



MARIN COUNTY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
ALEX HINDS, DIRECTOR

July 19, 2004

Marin County Planning Commission
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, California 94903

SUBJECT: Public Hearing on the Draft Marin Countywide Plan, *Built Environment* Element

Dear Planning Commission Members:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Review the administrative record and conduct a public hearing
2. Continue the public hearing to Monday, July 26, 2004, at 5:00 P.M.

DISCUSSION

Background

This meeting is the seventeenth public hearing on the draft Marin Countywide Plan, and the ninth for the Built Environment Element in which your Commission is receiving public input and providing staff initial direction to assist in further defining the “project description” of the Plan for environmental review purposes.

Today’s hearing will be on the *Planning Areas* section of the Built Environment Element and specifically focus on St. Vincent’s/Silveira, San Quentin, and Planning Area 7 (West Marin).

Continued Discussion on Planning Areas and Land Use Maps

At last Monday’s meeting the Commission discussed the St. Vincent’s and Silveira properties. Today’s discussion will conclude the St. Vincent’s/Silveira policy direction and then focus on San Quentin and the West Marin planning area.

San Quentin

The San Quentin State Prison property was the subject of an 18-month planning process which culminated in the preparation of the San Quentin Vision Plan. The Vision Plan contains a series of policy recommendations to guide future reuse of the site. The recommendations are based on the deliberations of the planning committee as well as the outcome of a community workshop in which the concept of a mixed-use, transit-oriented, European-style community surrounded by open space received strong support.

Key elements of the Vision Plan include a transit hub served by ferry, SMART rail, and buses; a central plaza for community interaction and events; shoreline access and views; preservation and reuse of historic structures; higher-density mixed-use at the village core with decreasing height and intensity going away from the core; pedestrian-friendly design; a mixture of housing types including exceeding affordable housing requirements; supporting retail and personal services; green building and renewable energy use; cultural arts and performance facilities; and a commitment to not exceed specified baseline impacts pertaining to environmental, traffic congestion, and resource consumption.

The Vision Plan serves as the foundation for future planning discussions that would result in the preparation of a Specific Plan in the event that the State of California decides to close the prison. Specific land use densities and intensities would be determined as part of the Specific Plan process. The Countywide Plan incorporates the Vision Plan recommendations and designates the site as Planned Community on the land use maps.

Planning Area 7 – West Marin

The West Marin planning area includes all of the unincorporated communities in the Inland Rural and Coastal Corridors: Bolinas, Dillon Beach, Forest Knolls, Inverness, Lagunitas, Olema, Marshall, Muir Beach, Nicasio, Point Reyes Station, San Geronimo, Stinson Beach, Tomales, and Woodacre, as well as the agricultural and public lands that surround these communities. With the exception of Olema, every village is within a community plan area.

There are currently 5,812 housing units within the planning area and a projected buildout of 8,761 units. Most of the potential development is attributed to a significant number of undeveloped single-family residential lots scattered throughout the planning area but located almost exclusively within one of the villages – there is negligible development potential on the many large agricultural parcels and publicly owned properties. An increase of 141,906 square feet of commercial area is assumed over the current level of 1,293,735 square feet. Approximately one third of the residual development potential is assigned to parcels on which it would be questionable that the theoretical development potential could be realized.

Land Use Map Changes

The Planning Areas section of the Built Environment Element contains a series of land use policy maps that establish land use designations for the unincorporated parcels in Marin County.

For the most part, the new maps reflect the existing adopted Countywide Plan maps, along with the correction of mapping errors.

The new maps were also updated to reflect the acquisition of lands into the Marin County Open Space District, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Mt. Tamalpais State Park, Point Reyes National Seashore, and other local, state, and federal parks. The land use maps have been changed to show these lands as Open Space.

Other changes to the maps are a result of modifications to the descriptions of the land use designations in the Community Development section. For example, the General Commercial land use designation has been expanded to include the Retail Commercial land use designation, which has been deleted from the Plan. The existing Residential Commercial land use designation has been renamed Neighborhood Commercial. An additional land use designation, Planned Community, has also been added to enable the planning of major reuse projects. These and other changes are all reflected on the maps.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alex Hinds
Agency Director