

August 20, 2019

Michelle Levenson, Senior Planner  
Marin County Planning Dept.  
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 308  
San Rafael, CA 94903

**Re: Marinwood Maintenance Facility Replacement Project**

Dear Ms. Levenson,

Since formation in 1960, Marinwood Community Services District (District) has provided and maintained community parks, open space and recreational facilities for the enjoyment and needs of our residents. In no small manner, these efforts helped form the identity of Marinwood-Lucas Valley and are widely regarded as highly utilized and valued community assets. As such, the District has maintained a park and facility maintenance crew responsible for the vast majority of general maintenance and repairs of the aforementioned facilities, including our community center, community pool complex, playgrounds and all associated equipment.

In 1965, the District constructed the current maintenance facility still used to this day. As the years have progressed the maintenance facility has severely deteriorated, rendering the facility practically unusable, and must be replaced. In order to continue their high standard of park beautification, maintenance and numerous other functions for the benefit of the community, our maintenance staff need access to a safe, conveniently located maintenance facility. Beyond a modern workshop, the facility must also store critical supplies and frequently used heavy equipment such as riding mowers, a tractor, utility vehicles, a park maintenance truck and a dump trailer. The included "needs assessment" document provides an overview of the identified requirements for this facility.

Significant time and thought have gone into identifying the best possible location for the replacement park maintenance facility being presented for your consideration. This included a search of both District-owned and privately-owned properties as potential locations. Privately-owned properties were ruled out of consideration due both to proximity needs as well as cost. It was determined that District-owned property was the only feasible option.

However, the majority of our Marinwood Park parcel (APN 164-260-35), which also houses our community center, community pool complex and fire station, falls within the County-declared Stream Conservation Area (SCA) established in 2007. In fact, the only potentially feasible areas of this 16-acre parcel entirely outside of the SCA include two large turf fields currently utilized for various community events and our popular summer camp programs which serve over 500 youth each day. Placing a maintenance facility in these locations would cause a severe negative impact to these programs and activities resulting in an inability to serve the current number of families dependent on our services which have helped define our community. As such, it was concluded the most appropriate and feasible



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location to be in the same general area where the current facility has existed for the past 50-plus years.

Recognizing the current area is in close proximity to Miller Creek – the current facility sits immediately on the banks of Miler Creek – a significant concern to the District was limiting to the degree possible any current and potential impacts on the surrounding environment. The District enlisted the services of certified biologists and archeologists to conduct respective biological and cultural assessments. These studies have been included in our application package for your reference and formed the foundation of our Initial Study and subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring Plan (also included) as adopted by our publicly-elected Board of Directors. Of significant note within the biological assessment report:

*The current building configuration diminishes the habitat functions and values of the riparian corridor along Miller Creek. Removal and replacement of the facility away from the top of bank would greatly improve the habitat values on the site, reduce the potential for pollutants and debris to enter Miller Creek, and buffer fish and wildlife populations from human disturbance. (Page 16, Paragraph 2)*

It was with the information gained in our initial planning and independent studies research that we began the process of facility design concepts. Beyond the goals of placing the facility as far back from the creek and outside of the SCA as possible while still incorporating the functional needs required, general aesthetics and flow were also of significant concern to the District.

The current facility layout forces passersby to walk along a narrow pathway directly in between the deteriorating workshop and a modular office building. Additionally, a large section of land immediately outside the facility is needed for the temporary storage of debris, holding bins of often used landscaping materials and parking for district maintenance vehicles and equipment. Engaging the services and vision of a professional architect, who also happens to live in the Marinwood community, the proposed facility combines these multiple structures and other surrounding land uses into one streamlined and fully contained facility while also occupying a smaller overall use footprint.

The proposed site plan concept also involves restoring the creekbank occupied by the current facility with native vegetation and beautifying the other immediate areas to create a more pleasing and natural experience for all to enjoy. This was the prime factor considered in incorporating side entrances for easy ingress and egress of the facility from the existing access road, as opposed to typical garage-style entrance doors on the southern face of the structure which would have caused vehicles to require a larger area to enter and exit the facility, thus negating efforts to maintain a park-like feel of the surrounding area to the extent possible.

The planning and design processes have also included extensive public outreach and involvement. Over the course of almost three years, the park maintenance

facility replacement project has been discussed at no fewer than 30 public meetings of our Board of Directors and/or Park and Recreation Commission, typically accompanied by detailed staff reports included in the agenda packets. These public engagement efforts include but are not limited to an initial community planning workshop, several progress and status updates, noticed public hearings and at least three visual presentations led by the project architect showing detailed concept illustrations and follow-up Q&A opportunities. Furthermore, a webpage specific to this initiative (<http://marinwood.org/park-maintenance-facility-replacement>) was created on our website in an effort to keep the broader public as informed and engaged as possible.

It was through this invaluable public engagement and feedback that many design modifications occurred, resulting in the Marinwood CSD Board of Directors approval of the project proposal now being presented to the planning department.

In closing, we believe your analysis of this proposal will lead you to the same conclusions we have reached. In short, this project as proposed represents clear and substantial improvements not only to our operational needs and working conditions, but also to the surrounding biologic and aesthetic environments, resulting in a finished project the District and community can be proud of for the foreseeable future.

On behalf of Marinwood CSD's Board of Directors as well as our staff, please accept our sincere appreciation for your thoughtful review and consideration of the much needed and long overdue Marinwood Park Maintenance Facility Replacement Project.

Sincerely,

Eric Dreikosen  
District Manager  
Marinwood CSD