

**MINUTES OF THE  
FLOOD ZONE 9 ADVISORY BOARD MEETING HELD  
7:00 PM TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2015  
AT SAN ANSELMO TOWN HALL  
525 SAN ANSELMO AVENUE, SAN ANSELMO**

**Board Members Present**

Tom McInerney (TM), Chairperson  
Richard Gumbiner (RG)  
Dan Hillmer (DH)  
David Weinsoff (DW)  
Chris Martin (CM)

**District Staff Present**

Tracy Clay, Principal Civil Engineer  
Scott Lyle, Ross Valley Program Manager  
Russ Eberwein, Senior Civil Engineer  
Felix Meneau, Project Engineer  
Jim O'Toole, CH2M Hill Consultants  
Laura Harnish, CH2M Hill Consultants

**Board Members Absent**

Sandra Guldman (SG)  
Peter Hogg (PH)

DH asked staff to look at the cost of recording Advisory Board meetings. If the cost is minimal, start recording the next meeting. If the cost is not minimal, put it on the agenda for next meeting.

**Item 1. Approval of meeting minutes for December 16, 2014**

**Action by Board:** approve December 16, 2014 minutes as written.  
**M/S:** CM/RG, **Ayes:** All, **Nay:** None, **Absent:** SG, PH, **Abstain:** None

**Item 2. Open time for items not on the agenda**

Public comment was provided by Steve Emery of San Anselmo inquiring why Memorial Park Detention Basin Facility was included as Baseline Measure within Ten Year Work Plan and why there was not more outreach with local residents prior to applying for the Department of Water Resources grant. Mr. Emery also asked, what is the threshold for removal of projects from the program?

**Item 3. Program Budgets**

District Staff discussed the Program Budgets, see [Staff Report dated February 17th, 2015](#).

CM agreed to take the place of PH on the Ad-Hoc Budget Subcommittee since PH is out of the country. Other members include RG and DH.

**Item 4. Ross Valley Flood Protection and Watershed Program Update**

The following topics were discussed by District Staff, see [Staff Report dated February 17th, 2015](#).

a) Mailer and Notification Cost Research

TM asked staff to be sure the dates of all Advisory Board meetings are told to the partner cities and ask the cities to put the information on their websites. District Staff will coordinate with partner agencies for future meeting postings.

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b) Strategic Communications Plan Update

District Staff is reviewing latest Draft Strategic Communications Plan and Implementation Plan.

c) Technical Working Group (TWG)

DH discussed recent comments provided to him from Mary Grace Houlihan, City of Larkspur DPW. Director, involving:

- Hillview neighborhood interior drainage concern.
- Concern that projects upstream of historic dredge reach within Larkspur could be weighted higher than projects residing in the dredge reach and therefore would be more likely to receive outside grant funding through the Department of Water Resources Local Levee Assistance Program.
- Transparency, public input, and public hearings are important.
- Flood Zone 9 and City of Larkspur continue to work together cooperatively through the Ross Valley Flood Protection & Watershed Program

District Staff responded that only projects benefiting Lower Corte Madera Creek will be ranked and included within final potential LLAP grant funded project list.

d) Flood Emergency Response Project Grant Program

RG asked for District Staff to discuss how the public is currently notified of upcoming floods.

District Staff responded by describing flood response coordination with Marin County Office of Emergency Services (OES) during large forecasted events. OES then coordinates with the Cities and Towns. Sometimes smaller anticipated storms can turn into larger events, especially because a significant portion Corte Madera Creek only has existing capacity for a 6-year flood. District staff tracks rate of rise and water levels of Corte Madera Creek using available stream gauge information and communicates this to emergency response personnel. The [Telephone Emergency Notification System \(TENS\)](#) hosted by OES allows the public to sign up to receive automated text alerts of current and local emergency conditions.

San Anselmo Town Manager, Debbra Stutsman, further added that the Ross Valley Cities and Towns have developed a unified emergency response over the last several years. A TENS notification alert activated within any one City or Town would automatically activate alerts for the other Ross Valley municipalities and result in phone calls between Ross Valley City and Town Managers to coordinate any necessary emergency response.

Public comment was provided by Ben Godfrey regarding an online tool within Twitter providing audible tones when creek bank overflow had occurred.

### **Item 5. Project Status Updates (Information Item):**

a) Phoenix Lake Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Retrofit Project

District staff provided an update to the Phoenix Lake IRWM Retrofit Project, see [Staff Report dated February 17th, 2015](#).

DH suggested District staff:

- Provide examples of other similar detention basins used in the North Bay that more closely

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match the required excavation dimensions, field size, and general multi-benefit uses of those detention basins currently proposed within the Ross Valley,

- Discuss overall strategy used by the Ross Valley Flood Protection & Watershed Program in determining currently proposed detention basin sites, and
- Consider organizing a field trip to visit similar detention basins being used outside of the Ross Valley.

District staff described another dual-use facility located at Hiram Lewis Park in Windsor was recently filled and emptied during a storm event. Additional rainfall that fell on the park after the facility had drained actually washed away sediment left on sidewalk and hardscape surfaces that had accumulated during the filling of the basin.

CM asked if Phoenix Lake IRWM Retrofit date of completion was still on target and if Department of Water Resources (DWR) grant deadline could be extended. District staff answered that the project is behind the original grant schedule, but we are communicating regularly with DWR and DWR is being kept informed of reasons for delays to the original projected September 2017 completion date. DWR has responded that they would consider an extension of the grant completion deadline.

TM, DW, and DH supported any opportunities to accelerate the flow reduction element study schedule without jeopardizing the necessary steps in the process such as evaluating benefit/cost analysis of potential alternative flow reduction projects and providing ample review time of alternatives analysis. TM recommended advancing a July Advisory Board meeting currently shown in the project schedule to a May meeting, if possible, and District staff agreed to investigate compressing upcoming project steps through coordination with CH2M-Hill consultants.

TM suggested that all public comments be received on Item 5 prior to a proposed action by Advisory Board regarding the recommended environmental approach.

### b) Memorial Park Dual-Use Facility

District staff provided an update to the Memorial Park Dual-Use Facility, see [Staff Report dated February 17th, 2015](#).

DW inquired if additional consultants could be hired to accelerate the project schedule, if the existing Town of San Anselmo Department of Water Resources (DWR) grant might be shifted to fund other detention basins projects such as Lefty Gomez and Loma Alta sites, and following construction of Memorial Park project if any program funding is anticipated to remain for the Lefty Gomez and Loma Alta Detention Basin sites.

District answered at this time only a proportion of time spent by a single District staff member is dedicated to this project, however several staff members are dedicated to continuing to search for outside grant opportunities for all projects in the program. CM suggested that we may want to reserve funds for Lefty Gomez and Loma Alta detention basin projects.

### c) Lefty Gomez Field Dual-Use Facility

District staff provided an update to the Lefty Gomez Dual-Use Facility, see [Staff Report dated February 17th, 2015](#).

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DW asked if these projects are sufficiently developed to allow securing grant funding. District Staff answered they are not currently grant ready.

TM noted each project may need to develop at its own unique pace.

DH asked if the Technical Working Group (TWG) will assist in setting priorities for future project sequencing and phasing. District staff answered the potential sequencing of each of the projects will be shown as part of the Flow Reduction Element Selection Criteria.

District staff stated that during the early project development or study phase, it is expected that less than the maximum target of 30% in total estimated project costs will be spent. The Advisory Board should continue to ask questions to District staff, and District staff will continue to present the new information from studies as they become available. Future recommendations can then be made by the Advisory Board on whether to continue development of projects to a "construction ready" design or whether to hold on further project development while continuing to pursue outside funding sources.

TM asked if District staff had sufficient resources to secure grant funding for Lefty Gomez and Loma Alta facilities. District staff answered they had adequate staffing and would hire outside consultants if needed to continue to aggressively pursue grant funding.

d) Loma Alta Dual-Use Facility

District staff provided an update to the Loma Alta Dual-Use Facility, see [Staff Report dated February 17th, 2015](#).

e) Bridge Replacements in Town of San Anselmo

District staff provided an update to the San Anselmo Bridge Replacement projects, see [Staff Report dated February 17th, 2015](#).

TM suggested signage displaying use of Ross Valley Flood Protection & Watershed Program funding for bridge projects should be shown at the bridge project sites. District staff answered Circlepoint is assisting in developing coordinated signage across all Ross Valley municipalities and signage will be shown ahead of the start of bridge construction.

f) Winship Avenue Bridge Replacement in Town of Ross

District staff provided an update to Winship Avenue Bridge Replacement project, see [Staff Report dated February 17th, 2015](#).

g) Azalea Avenue Bridge Replacement in Town of Fairfax

District staff provided an update to Azalea Avenue Bridge Replacement project, see [Staff Report dated February 17th, 2015](#).

TM asked if there is any way to assist in getting Azalea Avenue bridge placed on the Caltrans Bridge Program funding list, and District staff answered they would check with Garrett Toy at Town of San Anselmo and report back.

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h) Corte Madera Creek Units 3 and 4 Project

District staff provided an update to the Units 3 and 4 Project, see [Staff Report dated February 17th, 2015](#).

TM suggested signage showing use of program funding might be shown for the Units 3 and 4 Project.

i) Lower Corte Madera Creek Improvement Project

Project status covered under Agenda Item 4.c) Technical Working Group.

Return to Agenda Item 5. a): Phoenix Lake IRWM Retrofit Project

CH2M-Hill consultant, Jim O'Toole described that cooperation between partner agencies in developing a programmatic environmental document will help reduce duplicative efforts. The responsible agency will have "discretionary action" to use/adopt/modify the lead agency developed CEQA document or to choose to develop their own, independent, environmental document.

TM asked:

- If it is more costly to serve as "lead agency" than "responsible" agency.
- Would both "lead" and "responsible" agencies hold public meetings to discuss the project.
- What is the reasoning for why Memorial Park Detention Basin Facility is recommended to be examined at the Program CEQA level, per last page of CH2M-Hill Technical Memorandum?
- At what point during a project is the CEQA agency designation of "lead" or "responsible" determined.

CH2M Hill answered:

- It is not necessarily more expensive to serve as "lead agency" compared to serving as "responsible agency"
- The exact number and location of public meetings will vary from project to project.

Phoenix Lake is currently being recommended to be evaluated at the project level for the CEQA document. Memorial Park Detention Basin Facility is not as far along as Phoenix Lake and is currently planned to be evaluated as part of the program level CEQA similar to the other detention basin projects. District staff answered that determining the CEQA agency designation of "lead" or "responsible" for individual projects could be shown within a project Cost Sharing Agreement.

Public comment was provided by Brad Rippe of San Anselmo regarding:

- What alternatives are being considered to the Memorial Park Detention Basin Facility?
- How can the public obtain a copy of the CH2M-Hill contract?
- Where is the record of community and public input?

District staff responded that a copy of the contract is available on the Marin County Board of Supervisors website and District staff will also provide him a copy. Flow reduction element alternatives to Memorial Park Detention Basin Project will be made available once completed.

Public comment was provided by Alex Dunne of Mill Valley inquiring about what is the plan to dredge Lower Corte Madera Creek from Bon Air Road upstream and also downstream to State Highway 101.

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District Staff responded that the Technical Working Group is currently evaluating issues and opportunities for the Lower Corte Madera Creek Improvement Project. Findings from this evaluation will be provided to the public for review and comment at key milestones during the feasibility study process.

Public comment was provided by Steve Emery of San Anselmo regarding:

- Issues with data collection efforts due to historic 2 year rain cycles have affected the program schedule.
- Agrees detention basin projects are better sequenced from upstream to downstream.
- Approximately \$6 million in Memorial Park Detention Basin Project costs not related to reducing current flooding downstream should be covered by other than Flood Zone 9 District funds.

Public comment was provided by Ruth Kiskaddon of San Anselmo regarding:

- Concern that the proposed excavation of Memorial Park Detention Basin Project would impact use of field for only the intermittent filling of detention basin prior to large anticipated storm events.
- Windsor and Napa detention basins do not accurately reflect proposed Ross Valley detention basins, what other sample basins can be studied.

DH asked what projects were used in developing Ross Valley Program detention basin site selection strategy, such as quantity of excavation, size, etc. District staff said no single outside example detention basin site was used to select the Ross Valley currently proposed sites, as conditions are unique for each location. Volume of storage, aesthetic and environmental considerations were used but not enumerated during the planning phase of the Capital Improvement Plan Study.

TM described visiting detention basin facilities in Windsor and Napa and that these basins contained berms, tennis courts, and adjacent homes next to the basin. Some of these basins were partially inundated during recent December storms and found to perform with no technical issues. The Napa basin had soccer goals and was heavily used. A Manteca detention basin in the East Bay is surrounded by homes and another in Colorado is surrounded by an athletic field and homes. TM encouraged District staff to seek other examples.

Public comment was provided by Arlene Fox of Larkspur regarding:

- Appreciation for continued efforts to further develop the Lower Corte Madera Creek Improvement Project (Dredge) through support provided by DH.
- Can Technical Working Group provide the public with draft list of projects elements proposed for the Lower Corte Madera Creek Improvement Project?
- United States Geological Survey should host and maintain rain, tide, and stream gages on place the recorded gage information on their website instead of Fire Stations.

District staff answered that interested members of the public should let staff know if they would like to receive the draft list of potential projects once available.

**Action by Board:** Recommend CEQA Environmental Compliance Approach Option 3: A Program/Project Environmental Document. Prior to the motion DH asked emphasis be placed on Table 1, 10-Year Work Plan Measures Anticipated Lead and Responsible Agencies, within page 3 of CH2M-Hill Final Program Environmental Compliance Approach Technical Memorandum (dated February 10, 2015).

**M/S:** DH/CM, **Ayes:** All, **Nay:** None, **Absent:** SG, PH, **Abstain:** None

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**Item 6. Set Meeting Schedule for 2015**

The Advisory Board and staff set next meeting for March 17<sup>th</sup> per the following tentative dates proposed at the end of the December 16<sup>th</sup> 2014 Advisory Board meeting:

- March 17th
- June 16th
- Sept 15th
- Dec 15th