

February 21, 2013

Attention: Marin County Board of Supervisors

Dear Supervisors Susan Adams, Katie Rice, Kate Sears, Steve Kinsey, and Judy Arnold:

The Bolinas Community Land Trust (BCLT) and the Community Land Trust of West Marin (CLAM) would like to jointly take this opportunity to comment on the LCP planners' staff report and recommendations for the LCPA. As advocates and providers of affordable housing, we would first like to thank the LCP planning staff for working with us so diligently during this process. It is clear that we both want this outcome: removal of excessive barriers and reduction of costs to encourage homeowners to build second units as a source of affordable housing. To this end, the County should implement State Second-Unit Law AB1866, thus removing barriers and increasing affordability in the permitting process. We submit that in order to rent affordably, one must be able to build affordably.

Our comments for this LCPA meeting are as follows:

We urge the Board of Supervisors to adopt the LCP Staff's request for direction to include language for Administrative Appeals for inclusion in the LCPA before the LCPA goes to Coastal Commission. State law directs local governments to omit public hearings for both the application and the appeal.

We also respectfully request that the Board of Supervisors read this paragraph from State Law AB1866, as it clarifies our position, before the February 26, 2013 hearing:

"Does Second-Unit Law Apply to Localities in the Coastal Zone?"

Yes. The California Coastal Act was enacted to preserve our natural coastal resources for existing and future Californians. While second-units utilize existing built areas and usually have minimal environmental impact, the need for second-units should be balanced against the need to preserve our unique coastal resources. For these reasons, second-unit law shall not supersede, alter or lessen the effect or application of the California Coastal Act (Division 20 of the Public Resources Code), except that local governments shall not be required to hold public hearings for coastal development permit (CDP) applications for second-units (Government Code 65852.2(j)). As stated in correspondence, dated January 13, 2003 from the California Coastal Commission to all coastal communities, local governments in the coastal zone should amend their Local Coastal Program (LCP) to not require a public hearing in the consideration of second-unit applications. Further, local appeals should be handled in an administrative manner."

We have researched AB1866, analyzed Marin County's recommendations for second units in the Housing Element, met with County planners to discuss our shared goals,

attended numerous workshops and hearings, and worked closely with the County housing and LCP planners to advocate for:

- Consistency in language between Planning, Code, and LCPA documents
- Removing requirements which increase costs and don't serve the public well
- Simplifying the review and permitting process

We are grateful for the County's attention to these important matters and would also like to thank the Board of Supervisors for removing the second-unit prohibition in Bolinas. We have a chronic and serious shortage of affordable housing in West Marin, and some LCP policies and the Bolinas prohibition have exacerbated this shortage.

Workers in agriculture, retail, food service, guest accommodations, entertainment, health care, firefighting, teaching, and other public services provide necessary functions in our communities. Yet, the income of these workers requires them either to live locally in sometimes grossly substandard conditions, or to endure long commutes from more affordable communities. The former is degrading and unhealthy; the latter is personally stressful and environmentally destructive. Both reduce quality of life and societal and economic sustainability. Over the years, the affordability gap has become progressively wider, since the rise in real-estate prices has far outstripped the rise in wages.

A community's vitality and sustainability require sufficient affordable housing for its workforce and residents. Visitors to the Coast depend on the services, amenities and entertainment provided by local workers. These community qualities directly enhance the experience of visitors to the Coast, which in turn enhances the economic viability of our small communities. Now is the time to address the affordable housing shortage through the LCPA.

In closing, we deeply appreciate your attention to this matter and urge you to recommend that staff adopts this amendment to LCPA.

Sincerely,

Steve Matson, Board President, the Bolinas Community Land Trust (BCLT)
Maureen Cornelia, Board President, the Community Land Trust of West Marin (CLAM)
Don Smith, Bolinas Affordable Housing Advocate

cc:

Brian Crawford, Director, Marin Community Development Agency
Jack Liebster, Principle LCP Planner
Leelee Thomas, Marin County Affordable Housing Planner
Lesa Kramer, BLCT Executive Director - Contact: 415-868-8880
Kim Thompson, CLAM Executive Director – Contact: 415-663-1005