

MARIPOSA COUNTY

Code Compliance Advisory Committee

MEETING #24 FINAL MINUTES (approved 4/5/23)

DATE: March 15, 2023

TIME: 2:00 - 4:00 PM

LOCATION: Board of Supervisors Chambers, 2nd Floor
5100 Bullion Street, Mariposa CA

1. Call to Order and Welcome at 2:02 p.m. by Chair Woblesky.

CCAC Members Present: Kris Casto, Lydia Clary, Robert Fox, Ken Melton, Colleen Rhodes, and Karen Woblesky.

CCAC Member Excused: Gabe Edwards, Cassandra Beth Scaffidi.

County Staff Present: Corrina Miranda (Planning).

Public Present: Al Golub, Madison Kirkpatrick (Mariposa Gazette).

Chair Woblesky stated that we have three main focuses today, including (1) a presentation from Ben Goger about the county's Housing Rehabilitation Program, (2) a plan to work out the first half of our 2023 Work Plan, and (3) a review of the public comment input to Code Amendment 2019-218. Chair also asks that both members and the public submit their selections regarding the most significant of those comments. We will review the existing CCAC vacancy next time. The CCAC Memorandum will be before the Board of Supervisors on April 11. Next time, we will also review our process for submitting our minutes to the Board each month.

2. Approve Minutes of CCAC Meeting #23, 2/15/2023.

No edits or amendments were requested by members or the public.

Motion by Casto to approve the minutes as submitted.

Second by Clary.

Motion passed. 6 ayes, unanimous.

3. Discussion re: CCAC Member Introduction Roundtable

Chair Woblesky asked that all members provide a brief introduction, background, and what they hope to accomplish on the CCAC.

Clary described her 32 years of experience in code compliance and building work of all types in several jurisdictions (Los Angeles, Santa Rosa, Merced, and Stockton), and that she worked eight years

in firefighting prior to that. Casto described her ten years of experience on Los Altos Planning Commission and eight years on Los Altos City Council, which included helping to change her area from an unincorporated jurisdiction to a city, her nonprofit work, and her full-time vineyard and winery business. Fox described his 30+ year career in engineering and construction work including nuclear power stations and large mining facilities, his current efforts to build an ADU (accessory dwelling unit), and his hopes to streamline and simplify code compliance processes. Woblesky described her Human Resources background in the public sector, her hopes for simplifying code compliance processes and building bridges with the community. Rhodes described her 25 years of work in another county, including Planning, County Administrative Office, County Hospital, as a Deputy DA, and her hopes to make codes and processes fair and legal. Melton stated that he grew up in Yosemite and has lived in the county for 76 years, worked in real estate about 30 years, worked with BOS since 1977, helped the county write codes and develop two General Plans.

4. Presentation/Discussion re: Overlapping interests/programs with mitigating possible housing-related issues that may become a code compliance issue, as well as rehabilitating houses that are currently on the code compliance violation log. Presentation by Ben Goger, County of Mariposa Housing Specialist.

This agenda item was initially skipped, but was returned to at 2:58 p.m., after item #5 was discussed in full.

Chair Woblesky introduced Ben Goger, Housing Development Specialist for Mariposa County.

Goger presented information about the county's Housing Rehabilitation Program, which has been in place since 2000. It includes a couple of different grants that were put together with the assistance of Self Help Enterprises (SHE). The total funds are over \$700,000. Eligible uses are extensive and apply to individuals making <80% of area median income. We have almost 50% of residents who make close to that amount. Great opportunity to get funds to fix homes. Individual applies and indicates a need for repair. Eligibility intake is done with SHE. Contractors put together a work project.

In two years of promoting the program extensively, no one has gone all the way through the process. Goger has worked with Alliance for Community Transformations, Oak Fire individuals and case workers, and others. Trying to discover why so few applicants. Have had 15 go through initial intake. One Oak Fire family has gone through further than anyone before and is currently still active. Applicants have not wanted to take on the debt. A lot of people don't have upfront money to pay for repairs. But the loan is not just given away. The loan is attached to the property as a secondary lien. It is a no interest, deferred payment loan, so it's a great rate and a great deal. A lot of the demographic is on a fixed income. Once repaid, the funds then go back to the program so they can be redispersed.

During COVID market spikes, home values were rising too high for property owners to be able to qualify. Values over \$284,000 made properties overvalued for the program. The guidelines include income eligibility as well as the property's value, including land value and improvements.

Miranda asked how the property value is established. Goger responded that it is rough regional valuations and that valuations constantly change. Miranda observed that unimproved parcels are selling for more than \$284,000. This valuation level appears to be a major problem with the applicability of the program for our county.

Goger emphasized that health and safety issues, and code compliance issues are a focus.

Melton asked Miranda whether she has identified any such properties. Miranda stated that health and safety issues tend to be fixed quickly. She believes some feel that getting into such a program opens a Pandora's box for themselves and they're reluctant to do so.

Goger mentioned a sister program for first-time home buyers who may be reluctant to participate.

Woblesky stated that the CCAC has been looking at using ARPA funds, and asked if Goger were writing this grant himself and was looking at ways for property owners to repay, how would he write it. Goger said he would be as lenient as possible in writing grant guidelines, would be concerned about fairness and access to as many as possible. Woblesky invited Goger to consider partnering with the CCAC to develop ideas that may work for the community.

Miranda mentioned that engaging with HHSA may be helpful as well. Clary stated that funds can be transferred to a code enforcement fund to achieve certain objectives and improvements. She asked Goger if he can think of any kind of funds that might be transferred into an abatement fund that goes toward better health and safety, that could be helpful. Goger agreed to keep an eye out for such funding.

Miranda stated that she will reach out to representatives from the county's Health and Human Services Agency to invite them to present to the committee.

Fox says he is concerned about the use of the term "grant," that it may be misleading. Goger clarified that the grant is to the county from the state and the funds are then dispersed through zero-interest loans. The state may continue to provide additional funds if the county is able to show that it has been successful. Rhodes stated she believes Goger and his team have done great work and that it is now essential that all others who can help do so. Woblesky agreed. The members thanked Goger for his excellent presentation and he agreed to provide more information.

5. Discussion/Activity/Possible Action re: First Half of 2023 Work Plan Worksheet. Identification of CCAC next steps and priorities through June 2023.

Chair Woblesky introduced this item, beginning with a description of the Work Plan Worksheet, which attempts to keep the committee organized and moving forward and to organize essential issues.

Woblesky mentioned that we are moving forward in part through use of an ad hoc committee. Clary stated that the most recent ad hoc committee meeting was very productive, that more information will be presented at our next meeting.

Woblesky referred to the communication/education plan, which was originally worked on by then-members Nancy Kemp, Eileen Collins, and Karen Smith. The communication/education plan has been developed to the point that it can be further refined and perhaps finalized by the committee members in total.

The Memorandum will go before the Board of Supervisors on April 11 at 2 p.m.

Woblesky explained that the ARPA funds (\$300,000) must be allocated by July of this year. Some funds may be used to fund an abatement account that could assist with mitigation of violations. Clary stated that allocating ARPA funds is a huge priority, whether for an abatement account or for a vehicle abatement process. If we can utilize those funds, the progress could be significant. Woblesky added that funds could be used for an amnesty program.

Woblesky invited input to set priorities. Clary would like a whiteboard session to develop and prioritize ideas as quickly as possible. Casto believes that we should extend our meeting duration. Rhodes agreed. Melton is against ad hocs and wants the CCAC as a whole to consider ideas, doesn't want others giving ideas to him, wants to be engaged in the process himself. Woblesky agrees that we do best as a group in a working meeting context and asked if we have consensus. Woblesky asked specifically whether the group agrees that ARPA funds should be the priority for April. The group agreed it should. The group further agreed to meet from 1 pm to 4 pm at the next meeting. Miranda will reserve the room for the extended three-hour period.

Woblesky explained that other issues including amnesty, abatement, and ad hoc committees will fall into place better after we have made decisions about the ARPA funds. Consensus was reached to review the 2019-218 Code Amendment language in the second half of the year. We will get an update on the ad hoc committees' progress at the next meetings along with the ARPA funds. Melton repeated his objections.

Woblesky volunteered herself to review the communication/education plan that was previously put together in late 2022.

Casto thinks we need to focus on the nuisance issue, that nuisances are a primary concern of the community. Woblesky responded that this issue underpins much of the concern about the code compliance process. Clary added that abatement may deal with concerns about nuisances. Rhodes stated that new members need to read the prior agendas and minutes and attempt to get up to speed so the committee can move forward, that junk was discussed at multiple meetings. Melton continued earlier comments about not getting things done, trying to handle too much, and giving over decision-making to subcommittees.

Casto agreed to work on the issue of nuisances to pull together some ideas in a way similar to the work Edwards did on vehicle abatement and Rhodes did on solid waste efforts at landfills and transfer stations.

Woblesky then moved the discussion to agenda item #4 (above).

6. Review/Discussion of Proposed 2019-218 Code Amendment.

Chair Woblesky introduced the item, related some of the history of the 2019-218 Code Amendment and the opposition to it from the community. She observed that many things made this process go sideways, but it's important that we understand the community's responses, whether spoken or written, to understand the actual language of the proposal and the reasons for opposing. Wants the CCAC members to come to an understanding of these concerns. Even though the committee will move this topic to July and after, we need to have these concerns in mind as we go about our other efforts. These community concerns need to be kept in mind as we make future recommendations. Chair

Woblesky again asked that members and the public submit what they believe are the top three issues that the public communicated in their oppositions.

7. Discussion/Possible Action re: Future CCAC Agenda Items. Next CCAC Meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2023. (Meeting #25)

Woblesky indicated that in the interest of time we won't discuss this beyond what we talked about earlier. Next meeting, we will discuss ARPA and amnesty.

8. Persons wishing to speak on a matter not on the agenda, but within the jurisdiction of the committee.

No public comment was offered.

9. Adjourned at 4:11 p.m.

Motion by Melton to adjourn.

Second by Fox

Motion passed. 6 ayes, unanimous.

Minutes submitted by,

Colleen Rhodes
CCAC Secretary