyone with units for rent or who manages property in Marin to join me at an upcoming informational event on Oct. 5 from 12:00 -1:30 p.m. at the Osher Marin Jewish Community Center to learn more about the Landlord Partnership Program and how it can work for you. You can find more information on the event at [www.marinhousing.org](http://www.marinhousing.org).

More broadly, I am encouraged by the progress we have made in identifying housing strategies that are built on community consensus. The Landlord Partnership Program is a great start, but there is still much work to be done.

We remain committed to acquiring and preserving existing housing stock, which has proven effective. We are ready to amend our development code to promote junior accessory dwelling units as soon as state regulations are finalized. We will continue to lead and build consensus among landlords and property managers, tenant advocates, and all stakeholder towards voluntary rent guidelines. Moreover, our Board will take up “source of income” discrimination in rental housing during the coming weeks.

I look forward to maintaining focus on achieving the goals of preserving housing affordability and preventing displacement through strategies that are built on community support.

### Road and Trail Management Plan – Region 3

We are currently in the public comment phase of the Road and Trail Management Plan (RTMP) process for “Region 3,” which includes the Lucas Valley, Ignacio Valley, Pacheco Valle, Indian Valley and Loma Verde open space preserves. The RTMP is a trail designation process that relies on both a science-based approach and public input from all user groups. Trail designations aim to achieve two goals: reducing environmental impacts and enhancing recreational experiences.

I participated in a large community meeting hosted by County Parks and Open Space on August 21 to review draft trail designation plans. The meeting provided details on the process while seeking feedback on draft plans.

While the public comment phase is open until October 16, it’s important to bear in mind that this is the beginning of an ongoing process. County Parks and Open Space is committed to continuing to collaborate with all user groups to identify new opportunities for good trails that focus on connectivity and environmental stewardship beyond the current draft proposal. Further information is available online at the [County Parks and Open Space website](http://www.countyparksandopenspace.org). For questions or comments, please contact Jon Campo at [jcampo@marincounty.org](mailto:jcampo@marincounty.org).



*Sup. Connolly and County Parks Supt. Jon Campo evaluating trails in Region 3*

### Spotlight: McInnis Marsh Restoration

McInnis Marsh is a 180-acre wetland located east of McInnis Park between Miller and Gallinas Creeks. The buildup of levee systems over the years to protect various properties has separated a formerly intertwined system of distributary channels that kept the wetlands hydrologically connected.

We are working on a multi-benefit project to restore this valuable piece of our habitat to support unique and threatened native species, increase public access and recreational opportunities in the wetlands, and build up natural flood protection in the area.

Marin County Parks is working to initiate this project in partnership with the Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District and the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, working with potential funding partners including the US Army Corps of Engineers. We are also pursuing grant funding from the California State Coastal Conservancy, where our application has scored highly. I've met with the Army Corps both in San Francisco and Washington DC, and there is real excitement for a potential project that could take advantage of federal and regional funding to enhance and protect this valuable natural resource.



*McInnis Marsh*

### Upcoming Local Office Hours – Tuesday, Oct. 11, Andy's Local Market in Sun Valley

I continue to host an ongoing series of "Local Office Hours" throughout the district on the weekends and evenings, providing an opportunity for people who might not otherwise have the time to meet and discuss county or neighborhood issues, or connect with me regarding anything on their mind. Our next office hours will be on **Tuesday, October 11 from 5-7PM at Andy's Local Market in Sun Valley**. I hope to see you there!



*Neighbors gathered for local office hours at Andy's Local Market in Sun Valley*

### An Invitation from San Rafael Village

Marin Villages is a Marin non-profit organization whose goal is to help seniors remain independent and age securely and happily in their own homes and communities. Members and volunteers join together to enjoy social events, lectures, classes, hikes and more, keeping bodies active and minds stimulated. In addition, volunteers help members with transportation, pets, computers, and simple household repairs. Please join San Rafael Mayor Gary Phillips to learn more about San Rafael Village, and how you can participate this Thursday, October 20 from 5-7PM at San Rafael City Hall. Light refreshments will be available. For more information please visit [www.marinvillages.org](http://www.marinvillages.org) or call (415) 457-4633.

District 1 Newsletter

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*Dedicating the new Marinwood Community Emergency Response Team, or CERT Trailer*



*Enjoying Sol Food with the #RideWithDamon challenge winner Larry Bauer of Novato*



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