



# County of San Mateo Planning & Building Department Agricultural Advisory Committee

Natalie Sare, Chair  
Peter Marchi, Vice Chair  
Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou  
Crystal Chaix  
Daniel Theobald

Ryan Casey  
James Oku  
John Vars  
Marilyn Johnson

Dr. Igor Lacan  
Jess Brown  
Koren Widdel

County Office Building  
455 County Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, California 94063  
650/363-1825  
[planning.smcgov.org](http://planning.smcgov.org)

## MINUTES

**Monday, April 13, 2026**

IN-PERSON WITH REMOTE PARTICIPATION

A full recording of this meeting can be accessed on the official government YouTube channel of the County of San Mateo at: <https://www.smcgov.org/planning/event/agricultural-advisory-committee-meeting-april-13-2026>.

### **Call to Order**

Chair Natalie Sare called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### **Member Roll Call**

#### Regular Committee Members Present:

Natalie Sare  
Peter Marchi  
Crystal Chaix  
Marilyn Johnson  
Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou  
James Oku  
John Vars

#### Regular Committee Members Not Present:

Ryan Casey  
Daniel Theobald

#### Nonvoting Committee Members Present:

Koren Widdel, San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner  
Jess Brown, San Mateo County Farm Bureau Executive Director

#### Nonvoting Committee Members Not Present:

Igor Lacan, UC Co-Op Extension Representative

#### Planning Liaisons Present:

Robby Miller, San Mateo County Planning & Building Department

**Public Comment** to allow the public to address the Committee on any matter **not** on the agenda. If your subject is not on the agenda, the Chair will recognize you at this time.

**SPEAKERS:**

Public Speaker, Dr. Patrick Horn from Pescadero Municipal Advisory Council (PMAC), leading Housing Element Task Force and seeking input from AAC Chair or Members on sites analysis meeting and following meetings. Meeting dates are being worked out but within the next month.

Committee Member, John Vars, announces Farmworker Advisory Commission event for farmworkers and housing.

**Action To Set Agenda & To Approve Consent Agenda Items**

1. Consideration of the Minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Committee for May 12, 2025.

**COMMITTEE ACTION:**

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, motions to approve the March 12, 2025 minutes. Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, seconds motion. **Motion passed 7-0.**

Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, motions to approve March 12, 2025 and the March 9, 2026 with corrections of committee member spellings, and set the agenda. Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, seconds motion. **Motion passed 6-1**, (Marchi dissenting).

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix Cole motions to reconsider the March 9, 2026 minutes to hear Marchi. Chair, Natalie Sare seconds motion. **Motion passed 7-0.**

**SPEAKERS:**

Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, concerned about minutes stating Cole would approve project on page 4.

Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, agrees that he meant consider instead of approve.

**COMMITTEE ACTION:**

Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou motions to set the agenda and approve the minutes with corrections to March 9, 2026 of committee member spellings and to change Cole statement on page 4 to consider instead of approve for Item 2. Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson seconds motion. **Motion passed 7-0.**

---

**Regular Agenda**

**2. AAC Procedural Rules Amendments (75 min) – Discussion, etc.**

**Presenter: Summer Burlison, San Mateo County Planning & Building Department**

**SPEAKERS**

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, requests to strike out Secretary proposal to do minutes for Rule 3B – Officers.

Committee Member, James Oku, agrees because it has been a point of contention for members who need to work.

Chair, Natalie Sare, concerned with opening up the Chair position to non-farmers.

Planning Liaison, Robby Miller, states that staff would like to have all committee members be eligible to be Chair and Vice Chair because as written it blocks 4 members from serving, to have a broader pool of candidates because Chair has been hard to fill at times, aligns with other Boards and Committees.

Chair, Natalie Sare, reiterates concern and adds that Chair should have farmer experience.

Presenter, Summer Burlison, mentions past situation where very qualified member was blocked from serving as Chair, and reminds committee that if someone is not qualified they do not have to vote for them.

Committee Member, James Oku, wants to keep Chair position to only farmers due to possible conflict of interest and would consider to open up the Vice Chair position for all members.

Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, states that filling vacancies have been more of the problem than filling the Chair or Vice Chair seat.

Koren Widdel, San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner, states that farmers have the majority of seats for voting purposes, and Chair position is just procedural for meetings so encourages committee to allow all members be eligible for Chair/Vice Chair position.

Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, states that he wants to keep things the same.

Chair, Natalie Sare, states the risks outweigh the benefits and wants to keep it the same.

Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, does not recall there being a problem filling the Chair/Vice Chair position in the 16 years on the committee and agrees with Koren position, but thinks it should remain with farmers.

Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, agrees with Koren, but thinks the change should be to add more farmers to the committee.

Jess Brown, San Mateo County Farm Bureau Executive Director, states that there seems to be consensus to keep things as is and to move on.

Chair, Natalie Sare, agrees and moves to next proposed changes.

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, states to reject all the proposed changes for Rule 4B, does not want to have a set time limit to prevent project applicants from returning. Adds that a time limit should be an internal goal for the Committee.

Committee Member, James Oku, agrees and preferred the 7 pm meeting start time

Chair, Natalie Sare, agrees with Crystal and adds that the time limit also can be unfair to project Planners.

Committee Member, James Oku, asks a clarifying question regarding Section 4.3.

County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds.

Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, suggests to add email to the paragraph since that is common practice.

County Counsel, Brian Pettit, clarifies that this section does not change how agenda packets will be delivered to members.

Chair, Natalie Sare, announces that Committee accepts all Section 4.3 proposed Staff changes.

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, asks how a member is removed with two unexcused absences as stated in Section 4.4.

Presenter, Summer Burlison, responds that Staff or committee could.

County Counsel, Brian Pettit, agrees that Executives at the Planning & Building Department or Committee could enforce removal.

Chair, Natalie Sare, announces that Committee accepts all Section 4.4 proposed Staff changes.

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, states that Ron Sturgeon does not think 'seated' should be in Section 4.5 and asks why it was added.

County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds.

Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, states that in the past all seats open or not were counted toward the majority.

County Counsel, Brian Pettit, asks members if they are wanting to make it harder to have a quorum.

Presenter, Summer Burlison, states that when she was Liaison, there were many unfilled seats, so only seated members were counted to have meetings.

Chair, Natalie Sare, asks for the law from Brian.

Committee Member, James Oku, requests to clearly state that unfilled seats do not get counted.

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, agrees.

Chair, Natalie Sare, agrees.

Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, asks a clarifying question.

County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds.

Chair, Natalie Sare, announces that Committee accepts all Section 4.5 proposed Staff changes.

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, suggests 'in cooperation' language for Section 4.6.

Presenter, Summer Burlison, states that previous input was reason for 'shall collaborate'.

Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, asks why items are changed to 15 days from 10 days.

Presenter, Summer Burlison, responds that 10 days is when Staff tries to send out packets so 10 days is too early for new items.

Chair, Natalie Sare, announces that Committee accepts all Section 4.6 proposed Staff changes.

Chair, Natalie Sare, announces that Committee accepts all Section 4.7 proposed Staff changes.

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, asks why Section 4.8 was removed.

Presenter, Summer Burlison, responds that the Committee makes recommendations and the Board passes resolutions.

Committee Member, James Oku, asks a clarifying question.

County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds and makes a suggested edit to remove 'authorized by resolution' language.

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, asks if Section 4.8 name should be 'Recommendation'.

Jess Brown, San Mateo County Farm Bureau Executive Director, states that 'Official Acts' is more appropriate.

Chair, Natalie Sare, announces that Committee accepts all Section 4.9 proposed Staff changes.

Chair, Natalie Sare, announces that Committee accepts all Section 4.10 proposed Staff changes.

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, proposes not to change Secretary to Committee and keep the Secretary as Planning Liaison.

Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, proposes not to change the second sentence.

Committee Member, James Oku, agrees.

Chair, Natalie Sare, announces that Committee does not accept any Section 4.11 proposed Staff changes.

Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, asks a clarifying legal question regarding Section 4.10  
County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds.  
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, asks format question.  
Presenter, Summer Burlison, responds.  
Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, concerned about Section 5.1 strikeout of last sentence.  
Committee Member, James Oku, agrees with Marilyn to keep.  
Presenter, Summer Burlison, responds that the change was made because the Committee is supposed to be reporting to the Board of Supervisors as a natural function  
Committee Member, James Oku, asks if agritourism updates ever got to the Board of Supervisors.  
Chair, Natalie Sare, announces that Committee accepts all Section 5.1 proposed Staff changes, except removing the last sentence.  
Chair, Natalie Sare, announces that Committee accepts all Section 5.2 proposed Staff changes.  
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, asks a question about Section 5.3 regarding removing the entire section.  
County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds that this Section is covered by Brown Act.  
Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, asks if the Committee needed to have a quorum for subcommittees.  
County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds in the affirmative for standing committees.  
Chair, Natalie Sare, asks a question about the difference between Ad Hoc and Standing Subcommittee.  
County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds.  
Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, proposes to add more farmers and remove public member in Section 2.2 due to interest from others he knows.  
Presenter, Summer Burlison, responds that that kind of change is only possible by the Board of Supervisors and adds that it could be looked at by the Committee separately.  
Chair, Natalie Sare, asks Planning Liaison to agendize that.  
Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, responds that there used to be more farmers but had trouble filling seats so it shrunk down.  
Committee Member, John Vars, asks if farmers can serve as a public member.  
Presenter, Summer Burlison, responds in the affirmative.  
Chair, Natalie Sare, announces that the Committee will restart with Section 5.3 at next meeting.

**3.AAC Meeting Location (10 min) – Discussion on Half Moon Bay Library, etc.**  
**Presenter: Planning Liaison, Robby Miller**

**SPEAKERS:**

Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, states that Mike's internet service could run a hybrid meeting and would charge \$100 for the Starlink equipment and if Committee member sets it up or \$400 for him to set it up.  
Staff, Angela Montes, interrupts to ask Chair to open public comment for item #2 for the record.  
Chair, Natalie Sare, asks for public comment for item #2 and received no comments. Proceeds to close public comment for item #2.  
Jess Brown, San Mateo County Farm Bureau Executive Director, asks how many people the library room can accommodate.  
Planning Liaison, Robby Miller, responds that room can be expanded if the adjacent room is rented.

Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, asks if it is required to film the meeting.  
County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds that it is not a legal requirement.  
Committee Member, John Vars, asks if 8 pm is the library room stop time.  
Planning Liaison, Robby Miller, responds that 8:15 is the hard stop, but would like to end before and have everyone out by 8:15.  
Public Member, Karey Burke, states that the County would need to consider the cost of Starlink and asks a question about setting it up.  
Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, responds.  
Committee Member, James Oku, asks Staff how the technology at the library compares in terms of internet and audio.  
Planning Liaison, Robby Miller, responds that he will have to wait until he hears the recording.  
Supervisor Mueller Aide, Mike O'Neill, asks if Old Train Depot is ADA compliant  
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, responds in the affirmative.  
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, motions to meet with Mr. Avarado at the Old Train Depot to go over the set up of the Starlink.  
Committee Member, James Oku, makes a substitute motion to form a subcommittee to meet with the Planning Liaison at the Old Train Depot and go through the Starlink setup.  
Chair, Natalie Sare, asks if the room insurance can be delayed or a vote is needed now.  
Planning Liaison, Robby Miller, responds that he believes it can be delayed until next meeting.  
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, withdraws her motion.  
Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, asks if the Planning Liaison needs more time to collect information.  
Planning Liaison, Robby Miller, states that the challenges will be Starlink cost and using private equipment.  
Jess Brown, San Mateo County Farm Bureau Executive Director, states that the main reason for the Old Train Depot is the extra time for meetings, and asks Planning Liaison if the County has restrictions on working more than 2 hours.  
County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds that he does not know if the Planning Director will authorize it.  
Supervisor Mueller Aide, Mike O'Neill, asks if the Old Train Depot has a TV Monitor.  
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, responds that she does not know.

### **COMMITTEE ACTION:**

Committee Member, James Oku motions to form a subcommittee to meet with the Planning Liaison at the Old Train Depot and go through the Starlink setup. Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson seconds motion. **Motion passes, 7-0.**

Chair, Natalie Sare, states that James, Crystal, and Marilyn will be the subcommittee and the Planning Liaison will find out about the cost and insurance.

Committee Member, James Oku motions to keep the meetings at the Half Moon Bay Library in the interim. Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, seconds motion. **Motion passes, 7-0.**

Chair, Natalie Sare, states that James, Crystal, and Marilyn will be the subcommittee and the Planning Liaison will find out about the cost and insurance.

Planning Liaison, Robby Miller, ask County Counsel if Committee needs to vote to table

items 4, 5, and 6.

County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds in the affirmative if there is time.

**COMMITTEE ACTION:**

Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, motions to table items 4, 5, and 6 to next meeting. Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, seconds motion. **Motion passes, 7-0.**

---

7. **Adjournment.** Chair, Natalie Sare, adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.