

Sherry Golestan

From: Mike Cohen [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2020 4:30 PM
To: CMO_BoardFeedback
Subject: comment on agenda item #1 of Wednesday October 14 Special Meeting

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of San Mateo County. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments or reply.

Supervisor Horsley
Division Chief Sampson
Parks Director Nicholas Calderon
Executive Director Kellyx Nelson

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am running for Pacifica city council District 4 which is in the southeast corner of town. Most east and southern homes adjoin open space. This open space is GGNRA, state park (McNee) and San Pedro Valley County park. A large number of the voters I am talking to are concerned about a defensible break between their homes and open space lands.

Today we are discussing a county response regarding fire and fuel reduction issues.

The county must commit to a firebreak program. Then map and start work on firebreak protections around all county lands and Pacifica as soon as possible. A lightning strike which generated fires anywhere near the size and severity of what we witnessed in the CZU complex would destroy hundreds of Pacifica homes with very little warning.

Secondly, the County could be an invaluable ally in securing a joint meeting with the GGNRA and state to secure their engagement on a firebreak program as well. The county park is in the middle of adjoining open space-- GGNRA to the north, and state parks to the west.

All three open space owners have to engage in complementary firebreak programs for the effort to be seamless and useful.

Thank you.
Mike Cohen
Candidate for Pacifica City Council District 4

Sherry Golestan

From: Denise Enea [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2020 12:45 AM
To: CMO_BoardFeedback
Subject: Comment agenda item 1 Fuel Load Reduction in SMC

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of San Mateo County. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments or reply.

As a long time San Mateo County resident and recently retired Fire Marshal for the Woodside Fire Protection District I have been adamantly concerned that fuel reduction and wildfire resiliency for homes has played second fiddle to many other County and City priorities. Ironically as this meeting is being held today a red flag warning has been issued for parts of San Mateo County. The recent CZU fire established that our County is well suited for a large wildfire conflagration and we are grossly unprepared in our wildfire resiliency measures.

Our building codes are inadequate when it comes to ignition resistance. Instead of being built to resist, homes are being built to burn. Wood shake roofs, wood siding, inadequate vents and wood decks are consistently being used instead of materials and methods that are proven to be ignition resistant. Relaxed zoning measures are allowing more and more homes to be built in the most hazardous parts of the County. Have we learned nothing from the severe tragedies of wildfire victims in northern California? Fire officials consistently lobby for more stringent ignition resistant building codes, only to be continuously turned down by County and City staff. Vegetation and trees are encouraged by our planning departments to be planted around our homes instead of reduced. The County tree ordinance actually hinders any sort of defensible space or wildfire resiliency effort with its outrageous replacement ratio of trees during the removal of a single specimen. Incentivizing measures such as; free tree removal permits for non-native and fire prone invasive trees, i.e. eucalyptus, acacia and pine. These types of removal permits should be encouraged and not hindered by large fees and requiring laborious and costly reports.

Our roadways, which serve as our evacuation routes, are overflowing with vegetation, and cantilevering tree branches. Invasive and highly flammable vegetation such as scotch broom, eucalyptus and diseased pines are abundant along the County and City roads and hover over the PG&E powerlines. There are no County programs that identify these ignition target hazards or work towards their removal. The County Parks Department has a monumental task in reducing the hazardous fire fuels in their parks. The Parks Department has proactive initiatives and capable individuals to institute and oversee forest health management projects however, inadequate staffing and equipment operators to complete the work.

Fire Safe San Mateo County regularly applies for and implements grants from various sources and conducts medium to large scale fuel reduction projects for a variety of landowners and cities within San Mateo County. Fire Safe members including Cal Fire staff and other fire agencies work hand in hand to accomplish monumental fuel reduction projects and purchase state of the art equipment. Some of our larger projects include; Eaton Park, Big Canyon Park, Teague Hill, Portola Rd. eucalyptus removal, Cattle Hill cypress removal, Devonshire Canyon hazard tree removal, Woodside Rd./Wunderlich Park eucalyptus removal, Sandhill Rd. eucalyptus removal and of course our community neighborhood chipper program which we hope to grow in 2021 with the Supervisors' support.

Fire Safe is committed to the entire WUI community of San Mateo County and stand at the ready to assist the County of San Mateo in defining and implementing efficient fuel reduction programs, resident resiliency incentives, ignition resistant planning/building codes, safer evacuation routes and wildfire resiliency policies to help make San Mateo the leader in wildfire resiliency instead of the victim of catastrophic wildfire.

Thank you

Denise Enea

Fire Safe SMC, President