

Written Comments for
Regular Public Comment Section
- **Consent Agenda**
- **Non Agenda Items**

El Granada, November 18, 2024

Dear Supervisor Ray Mueller and Board of Supervisors,

I know your hands are full, especially with the developments in the Sheriff's Department, but I'm hoping you could give some attention to the issues that I am presenting here. It starts with 'the story pole requirement', an essential tool for the Coastsides Design Review Committee (CDRC) that the Planning Department took away 4 1/2 years ago without informing the Planning Commissioners or the community. There seems to be no official documentation available that can explain the need to do this after decades of it effectively functioning as a de facto regulation.

There are 2 current petitions to bring the story poles back:

<https://www.change.org/p/story-poles-requirement-change-to-smc-coastsides-demonstration-of-project-scale-policy-b636408f-9ef1-4de2-8050-fac51c3fc7f2> by David Alumbaugh from 2023

<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/bring-back-the-story-poles> by me from August 2024

The bigger story is how there is a lack of transparency and information available for the public. The County Planners/ Planning Department have taken away the posted 'Chair Reports' on the CDRC (Coastsides Design Review District) website that was the only form of information that provided any clues into the work of the CDRC. In April they took away video and use only audio for the hearings. The Board of Supervisors appointed a representative for El Granada who was supposed to start in January 2023, he has not shown up, but remains on the roster. There is no alternate either, so we are without representation. It is about transparency and democracy in the end. I think there is need for oversight and reform and I was hoping you could provide that.

I've tried to be concise while still giving you the relevant sources and information. My points are 5 pages long, the rest is Attachments referred to.

Sincerely,

Birgitta Bower, El Granada resident since 2014.

4 years ago I became aware of the CDRC because we had story poles come up in front of our house. I can attest to how effective they are compared to a poster. The story pole installation had been in practice forever and not in itself questioned by anyone. (Not to say it didn't have minor problems: the posts were supposed to come up 10 days before hearings, which didn't happen in our case; sometimes they were inaccurately installed and not inspected; and sometimes they were late in coming down after hearings.)

The story poles were unceremoniously killed off on May 28, 2020 when the County published 'Demonstration of Project Scale' that made it official that though story poles were 'standard', you could use images on a poster instead. Builders loved it, less hassle and the real impact of the building could be lessened and manipulated on images compared to the physical presence of poles and webbing. The CDRC members weren't happy about it and have worked ever since to bring them back. They consider story poles a valuable tool for them and the community. How the story poles could be taken out in this way is veiled in mystery. (See my point 6 on page 4.) I asked questions, wrote emails, posted on NextDoor to inform the community etc., but left it at that because it sounded like the CDRC members were very focused on getting the story poles back asap.

This year again, there was a project close to us, but no story poles this time. I wanted to understand why. I went through what is called "Chair Reports" (Attachment 1) on the County website. I posted what I found on CoastsideBuzz in October (See "The case of the missing story poles" at <https://coastsidebuzz.com/?s=story+poles> <https://coastsidebuzz.com/story-poles-or-digital-pictures-mid-coastside-design-review-committee-discusses-efficacy-cost-and-logistics/>). My summary was:

The last Chair note is in August 2022. So long story short: May 2020 there was a new Policy for Demonstration of scale, story poles were recommended, but not enforceable. The CDRC tried to get an Urgency Ordinance for required story poles with a letter in July 2020. Then there was going to be public outreach, but in March 2021, lacking "community urgency", the Planning Director killed the effort. Surveys and outreach was then planned. Then all efforts from the County ended in July 2022. The CDRC kept on talking about the story poles at every meeting since. For some reason the County went through the trouble of making a new Policy in July 2024, that functions the same as the 2020 Policy.

The CDRC is currently trying to write a new 'Demonstration of Scale' to bring back story poles. They spent 2 hours at their October meeting, and continued at the November meeting. They released correspondence from 2019 and 2020 (<https://www.smcgov.org/media/151384/download?inline=>) to be reviewed by them as a guide. It's a 37 page collection of emails, where the last 7 pages [sic] outline all the steps needed in order to get story poles back. The CDRC members patience with this is amazing. This emails gave me more clues, and I will refer to this source as 'Media' with a page number.

The story poles is one issue, but the bigger story in my opinion is the lack of transparency. I have tried corresponding with the County Senior Planner Camille Leung who leads/supports the CDRC hearings and planner Luis Topete. (Luis Topete did help by putting up the hearing recordings for 2024 that were missing), but I would like to have a some issues reviewed by the Board of Supervisors. I have 7 concerns:

1. The Board of Supervisors appointed a representative for El Granada to serve Dec 2023 to March 2025. This person wasn't at the meeting my neighbors and I attended in September. He also doesn't appear on the 2024 head of agendas where the members are listed, and he has so far never attended a meeting. (See Camille Leung's reply to this, Attachment 2)
2. The roster of members lists architect Rebecca Katlin (who resigned in March), but she is listed as serving till 2026 (Attachment 3). Anyone going by this list would presume that El Granada has a representative, and that there are already 2 architects. The Notice of Vacancy page (Attachment 4) is dated in 2018, and then just copied and pasted for January 2024.
3. When the story pole requirement went away, the Planning Commissioners were not informed about the change. The Coastside Commissioner, Lisa Ketcham, wrote two CDRC members in September 2020 (see Attachment 5, also in Media pp 17-18). She writes that she didn't learn of the new non requirement of story poles until she saw a NextDoor post of mine. Lisa also notes that *"the public is handicapped because since CDRC meeting pages provide no minutes, video or supporting documents..."*, she also recommends *"ask to have more info provided on CDRC website to help the public be aware of what you are doing"*. That did not happen.
4. There used to be regular 'Chair Person Notes' (<https://www.smcgov.org/planning/cdrc-chair-reports>) as described on the agendas, but they end in July 2022. Camille Leung's response to this (Attachment 2) is that *"they are not required to be posted online"* and she refers to the audio recordings. The 'Chair Reports' are now read at the meetings, but not available online.
5. The CDRC hearings had video up until April 2024, but the planners now say they can only do audio. The audio quality is not very good. Camille Leung cites bandwidth as a reason. Gregg Dieguez of the MCC, which uses the same room as the CDRC, commented that they use PCTV with audio and video and it works fine. Leung's response to this was that they use an "owl" system that may use more bandwidth. (Attachment 6). I found a Chair Report Note from May 2021: *"County Council is reluctant to approve publishing the CDRC Zoom video meetings because of legal ramifications. The preference by County is for CDRC to post audio-only"* (see Attachment 6).

6. At the demise of the story poles in 2020, the only documentation I can find ‘explaining’ it is: *“We consulted Lisa Aozasa, Deputy Director, on the Story Pole policy. She reiterated that the policy is just a policy and not a regulation.”*(Media p 1). That was an email by Camille Leung Nov 6, 2019. On May 11, she writes that *“ After further discussion with County Counsel, Management staff has revised the Demonstration of Project Scale Policy (previously the “story pole” policy) to be more in line with current legal authority”*(Media p 8). May 28, 2020 there was a new “Demonstration of Project Scale” where story poles were no longer required.

7. At the CDRC meetings there has long been talk of a need to rewrite the “Design Standards” that the work of the CDRC is based on. The standards need be more “objectified”. I asked Camille Leung why in an email (See Attachment 7). I was referred to the recordings. There is no information of the changes that are anticipated for the future? Objective standards would do away with the role of the CDRC, which seems a big deal. No need for public input for this?

Going from required story poles to no requirement happened without any documentation or notice sent to the Planning Commission. With all the legalize the County otherwise use (“in line with current legal authority’ and ‘legal ramifications’) that is remarkable in itself. Bringing back the story poles would require a year long effort to *‘form internal stakeholder team’, ‘develop and implement Outreach Strategy’, ‘internal stakeholder outreach’, ‘internal stakeholder outreach’, ‘broad public outreach’, ‘public meeting’, ‘present draft ordinance to MCC/PC’, etc etc* (Media pp 31-37). The Planning Department took away story poles with the stroke of a pen knowing it would be extremely difficult to get them back.

The members of the CDRC never understood the whole ‘it’s a policy, not a regulation/requirement thing’. If it comes to “wording”, Half Moon Bay is getting away with having a “Policy for Story Poles” that is also a requirement. In an email, architect Katie Kostiuk writes (Media p 4) Nov 6, 2019 : *I may never understand the difference between a policy and a regulation as far as how they are enforced differently. Seems like it’s either a requirement or it’s not, especially if the policy says they are required. That said, it sounds like you are proposing for it to be REQUIRED. Does that mean it would be a regulation and no longer would be a policy?* “ When I wrote and asked about it, he answer I got from Camille Leung in 2020 was: *“the County could not rely on a ‘policy’ (which is not formally adopted as a law by the Board of Supervisors, unlike regulation which is adopted) to legally require applicants to put up story poles.”* (Attachment 8). Since there is no document explaining what happened, new as well as old CDRC members have continued over the years to be confused over why the story poles went away.

It is striking to see how easy it is to take away things from the public: story poles that has functioned for ages without major problem as long as everyone did them, video recordings, and Chair Reports that give some, even if cryptic, insight into what is going on. You can only conclude that the County Planning Department wants no documents reviewable by the public, prefers bad audio, sees no need to fill vacancies on the CDRC, is uninterested in doing public outreach, and prefers to keep the CDRC work under wraps.

I think the Midcoast communities deserve to know if it was a really necessary to end a well established, reasonably well functioning policy of everyone building putting up story poles. For 4 1/2 years it's been discussed probably at every CDRC meeting. At least by the actions taken it appears the County Planners have a different agenda than the CDRC and the Midcoast community and 'no story poles' fits in with the new objective standards.

In conclusion, I am asking the Board of Supervisors:

- Did the San Mateo County Planning Department act lawfully when they summarily ended a story pole policy that had for all intents and purposes worked well as a requirement for decades and was an important tool for the CDRC? Is it reasonable that the Coastside has been without them for 4 1/2 years?
- Can a story pole requirement be implemented on fast track? The Planning Director denied the CDRC's Urgency Ordinance in 2021 because there was a lack of "community urgency". (From Chair Report March 11, 2021. Attachment 9). How do you show "community urgency"? We have two petitions. If it takes a year of outreach etc., and then apparently 2 years to get it on the agenda (mentioned at a meeting) for the Board of Supervisors to make it law, it seems unacceptably bureaucratic. That's why maybe it's easier put the 2020 policy back as it was.
- Can the CDRC and the Planning Department be reformed to serve the public better by reinstating video recordings, publishing on going business and making documents available on the CDRC website?

The Board of Supervisors appoints the Coastside Design Review Committee (CDRC) to ensure that new development is compatible with the physical setting of the site and the visual character of the Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Miramar and Princeton communities. The CDRC Chairperson prepares [regular reports](#) describing current matters of CDRC business.

CDRC Chair Reports

CDRC Chair Report - August 11, 2022

CDRC Chair Report - February 10, 2022

CDRC Chair Report - November 18, 2021

CDRC Chair Report - May 13, 2021

CDRC Chair Report - April 18, 2021

CDRC Chair Report - March 11, 2021

CDRC Chair Report - January 14, 2021

CDRC Chair Report - November 12, 2020

Attachment 2



Camille Leung

Inbox - Google November 12, 2024 at 2:20 PM

RE: Problems with the CDRC

To: Birgitta BOWER, Planning_CDRC, MCC, Planning_Commission,
Steve Monowitz,
Cc: Luis Topete, Lisa Ketcham



Hi Birgitta,

Please see my responses below, as underlined:

The CDRC roster is never updated, there is supposed to be a Clinton Miles representing El Granada (Dec 12 2023 to March 31, 2025). He never appears on any agendas, and he wasn't there when we had a hearing for an El Granada house in October. I wrote Luis Topete twice, I didn't get an answer to my second mail, see below. – Clinton was appointed by the Board of Supervisors. He has not formally resigned as a CDRC member, so he remains on the roster. We will continue to reach out to him.

The “for immediate release - notice of vacancy” looks like a copy & paste. What outreach is the CDRC and County doing to fill these vacancies? What outreach is there concerning ongoing issues, like the story poles? – Outreach for both is via CDRC meetings, website information, and informal recruitment by members and staff. Story poles discussion is on-going, but should requirements be incorporated into the Design Review Regulations (other changes being made to these regulations), there will be a formal outreach process as a part of the larger regulations update project.

The link to “regular” Chair Person reports ended in August 2022. How does the Coastside know about what is happening with building regulations on the Coastside. –Chair reports are not required to be posted online. Discussions are recorded with the meeting and audio recordings are available.

The CDRC meetings are audio only since May. It was mentioned by the planner at a meeting that video now somehow interferes with audio. Really? – Due to wifi bandwidth at the GCSD Building, having the camera on makes the connection less reliable. To allow for participation and understanding by participants, we have chosen audio over video. However, we do believe there is a way for the recording to include information from screen sharing despite the camera being off; we will continue to see if we can adjust the recording to include this.

-

Attachment 3

Board Details Member Roster

[April Bingham](#)

Partial Term	Position
Dec 12, 2023 to Mar 31, 2024	Community Representative
Title	Representing
Member	Miramar

[Moshe Porter](#)

Partial Term	Position
Feb 27, 2024 to Mar 31, 2025	Architect
Title	Representing
Member	At-Large

[Julian Martinez](#)

Partial Term	Position
Dec 12, 2023 to Mar 31, 2025	Community Representative
Title	Representing
Alternate	Moss Beach

[Clinton Miles](#)

Partial Term	Position
Dec 12, 2023 to Mar 31, 2025	Community Representative
Title	Representing
Member	El Granada

[James Bennington](#)

Partial Term	Position
Dec 12, 2023 to Mar 31, 2026	Community Representative
Title	Representing
Member	Montara

[Mark Stegmaier](#)

1st Term	Position
Apr 01, 2023 to Mar 31, 2026	Community Representative
Title	Representing
Alternate	Montara

[John Steadman](#)

1st Term	Position
Mar 28, 2023 to Mar 31, 2026	Community Representative
Title	Representing
Member	Princeton

[Rebecca Katkin](#)

1st Term	Position
Mar 29, 2023 to Mar 31, 2026	Landscape Architect
Title	Representing
Member	Architect (At-Large)

[Mark Dinh](#)

Partial Term	Position
Jul 11, 2023 to Mar 31, 2026	Community Representative
Title	Representing
Member	Moss Beach

NEWS

January 18, 2018 (Updated January 25, 2024)

For Immediate Release - Notice of Vacancy

Design Review Committee – Coastside

President of the Board of Supervisors Warren Slocum announced that applications are being accepted for appointment to the Design Review Committee – Coastside. There are currently five (5) vacancies on the subject board, with a 6th vacancy effective April 2024 for an Architect At-Large:

Two (2) Architect At-Large Community Representative (1 effective April 2024)

One (1) Alternate Architect At-Large Representative

One (1) Alternate Miramar Community Representative (see map attached)

One (1) Alternate Princeton Community Representative (see map attached)

One (1) Alternate El Granada Representative (see map attached)

The Design Review Committee – Coastside consists of 13 members: two licensed architects or landscape architects; one alternate licensed architect or landscape architect, and two residents (one representative, and one alternate representative) who live in each of the following unincorporated MidCoast communities: Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton, and Miramar. Princeton positions are an exception and can be held by residents in any of the listed unincorporated MidCoast communities. ***PLEASE SEE ATTACHED PAGES FOR MAPS OF COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES***

The Design Review Committee was established by County ordinance to review building plans for new development in certain unincorporated communities of the County which are zoned Design Review (DR). Meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at Granada Community Services District meeting room, 504 Avenue Alhambra 3rd Floor, El Granada.

Applications will be received on an ongoing basis and can be submitted online at the County website: <https://www.smcgov.org/bnc/application-boards-commissions-and-committees>, or obtained from Sherry Golestan, Deputy Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, 400 County Center, Redwood City, sgolestan@smcgov.org or by calling (650) 363-4609. For information about this committee, contact Camille Leung, Committee Liaison, at 650-363-1826 or cleung@smcgov.org. For information about this release, contact Sherry Golestan, Deputy Clerk of the Board, at (650) 363-4609 or sgolestan@smcgov.org.

Attachment 5

Lisa Ketcham <lisa.ketcham@comcast.net>
To: Katie Kostiuk <katie@fatpenstudios.com>
Cc: Beverly Garrity <bnergarrity@comcast.net>

Mon, Sep 14, 2020 at 7:38 PM

Hi Katie and Beverly,

I should have paid closer attention to your agendas last spring to realize what was going on. I just saw the words story poles and thought it was some simple tweaking. That said, the public is handicapped since CDRC meeting pages provide no minutes, video, or supporting documents other than project plans. There is no notation added to indicate that projects on the agenda were approved, denied, or continued. There were no supporting documents re story poles (old & new policy). I learned about the policy change on Nextdoor in August — https://nextdoor.com/news_feed/?post=158120273&comment=447128350

Thanks for sharing your outline & purposes section. It should be easy and quite helpful if you just cc the email/attachments to the MCC and the Planning Commission:

MidcoastCommunityCouncil@gmail.com

Planning-Commission@smcgov.org

(Always blind copy me when sending to the PC so I can be sure the secretary forwards it to the Commissioners (that does not always happen). No need to worry about that with MCC, since that goes directly to each Councilmember.)

I have made MCC and PC aware of the issue now, and receipt of your correspondence may trigger further discussion. It was helpful for me in bringing it up at the PC that Birgitta Bower had written the PC which provided an opening to discuss the correspondence on an item not on the agenda. None of the other Commissioners had any idea what had occurred, and it helped that in addition to me, Commissioner Santacruz expressed dismay that this requirement had just quietly gone away. I pointed out that tying the update to the C-1 or DR update would take too long, that both have been dormant for a year with no indication when they might start up (don't hold your breath, or give much weight to the dates on the

Long-Term Planning Work Plan). For whatever reason, getting this out in the open at a Planning Commission meeting motivated Steve to give or change the direction to staff. Keeping the MCC informed on what CDRC is doing is helpful to them and provides them with the opportunity to weigh in with support, or at least lets the County know that MCC is informed.

Things you can do as CDRC members:

Keep asking for status updates on these long-term planning projects.

Ask to have more info provided on CDRC website to help the public be aware of what you're doing (see comments above).

Encourage Chris to give updates on CDRC at MCC meetings. He often attends their meetings and is their rep on the Quarry Park pump track committee. He could report during Public Comment about the change in story pole policy — no need to devote time to an agenda item and presentation. ¹⁰ That puts the news out there, on the video, and in the minutes — better late than never.

Best of luck,
Lisa

Attachment 6

 **Camille Leung**
RE: Problems with the CDRC
To: Birgitta BOWER, Gregg Dieguez, Cc: Planning_CDRC, MCC, Planning_Commission, Steve Monowitz, Luis Topete, Lisa Ketcham
Yesterday at 1:18 PM
[Details](#)

Thanks, that was the guidance one year into the pandemic. Other County hearings have video, so its something we can look into to

From: Birgitta Bower <bowerbirgitta@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2024 9:37 AM
To: Camille Leung <cleung@smcgov.org>; Gregg Dieguez <mccgreggd@gmail.com>
Cc: Planning_CDRC <CDRC@smcgov.org>; MCC <midcoastcommunitycouncil@gmail.com>; Planning_Commission <Planning_Commission@smcgov.org>; Steve Monowitz <smonowitz@smcgov.org>; Luis Topete <ltopete@smcgov.org>; Lisa Ketcham <lisa.ketcham@comcast.net>
Subject: Re: Problems with the CDRC

Good Morning,

This is the from the Chair Person Report May 133, 2021 <https://www.smcgov.org/media/78006/download?inline=>

PLANNING INSPECTION REQUESTS

Katie Kostiuk noted a vacant parcel at 498 Avenue Portola with a wood fence in process, and a parking pad installed. Staff reports no current permits. Katie sent photos to staff. Violation case has been opened. Owner is working with Camille Leung to resolve. ~~5/13/2021 In process.~~

DISCUSSION: CDRC TELEVISED MEETINGS

Request for CDRC meetings to be televised on PCTV. How can anyone gain access to the audio recordings? County Council is reluctant to approve publishing the CDRC Zoom video meetings because of legal ramifications. The preference by County is for CDRC to post audio-only, and has advised all county meetings continue their publishing methods remain consistent with what they were doing pre-pandemic. Ruemel is working to implement audio only for CDRC.

On Nov 13, 2024, at 7:32 AM, Camille Leung <cleung@smcgov.org> wrote:

Hi Gregg,

We use a device called "the owl" with a rotating camera and built in mic/speaker, which may consume more bandwidth than the system you use. We are a bit limited to the equipment we are provided by the County but will continue to see if we can make adjustments to improve video capabilities.

Thanks

From: Gregg Dieguez <mccgreggd@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 6:07 PM
To: Camille Leung <cleung@smcgov.org>
Cc: Birgitta Bower <bowerbirgitta@gmail.com>; Planning_CDRC <CDRC@smcgov.org>; MCC <midcoastcommunitycouncil@gmail.com>; Planning_Commission <Planning_Commission@smcgov.org>; Steve Monowitz <smonowitz@smcgov.org>; Luis Topete <ltopete@smcgov.org>; Lisa Ketcham <lisa.ketcham@comcast.net>
Subject: Re: Problems with the CDRC

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.

Camille,
I've never attended a CDRC meeting, but we use GCSD offices on 3rd floor for MCC meetings. We are recorded by PCTV. We have zoom attendees with audio and visual working (mostly) fine. I don't know if some essential infrastructure item is missing when you meet, but our meetings don't have the restriction to audio only.

- Gregg



Camille Leung

To: Birgitta Cc: Luis >

10/15/24

RE: New Design Standards?

Hi Biritta,

I explained the need for DR standards update as well as why it had been on the backburner at length at the meeting. I am asking Luis to send you a link to the recording once it is loaded to the website.

Thanks!

-----Original Message-----

From: Birgitta Bower <bowerbirgitta@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 14, 2024 10:12 AM

To: Camille Leung <cleung@smcgov.org>

Subject: New Design Standards?

Hi,

At the Coastsides meeting Thursday 10/10 you mentioned that the County wanted to make the Design Standards more objective. Did I understand you correctly? If so, why is that, and who decides that?

It would explain why the County has been putting the story poles "on the back burner" for 4 years. I think our local communities would like to be informed if there are changes coming to the CDRC and the Design Standards.

Hoping for transparency,
Birgitta Bower, El Granada

Attachment 8

-----Original Message-----

From: Birgitta Bower <bowerbirgitta@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2020 4:15 PM

To: Planning_Commission <Planning_Commission@smcgov.org>; Planning_CDRC <CDRC@smcgov.org>

Subject: For your sep 26 consideration: Story poles etc.

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.

Hi,

I've tried understanding the whole permitting-reviewing-approval procedure since we had story poles pop up across from us on a Sunday morning in March (4 days before the CDRC meeting, not 10). I now understand that the whole procedure, beginning to end, is not clear to the CDRC members, nor the Planning Commission either.

The CDRC members don't know where set backs on plans come from, they don't know who decides them initially at the county, they don't know how the planning commission deals with items once they have CDRC approval; and then the County tries to influence the planning commission saying that setbacks and height are essentially part of mass and placement, so it something the CDRC has already dealt with, which is not accurate.

The Planning Commission members do not know what is up with the story poles now.

The CDRC seems to have been discussing story poles for a long time. I heard them on the April zoom meeting, it took five minutes, but they did agree that story poles are there for the community and neighbors to fully appreciate the impact a building will have. (Nothing can replace the stark reality of an orange mesh obstructing your view). Again, at the August CDRC meeting, story poles were discussed. Turns out nobody is using them anymore after a May 28 Ordinance declaring that builders can put up a poster instead of story poles (simultaneously, and disingenuously, calling story poles 'standard'). The CDRC wanted to make the story poles mandatory, except under certain circumstances, but according to the County representative this was complicated and a new ordinance couldn't just be written as easily as the May ordinance for some reason. On my question, Camille Leung wrote that the CDRC had to write the request for the ordinance change. I'm not sure where the ball lies exactly.

Anyway, it sounds like the Planning Commission is not aware that none of the 5 projects reviewed by the CDRC in August had story poles, and that no builder is going to put them up until there is a new Ordinance.

At one of the CDRC meetings I heard the landscape architect was quitting his job at CDRC because it takes a lot of time. Also, that his gig in Atherton paid \$200/hr instead of the \$50/month that the Coastsides members get. Most members of the CDRC are committed to doing the best job possible representing our communities, and I think they are worth a more adequate compensation. The August meeting took something like 8 hours and necessitated a lot of preparation on top of that. I think it behoves the Community to show appreciation of the hard work with a more generous compensation. I also find that the CDRC decisions, should not be made with a two member vote, it needs the input of three, it should be noted in some kind of Ordinance.

I don't see how the CDRC members and the Planning Commission can find the time for it, but it would be good if you sometimes check in with each other. If you don't see the whole picture, you don't know the impact of your decisions.

Thank You for your time,

Birgitta Bower, 545 The Alameda, El Granada



Camille Leung

Inbox - Google August 27, 2020 at 9:41 AM

RE: For your sep 26 consideration: Story poles etc.

To: Birgitta BOWER, Cc: Ruemel Panglao, Janneth Lujan

[Details](#)



Hi Birgitta,

Thanks for your email. Please feel free to email me directly anytime if you have questions about anything said at CDRC meetings and policies, and ordinances.

Steve Monowitz, the Community Development Director, provides regular updates to the Planning Commission regarding broader planning and coastsides concerns. Lisa Ketcham (Planning Commissioner and former MCC member) is also very familiar with issues brought up at the CDRC meetings. She often asks Steve and Planning staff for updates on specific Coastsides issues.

The problem with the previous Story Pole policy was explained over many CDRC meetings, but in general, the County could not rely on a "policy" (which is not formally adopted as law by the Board of Supervisors; unlike regulation which is adopted) to legally require applicants to put up story poles. Therefore, in May, the story pole 'requirements' of the policy were removed and, now, the revised policy better reflects that story poles are only 1 way to demonstrate project scale, amongst other methods. The policy was revised to accurately reflect the County's legal authority to regarding story poles.

For the County to legally require applicants to put up story poles, as the CDRC wishes, that requires regulation to be written, go through a public process, and get adopted by the Board of Supervisors, which of course is a more complicated and longer term undertaking.

Regarding CDRC member compensation, that issue has been vocalized by the CDRC members. Their compensation is set by Design Review District regulation. Please see Section 6565.2 of the DR Regulations at the link below. The 2-member vs. 3-member vote is also part of the DR Regulation. Compensation cannot be changed without a change to the regulation; which I said is a longer, very formal undertaking. The CDRC and County have initiated an effort to revise many areas of the Design Review regulations including compensation. However, that effort is on hold at the moment due to other priorities of the County and the CDRC.

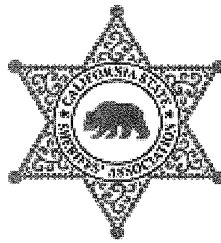
<https://planning.smcgov.org/documents/design-review-districts>

Thank you

CDRC Story Pole WorkPlan Discussion (see work plan sent 2/1//2021 email by Ruemel) :

Ruemel has noted - The more complicated than expected Story Pole Work Plan is required because to refers to to "A Demonstration of Scale" vs just Story Poles; which must go through due-process. An urgency Ordinance is a type of Board of Supervisors Resolution and takes almost the same amount of time. There would need to be some community urgency expressed. Steve Monowitz & Joe LaClair did not think this Ordinance rose to the level of urgency. **Ruemel to report on the external stakeholder outreach plan at CDRC meeting, date to be determined. Ruemel to provide an update re: recruitment for Joe LaClair, San Mateo County Planning Services Manager**

Written Public
Comment(s) for **Item No. 4**



California State Sheriffs' Association

Organization Founded by the Sheriffs in 1894

Officers

President
Don Barnes
Sheriff, Orange County

1st Vice President
Brandon Barnes
Sheriff, Sutter County

2nd Vice President
Chad Bianco
Sheriff, Riverside County

Secretary
Ian Parkinson
Sheriff, San Luis Obispo County

Treasurer
Shannan Moon
Sheriff, Nevada County

Sergeant-at-Arms
Jim Cooper
Sheriff, Sacramento County

Immediate Past President
Mike Boudreaux
Sheriff, Tulare County

Directors

Ingrid Braun
Sheriff, Mono County

Shannon Dicus
Sheriff, San Bernardino County

Jeff Dirkse
Sheriff, Stanislaus County

Tom Ferrara
Sheriff, Solano County

Billy Honsal
Sheriff, Humboldt County

Oscar Ortiz
Sheriff, Napa County

Patrick Withrow
Sheriff, San Joaquin County

Presidents' Counsel

Bill Brown
Sheriff, Santa Barbara County

Kory Honea
Sheriff, Butte County

David Livingston
Sheriff, Contra Costa County

David Robinson
Sheriff, Kings County

Donny Youngblood
Sheriff, Kern County

M. Carmen Green
Executive Director

James R. Touchstone
General Counsel

Cory Salzillo
Legislative Director

November 18, 2024

The Honorable Warren Slocum, Board President
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
500 County Center, 5th Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063

RE: Ordinance Granting Authority to Remove Elected Sheriff

Dear Board President Slocum:

The California State Sheriffs' Association has significant concerns regarding the proposed ordinance granting the Board of Supervisors the authority to remove an elected Sheriff from office.

California's county government system provides a board of supervisors and specified elected department heads with separate powers and equal authority. The board of supervisors is entrusted with financial oversight, but the day-to-day operations of a department is the statutory responsibility of each elected sheriff. Like the State Legislature itself, all are accountable solely to the people who elected them to serve and the laws that they have sworn to uphold. From my experience, when each side of this balanced scale recognizes the other's authority, and works cooperatively, the needs of the people are well served. By investing the power to remove a sheriff from office in the hands of one legislative body, this ordinance will tip this critical balance and dilute the voice of the voter.

Every four years voters have the opportunity to make their voice heard on who will serve as their sheriff. In the 2022 election cycle, the voters in 15 counties elected a new sheriff, in some cases by defeating the incumbent office holder. These 15 counties represent 56% of California's population. Additionally, should the need arise to remove a sheriff before their term is up, the option of pursuing a recall has been used locally a number of times for local officials. For example, in the recent 2024 election, voters in Alameda County recalled their District Attorney mid-term due to her failure to fulfill her public safety responsibilities. I suspect the recall option would be vigorously pursued against any sheriff who similarly neglects their responsibilities.

CSSA is also concerned the proposed ordinance will unnecessarily inject further political considerations into the work done by the sheriff and county supervisors. Future sheriffs may alter how they undertake the obligations of their job out of fear that board members may decide they do not like the sheriff and board members would be pressured to exercise this authority every time a vocal group of constituents decides they are dissatisfied with the

sheriff. Placing this power into the hands of the individual board members, coupled with the subjectivity of “cause”, disenfranchises your constituents’ votes and undermines confidence in the electoral process. Further lending to the concern about this ordinance is the fact that it only applies to the sheriff, but no other elected county officials.

Finally, CSSA urges your board to consider the fact that this ordinance is a massive change to county governance that ignores existing processes and oversight in favor of the perceived immediate gratification of one set of county elected officials being able to remove another county elected official from office. Furthermore, the authority you seek already exists in the California Constitution, where it clearly states in Article 5, Section 13, that “The Attorney General shall have direct supervision over every district attorney and sheriff and over such other law enforcement officers as may be designated by law, in all matters pertaining to the duties of their respective offices...” As such, this action will unequivocally usurp the authority granted by law to the California Attorney General and raises a separation of powers argument as the county’s legislative branch would hold authority over its executive branch.

For these reasons, we request you reject this proposed ordinance.

Sincerely,



Don Barnes, CSSA President
Sheriff, Orange County

From: [Cindy](#)
To: [CEO BoardFeedback](#)
Subject: Re: November 19, 2024 Comments Agenda Item 4
Date: Monday, November 18, 2024 5:05:22 PM

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.

I'm sending my public comment again and have made 2 corrections which are underlined.

Thank you,

C. McReynolds

On Monday, November 18, 2024 at 04:58:51 PM PST, Cindy <cynmc110@aol.com> wrote:

I am writing as a constituent and resident of San Mateo in protest of the ordinance being sponsored by Supervisor Noelia Corzo and Supervisor Ray Mueller. I'm also in opposition to the coercive manner in which the Board is breaking laws and misrepresenting an investigative audit by an investigator who is repeatedly referred to as a retired judge even though she isn't acting in the capacity of a judge. Most audits and investigations are presented to officials who then have an opportunity to respond or to correct the issue. Why wasn't this process followed by the Board of Supervisors?

Dear Representatives, I'm writing as a concerned resident and constituent of San Mateo county and the egregious acts by the Board of Supervisor's attack on Sheriff Corpus who is an elected official not under the Supervisor's control. I haven't seen any criminal acts proven to be committed by Sheriff Corpus but I'm deeply disturbed by the dictatorship the Supervisors are becoming. If county staff creates an ordinance for a charter amendment to be considered by voters it should grant authority to remove all elected officials including the District Attorney, Assessor, Coroner, Assemblymember, Senator, Governor and Congressman, not just ones on the Supervisor's special agenda. Again, we are experiencing the weaponization of the government for vendettas. When Sheriff Carlos Bolanos was caught using deputies sending them to Indiana and expending \$10,000 of taxpayer funds to help his friend, the Supervisors took no action against this criminal. Then when Bolanos was arrested while purchasing prostitutes there was no attempt to remove Bolanos from office nor did the district attorney indict Sheriff Bolanos for his crimes but was allowed to run for office again. Bolanos' leftover Carlos Tapia has been arrested for stealing and time card fraud is out on a \$10,000 bond yet our Supervisors are trying to protect him like they protected Bolanos. Even though Sheriff Corpus has not committed any crimes like Bolanos, Supervisor Slocum was quoted in the Daily Journal, "Nevertheless, in my 40 years in county government, I have never witnessed such chaos, and that chaos has been caused by the sheriff and Mr. Aenlle. Can Supervisor Slocum please explain what he has experienced as being

chaotic by Sheriff Corpus and how it has affected him? This is very disappointing to see these Supervisors attempt to usurp constituents votes when they are the ones who should be audited and held accountable for their actions and lack of actions. Several Supervisors have been in their offices for many years and have yet to be audited. The accusations are petty and opinionated. This wreaks of a good old boy network. It has exposed the Supervisors as adverse to cleaning house and out of touch with their constituents. San Mateo county residents same as the rest of California voted for President Trump because we want these corrupt politicians like those on the Board of Supervisors to be held accountable. I'm asking that the Board of Supervisors also be investigated for trying to deceive the public into believing they have the authority over the sheriff to remove her when they don't and have no just cause. The Supervisors have also committed defamation of character of Sheriff Corpus when no criminal acts were found so changed their focus to her Chief of Staff implying both have done wrong when there's no proof or evidence of a crime. The motives of these Supervisors need to be investigated as to why they are going to such extremes to remove any outsider sheriff who I can relate to as we residents are also outsiders. Tapia and Bolanos along with the Supervisors appear to be insiders who do no wrong no matter how many laws they break.

Did the audit follow the Generally Accepted Auditing Standards if not what standards were followed and where can they be found. Audits are generally used to find and correct problems within an agency not to go after one person like an elected official. Is this investigation or audit merely a guise to rob San Mateo county residents of our votes and implement a dictatorial board to bulldoze people that disagree with Supervisors?

Sincerely,

C. McReynolds
San Mateo, CA 94403-3638

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

4. Introduction of an ordinance calling for a special election to be held on March 4, 2025

throughout the County of San Mateo for the purpose of voting upon an amendment to the

San Mateo County Charter granting the Board of Supervisors the authority to remove an

elected Sheriff for cause, by a four-fifths vote of the Board of Supervisors, after written

notice and an opportunity to be heard, proclaiming said special local Countywide election

pursuant to Elections Code Section 12001, and requesting that the election be consolidated with any and all other elections to be held on March 4, 2025, and waive the

reading of the ordinance in its entirety.

Sponsors: Supervisor Noelia Corzo and Supervisor Ray Mueller

CEO_BoardFeedback

From: Janet Davis <jadjad@sbglobal.net>
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2024 7:21 PM
To: CEO_BoardFeedback; Michael Callagy; John Nibbelin; David Silberman
Subject: BOS Meeting 11/19/24 Item 4 OBJECTION

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.

All 58 Counties in California elect their Sheriffs. Of those, only 14 are Charter Counties which allows them, under the State constitution, to remove a Sheriff by recall or via Charter provision. Only two counties: Los Angeles and San Bernadino have so far amended their charter to provide for removal of the sheriff for cause via their charter amendment, and that was triggered by extreme events. **The charter amendment was urged in Los Angeles by 70 community organizations and labor unions, plus activists and family members of people killed by police.** That county charter amendment narrowly defined “cause” and required written notice and an opportunity for the Sheriff to be heard and was passed by 70% of the electorate.

There was, however, opposition on the basis that **there should not be one entity that has power over the other to the detriment of voting public. This is the basis of my objection.**

This same Los Angeles opposition (that it was up to the voters) was touted as mandatory County policy to avoid the then Supervisors from taking action against Munks and Bolanos following their trip to the Las Vegas brothel.

The alternative procedure for removing a Sheriff (or Supervisor, or DA) is by **RECALL necessitating a public vote.**

After participating in San Mateo County political events for about 40+ years, I see no reason to assume that any four supervisors have superior judgment or ethical standards to that of thousands of voters who experience the impact of Sheriff’s actions or malfeasance. In my memory there have been some Supervisors who certainly did not live up to expected standards and who appeared to make decisions based on ignorance/personal criteria/optics and/or the threat of personal law suits. I recall one incident years ago when a Supervisor even got a serious arrest of a County employee expunged to avoid adverse publicity.

I believe in doing things lawfully, equitably, and with due process. Thus far, in my opinion, this theatrical event resembles a Kangaroo Court, based on *allegations* by a very small number of people not under oath, who may have their own agendas, whose exhibits have not be subjected to proof, and many of the assertions of retribution are plain silly.

BOTTOM LINE: Opting for a charter amendment may save the county money and time, but it subverts voters’ rights

CEO_BoardFeedback

From: Cathy Baird <cathy_baird@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 16, 2024 9:49 AM
To: Christina Corpus; Christina Corpus
Cc: CEO_BoardFeedback
Subject: Agenda item 4: Special election

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.

Sheriff Corpus:

I apologize for using personal email addresses for you, but there is no county email address posted on the Sheriff website.

I am bewildered and disappointed by your behavior and decisions outlined in Judge Cordell's report. (I have respected Judge Cordell's work for many years.)

You don't know me, but I campaigned for you. I volunteered by calling voters several times during your campaign and proudly displayed a campaign sign for you. The points I made during phone calls and conversations with family and friends in San Mateo County were:

- You would bring much needed transparency to the Office of the Sheriff.
- You would begin to dismantle the cronyism of the Office of the Sheriff.

I was so wrong on both counts. Your poor judgment has replaced the "old boys network" with a network of apparently two, and you've made many decisions outside of county protocols and good management practices. The good community building work you did as a sheriff is overshadowed by your actions since you were elected Sheriff.

It's particularly unfortunate to have this turmoil in local law enforcement when we need strength and unity for what may be coming from the incoming presidential administration.

I urge you to save some honor by resigning and not digging in.

Cathy Baird
San Carlos

CEO_BoardFeedback

From: Brian Hofer <brian@secure-justice.org>
Sent: Sunday, November 17, 2024 5:44 PM
To: CEO_BoardFeedback; Sameena Usman
Subject: Item 4 - remove Sheriff for cause

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.

Dear Honorable Members of the Board,

I write on behalf of Secure Justice to voice our support for Item 4, an ordinance to call for a special election to amend the charter and authorize the Board to remove the Sheriff for cause by 4/5ths vote.

Although a Board's direct authority over an elected Sheriff is somewhat limited, it has long been legal to do as you are contemplating (both the 4th App. court in *Penrod*, and the Attorney General have weighed in), and San Bernardino and Los Angeles counties have shown the political will to take Sheriff misconduct seriously by enacting a similar mechanism.

Losing their job is the only real fear an elected Sheriff has. Having such authority in your charter will lead to less misconduct by future Sheriffs because of the very real possibility that a future Board will remove them.

We respectfully request your Aye vote on Item 4.

Brian Hofer
Executive Director



Cell: (510) 303-2871
Twitter personal: @b_haddy
Twitter org: @securejustice
Bluesky personal: brianhofer.bsky.social
Bluesky org: @securejustice.bsky.social
Mastodon org: @securejustice@techhub.social
Tik Tok org: @secure.justice
San Francisco Bay Area, CA
secure-justice.org
[Hofer bio](#)
[Donate](#) to Secure Justice

**Disclaimer: This email may contain confidential and privileged material, including attachments, for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) named above. Please do not review, use, copy, forward, or in any way distribute or disclose the contents of this e-mail including any attachments unless you are the intended recipient(s) named above. If you are not the intended recipient, or authorized to receive this message for the recipient, please contact the sender by reply email and delete all copies of this message.*

CEO_BoardFeedback

From: Jacqueline Weiler <jackie.weiler2011@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 17, 2024 7:45 PM
To: CEO_BoardFeedback
Subject: A letter in support of Sheriff Corpus

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.

Dear Board of Supervisors,

As a voter who supported Sheriff Corpus, I am outraged by the suggestion that she resign. This undermines the democratic process and disrespects the will of the people.

When Sheriff Corpus took office, my North Fair Oaks (NFO) neighborhood was unsafe—gunfire disrupted our nights, deputy response times were slow, and the Sheriff's Activities League (SAL) was disorganized and exclusive. Under her leadership, these issues have drastically improved:

Gunfire has decreased, and safety in NFO has improved.

Deputies respond more quickly and engage with the community through feedback tools.

SAL is now inclusive, allowing more children to participate, fostering trust between youth and law enforcement.

The Sheriff's Department is viewed as trustworthy, and residents feel safer.

As a result, my son has been inspired to pursue a career in the department, and my elderly parents can walk our neighborhood without fear.

In contrast, under former Sheriff Bolanos, priorities seemed misplaced. He was focused on helping his wealthy friend in chasing a Batmobile than he was in protecting our communities. Why wasn't he and then Sheriff Munks caught in Operation Dollhouse? Why wasn't Sheriff Munks asked to resign?

It's hard to ignore the possibility of bias against Sheriff Corpus. If she were an older white man, would this be happening? Your actions erode my faith in the Board and the democratic process. I urge you to respect the will of the voters and the positive changes Sheriff Corpus has brought to our community.

Sincerely,

Jackie Weiler
650.759.3270
jackie.weiler2011@gmail.com

[illegible]
