

**MARIN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**October 20, 2003**  
**Marin County Civic Center, Room #328 - San Rafael, California**

*Commissioners Present:* Ross Herbertson, Chair  
Ray Buddie  
Hank Barner  
Don Dickenson  
Jo Julin  
Steve Thompson  
Allan Berland

*Commissioners Absent:*

*Staff Present:* Alex Hinds, Agency Director  
Brian C. Crawford, Deputy Director of Planning Services  
Dan Dawson, Senior Planner  
Jessica Woods, Recording Secretary

Minutes Approved on: *November 3, 2003*

Convened at 2:14 p.m.  
Adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

1. WORKSHOP: Planning Commission workshop on hearing procedures and protocol.

2. ROUTINE TRANSACTIONS

a. M/s Barner/Berland, and passed unanimously of those present, to incorporate Staff Reports into the Minutes. Motion passed 6/0 (Commissioner Buddie not present).

b. Continuances- None

3. COMMUNICATIONS

The Commission acknowledged correspondence from the Marin County Parks and Open Space Cultural Resources.

4. OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION (LIMITED TO THREE MINUTES PER SPEAKER)

None.

5. DIRECTOR'S ORAL REPORT – COUNTYWIDE PLAN UPDATE

Staff presentation on the draft Economic Element of the Countywide Plan Update. The Economic Element is a component of the pending Countywide Plan update; it contains goals, policies and programs in the following general areas: promoting the local economy, the local institutional framework to support economic development, the availability of housing and employment for the county's work force and residential labor force, and the relationship between the county's transportation system and economy. A decision regarding adoption of this element will not be made at this meeting.

Alex Hinds, Agency Director, indicated that they are working on specific elements of the Countywide Plan that staff proposed be adopted separately and then summarized in the Countywide Plan. He added that the Marin Economic Commission has been working on an Economic Element to the Plan and are present to provide input to the Commission. He indicated that this meeting is not to take any formal action or make recommendations, but a workshop. He further explained that the Planning Commission and the Economic Commission has the responsibility to make recommendations to the Board, which staff would provide after the public hearings.

Dan Dawson, AICP, Senior Planner, summarized the staff report and explained that the Economic Element is one component of the Countywide Plan, which is an optional element under State law. He noted that staff worked with the Marin Economic Committee (MEC) and a consultant to establish a plan that is achievable without being overly ambitious. He also pointed out that the Economic Element is broken into several sections starting with a consideration of economic goals and polices, describing existing economic conditions and trends in the County as well as identification of key issues. He then explained that there are four Goals included in the Economic Element that were identified as follows:

1. A Vibrant Economy- Promote a vibrant, diverse, and sustainable local economy by pursuing policies that balance economic, environmental, and social equity needs of the County.
2. Institutional Support for Economic Viability – Assure the presence of an institutional framework in Marin County to support economic development.
3. Housing for a Vibrant Economy- Assure the availability of housing for Marin Country's workforce and the availability of employment for Marin County's resident labor force.
4. Transportation for a Vibrant Economy – Provide a transportation system that supports economic viability by assuring the reliable movement of workers and goods throughout the County.

Mr. Dawson announced to the Commission that an awards luncheon would be held on Friday, October 31, 2003, to recognize leaders in the community for providing workforce housing and environmentally sound practices.

The hearing was opened to public testimony.

Katie Crecelius emphasized the need to link the economy with transportation and affordable housing.

Virginia Brunini, Marin Economic Commission Chair, stated that they have serious economic concerns for the progress and future of the County. She added that the County must carefully review what is occurring and she hoped the Commission would review and appreciate their recommendations.

Charles McGlashan, Marin Economic Commission Vice Chair, pointed out that if the County desired infill housing then the County must provide a transit system. He believed business retention is a key issue and if they targeted businesses, they could remain and grow within the community. He stated that they must encourage and appreciate businesses that serve local community needs in order to avoid traffic congestion. He explained that good targeting and careful identification would be helpful to the viability of the County. He discussed the concept of shrinking the economic footprint by buying products locally in order to decrease the environmental impact and the idea of inside County recycling is good. He also indicated that by working hard and smart they could try to support more companies that are desired within the community. He suggested using a "buy local" concept in order to grow the local services and products needed in the County. He further agreed with the idea of streamlining the permitting process and believed that would be a great move in order for desired businesses to thrive in the community.

Clark Blasdell, Marin Economic Commission member, represented Major Employers Council in Marin/Sonoma, desired to ensure that some policies could be expanded and to create new facilities. He noted that MEC worked diligently to establish the overall policies. He further believed this Economic Element would allow the quality of life for many individuals to be better sooner.

The hearing was closed to public testimony.

Commissioner Dickenson desired to know the reasons for businesses relocating out of Marin County. He pointed out that they must determine the priorities for employment, housing and environmental protection. He also was unclear as to the definition of "protection from residential uses." He indicated that the threat to agricultural land is different and should be addressed. He also believed an analysis of housing and cost of housing for agricultural workers should be conducted in order to meet their needs and determine the appropriate location. He also felt the Economic Element policies would increase jobs, which would make the housing situation worse. He also stated that transit must be in close proximity to schools and childcare. He further noted that the Economic Element should make reference to other considerations, not just the desire to provide workforce housing.

Commissioner Barner appreciated the developed document that raised several questions. He believed water would control development in Marin County. He discussed the employment rate and felt they should decide how much time and energy is spent on such issues that they have no control over. He pointed out that farm families and seasonal workers in terms of agricultural should be included. He also explained that they must determine where individuals are living and establish specific transportation to meet their needs such as shuttles. He also believed that consideration should be given to Skaggs Island. He further indicated that they must appreciate the businesses that currently exist in the community.

Commissioner Buddie believed an analysis of public finance is missing from the document as well as how to measure those funds in a meaningful manner. He felt they must determine the sources of County revenue in order to start making some qualitative decisions in terms of sales tax or hotel tax. He pointed out that the goal should be economic health for the County measured in terms of what are good useful businesses for the County on County land. He discussed commercial and industrial usage and felt they should encourage

the appropriate types of uses through floor area ratio exemptions, or different configurations to make maximum use of the industrial areas that currently exist.

Mr. Hinds pointed out that there is an opportunity to establish ideas as to what works and adjust accordingly.

Commissioner Berland stated that attracting new businesses in order to increase the economy is counter productive in his view because it would only exacerbate the existing traffic and housing problems. He would encourage the small businesses that provide what is desired locally. He also believed that further economic development should be focused on attempting to remedy the commuter imbalance. He stated that since Marin is such a desirable place to live, and the supply of housing is limited, affordability will always be a problem. Providing affordable housing should be the primary goal and he suggested identifying available sites that could be developed for affordable housing.

Commissioner Thompson noted that there are several constraints traveling around Marin County and felt individuals should have choices. He also agreed with a sustainable slow growth of housing in Marin, but expressed concern for the term "sustainability."

Commissioner Buddie requested additional information regarding the ecological footprint of the County.

Chair Herbertson thanked the MEC for their work with the Economic Element and believed Marin County is a very unique place to live and work. Mr. Hinds added that there is a lot of progressive recommendations included in the report and felt the MEC did a wonderful job. The Commission concurred.

Mr. Dawson pointed out that the Economic Element of 1994 focused toward the fiscal impacts and there was a conscious effort with this document to review the broader impacts and not focus on government revenues and expenditures.

Chair Herbertson recommended to staff that when they provide graphs or tables that the data points be in a ten-year period in order to better understand the material. Mr. Hinds agreed.

## 6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M/s Berland/Julin, and passed unanimously, to approve the June 16, 2003 Minutes as amended. Motion passed 7/0.

M/s Barner/Julin, to approve the July 28, 2003 Minutes as amended. Motion passed 6/0/1 (Commissioner Herbertson abstained).

M/s Thompson/Julin, to approve the September 8, 2003 Minutes as amended. Motion passed 6/0/1 (Commissioner Herbertson abstained and Commissioner Thompson abstained for Item #5 – Najarian Appeal of the Community Development Agency's approval of the Youssefirad Design Review.).

M/s Barner/Julin, to approve the September 22, 2003 Minutes as amended. Motion passed 6/0/1 (Commissioner Herbertson abstained).

M/s Julin/Thompson, to approve the October 6, 2003 Minutes as amended. Motion passed 6/0/1 (Commissioner Berland abstained).

7. UPDATE ON BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ACTIONS

October 14, 2003: Hicks Mountain Ranch Master Plan/Precise Development Plan/Negative Declaration of Environmental Impact approved; Qualls Costal Permit/Design Review appeal of Planning Commission's action denied

October 28, 2003: Raabe Design Review Appeal (Kentfield) granted with modifications to the project; Inclusionary Housing Ordinance adopted; Code Enforcement options; Wood Smoke Ordinance adopted

November 25, 2003: Tobias Variance Appeal (Lucas Valley); San Quentin Vision Plan

8. FUTURE AGENDA DISCUSSION ITEMS, FIELD TRIPS

November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2003

San Quentin Vision Plan Presentation (Tentatively Scheduled)

Marin City Church of God Rezoning/Subdivision (Marin City)

Cascade Canyon White Hill Open Space Draft EIR

November 17, 2003

Oak View Master Plan/Tentative Map (Lucas Valley)

December 8, 2003

Countywide Plan Update presentation

St. Vincent's Notice of Violation for unauthorized grading

Ricardo/Fitzgerald Design Review/Certificate of Compliance (San Rafael)

Staff and the Commission discussed the need for a special meeting(s) in January or February to discuss the Countywide Plan update, with the Commission agreeing to meet Tuesday evenings.