

Santa Margarita Area Advisory Council

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MINUTES

7 PM, Wednesday, February 5, 2014
Santa Margarita Community Hall
22501 I Street, Santa Margarita, CA 93453

Members Present: Sophie Treder, John Beccia (alternate for John Reed), Mike Cole, Bob Righetti, Su Andros, George Sullivan, Dana Tryde, Stuart Souza, Guy Rathbun, Sue Christian, Joe Patterson.

1. **Call to order – 7:08 pm**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting** – Tabled due to printer error.
4. **Approval of the agenda** – Agenda approved unanimously.
5. **Review of Meeting Structure**
 - a. Audio/Video Recorders
 - b. SMAAC meeting procedure for project review
 - c. Rules for presenting testimony
 - d. Agenda item requests – submit requests no later than ten days prior to meeting. Requests to be submitted through representatives to Chairman. Late requests must be submitted in writing and may be included in the agenda at the Chairman's discretion.
6. **Open comment**
 - a. Public announcements and comments regarding items not on the agenda – Jessica Berry with SLOCOG was present on behalf of Caltrans. George Sullivan asked if she had received SMAAC's letter and if the consultants had it. A: Yes. George Sullivan suggested increasing the focus on connectivity between communities instead of just de facto freeway corridors. Suggested some specific connectivity areas that are of high risk to pedestrians that should be included in the study. Joe Patterson asked whether the scope of the study had to be limited because of budget. A: Basically, yes. George Sullivan had additional comments. Guy Rathbun asked whether bicycles were legal on the freeway. A: Anywhere that it is not posted that they are excluded. (Response from Dave Flynn, who was also present.) George Sullivan asked if there was anything the public could do to refocus the study: A: Send comments to Jessica Berry and she will include them in the Regional Transportation Plan. It is too late for this study, but not for the RTP. All of the Highway 101 discussion will go to SLOCOG in June. They may also have a set of workshops for the RTP.
 - b. Council announcements and comments regarding items not on the agenda – Joe Patterson gave a brief update. His son came home in January and just turned 2 last week. Incredible gratitude to the local community and to Jack's Helping Hand. They hope to advocate for awareness of food borne illness to bring some lasting positives from their experience.
7. **Public Safety – None**
 - a. Cal Fire / County Fire Department
 - b. Sheriff's Department
 - c. Highway Patrol
 - d. Other Agencies

8. CSA 23 Update –George Sullivan was at the last meeting, and said there are currently 5 open seats. They meet 1st Thursday of every month. Guy Rathbun asked if anyone had knowledge of the current status of our water wells. Su Andros and others clarified that it is usually posted on the board in front of the wells on El Camino Real, and that they appear to be holding fairly steady so far.

9. Treasurer’s Report – Not present.

10. New Business

a. Santa Margarita Energy Challenge – Cheryl Cochran, County of SLO. Cheryl Cochran and Zarina Hackney from SLO Planning gave the presentation. The SLO Energy Alliance is a partnership between the County and local utility providers. They are starting a kick-off challenge March 5th in Santa Margarita. Programs are available all year round, this is just a very focused outreach effort. The focus for this challenge is on income qualified programs (hence the CAPSLO partnership). For residents, they can meet with a CAPSLO rep and find out if they qualify for programs to help with weatherstripping, attic insulation, appliance replacement, caulking, etc. Work is all done for free. To kick off the challenge, the event is March 5th at Santa Margarita Elementary School. The event will also involve the Food Bank, and free dinner available. PG&E can also talk to business owners about an energy consult and audit. Everyone will receive a letter from Supervisor Arnold, but she requested help from the Council on getting the word out. Su Andros suggested putting flyers up on the kiosk outside the post office; an e-flyer could be put on the SMAAC website. Guy Rathbun suggested promoting the event on the Dave Congalton show. John Beccia suggested putting flyers at the library. Dana Tryde asked if the programs would cover small farms. A: no, but PG&E does have programs for agriculture.

11. Continued Business

a. None

12. Internal Council Business

a. Bylaws Amendment—Second Reading and Ratification Vote. Sophie Treder gave the report for the bylaws committee, and handed out copies of the final version in track changes. It was noted that because this was a second reading and ratification, no changes could be made at this point, it was just an up or down vote. Following a review of all proposed changes carried over from December, George Sullivan moved to approve the changes, and Bob Righetti seconded. Motion passed with none opposed and one abstention (John Beccia).

13. 5th District Supervisor’s Report – Supervisor Arnold gave the report. The BOS adopted the LUCE amendments this past week. SMAAC last heard it from the Planning Department a year or more ago. Planning did read our comments from our minutes at the Board hearing so those were taken into account. Templeton, Creston and the Farm Bureau also opposed it. Supervisor Arnold voted against it (as did Mecham) but it passed anyway. Main changes are that the existing 11 area plans and specific planning area standards have been reorganized into four area plans. Each village plan will have their own plan. The result is that the towns have been separated from the outlying areas when it comes to planning standards and updates. The Salinas River Trail was discussed in the recent SLOCOG meeting. South Atascadero residents have been concerned that trails were being planned across private property; SLOCOG passed it as was, so there are some miscommunications that she will be looking into. Paso Groundwater Basin update: it comes as far south as Garden Farms, but doesn’t really affect our area because existing water districts and purveyors (Garden Farms Water District, Atascadero Mutual Water Company) will not be affected by the proposed district. County recently received some updated studies on the Basin, and the Basin seems to be holding up rather well under the drought cycle that is currently pervading. There have been a lot of studies now on the hydrology and geology of the Basin, so there is a lot to learn about the Basin and water districts for anyone who is interested- her door is always open.

Bob Righetti noted that the public seems to have forgotten that every living thing requires water. The shortage is the effects we are starting to see of the environmentalists that came in some time ago to completely shut things down. There is no trimming, cutting, or management of vegetation anymore. The vegetation is taking over even from the wildlife. No fish, frogs, or raccoons in the river anymore. Blue herons used to catch fish and frogs, now they go for gophers and ground squirrels because they can't fly in the river corridor. Streams silt if they are not cleaned up and then you have evapotranspiration. We are not utilizing the resources like we used to when he was a kid.

14. Chairman's report – Su Andros- Vice Chair.

- a. Elections- Courtesy incumbent announcements: Incumbents up for reelection are: Garden Farms: Stewart Souza (will run); Highway 58: Peggy Nelson (not present); Las Pilitas Rd: Both seats currently open; Parkhill Road: Charlie Whitney (not present); Pozo: Sophie Treder (will run); Rinconada: Butch Pope (not present); Santa Margarita: Su Andros (will not run); South Atascadero: Jeremy Burns (not present); Tassajara Canyon: George Sullivan (will run).
- b. Committee- Su Andros asked for volunteers. Joe Patterson said he does not want to chair, but will be on the committee. Sophie Treder nominated Mike Whiteford, but as he was not present, it was felt it would be unfair to assign him. Dana Tryde volunteered to be on it. Joe Patterson agreed to Chair provided he had sufficient help. Su Andros agreed to be on it. Sue Christian agreed to work the polls. Bob Righetti and Guy Rathbun also agreed to help with the polls. Committee: Joe Patterson, Chair, with Dana Tryde and Su Andros. Poll help, Bob Righetti, Guy Rathbun, and anyone else who is not up for reelection. Election will be held Tuesday March 25th (the Tuesday before the April 2nd meeting, as per the new bylaws.).

15. Adjournment – 8:33 pm.

- a. Next Meeting – March 5, 2014 at 7:00pm

SMAAC Meeting Procedure for Project Review

1. The Chair will open the discussion by first asking county staff to present any information or reports on the specific project. When the staff presentation is concluded, the Council will have an opportunity to ask questions.
2. The applicant and/or agent will then be given an opportunity to make a presentation, after which, the Council will again have an opportunity to ask questions.
3. Any committees tasked with reviewing the project will give presentations, reports and recommendations and respond to questions from the Council.
4. The general public will have an opportunity to comment on the project in accordance with the guidelines set forth below. After public comment has been closed, the Chair will invite staff and the applicant to respond to the public testimony.
5. Finally, the Council will further discuss the project and take any action deemed appropriate.

Rules for Presenting Testimony

1. Members of the public who wish to present testimony should conduct themselves with dignity and be courteous and respectful to all parties involved.
2. When speaking before the Council, please identify yourself for the record.
3. Address your testimony to the Chair. Conversations, debate, or discussions between or among the speaker and the audience, the applicant/agent, the staff or members of the public are not permitted.
4. Keep your testimony brief and to the point. Address the proposal and not the individuals involved. If absolutely necessary, refer to individuals by title only. For example: the Chair, the staff member, the applicant, the previous speaker, etc.
5. Public testimony will be limited, at the discretion of the Chair, generally to three minutes per individual. And please, no audience reaction (applause or otherwise) during or after the testimony.
6. Written testimony (letters or e-mail) is acceptable. Please submit testimony at least five calendar days prior to the SMAAC meeting to your area representative. The area representative may read your testimony on your behalf during the meeting.