

Paoli, Diana

From: Adele Horne <adelehorne@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 6, 2025 1:01 PM
To: City Clerk; Jason Godeke; Peters, Lindy; Albin-Smith, Tess; noyofish@gmail.com; Whippy, Isaac
Subject: Concerned about plans for mill site development

Dear City Council:

I've been interested in the plans for the former mill site here in Fort Bragg for many years, and have attended a few meetings where the public came together to discuss possible uses for the land. I think all of us love the Coastal Trail that was one of the first fruits of this process. I have also followed the news about the Skunk Train claiming that they are a public utility and therefore didn't have to follow local zoning/planning rules in developing the land, and an ensuing lawsuit where they were ruled against. I recently learned that the City Council is currently negotiating with the Skunk Train and is about to vote on whether to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with them about moving forward with plans to develop the site. My concern is that the current map shows an electric trolley going parallel to the Coastal Trail, and the Railroad doing a circle around a Hotel/Conference Center on the headlands. Looking at the public comments that have been logged over the years, most people want to preserve as much open space as possible, and most people at the March 2025 meeting objected to the train and trolley they saw on the map of the headlands. Why is that map showing the rail and trolley line still part of the planning document?

I also feel strongly that we need to ensure that a full remediation of the site occurs, to make sure that the dioxins in the mill ponds don't harm current and future generations as the sea level rises. I am concerned that in readying the site for development in a cooperation with the Skunk Train, the City will be pressured to accept a scenario with minimal remediation. The community is very clear that we want a full cleanup of the toxins in the millpond. I urge you to vote "no" on moving ahead with the Memorandum of Understanding as it currently stands. It doesn't incorporate the public's concerns, and it cedes too much power to the railroad. We need more public input.

Respectfully,

Adele Horne

Paoli, Diana

From: Susan Sisk <suzyqsisk@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 7, 2025 10:01 AM
To: City Clerk; Jason Godeke; lpeters@ftbragg.com; Whippy, Isaac
Subject: Please vote No on the MOU with the railway!

I am strongly urging a NO vote on moving ahead with the MOU with Mendo Railway as it currently stands. I know it has been exhausting financially and with a long history of negativity on the part of the railroad towards the city, however, these people are and always will be the classic bullies. They do not care about the city or our beautiful Noyo Headlands. They just want to make a ton of money creating an Amusement park for tourists and housing for rich people. The city MUST insure that the toxic remediation is completed and the old mill site restored with daylighted creeks and a beautiful ecological design. An electric trolley?!? Circling around a Hotel/Conference development?!? Planning behind closed doors without community input?!? Puhleese!

We all know that bowing the knee to a bully never works out for the one who capitulates.

Please vote NO!

Thank you,

Susan Sisk

Paoli, Diana

From: cal winslow <calwinslow123@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 7, 2025 11:48 AM
To: City Clerk; Jason Godeke; Peters, Lindy; Albin-Smith, Tess; noyofish@gmail.com; Whippy, Isaac
Subject: headlands

Dear Council members.

I am astonished to see the city and the “railroad” proceeding with their wild, foolish plans, ignoring:

1. Unsettled status of the RR.
2. Lack of community input on the maps.
3. Lack of vision.
4. Many environmental concerns, including but not limited to:
 - a. Incomplete cleanup
 - b. The climate crisis ie. Carbon Sequestration through restoration, growing food as the Central Valley becomes a desert and much more
 - c. Water scarcity
 - d. Work force housing, and job creation through restoration are compatible with a “higher’ vision of development.

Most important, I am concerned with toxic ponds, and the lower levels of poisons throughout the headlands. How can the Council continue to refuse to face up to this.

Your sincerely,

Cal Winslow

Paoli, Diana

From: Linda Jo Stern <lindajostern@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 8, 2025 5:08 PM
To: City Clerk; godekejason@gmail.com; Peters, Lindy; Albin-Smith, Tess; Whippy, Isaac; noyofish@gmail.com; Hockett, Scott
Subject: No trolley, no convention center, yes to total clean up, yes to open space

Dear City Council,

Since I have lived in Fort Bragg (the past 10 years) I have been following the saga of the millsite and have gone to and participated in a number of meetings. The public at these meetings, including the most recent meeting at Town Hall, have overwhelmingly asked for a full clean up of the mill ponds and have asked for as much open space as possible. It was also very clear that there was a strong "no" voice for the Skunk Train's development idea of a trolley (really? a train trolley on the ocean coast??) and a convention center (again, is that really something we need here?)

Please do not agree to an MOU with the Skunk Train that includes these plans and please make the remediation of the site a high priority in order to make it a healthy place for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Linda Jo
617-435-8412 (mobile)

Paoli, Diana

From: Godeke, Jason
Sent: Saturday, June 7, 2025 7:16 AM
To: Paoli, Diana
Subject: Fw: Agenda

I'm forwarding a public comment, which appears to be related to Monday's agenda, though no agenda item identified...

JG

From: Jason Godeke <godekejason@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 7, 2025 7:13 AM
To: Godeke, Jason <JGodeke@fortbraggca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Agenda

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **William Carter** <billcarter2437@icloud.com>
Date: Fri, Jun 6, 2025 at 7:48 PM
Subject: Agenda
To: <godekejason@gmail.com>

Protect the headlands the citizens of Ft bragg and the town from the polluting fake railroad save the headlands
Sent from my iPhone

Paoli, Diana

From: Jason Godeke <godekejason@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 7:22 AM
To: Paoli, Diana
Subject: Fwd: Headlands Planning

See public comment below on item 8a (in case it didn't already come to you).

JG

----- Forwarded message -----

From: T Roskopf <rosskopfengineering@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Jun 8, 2025 at 9:02 PM
Subject: Headlands Planning
To: <godekejason@gmail.com>

Dear City Council:

I've been interested in the plans for the former mill site here in Fort Bragg. I think all of us love the Coastal Trail that was one of the first fruits of this process. I have also followed the news about the Skunk Train claiming that they are a public utility and therefore didn't have to follow local zoning/planning rules in developing the land, and an ensuing lawsuit where they were ruled against. I recently learned that the City Council is currently negotiating with the Skunk Train and is about to vote on whether to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with them about moving forward with plans to develop the site. My concern is that the current map shows an electric trolley going parallel to the Coastal Trail, and the Railroad doing a circle around a Hotel/Conference Center on the headlands. Looking at the public comments that have been logged over the years, most people want to preserve as much open space as possible, and most people at the March 2025 meeting objected to the train and trolley they saw on the map of the headlands. Why is that map showing the rail and trolley line still part of the planning document?

I feel strongly that we need to ensure that a full remediation of the site occurs, to make sure that the dioxins in the mill ponds don't harm current and future generations as the sea level rises. I am concerned that in readying the site for development, the City will be pressured to accept a scenario with minimal remediation. The community is very clear that we want a full cleanup of the toxins in the millpond. I urge you to vote "no" on moving ahead with the Memorandum of Understanding as it currently stands. It doesn't incorporate the public's concerns, and it cedes too much power to the railroad.

Respectfully,
Thomas Roskopf

Paoli, Diana

From: Annemarie <aweibel@mcn.org>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 3:37 PM
To: Paoli, Diana; Peters, Lindy; Albin-Smith, Tess; Rafanan, Marcia; Godeke, Jason; Hockett, Scott; Whippy, Isaac
Subject: please vote no on the MOU with the railway, public comment item 8A

Dear City Council members,

I am involved with another meeting at the same time that is why I am writing to you. It took me all this time to read all the documents and highlight them, but now I am running out of time to respond to all the issues that were brought up.

I have attended City meetings off and on and commented on issues all along for the last 20 years.

This agenda item lists: Consider Adopting a Resolution Accepting the Mill Site Development Strategy Report and Directing City Manager to Initiate Phase 2 of the Master Development Agreement Planning Program; CEQA Exemptions 15265 and 15061(b)(3)

Looking up CEQA Exemptions 15061(b)(3) I understand that 15061(b)(3) The activity is covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

I understand that voting in favor of a MOU with the Skunk Train without giving the public enough time (5 days) to study the agenda, resolution, 59 pages EPS draft report and not truly listening to the public that has been involved with this project for 20 plus years is premature. it should not be exempt from CEQA as the issue about the toxins has not been addressed. To move on now without having any guarantees that the toxin issue will be properly addressed does not give the community hope that it will ever be addressed. And shipping it to Kettleman City where babies of undocumented Hispanic workers die due to the toxins is not a solution either.

I agree with all the public comments you received so far and also agree with the comments by Peter McNamee of Fort Bragg addressed to the editor of the AVA which questions the legality of making land use decisions in closed session (abbreviated version). "The full justification for the Fort Bragg City Council putting off resolution of its lawsuit with Mendocino Railway in the courts, in order to negotiate a master development agreement for the Fort Bragg headlands with the railway, was never transparently vetted with the public. And while its legal for city councils to make decisions about litigation in closed session, it is not legal or morally acceptable to make land use planning decisions in closed session.

The City Council's decision to make decisions in closed sessions has exposed the City on multiple fronts to added risk of legal & financial liability.

Equally troubling, hiding the deliberations regarding land use planning from the public, undermines the public's faith in the integrity of City Officials and the Council. Land use decision making must be done in public with full transparency, and determinations of law should be made by the courts. More than six months into these secret discussions and the public has no way of knowing what is being discussed or what the impacts may be on the community".

In your resolution you write that "Appropriate environmental studies will be completed when the binding Development Agreement is presented to the Council at a future public hearing". This is not what the public wants to hear.

I attended the DTSC meeting when they wanted to pull out as their senior scientist was retiring. The community will not allow you to postpone the key issue now. The EPS draft report did not mention the dam. Not all wetlands are mapped now.

That needs to be done now. On page 39 there was only mention of "Allow for daylighting of Maple Creek. (2019)" Why not Alder Creek?

Please vote no on the MOU with the railway and if you can not agree to that, ask for an extension to allow that the public to tell you their reaction to all this information. Please schedule a meeting with the public. 5 days is not enough time!

Sincerely, Annemarie Weibel

Paoli, Diana

From: William Carter <billcarter2437@icloud.com>
Sent: Friday, June 6, 2025 7:45 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Agenda

Headlands should be a preserve and educational commercial after a thorough clean up. Skunk train is not a utility and their trolley idea is turning g headlands into Disneyland and their existing train is a polluter both air quality and noise pollution thank you protect your town and citizens please Sent from my iPhone

Paoli, Diana

From: Christy Wagner <christywagners@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 8, 2025 8:41 AM
To: City Clerk; godekejason@gmail.com; Peters, Lindy; Albin-Smith, Tess; noyofish@gmail.com; Whippy, Isaac
Subject: Vote "no" on the Memorandum of Understanding

Dear City Council Members:

Vote no on the Memorandum of Understanding as it cedes too much power to Mendocino Railway. Not only do they claim their tourist excursion company is a public utility--a trolley on the headlands will be used to buttress this claim--but they have a documented history all over the state of repeatedly violating community trust. Whoever develops the Fort Bragg headlands must be bound by local zoning/planning rules. This is the most basic and essential point.

Critically, the full remediation of the mill site must be required to make sure that the dioxins in the mill ponds don't harm current and future generations. As the site is prepared for development, the City mustn't leave itself open to being strong armed to accept a scenario with minimal remediation.

Please stand up for the City's mandated responsibility, inherent to the power to control zoning and planning. This is an historically unreliable developer. Vote, no, on moving ahead with the Memorandum of Understanding as it currently stands.

Christy Wagner

430 N. McPherson St

Fort Bragg

Paoli, Diana

From: Karen Lewis <klewis@mcn.org>
Sent: Sunday, June 8, 2025 8:42 PM
To: City Clerk
Cc: noyofish@gmail.com; Albin-Smith, Tess; godekejason@gmail.com; Peters, Lindy; Whippy, Isaac
Subject: Headlands/Mill Site

Dear City Council Members,

I believe it is premature to enter into any MOU with the "Mendocino Railway" with regards to future development on the Old Mill Site.

This is a very complex situation, and extremely important natural coastal habitat.

There are many different interest groups involved with a stake in the future development of this land.

Mendocino Railway has exerted undue influence trying to "railroad" their plans for the site. This is not fair, and all concerned citizens need to have enough time to weigh in and determine what is best for the community's future. If Mendocino Railway really cares about the community, they will stop claiming that they are exempt from local regulatory oversight.

BTW if Mendocino Railway was truly "a Public Utility" then it would run trains somewhere people actually need to go - eg the Bay Area or Ukiah - not just a tourist train or cutesy "rail bikes".

Thank you for not caving into the pressure from Mendocino Railway which seems intent on undermining the authority and the good planning process in place already in our coastal community.

Sincerely,
Karen K. Lewis
Parent-Small Business Owner
Volunteer at Noyo Center for Marine Science klewis@mcn.org

Paoli, Diana

From: Sally Carter <buttecountypainter@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 8, 2025 10:31 PM
To: godekejason@gmail.com; City Clerk; Peters, Lindy; Albin-Smith, Tess; noyofish@gmail.com
Subject: The Future of Fort Bragg

Dear Honorable City Council Member,

I am writing to you to express my fears and hope for the future of Fort Bragg and development on the old mill site. I understand that the City Council is going to vote on entering a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mendocino Railway that has not been adjudicated as a public utility and has expressed a vision for the Fort Bragg headlands featuring electric trolleys and trains to access vigorous development. My concerns about this project are the very first and foremost issue should be the cleanup of the dioxins to provide a safe environment for all citizens and wildlife moving forward. By entering into an agreement without a clear plan to finance and execute said cleanup no development should move ahead.

I have watched and listened to public commentary on the plans to develop the former mill site and it is clear to me that most of us prefer a clear and unencumbered vista along the Coastal Trail and the people's wishes should be honored. The city finally has a view of its incredibly beautiful coastline and development in this area should be minimalistic and attuned to the residents wishes rather than a single entity given undue power in overseeing development that would be economically beneficial to said entity, the Mendocino Railway. The public has spoken out against the trolley and railroad on the headlands yet they are still on the map.

The city of Fort Bragg has an opportunity to provide the future with a goal of educational facilities with minimal infrastructure, daylighting creeks, incorporating visionary and traditional environmental knowledge. To do anything else would be handing the keys to the hen house to the fox, disregarding your constituents preference and short selling the future.

Sincerely,
Sally Carter

Paoli, Diana

From: Sakina Bush <sakina@mcn.org>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 3:35 PM
To: City Clerk; godekejason@gmail.com; Peters, Lindy; Albin-Smith, Tess; noyofish@gmail.com; Whippy, Isaac
Subject: Public comment Monday, June 9th meeting

Dear council members,

I voted for you because I thought you would be good leaders to guide us through the difficult process of having a vision and a plan for the Mill Site and one that involves dealing with a very heavy handed Mendocino Railway. It is a hard job, and I appreciate your service.

I am concerned that a Memorandum Of Understanding with Mendocino Railway is a bad idea for a couple of reasons:

1. People in the community will think it is some kind of formal enforceable agreement.
2. Mendocino Railway has a history of being underhanded, deceitful, litigious, and morally corrupt. Greed is their their primary motivation. They tried to steal someone's land in Willits. They are lying about their status as a common carrier. These are not the kind of people we should be making agreements with.

I know that there are lawsuits and legal fees and things happening behind the scenes. Maybe the City of Fort Brag has just been financially and legally bullied to the point where it has to bend a knee and agree to give the ball to the other team. If that is really the case I will understand if you fold.... BUT IF THERE IS ANOTHER OPTION PLEASE DON'T GIVE IN!

I am concerned that if you give them an inch they will take... the entire Mill Site to do with as they please.

The community deserves to have a leash on Mendocino Railway, a way to make them comply with permits, clean-up, and other limits on their development. Of course they want a -free-to-do as they- please situation.

What are the options?

I don't think the City has been forthcoming with the community about the whole situation. Are we out of options? What happened to all the restorative visions proposed? IMO an electric train trolley ride is not an appropriate use of this property and will compromise the INCREDIBLY RARE OPPORTUNITY to create something restorative and green. I know it's a brown field... but it doesn't have to be 'Skunklandia'.

Again thank you for your service,

Sincerely,

Sakina Bush
Fort Bragg

Paoli, Diana

From: Isabel Rucker <isabel@isabeljewelry.com>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 8:32 AM
To: City Clerk; godekejason@gmail.com; Peters, Lindy; Albin-Smith, Tess; noyofish@gmail.com; Whippy, Isaac
Subject: Please plan for the current users of the coastal trails

Dear City Council,

Please take the time to respect all of the concerns of past comments before accepting the MOU with the Skunk Train. I don't think the current MOU is taking into account people's concerns about the poison soil and opposition to a trolley. I walk almost daily there and the abundance of nature and the peace it provides to all of us citizens should be taken in to account. I don't think adding a noisy toy train trolley makes sense, it's silly and doesn't respect the current peaceful atmosphere and none of us would use it anyway.

We should build the area for the people that are already using it rather than trying to attract a dream crowd that isn't here. It's old fashioned to plan for dream crowds. I recently read a really good article about the transformation of the UN Plaza in San Francisco, they positively changed the area by forming it for the people already using it, skateboarders in this case, instead of trying to attract a dream audience that never showed up.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/30/business/economy/san-francisco-skateboarding-un-plaza.html>

Thanks,
Isabel Rucker
Fort Bragg

Paoli, Diana

From: Susana hennessey lavery <shennesseylavery@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 9:54 AM
To: City Clerk; Jason Godeke; Peters, Lindy; Albin-Smith, Tess; noyofish@gmail.com; Whippy, Isaac
Cc: Susana hennessey lavery
Subject: Please vote no on MOU with Skunk train

Dear City Council:

I've been interested in the plans for the former mill site here in Fort Bragg. I love the Coastal Trail and that this area is open to the public. Unfortunately, even though the Skunk Train claim that they are a public utility and therefore didn't have to follow local zoning/planning rules in developing the land was ruled against in a lawsuit outcome I now hear that the City Council is in negotiations with the Skunk Train about an MOU. I even hear that there will be a vote on whether to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Skunk Train about moving forward with plans to develop the site. I'm deeply concerned with this for a couple of reasons:

The current map shows an electric trolley going parallel to the Coastal Trail, and the Railroad doing a circle around a Hotel/Conference Center on the headlands. Looking at the public comments that have been logged over the years, most people want to preserve as much open space as possible, and most people at the March 2025 meeting objected to the train and trolley they saw on the map of the headlands. Why is that map showing the rail and trolley line still part of the planning document?

Second, even though there was community input in the past, I certainly didn't know about this MOU and feel there has to be an ongoing bilingual community process for input into any actions taken. I'm taken aback that this current proposal will benefit a private corporation rather than primarily our city. I strongly feel the city should be in charge of any development to ensure it has public oversight and regulation, is eco-friendly/sustainable in all its purposes and benefits in some way the original inhabitants, the Pomo.

Finally, we must ensure that a full remediation of the site occurs, to make sure that the dioxins in the mill ponds don't harm current and future generations as the sea level rises. I am concerned that in readying the site for development, the City will be pressured to accept a scenario with minimal remediation. The community is very clear that we want a full cleanup of the toxins in the millpond. I urge you to vote "no" on moving ahead with the Memorandum of Understanding as it currently stands. It doesn't incorporate the public's concerns, and it cedes too much power to the railroad.

Respectfully,

Susana Hennessey Lavery

209 North Sanderson Way

Fort Bragg, California 95437

Paoli, Diana

From: Gordon Barbosa <gordonbarbosa58@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 3:54 PM
To: City Clerk; 'Jason Godeke'; Peters, Lindy; Albin-Smith, Tess; noyofish@gmail.com; Whippy, Isaac
Subject: Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Mill Site

Dear Fort Bragg Council Members:

I've been interested in the plans for the former mill site here in Fort Bragg since I moved here in the fall of 2017. I think all of us love the Coastal Trail that was one of the first fruits of this process. I have also followed the news about the Skunk Train claiming that they are a public utility and therefore didn't have to follow local zoning/planning rules in developing the land, and an ensuing lawsuit where they were ruled against. I recently learned that the City Council is currently negotiating with the Skunk Train and is about to vote on whether to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with them about moving forward with plans to develop the site.

My concern is that the current map shows an electric trolley going parallel to the Coastal Trail, and the Railroad doing a circle around a Hotel/Conference Center on the headlands. From the public comments that have been logged over the years, most people seem to want to preserve as much open space as possible, and most people at the March 2025 meeting objected to the train and trolley they saw on the map of the headlands. Why is that map showing the rail and trolley line still part of the planning document?

I feel strongly that we need to ensure that a full remediation of the site occurs, to make sure that any toxins in the mill ponds don't harm current and future generations as the sea level rises. I am concerned that in readying the site for development, the City will be pressured to accept a scenario with minimal remediation. The community is very clear that we want a full cleanup of the toxins in the millpond. I urge you to vote "no" on moving ahead with the Memorandum of Understanding as it currently stands. It doesn't incorporate the public's concerns, and it cedes too much power to the railroad.

Respectfully,

Gordon Barbosa

207 N Sanderson Way,

Fort Bragg, CA 95437

209-324-5327

Paoli, Diana

From: Doug Hammerstrom <thehahas@mcn.org>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 5:58 PM
To: City Clerk; Jason Godele; Peters, Lindy; Albin-Smith, Tess
Subject: Agenda item 8A City Council meeting on Monday 6/9/25

To all,

I have concerns about the process that is being discussed in this agenda item.

One specific concern is related to a list of items under the heading of "State and Local-Regulated Activities" on page 10 (PDF page 14) of the Mill Site Development Strategy.

The first 7 items in the list contain the phrase "that are unrelated to rail operations". My life as a lawyer has taught me to look at possible interpretations of specific wording that could be adverse to the interests I care about. The adverse meaning of this phrase is that it is a limitation on whether the listed items can be regulated. I see the word that being broad enough that "if" could be meant by it in the context of its usage.

That would mean MR could say any items listed, for instance, building a restaurant, could not be regulated if it is intended to be accessed by rail. The implication is that to contest any interpretation MR asserts you would need to sue them to an interpretation that would allow the City to regulate its activities.

Please have your attorney reword the list of agreed regulated activities to eliminate ambiguities that allow MR to contest their obligations.

My second concern is that the attorney costs of reviewing the documents necessary to the process the City is currently pursuing to avoid litigation will cost more than the litigation. Can you inform the public of what attorney costs of this process have been so far and what you expect them to be for the whole process so the public can know which process achieves the goal of saving attorney costs.

I am also concerned that public input is not being incorporated into the documents being created in this process that will provide guidance for the land use decisions that will be made for the Mill Site. In particular the maps shown in the Mill Site Development Strategy have not changed the amount of rail construction shown despite overwhelming public input wanting no additional rail lines.

Lastly, the documents attached to this agenda item all show a primary focus on the process of settling the lawsuit that pushes aside a thoughtful process of making land use decisions for the Mill Site. The concessions being made by the City suggest a party that feels that they are losing the lawsuit. The collateral damage of this focus is the future of the Mill Site that meets citizens expectations. All the land on the Southern portion of the Mill Site has residential as a permitted use. Coupled with the expressed desire of MR to build housing because it is the most profitable for them, there will be no land for job creation or any thing else citizens want to see.

The drive to settle is not allowing you to see public input; nor to see the damage you are doing to public trust of your decisions.

Doug Hammerstrom
Sent from my iPhone