

MARIPOSA COUNTY

Merced River Trail Community Working Group

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: November 18, 2021
TIME: 10:00 AM
LOCATION: TELECONFERENCE ONLY

1. CALL TO ORDER: Goralnik called the meeting to order at: 10:03 AM

Members Present: Jeff Gabe, Dean Bernacchi, Rosemarie Smallcombe, Michael Martin, Art Baggett, Jessica Thompson, Wendy Brown, Ben Goger,

Members Absent: none

Excused Absences: Nick Ross-Rhudy, Ralph Mendershausen, Tony McDaniel

Visitors: none

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE 8/19/21 AND THE 10/21/21 MEETING:

The minutes from the October meeting was unanimously passed. There were not enough members who were present at the August meeting to vote on those minutes.

3. UPDATE TO AND ACTION ON CWG BY-LAWS:

The group voted to adopt revisions to the group's bylaws that are consistent with similar revisions that other county Planning Advisory Committees are also making to align with county policy, with Art Baggett abstaining. Supervisor Smallcombe clarified that her role as a non-voting member is to provide insights into administrative considerations (such as the by-law update), act as a liaison to the Board of Supervisors to share information with other supervisors, and to support staff in communicating CWG activities to the public.

There was a question as to what constitutes an excused versus unexcused absence, for which staff did not know the answer. Goralnik indicated he would investigate and report back. It was pointed out that the group should resume electronic recordings of the meetings.

4. UPDATE ON PROJECT ACTIONS SURVEY AND NEXT STEPS:

Goralnik reminded CWG members that the survey on the draft project actions was released on September 8, and provided an update that so far 114 responses had been logged, with the last response on October 25. He recommended that the survey be closed so that the results could be evaluated by the subcommittee and the responses incorporated into the recommended project actions. The CWG agreed, and it was recommended that the survey be closed. Michael and Art volunteered to serve on the subcommittee and requested that the results be exported and put into a legible format for them to begin working to integrate community input into final project actions that would come to the CWG for discussion and endorsement at a later date.

5. UPDATE ON MILLER GULCH RESTORATION AND POTENTIAL ACQUISITION:

Jeff Gabe and Jessica Thompson provided a summary of the recent Land Revitalization Technical Assistance workshop on the Miller Gulch site. Key takeaways were that, based on input from community and agency partners present at the workshop, the design team would pursue a phased

concept that emphasizes the site's rustic and isolated character while aligning the site restoration objectives with practical recreational enhancements. Goralnik shared that drafts of the deliverable would be available before the end of the year, and that he anticipated the project wrapping up in February 2022.

He also shared that the Board of Supervisors discussed the potential of contributing to an acquisition of the site at the 10/26 Board meeting. Though the supervisors opted not to vote on the matter at that time, several supervisors were outwardly supportive of the idea and the Board was generally amenable. Goralnik indicated that the Planning Department would return to provide an update to the Board at a later time, at which point it would be helpful if CWG members could express their support for the Miller Gulch acquisition at the meeting.

Finally, Goralnik shared that the Planning Department anticipated submitting at least two grant applications in March for external funding to support the acquisition of the Miller Gulch property. Michael Martin, Jeff, and Art Baggett shared that without reviewing the deliverables from the EPA Targeted Brownfield Assessment, they would not feel comfortable advocating for an appraisal of the property.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Goralnik shared that Jeffrey Jenkins, a professor and researcher at UC-Merced, was installing trail counters throughout the trail corridor to collect data on current trail usage. He stated that though the precise use of this data wasn't yet clear, having an understanding of existing use patterns would invariably be valuable for future planning efforts, including the development of the Vision Plan.

7. ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned the meeting at 11:18 AM.

Minutes Prepared by: Mikey Goralnik