



City of Fort Bragg

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Meeting Minutes Special City Council

*THE FORT BRAGG CITY COUNCIL MEETS CONCURRENTLY
AS THE FORT BRAGG MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
NO. 1 AND THE FORT BRAGG REDEVELOPMENT
SUCCESSOR AGENCY*

Thursday, June 16, 2016

6:00 PM

Town Hall, 363 N Main Street

Special Meeting: Central Coast Transfer Station Revised Draft EIR

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Turner called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

- Present:** 4 - Vice Mayor Lindy Peters, Councilmember Michael Cimolino, Councilmember Doug Hammerstrom and Mayor Dave Turner
- Absent:** 1 - Councilmember Scott Deitz

1. PUBLIC HEARING

1A. [16-251](#) Public Hearing on the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Central Coast Transfer Station Project

Mendocino Solid Waste Management Authority (MSWMA) Manager Mike Sweeney gave background and information on the Central Coast Transfer Station and noted that the public hearing will be about revisions to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Mayor Turner opened the public hearing at 6:12 PM.

1. Barbara Rice, Caspar resident, expressed thanks for all the work that has gone into preparation of the EIR. She noted that she represents a number of people in favor of the project who think the EIR is a good one. She thinks the project should go forward.
2. John Fremont disagreed with the idea of restricting comments only to the revised EIR, as several City Councilmembers have indicated to him that they had only glanced at the EIR. He believes the project threatens the forest habitat and its inhabitants, and it will have a negative impact on the proposed reservoir and nearby properties. He stated that the EIR does not address waste management in the future, when communities will be charged with taking care of their own garbage. He thinks there are better solutions to garbage problems and presented the Council with a printed document giving some of his proposed solutions. Garbage trucks could be restricted to times when streets are quiet. The Caspar transfer station has a stench, traffic problems, litter and environmental hazards. He called the Highway 20 transfer station a \$5 million boondoggle that will have the same type of hazards should the project proceed. Fremont stated that the proposed 17 acres on Highway 20 is pristine pygmy forest with nesting birds, which cannot be replaced once the land is bulldozed and paved over. The noise and traffic created during building will not be mitigated and property values will be compromised. The helicopter pad adjacent to the station will cause additional damage and there will be

lawsuits.

3. Tracy Howson is concerned about the toxics at the new transfer station. She worked at the old dump site before it was converted to a transfer station. She said that the transfer station does not put garbage in the ground, but in containers that are then hauled away. She cannot see contamination happening on the new site because the garbage is not put in the ground, but separated out. She said putting garbage on the rail should be considered. She is in favor of the new station, but urged that the old station continue to be monitored for leachate, methane, and other contaminants, even if the new transfer station is approved. Howson agrees with Mike Sweeney's plan and said he was instrumental in getting the recyclables carried away. She thinks the EIR is on the right track.
4. James Gay, Highway 20 resident, said he timed the speed from Charles' house to the dump going 55 mph and it took 12 seconds. He asked how many souls would be able to get off the road and out of the way when pulling a trailer. He asked the Council to consider having the California Highway Patrol reduce the speed there to 35 mph, which would give people 18 seconds to get out to the road before they get killed. Gay said one of neighbors on Highway 20 who hauls bodies told him that his business would increase.
5. Charla Thorbecke owns land by the proposed transfer station. She stated she was given permission by California State Parks to tell the Council that they are drafting a letter to stop the swap, and they no longer want to be part of the swap because the pygmy forest will no longer be free.
6. Jeremy James said that he checked for accidents near the transfer station site and found out from CalTrans that there were 15 accidents there. He stated that the City Council knows that it is not a good idea to have the reservoir below the transfer station. He understands that the City needs the water, but it is not a good idea to have something this large built nearby that will have runoff leaching out of the asphalt for some time. James stated he knows that the pollution and transfer of trash from small trucks to big trucks will occur in an enclosed area, but the toxins that will be released should be considered. He said the State Parks wants the land swap off the board. Something positive can come from the pygmy forest, but it has not been scientifically studied yet. He can understand why the folks on Road 409 want the current transfer station moved, but he thinks an alternate location with less environmental impact should be found.
7. Rixanne Wehren, representing the Mendocino Sierra Club, voiced objections to the site. They support moving the transfer station from Road 409 and think Highway 20 has many benefits, but they object to the site. Their mission is to protect rare habitats and the environment and they have asked the Council not to pick a location that contains pygmy forest. Wehren noted that there are two other locations within a mile that satisfy the other requirements and have the same benefits but do not destroy the pygmy forest. She stated that the distances to residences were measured from the boundaries of the entire parcel instead of the boundaries of the facility, and the actual impact is from the facility. The Coastal Commission will have a say in this, as the proposed pygmy reserve site is in the Coastal Zone, and they should be contacted before this project is certified. State Parks and Fish & Wildlife say that this site is inadequate and all three parcels have to be analyzed, but that has been ignored and dismissed. Wehren contends that these agencies are not in support of the project and there will be trouble. She hopes the Council will consider using an alternate site.
8. Mary Walsh of Albion incorporated by reference all papers and pages previously submitted regarding the Central Coast Transfer Station. She noted that each of the Councilmembers, through their oath of office, has agreed to uphold and abide by the laws of the State of California. Walsh stated that these oaths and agreements are being betrayed by failing to comply with CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act). This revised draft EIR fails in its analysis of impacts to the pygmy trees in Jackson State Demonstration Forest, as it fails in its assessment of Russian Gulch State property. The City and County and Solid Waste Authority

have not met with State Parks or California Fish & Wildlife in the time since the last submittal of the EIR one year ago. She asked why that is, stating that no one has sought out these agencies to discover how best to move forward. These agencies safeguard properties belonging to the people. Each agency has been critical of this draft EIR in the ways it treats the land. They have been ignored by MSWMA, the City and the County, and the environment will suffer degradation if the proposal goes forward. The California Coastal Commission was not contacted regarding the proposed mitigation property that lies within the Coastal Commission purview. Walsh said the document fails as an environmental impact report and asked: Will the entire revised draft EIR have to be re-noticed? Why use ambiguous language to describe distance from neighbors? Have the Councilmembers read the draft EIR?

9. Ann Rennacker expressed concern about the project. The last 2000 acres of rare and endangered pygmy forest needs to be protected, as it is all there is in the world. A few years ago there were 4000 acres, but things were built on them and they were trashed. Three parks currently protect the pygmies, but that is a tiny amount and people should stand up and protect them. She stated she is delighted to hear that State Parks and Fish and Wildlife are going to step in. After reading the EIR, she read the County of Mendocino's policies, general plan, and goals and one goal is to protect the visual character, quality of natural and scenic resources and areas of significant natural beauty, which includes coast lily, pygmy forest, and old growth redwoods. Rennacker maintained that these will be in jeopardy if the project goes through. Highway 20 is eligible to be a scenic highway, though it has not been so named by CalTrans. It will need to be widened for this project, and she sees trouble there with double-wide trucks going down the highway with all the trash. Policy RM80, grading and land form modifications that affect site stability, soils and hydrology, should be reviewed, and she warned that there is a wetlands in the corner of the site. The land swap would endanger the trees that are to be logged in 2017/2018 according to the documents. Rennacker said there are a lot of reasons that the Supervisors need to look closer at this project, and their plans and policies, and say no.
10. Rick Sacks stated that the Caspar transfer station has been in his back yard for almost 40 years. Since the cleanup that changed Caspar from a landfill to a transfer station, wildlife and vegetation have come back and it has been amazing. As a self-hauler, he will miss the convenience of being able to haul to Caspar and will have to go out Highway 20. He is glad the Council and Supervisors have the job of figuring out the long-term future of the community for the children and grandchildren.
11. Barbara Moller referred to the project site as "Mike Sweeney's trump of trash." She asked about the CEQA process for the transfer station. The new station would be at the headwaters of the reservoir, and she questioned how smart it would be to put a garbage dump right next to the water reservoir. Moller predicted that there would be problems. Water is one of the most precious resources there is. Fish and Wildlife does not want it. State Parks does not want it. She recommended that the Council rethink putting in a garbage transfer station at the site of the only pygmy forest location in the US. She also expressed concern about leaching.
12. Micky Becker, resident on Prairie Way near the existing transfer station, said that increased traffic is a danger to families, children and pets. She stated that her neighborhood is a community of families and homeowners who are invested in the environment and it would seem appropriate to relocate the transfer station. She acknowledged that many people do not want the new transfer station to be on Highway 20, but she is in support of it because she lives down the street from the current one. Becker noted that the Caspar transfer station is doing really well now and she doesn't see why they could not do it well in the new location or somewhere that does not affect neighborhood children, people and pets.
13. Cynthia Frank lives out Highway 20. Her brother is a forensic engineer with a specialty in soils. He read the draft EIR and was appalled. He submitted a letter with various details and was surprised that all the issues he raised have not been addressed. Mr. Sweeney claims no water

will be leached into the ground, but cleanup and restroom effluent will undoubtedly infiltrate, poisoning local wells and the reservoir that the City is building. She stated that it would be cleaner and cheaper to transfer our garbage by rail and suggested using the Skunk Train. Frank entreated the Council to look at alternatives and said that better solutions to our garbage problems exist. She said that what failed to appease the residents of Road 409 will not appease the residents and travelers on Highway 20.

14. Bill Heil said what is wrong with both the first draft EIR and the revised draft EIR is that they are analyzing the wrong place. There is no way in the world an EIR can be written that can change a pygmy forest into a transfer station that will make any environmental sense at all. This is garbage and it didn't come from animals except for one species. He said that we made it, right here in this town, a whole lot of it made at the Boatyard Center. He said that we should deal with our garbage in the same place that we made it.

15. Teri Jo Barber, Cedar Street resident, said that she has had a long education with regard to water and watershed management. She has a master's degree in water management and spent a long time studying from people who know a lot about that. One of the primary things you learn in Watershed 101 is that you don't put a garbage or waste feature on top of the most prized thing you have in a community, which is your beautiful, fresh, pure water. There are many safeguards in place for the project, but even one snowball's chance is not worth taking the risk for.

Mayor Turner closed the public hearing at 6:46 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Turner adjourned the meeting at 6:50 PM.

DAVE TURNER, MAYOR

June Lemos, City Clerk

IMAGED (_____)