



Half Moon Bay General Plan and LCP Update

General Plan Advisory Committee Meeting #11

537 Kelly Avenue, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

June 30, 2016 | 6:30pm

Meeting Notes

Materials for this meeting can be found at www.planhmb.org/general-plan-library.html.

Project Overview: Project Status and Schedule

- Reviewed schedule and project status.
- Reviewed notification and agenda availability and format:
 - Notification for this session was similar to previous sessions and included: Half Moon Bay ENews (multiple notifications), Plan Half Moon Bay email (multiple notifications), Next Door website posting, Half Moon Bay Review color display ad, press notifications, www.planHMB.org project web page, and multiple announcements at City Council, Planning Commission and previous General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) session. One community member noted that Next Door notification does not reach the north end of the City.
 - Agenda Availability: Posted June 8, 2016 – electronically on City of Half Moon Bay web page calendar and www.planHMB.org, and hard copy at City Hall. Community members were once again asked to speak with staff if they are having any trouble finding the agendas or other documents.

Draft Local Coastal Land Use Plan:

Presentation covered the following:

- Updates regarding June 2, 2016 GPAC and community comments:
 - GPAC wants to discuss land use – staff will inform the City Council overtime with respect to the GPAC’s input.
 - Document Structure and Format: With respect to the most prevalent feedback about the document structure and format (listed below), staff described options and their intention to provide an outline indicating revised structure to the GPAC before the next version is drafted.
 - Incorporate the Coastal Act policies in full
 - Break up into shorter sections

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- Connect narrative with policies
 - Address the completed PUDs differently
 - Provide transparency: Staff described progress regarding the following items requested at the June 2, 2016 session:
 - Record the GPAC meetings: The June 30 GPAC session was recorded using a GoPro camera and portable mics. Future sessions would be more elaborately recorded. Recordings will be posted on the project web page.
 - Comments and Responses: Staff described again how this will be done in a table format similar to the update of the Existing Conditions, Trends and Opportunities Report in April 2016. Staff noted that this is pending conclusion of a comment period that will likely continue through September.
 - Concordance Table: A table comparing 1993 LUP and the first public draft LUP policies was prepared, posted on the PlanHMB.org web page, and handed out at the session.
 - “Shall” Language: Staff described and shared examples of how and why language was modified with the intention of putting the policies into active voice. The intention was not to weaken policies. In some cases, 1993 policies include may, should, allow and other less committal language. This was often brought forward. If the GPAC prefers more definitive language for any of these policies, they should provide that input. It was also noted that some new policies, introduced in this draft, include “may” and “should” statements in some cases because the intention was to allow for some flexibility. Again, the GPAC is encouraged to advise on these.
- Section 2.4: Coastal Resources –
 - The following topics are covered in the Coastal Resources chapter of the Draft LUP:
 - Coastal Act Framework
 - Biological Resources
 - Hydrology and Water Quality
 - Shoreline Conditions
 - Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing
 - Scenic and Visual Resources
 - Cultural Resources

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- Anticipated discussion topics based on input staff has heard so far include:
 - ESHA Mapping
 - Buffers
 - Prime Soils
- Section 2.5: Coastal Hazards
 - The following topics are covered in the Coastal Hazards chapter of the Draft LUP:
 - Coastal Act Framework
 - Geologic and Seismic Hazards
 - Flooding
 - Fire
 - Sea Level Rise
 - General Plan Safety Element: it was noted that the forthcoming element will cover related matters.
 - Anticipated discussion topics based on input staff has heard so far include a focus on water courses, including:
 - Erosion
 - Flooding
 - Storm Drainage adequacy

GPAC Clarifying Questions:

- When will the GPAC see the revised document?
- Comments have been submitted from various experts with respect to habitat areas. When will we review and discuss those?
- The Coastal Prairie habitat type – one of the most endangered habitat types on the San Mateo County coast - is missing from the narrative and not mapped.
- Not many special status plant and animal species listed in the tables. Need to consult with local experts - have the best people look at this. I.e., White-tailed kite is not mentioned as a special status species. (Response: White-tailed kite is not included in the table because the source of the table is the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), which does not track it; that said, page 2.4-6 in the Coastal Resources chapter states the following with respect to white-tailed kite: “White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), a CDFW Fully Protected species that is not tracked by the CNDDDB, has also been known to occur in the Planning Area.”)
- With respect to the habitat and ESHA maps, although there is a process outlined in the draft LUP for updating them over time once the LCP is adopted, this process

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could be lengthy. In order to start with the best base map from the initial adoption, these maps should be updated now before adoption. Furthermore, the CNDDDB cannot be relied upon as the basis for updates because there can be quite a time lag between siting a special status species and when the report is documented in the database.

- With respect to the scenic resources map, the arrows used to indicate views may diminish the intention of presenting the big panoramic views present throughout the City.
- Species have been found and the CNDDDB is too slow – technology has moved ahead of the process. Need new method of communicating sitings that allows for public information access and input.
- Could not find anything that Sewer Authority Midcoast (SAM) is considering that their plant will be under water.
- With respect to private properties that may be subject to sea level rise impacts, what liability does the City have if there is a policy? What about notification? GPAC members and staff discussed the City's role with respect to disclosure and informing the public. An example of real estate disclosure was presented as a potential method (e.g. airport).
- GPAC member responsibilities with respect to conflicts of interest were discussed. Staff reaffirmed that any GPAC member concerned about conflict should contact the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC).

Public Comment:

- San Mateo County has a disclosure in planned agriculture districts. The language and was developed by the Farm Bureau.
- The Pubic Facilities PUD District adjacent to the SAM plant is in appropriate. The area is ESHA and includes a riparian corridor with habitat for both the San Francisco Garter Snake (SFGS) and California Red Legged Frog (CRLF). Furthermore, the area is subject to hazards from tsunami and dam failure. It is not an appropriate location for new public facilities.
- With respect to environmental mapping – a number of locations have already been identified as habitat through past studies. These areas should be included on an updated map. Recommend that findings from all known studied be shown on ESHA maps. This helps owners and buyers. The Beachwood and Glenree properties are examples where wetlands have been mapped. ESHA maps should include such wetlands and their buffers. With respect to the California Coastal Commission guidance, it is the actual presence of ESHA that matters; thus when this is known, it should be mapped for future reference.
- In the past, the City tried to proceed with a corporation yard on the property adjacent to the SAM plant, however, it did not progress. It is pointless to have this area in a PUD designation.
- Mapping ESHA more specifically can protect and inform with regard suspected instances of unauthorized land disturbances (e.g. diking, etc.).

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- Considering the recently reviewed fire training tower, would hope that the updated LUP would resolve differences of opinion and interpretation as occurred using the existing LCP.
- Concern that the draft LUP does not properly address all of the changes over the past 20 years with respect to ESHA and potential ESHA. The area south of Casa del Mar including the City-owned Caltrans mitigation area and the agricultural pond east of Grandview are documented ESHA, but not shown on the maps in the draft LUP. The map should reflect these updates.
- With respect to the Kehoe watercourse, cattle graze uphill from this drainage and waste discharge from the ag pond and runoff drain to Kehoe. This contributes to increased bacteria levels. The existing LCP text addresses this condition, but not the draft LUP.
- The ESHA and potential ESHA mapping does not recognize all of the habitats.
- Mosquitos and creek overtopping are not listed as hazards.
- For the Public Facilities PUD, the 1993 policies are brought forward; however, it is clear now that ESHA is present. The Pilarcitos Avenue extension (southward) into the Public Facilities PUD area should not be brought forward.
- Take a step back and look at context for what is all happening. Beyond working to conform to the California Coastal Act, the draft LUP projects one thousand new homes and 300,000 square feet of additional commercial development. Consider the plan with regards to benefits to views and species, but also the citizens. The situation could lead to “tragedy of the commons” situation where development that benefits a few harms others. Consider the public good for existing citizens.
- The process seems open-ended which is good because there are still people who don’t know about the General Plan and LCP updates. Is there another round of discussion coming?
- With regards to conflict of interest and the FPPC guidance, recusal only required when the subject is material. Concerned that overly strict interpretation will lead to delays in the process.

GPAC Discussion:

GPAC members focused their discussion items on topics most essential to the good of the group and will submit more detailed comments about document format, specific language, etc. to staff.

- Reconsider the buffers and setbacks. Seacliffs/bluffs are ESHA. The proposed ESHA setback of 100 feet is not adequate to these habitats because of the anticipated erosion. These setbacks need to consider retreat as well as the California Coastal Trail.
- Hazards and ESHA are linked and related to the PUDs. Protecting ESHA also protects development from hazards. These links need to be developed and integrated into plan. There is an issue of losing “slack” if inadequate accommodations are made. E.g.

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solving a drainage problem upstream in a manner that increase rate of flow will overwhelm the downtown stream condition.

- Consider the over-abatement of weeds. Weed removal for fire protection is necessary, but these areas do not need to be disked, which affects the condition of the land in other ways, such as in its ability to absorb water. Vegetation removal from creek banks has similar implications.
- Need more consideration of sedimentation. The Pilarcitos Creek lagoon is shallower because of sedimentation.
- The relationship between sea level rise and saltwater intrusion needs to be further addressed. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has identified saltwater intrusion in Half Moon Bay aquifers.
- The draft LUP policy does not reflect our understanding of how development affects our risk; e.g. impervious surfaces and run-off.
- Consider the effects of pesticide impacts on bees and amphibians.
- Development should not affect the value of the buffer; e.g. bike trails adjacent to creeks. Trails should be set farther back to protect the buffer.
- Make setback/buffers more definitive.
- Does the draft LUP include consideration of having outfall stations and/or retention basins? (Response: staff provided an overview of the Storm Drainage Master Plan preparation, currently underway. Considerations of green infrastructure and low impact development [LID] will be included.)
- The sea level rise estimates and ranges in the text/tables are different than the mapping.
- With respect to the SAM plant, we should look past the 2040 plan horizon and seriously consider the potential future need to move the plant and designate a site for it. We need to communicate with SAM.
- The City should provide community information about sea level rise hazards, for example, through the City's newsletter. We should be careful about rushing to contact individual property owners as study of the issue and potential timing becomes better informed.
- The FEMA maps – which do not indicate inland flooding from the various watercourse in the City – affect a lot of issues. (Response: staff described how a formal request for mapping of these areas could be considered by City Council.)
- The Coastal Resources chapter is missing narrative describing the threats/issues/impacts on coastal resources. This information would better inform what types of policies are needed to support their protection. Could use the State endangered species recommendations regarding identifying threats to species to develop the narrative.
- The City needs an Open Space Conservation land use designation.

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- For ESHA and potential ESHA: if they are delineated, they should be shown on the map. Maintain and use records when we have delineations. Habitat assessment for certain species don't go stale.
- The Pacific Ridge dedication area for the path and open space should be mapped.
- Would like a map on the City's website presenting observations of special status species.

Next Steps in the Process:

Future GPAC sessions will be scheduled in August and September to continue review of the LUP and the forthcoming General Plan elements. The GPAC's work product is a revised document for the Planning Commission.

Document availability was reviewed again.

Attendance

GPAC Members

Jo Chamberlain
Jan Gray
Diane Johnson
Greg Jamison
Steve Kikuchi, At-Large Alternate #2
James Benjamin
Dan McMillan
Sara Polgar
Marcia Reilly, Parks and Recreation Committee Alternate representative

Note: GPAC Member Benjamin excused himself several times during the meeting due to potential conflict of interest regarding the Public Facilities PUD property and Pilarcitos Creek area adjacent to the SAM plant.

City Staff

John Doughty, Community Development Director
Jill Ekas, Senior Management Analyst
Bridget Jett, Planning Analyst