



County of San Mateo Planning & Building Department Agricultural Advisory Committee

Natalie Sare, Chair
John Vars, Vice Chair
Daniel Theobald
Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou

Crystal Chaix
James Oku
Jess Brown
Jim Howard

Dr. Igor Lacan
Koren Widdel
Peter Marchi
Ryan Casey

County Office Building
455 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, California 94063
650/363-1825
planning.smcgov.org

DRAFT ACTION MINUTES

Monday, October 21, 2024

IN-PERSON WITH REMOTE PARTICIPATION

Once available, 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-october-21-2024>.

1. **Call to Order**

Chair Natalie Sare called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m.

2. **Member Roll Call**

Regular Committee Members Present:

Natalie Sare
John Vars
Peter Marchi
Ryan Casey
Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou

Regular Committee Members Absent:

James Oku
Crystal Chaix
Daniel Theobald

Nonvoting Committee Members Present:

Koren Widdel, San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner

Nonvoting Committee Members Absent:

Jim Howard, Natural Resource Conservation Staff
Jess Brown, San Mateo County Farm Bureau Executive Director
Dr. Igor Lacan, UC Co-Op Extension Representative

Planning Liaison Present:

Olivia Boo, Planning Staff Liaison

3. **Oral Communications** to allow the public to address the Committee on any matter not on the agenda.

SPEAKERS

None

4. **Consideration of Meeting Minutes** for the July 8, 2024 AAC meeting.

SPEAKERS

None

COMMITTEE ACTION:

Committee Chair, Natalie Sare, called for motion to approve minutes.

Motion approved, 4-0.

Committee Member, Peter Marchi, abstained

5. **Officer Elections** for Chair and Vice Chair. *(These positions are required to be filled by farmers.)*

SPEAKERS

Committee Member, Peter Marchi, proposed to wait and defer until the next meeting due to multiple committee member absences.

Committee Chair, Natalie Sare, announced that since many members are not in attendance, this item be deferred to November.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

The Committee Members in attendance unanimously agreed to defer this item to next month (there was no motion called).

6. **Committee Member Update(s) and/or Questions** to allow Committee Members to share news and/or concerns for items not on the agenda.

SPEAKERS

Committee Chair, Natalie Sare, commented regarding Ag tourism guidelines, a copy of the ag tourism application from 6 yrs ago was labelled "certificate of exemption". This description was created years ago to carefully allow farmers to add a secondary activity easily. Now that the title is changed, will this prompt additional requirements by the Planning Department that were not asked for in the past. She requested to agendaize for November, to modify the title of this permit. Summer Burlison, Senior Planner, proposed wording that could work.

Committee Member, Peter Marchi, commented that if the word "exemption" is removed, it changes the project scope. There is concern an agricultural tourism permit will be subject to the Coastal Commission versus a streamlined approach.

Committee Vice Chair, John Vars, inquired whether the fees are affected.

San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner, Koren Widdel, commented she has detailed notes from the AAC June 8, 2020 meeting, when this topic was discussed.

Committee Member, Ryan Casey, inquired if the committee will make other changes to the application.

San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner, Koren Widdel, announced there is another quarantine for the Mediterranean fruit fly found in Fremont, Alameda County; there are compliance mitigation measure requirements at farmers markets for this. High Path Avian influenza has been found in the state, if there is concern, the public can call 1-866-922-2473. The California Department of Food and Produce is launching a new farm data website to support compliance with food safety. New AB 1864 monitors the use of pesticide for agricultural use, for fields near schools. The bill requires agricultural fields located within ¼ mile of a school to be issued different ID numbers. There will be extra requirements for reporting starting January 2025; it will apply to grade Transitional Kindergarten through grade 12. Assembly Bill 2552, effective January 1, 2025, rodenticide prohibits the use and sale of chlorophacinone and warfarin, two chemicals heavily used, these are heavily restricted due to widespread secondary poisoning of non-target wildlife. There are exemptions for some agricultural activities. Minimum wage for San Mateo County will increase to \$17.46, effective January 1, 2025.

Committee Member, Daniel Theobald, commented he is aware both his farms have recently been contacted by inspectors from the Department of Food and Safety.

Committee Member, Coles Mazariegos-Anastassiou, inquired if there is an update regarding Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certifications.

San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner, Koren Widdel, will look into the GAP plan/program.

Supervisor Aide, Mike O'Neill, inquired if AB 1864 includes grades Kindergarten through grade 12.

San Mateo County Agriculture Commissioner, Koren Widdel, confirmed AB1864 includes grades K-12.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, motioned to move the agritourism item to the next meeting, to be able to draft a new version and to show what it will look like.

Committee Member, Peter Marchi, seconded the motion.

Motion approved 5-0.

7. **Committee Nomination** for AAC Secretary.

SPEAKERS

Committee Chair, Natalie Sare, commented that since many committee members were not present, she asked the members in attendance if it was appropriate to defer this item to the next meeting.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

Committee Member, Peter Marchi, motioned to defer this item to the November meeting.

Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, and Committee Member, Ryan Casey, seconded the motion.

Motion approved 5-0

8. **Planning and Building Department Director's Report.** *(Planning Liaison)*

SPEAKERS

None

Regular Agenda

9. **Applicant/Owner:** Daniel Sare and Natalie Sare
 File Number: PLN2024-00263
 Location: 78 Pilarcitos Creek Road, unincorporated Half Moon Bay
 Assessor's Parcel No.: Portion of 056-380-110 (formerly 056-380-020 and portion of 056-380-060)

Consideration of an Agritourism Event for the temporary, seasonal Santa's Tree Farm operation starting on November 22, 2024, and ending on January 5, 2025. This year's activities will include the addition of agricultural education farm tours and stories. Please direct any questions to Project Planner, Tiffany Gee, at tgee@smcgov.org.

Action Request: That the AAC provide a recommendation to the Director of Planning and Building on the application.

SPEAKERS

Committee Member, Peter Marchi, inquired if there are any changes since last year.

Committee Chair, Natalie Sare, responded there is one change, the addition of farm tours. The Christmas tree sales noted as a new change is incorrect, tree sales has been an ongoing activity since 1972. The tree and crop sales have been existing before agritourism ever existed.

San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner, Koren Widdel, commented the property does have to be growing a crop.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

Committee Member, Peter Marchi, motioned to approve.

Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, seconded the motion.

Motion approved, 4-0.

Committee Chair, Natalie Sare, recused as the applicant.

10. **Discussion items:**

- a. Pescadero Fire Station Mitigation Measures – Committee Member Chair Natalie Sare - Committee to review a draft recommendation letter written by the AAC, addressed to the County. See Attachment A.

SPEAKERS

San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner, Koren Widdel, inquired about where the conditions come from.

Supervisor Aide, Mike O'Neill, commented this project was reviewed by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) and has been appealed so it will be on the LACFO agenda again. The Committee may want to postpone discussion to the next meeting.

Committee Member, John Vars, commented he would like to make sure the mitigation measures are met.

Committee Chair, Natalie Sare, shared that she will sign and submit the letter regarding the Committee's concerns on this topic to Supervisor Mueller. She also proposed the idea to invite other farmers to the next meeting to gather comments on the water connection.

Committee Member, Peter Marchi, commented that it is important for the Committee to be involved as the matter is an agriculture-related item.

Committee Member, Ryan Casey, commented it is important to keep the letter simple regarding the mitigation measures to make it easy for LAFCO and Planning staff to keep the Committee informed.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, moved to approve the letter.

Committee Member, Ryan Casey, seconded the motion.

Motion approve 5-0

Committee Member, Peter Marchi, motioned to agendaize the water connection and invite public members who have agriculture interest to the next meeting.

Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, seconded the motion.

Motion approve 5-0

- b. Committee Member Chair, Natalie Sare - Drafting steps and paths for the County to help preserve and promote farm labor housing.

SPEAKERS

Committee Chair, Natalie Sare, proposed drafting a list of suggestions from the Committee to share with Planning staff. She commented Jess Brown was going to review the differences between Santa Cruz County and San Mateo County on this topic, as well as how affordable housing is handled by Stanford. She asked Supervisor Aide, Mike O'Neill, if he was able to check with Supervisor Mueller about forgivable loans and the status.

Supervisor Aide, Mike O'Neill, commented he will check on the status of the loans. He suggested creating a mission statement, guidelines to preserve family farms to allow existing farmers to pass the farm to the next generation and to preserve and protect farming to stay local, in the area.

Public Member, James Inglesbe, suggested to change the description to "farm family housing" to promote farming to continue to operate under family members.

- c. Committee Member Chair, Natalie Sare – List of methods to help farmers stay in the area; Chair Sare to send a draft list to Planning staff.

SPEAKERS

Committee Member, Ryan Casey, commented he would like to have the option to pass on the farm, by selling the business to someone who would keep the farm going.

Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, commented he liked the idea of establishing goals to preserve farming. There is a need for affordable housing, especially in the

south coast. There is a concern regarding people buying property on the coast for large vacation homes.

Committee Vice Chair, John Vars, commented the affordable housing program has restrictions for a family that is renting a unit that their income must fall within specific income limits for the family to qualify to rent the unit.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

Committee Vice Chair, John Vars, motioned to agendaize this item for the next meeting for continued discussion.

Committee Member, Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou, seconded the motion.

Motion approved, 5-0.

11. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Agricultural Advisory Committee
