

Drumm, Kristin

From: IConlan@aol.com
Sent: Monday, October 01, 2012 11:55 PM
To: Drumm, Kristin
Cc: conlanranches@live.com
Subject: Ltr BOS for Oct 2, hearing.

Kristin, Will appreciate your submittal of this letter of protest to our Marin County Board of Supervisors, prior to the hearing October 2, 2012. Thank you for your courtesy and attention, as always. lone

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October 1, 2012

The Marin County Board of Supervisors

Via e-mail c/o Kristin Drumm: kdrumm@marincounty.org

Re: Local Coastal Program: October 2nd hearing

Dear President Kinsey and members of the Board of Supervisors:

Let us begin with the premise, that we all have spent enormous time and effort in good faith, without malice toward anyone's point of view, in compiling a group of well meaning regulations to preserve our beloved Marin County Coastline, protect our waters, our lands, and your own constituencies.

Staff has been most accommodating and collegial, and greatly appreciated.

We all understand that these well meaning proposed regulations will irreparably affect the lives of many of your constituents for their lifetimes, as well as their successors in interest.

The issue here today, as I see it, at this October 2, 2012 hearing, is that agriculture in Marin County will ultimately become non-existent, because these regulations concerning farm and ranch lands, have been formulated in good faith by individuals, who however, have no

knowledge or experience in farming and ranching. Thus we have regulations that will destroy our family farms in West Marin County.

What is disquieting, is that those of us who have been on the land for many years, born and reared in California, on farms/ranches which have been in our families, **with great personal sacrifice,** continually in agriculture for over 145 years are ignored and dismissed in favor of newcomers who would impose their notions of values on our existing communities.

We *“Native sons & daughters of the Golden West”* suddenly find ourselves controlled and dictated to, mandated on how we should live and manage our lives and farms/ranches by those who have been attracted to Marin County by the beauty of the lands **we have preserved, for which they now take credit.**

These newcomers to Marin County and California, have acquired the power of political status and are eager to push us around and usurp our ability to make a living and deny us the Constitutional right to continue our lawful way of life, which harms neither the environment nor others.

It is we who have continued to preserve our lands and conserved water for future generations...all of these LCP proposals well meaning of course, are designed and **formulated without a scintilla of knowledge of farming and ranching operations.**

Yet these proposals, claim *“superior knowledge...know best”* and with political position imposes upon us, the farmers and ranchers, who have been working the land, preserving it in agriculture for years.....**find these well meaning good folks, have the power to destroy farms and ranches in Marin County based on their uninformed intelligence.**

Worthy of repeating, as one of your well meaning appointed Planning Commissioner stated, *“farmers don’t have to live on the land...I know many who don’t”*..... (Commissioner Greenberg)

We know of some too. (All public record) They live in NYC, Malibu, Piedmont, Tiburon, Palm Springs, Palm Beach, and many other areas, and collect mail box income, including government farm subsidies, financed by taxpayers.

The West Marin farming and ranching community does not fall into that category.

We must be physically present daily 24/7, to put up the chickens, ducks, turkeys for the night, so that they are not ravaged and painfully torn to shreds, killed by predators; water our livestock twice a day; daily ride the farm/ranch to check on livestock to help pull a birthing calf, rotate our cattle to preserve pastures, check fences and nightly lock our gates and be physically present on our lands for security to deter pilfering and cattle disappearance-- we are busy sunup to sundown. We barely can take the time to represent ourselves today, before our Board of Supervisors, while our farm/ranch chores await us.

We do not have the luxury of cell phone service, because towers are not permitted or allowed in our areas, so if power or telephone land lines are out of service by pole or wire disturbance, we have no ability to call for emergency health and safety services.

There is something terribly wrong with this picture. And we ask our Supervisors to correct this health, welfare, and safety issue.

Your appointed Planning Commissioners, did not consult with farmers and ranchers, and ignored many complaints and suggestions of farmers/ranchers, which are frequently dismissed with a wave of the hand, *“those farmers (out in West Marin) didn't ask for generational housing for thirty years, so why do they need them now”* (Commissioner Holland)

I ask this Board to place this communication on file as my public documented notice, that I, a West Marin farmer/rancher object to the regulations which have been incorporated in the presented LCP without adequate consultation by stakeholder farmers/ranchers providing input to the Marin County Planning Commissioners, who have ignored reasonable suggestions.

OBJECTIONS:

1 C-BIO-2 ESHA Protection Page 6, Oct 2, 2012 BOS Attachment #1 Executive Summary of Key Issues

“3. Avoid fences, roads, structures that significantly inhibit wildlife movement, especially access to water”

This kind of language is more appropriate for open space and state and federal park systems, not farm/ranch agriculture. Fencing on private farms and ranches are built and designed at great expense to keep our livestock and especially our bulls within our farm/ranch perimeters for public safety reasons, so as not to allow livestock to enter into the county roads and harm the public. (And for which each farmer/rancher is held strictly liable in the event of an accident to passing vehicles, pedestrians and bike riders.)

2. Ongoing Agricultural Activities should not require a permit.

This includes, but is not limited to, brush clearing; crop rotation; pasture rotation; pond & reservoir cleanout maintenance, plowing, no-till, aerating, ring rolling, disking, seeding, grading, fertilizing; fence post digging; fence remove and replace; tree (ever green, apple & stone fruit) planting; crop, vine (vineyard); orchard planting; harvesting; irrigation, mainline and surface pipelines, risers, remove and replace pumps & water systems, installation of filter units, tanks and drip tape; ranch road repairs and maintenance; culvert replacements; road grading (blacktop and bedrock placement); type and number of livestock and small domestic farm animals, tree trimming; fire hazard foliage & cleanup; repairs and

maintenance of corrals, farm shops, tack sheds, large and small animal and poultry shelters; and all similar and customary farm/ranch activities.

Formal Objection “*permits required for development*” should not include any of the above usual and customary farming/ranching maintenance activities as well as a landowner’s management and financial decisions to change increase or decrease farm animals, crops, convert to orchard or evergreen forest planting.

Nor should farmer be required to obtain a permit to plant berries, grapevines, pumpkins, apples or any other agricultural commodity

That is akin to requiring an architect or lawyer to obtain an additional extra specific county permit for designing a church or writing a real estate deed, respectively. (Obviously inherent in their licensed profession)

Formal Objection I expressly object to the Planning Commission’s permitted status removal of the Bed and Breakfast which was allowed since the mid 1980’s by the CCC

I expressly object to merging of parcels, clustering of farm/ranch buildings, restrictions on cumulative square feet of total structures, extracting easements as a condition of permit, trails through farm/ranch lands, tours restricted to non-profits, size of farm stands, and processing facilities, denial of cottage industries.

And the most outrageous restriction of all, if after expensive permits and delays, the farmer/rancher is allowed to build a home, it is required that such home building must not be placed in the view shed of a passing vehicle on a county road so as not to offend the view of a person passing by, en route to point B from point A. What kind of nonsense is this? May I object to the placement of your home on your lot, in your community which may impair my view of the church steeple?

What have we allowed ourselves to become here? Whose tail is wagging the dog? Is this our *out of state rule maker* designing our lives to their values? Has a farmhouse on a private farm become offensive?

Formal Objection to the conclusion stated on page 3, Oct 2, 2012 BOS Attachment #1

Executive Summary of Key Issues:

“The LCPA adds size limits on the farmhouse and the intergenerational housing which will help protect Marin’s agricultural land from the pressure to convert to large rural estate developments”

(Emphasis mine)

This is an offensive outrageous conclusion. Unreasonable farm housing size limitations may destroy agriculture, because it discourages generational living and additional housing.

Formal Objection to personal views of authors of regulations and proponents that would preclude “large rural developments” (whatever that means to them)

What has taken place in our fine Marin County, that we have allowed out of state imports, & appointed Planning Commissioners to decide the size of our farm kitchens and bedrooms “size limits on farmhouse”

Please note, we have preserved our farms and ranches (some for 150 years) long before these out of state imports came into Marin County. Have they been successful in blowing George Lucas of Skywalker Ranch out of the County, and now seek to destroy family farms, which have been in existence long before they even thought about relocating to California and Marin County?

What’s going on here? What is the problem with intergeneration families living in one large home? Why can not the home be large enough to accommodate grandmother and grandfather, son or daughter, and their young children?

That has been traditional living on farms for many generations, and has been common in Europe for centuries. Why shouldn't family members working outside the farm live in the family farm complex?

Who are these governmental employees and appointed & elected officials who are attempting to “socially engineer” how we should live, solely by restricting the size of our homes, who should live with us, and their occupations?

Note presently, the intergenerational housing plan may only be provided to a family member who is actively engaged in the farming operation, so that if son is a fireman, or works at the local bank not allowed!

Oh, and add to that the unconstitutional taking of requiring a conservation easement as a condition of “land division” and permitting.

What is going on here?

Commissioner Greenberg stated, “*I don’t want Marin County to become another Napa*”. Are we to stand idly by, while an appointed Planning Commissioner **unilaterally** determines how a County may develop in the future?

I ask this Board to consider carefully the awful and unreasonable restrictions which have been placed upon our family farms/ranches, in this LCP

The farmers/ranchers in West Marin are not factory farms. We are small individual family farms, most generational farms, such as ours. We are Certified Organic, Grass Fed, Animal

Welfare Approved, and we have preserved land and water over the generations for over 145 years.

We object to pompous ill informed third parties (many out of state imports) who claim a greater concern than we for our own lands.

We urge this Board to review the agricultural restrictions, form a committee of qualified farmers & ranchers for consultation, and remove the objectionable portions of this document relating to agriculture.

We farmers/ranchers have the same goals as the myriad of "Environmental" Organizations who protest our right to farm, only we are hands on and have already preserved the lands.

We are not weekend invasive species weed pullers and bird watchers, we perform such daily, we are passing by stewards of our lands, with the goal of leaving our lands even more beautiful than when we assumed stewardship.

We do this, all the while preserving land and water for future generations and we will not allow our right to make a living, to be so flippantly dismissed by well meaning third parties who have no knowledge of what they speak.

Ione Conlan

PS I support and agree with the protests and proposals of the **Marin County Farm Bureau**, on which I serve as a Director with my fellow family farmers. I am also a Director on the Board of the **California Beef Cattle Improvement Association**, CBCIA, the education arm of the California Cattlemen's Association, as well as memberships in many other organizations, including a **Lifetime Membership in the Sierra Club**, since the 1980's.

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