

AGENDA

MIDPINES PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 3, 2013, 6 – 8 p.m.

This meeting will be held at the Midpines Community Center, Highway 140, Midpines, Ca. 95345

1. Call to Order: 6 p.m.

- a. Introductions & Sign-in
- b. Review, amend, and approve minutes for November 5, 2013

2. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items: 6:10 p.m.

The public may speak on any item not on the printed agenda. No action may be taken by the Committee. The public will also be given the opportunity to comment before or during the committee's consideration of the items on the agenda.

3. Discussion/Action Items: 6:15 – 7:30 p.m.

- a. Broadband Coverage for the Midpines Community Center – Debbie Peters, Sierra Telephone Co.
- b. Meeting Discussion Protocol – Chair, Brian Foucht
- c. Review Summary of Notes from Forums 1 & 2 – Brian Foucht
- d. Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

4. Reports / Updates: 7:30 – 7:45 p.m.

- a. Lee Stetson, District 1 Supervisor
- b. Les Marsden, District 1 Planning Commissioner

5. Next meeting: 7:45 – 8 p.m.

- a. Date and time – January 7, 2014, 6 pm
- b. Agenda Items - to be determined
- c. 2014 Meeting Dates

6. Adjournment: 8 p.m.

If specific accommodations are needed for you to participate in the meeting, please contact Carol Suggs csuggs@mariposacounty.org at **966-5151** as soon as possible.



MARIPOSA PLANNING

COUNTY OF MARIPOSA

5100 BULLION STREET • POST OFFICE BOX 2039
MARIPOSA, CALIFORNIA 95338-2039
209 . 966 . 5151 • FAX 209 . 742 . 5024

Date: December 3, 2013

To: Midpines Planning Advisory Committee

From: Brian Foucht, Deputy Director

Subject: Community Engagement Program Update:

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Blog Site
- Community Forums

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

During the November MPAC meeting, I outlined for the committee the current phase of the Community Plan process that leads to completion of an Issues and Options report. This report will frame key policy questions by synthesizing community and stakeholder input with information contained in a Background Report, currently underway.

Eventually, these key policy questions will be used by MPAC to create a limited set of plan alternatives to be evaluated in a subsequent report. In addition, a preliminary Community Vision Statement and a set of guiding principles will be prepared by MPAC and released along with the Issues and Options Report. Community and stakeholder input and the Background Report will also be used to create the preliminary Vision Statement and the Guiding Principles.

The community engagement process is ongoing, with the first phase substantially completed, as outlined below in items I. – V. below, including the blog questions, and community forum notes. In November, the MPAC discussed ways of identifying stakeholder groups (e.g. live, work, play, agencies, interest organizations) as a first step in tailoring the most appropriate strategy for each group (more formal or less formal). The Committee also discussed MPAC's role relative to that of staff.

During the interim MPAC members Candy O'Donel-Browne, Angie Heiss, and Don Fox volunteered to meet to prepare a recommendation to the MPAC regarding this strategy. The following summarizes their thoughts regarding the various stakeholder engagement strategies:

- 1) Identify groups by subject (conservation, traffic etc.) and MPAC or an adhoc committee hold meetings, report back to MPAC.
- 2) Identify geographic units within Midpines, e.g. by road or area and organize meetings, meet and report to MPAC

- 3) Identify user groups (bicyclists, river rafters, hikers, commuters, large land owners) and conduct appropriate outreach to be determined. Various MPAC members may wish to volunteer to handle different user group meetings.
- 4) MPAC as a whole to conduct the most sensitive or key stakeholder meetings with Native American interests, fuels management committee, Friends of Bear Creek, BLM, etc.

Important issues to be considered by the MPAC this evening regarding these recommendations include:

- Appointment of an adhoc committee to develop an overall strategy;
- Guidance from MPAC regarding stakeholder identification and overall general strategy;
- Communication between any volunteer or adhoc committee and the MPAC; and
- The role of staff relative to that of any adhoc committee or volunteer group.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS UPDATE **(please log on to the site to review comments)**

I. BLOG QUESTIONS

A. Economic Development, Housing and Community Character

- 1) What is it about Midpines (character, surroundings, activity) that you most enjoy?
- 2) Should there be new commercial development in Midpines? If so: a) what sort of commercial development is needed in Midpines; b) where should this development be located?
- 3) Should the Midpines Community Plan establish a priority for different types of commercial development in Midpines; for example, community-serving or visitor-serving uses?
- 4) Is additional housing needed in Midpines? If so, what types of housing do you think are most desired and needed (second units, apartments, single family residences, small lot or clustered mixed use development etc.)?

B. Culture and History

- 1) What are your favorite places in Midpines?
- 2) What do you think are important historical aspects of Midpines?
- 3) What places and either man-made or natural features are worthy of preservation?
- 4) Midpines Community Plan will include an inventory of historically and culturally significant places and structures. What types of, or specific, places or things should be included in this inventory?

- 5) How should the cultural history and historical community character of Midpines influence future development and improvements within the community?
- 6) Are there other questions, ideas or comments that you would like to make regarding the Historical and Community Character of Midpines?

C. Land Use Regulation

- 1) Should the design, placement and color of new structures in Midpines be regulated? If so, to what end?
- 2) Should Midpines have appearance standards for private properties? If so, what should these standards accomplish?
- 3) Should the Midpines Community Plan identify any special habitats and Heritage Trees for protection? What measures should be used to protect these features?
- 4) In addition to areas covered by the current Scenic Highway Overlay (SHO) zoning designation, are there any other visual resources within the Midpines area that should be protected? If so, how should these resources be protected?
- 5) Should existing and abandoned mines be regulated? If so, how should they be regulated?
- 6) Restrictions and Incentives are two regulatory tools that are often used to achieve the best outcome in such areas as appearance, safety, density, preservation or conservation. Are there either incentives or restrictions, or both, that you believe would help to achieve any positive community preservation, conservation or development goals?
- 7) Are there other questions, ideas or comments that you would like to make regarding land use regulations appropriate for Midpines?

D. Open Space Management

- 1) Should the undeveloped open space lands and areas within Midpines community be actively managed to achieve specific objectives?
- 2) Upcoming Questions Of The Day:
- 3) What are the most important purposes to be achieved in managing open space within the Midpines community?
- 4) What are some ideas for achieving a better relationship, or interface, between open space and developed areas of Midpines?

- 5) In order to reduce fire or other hazards that threaten the community's vital economic and cultural assets, should management of unimproved areas of property and open space land be: a) Encouraged through education and incentives? Or b) required and mandated?
- 6) Are there other questions, ideas or comments that you would like to make regarding the management of open spaces in Midpines?

E. Fire Hazard

- 1) Do you ever worry about wildland fires? If so, what should be done to address your concern?
- 2) Are current fire safety regulations adequate? What regulations would you add or change?
- 3) In your opinion, what should be done to improve fire safety for: a) the community; and b) individual properties ?
- 4) Should current fire safety construction and fuel modification standards be required for homes upon re-sale? If so, when after adoption of the Community Plan should this requirement take effect?
- 5) Can fire safety be achieved and also the ecological value of forest habitats protected?
- 6) Are there other questions, ideas or comments that you would like to make regarding Fire Hazard and Safety in Midpines?

II. COMMUNITY FORUM PARTICIPANT TOPICS (as posted)

A. Watershed and Supply

1. Ground water supply
2. Carrying capacity (available water)
3. Illegal activities on land such as running tours in public and private lands, pot growing, mining detrimental for environmental

B. Fire

1. How do neighborhood groups form to do fuel reduction projects?
2. Brushing is paramount for fire safety. How can we help each other? What is impossible for one widow is a good community project to help and get to know each other.
3. Controlled burns
4. Alternate Methods of fire protection: brush clearing, cattle, horses, sheep, etc.
5. How to deal with unoccupied residential land and clearing? Or less than 100' from occupied property? Who to contact?

6. More community education on key resource topics, conservation ideas, fire protection ideas for homeowners
7. Help Midpines County Park brush and clean expanded areas
8. Form committee specific to fuel reduction under FSC or other group

C. Open Space

1. How to keep open space?
2. How to get more biking, hiking, horse trails?
3. Modern timber harvest. Forest and economic health. Meadow lands and water
4. Water and land size for parcel
5. What are the prohibitions, if any, on the donated 312 acres?
6. Conversation regarding Bear Creek Trail
7. Capitalize on outdoor recreational use/mult-use. Equestrian use can be eyes and ears on public lands
8. Horse trails: maintain, keep open or re-open
9. Keep public lands open and challenge the Endangered Species Act
10. Expand Community Park in a well organized way
11. Night Sky or Dark Sky lighting ordinance
12. Open private roads, give access to BLM land

D. Development (residential, commercial, economic, regulation)

1. Make it attractive for business to invest in Midpines
2. Should existing and abandoned mines be regulated? If so, how should they be regulated?
3. 2-3 bedroom rental homes with 10+ people living in it – septic, well and creek issues
4. Should there be new commercial development in Midpines? If so: a) what sort of commercial development is needed in Midpines; b) where should this development be located?
5. * Should the Midpines Community Plan establish a priority for different types of commercial development in Midpines; for example, community-serving or visitor-serving uses?
6. Design criteria and color for businesses and homes in the scenic highway overlay in Midpines
7. * Restrictions and Incentives are two regulatory tools that are often used to achieve the best outcome in such areas as appearance, safety, density, preservation or conservation. Are there either incentives or restrictions, or both, that you believe would help to achieve any positive community preservation, conservation or development goals?
8. Ways to develop with minimal impact on open space and esthetics
9. We have a big issue regarding homeless, what can we do about this issue?

E. Traffic, Circulation, Access

1. Private road issues; leaves land inaccessible to emergency vehicles
2. Midpines transportation: needs of aging population
3. Artist colony in Midpines

4. High Speed Internet similar to Digital 395 project east side of CA
5. YARTS, VIA, Mariposa Transit – 3 YARTS busses 5:30 am all summer mostly empty
6. Housing

F. Community Culture and History

1. * What is it about Midpines (character, surroundings, activity) that you most enjoy?
2. * What do you think are important historical aspects of Midpines?
3. Recognize the Native American and work with them to preserve the culture
4. * Midpines Community Plan will include an inventory of historically and culturally significant places and structures. What types of, or specific, places or things should be included in this inventory?
5. * What are your favorite places in Midpines?
6. * How should the cultural history and historical community character of Midpines influence future development and improvements within the community?

III. FORUM DISCUSSION NOTES (as written, by topic, # priority dots in parenthesis)

A. Land Use (LU)

➤ Issues and Concerns (LU)

1. Use, Density, Intensity
 - a) Sustainability? (6)
 - b) Concern about High Density and overcrowding in a small area (6)
 - c) How do we determine carrying capacity for Midpines? E.g septic capacity, well capacity, population capacity, road accessibility (5)
 - d) Carrying Capacity: # of people per acre/parcel (2); # of dogs per acre/parcel
 - e) How do we accommodate growth?
 - f) Climate Change (2)
 - g) 152 acres of land can be non-industrial
2. Visual Resource Community Character
 - a) Midpines should look great to residents, travelling/vacationing public (5)
 - b) Attractive development that fits with rural character and SHO (1)
3. Regulations
 - a) Enforce current regulations - How? (3)
 - b) Lighting and noise pollution (3)
 - c) Private Property Management

➤ Actions (LU)



1. Form Neighborhood Groups **(17)**
 - a) Fire safe council/Midpines
 - b) Organize Clusters Neighborhoods
 - c) Education and defensible space
 - d) Equipment and investment
2. Allow cluster housing with open space **(10)**
3. Balance standards and creativity with development that fits with rural character and SHO **(5)**
4. Limit development based on water availability **(4)**
5. Encourage dream homes **(2)**
6. Enforce zoning ordinance with mobile homes, homes and businesses **(2)**
7. Combine residential and commercial development **(1)**
8. Request BOS to create a lighting ordinance (dark sky) motion sensitive hood lighting.

B. Economic Development (ED)

➤ Issues and Concerns (ED)

1. Communication Infrastructure
 - a) Getting Cell Service Better **(12)**
 - b) Need broadband high speed internet **(6)**
 - c) Utility service improvements in Midpines? If so, what sort of improvements?
 - d) Land line underground is protected, cell towers are not
 - e) Other companies do not want to come here because it is not cost effective
 - f) Better internet for better communication
2. Business Development
 - a) Could Midpines support another business like the Yosemite Bug? **(5)**
 - b) Art Center and Economic Development Possibilities **(3)**
 - c) Biofuels **(2)**
3. Economic Foundation
 - a) Conserve the Hwy 140 viewshed for community and tourism **(2)**

➤ Actions (ED)

1. Communication Infrastructure
 - a) Pursue broad band service for the Community Center **(8)**
 - b) DSL VAST within 2 months **(6)**
 - c) NTCA Rural Broadband

d) Write to FCC re bandwidth power and high speed internet.

2. Business Development

- a) Identify specific business types for MP (3)
- b) Hiking supply store (1)
- c) Encourage businesses to invest in Midpines (2)
- d) MP part of Sierra Art Trail and Arts Council, tours of local attractions (3)
- e) Focus on getting people here
- f) Pellet production
- g) Pine Needle Harvest

3. Economic Foundation

- a) Partner with private industry to access resources for economic development
- b) UC Merced partner to do research for jobs in midpines
- c) Take advantage of ongoing research
- d) Mariposa Count needs to collaborate with Merced College. Cabins could be used by artists and students
- e) More Brick and Mortar buildings for business
- f) Radio Station
- g) Biomass research, slash harvest develop a business climate reaction

C. Circulation, Transportation (TC)

➤ Issues and Concerns (TC)

- 1. Private road maintenance needed for emergency access (5)
- 2. Private Road Maintenance (5); Mosher Rd. (3); Crystal Aire Road
- 3. Locked gates/easements? (2)
- 4. Who is responsible? Absentee Owners (mandate)

➤ Actions (TC)

- 1. Articulate with Caltrans encroachment permits and signage etc.

D. Public Utilities, Services (PS)

➤ Issues and Concerns (PS)

- 1. How do we determine how much water is available? (8)
- 2. Cluster development may minimize need for central water/sewer systems (2)
- 3. No power, no charge cell phone, no broad band (emergency) (2)
- 4. 911 reverse notification

➤ Actions (PS)

1. Sierra Tel should comp wifi at community center (3)
2. Water system needed (2)
3. Boosters (Wilson cellular)
4. Roger Bales at UC Merced and Martha Conklin are hydrologists could be resources
5. Plug in phone to land line for 911 even if you don't have land line service (1)
6. Interagency coordination and cooperation needed.

E. Public Health Safety (PHS)

➤ Issues and Concerns

1. Water Supply
 - a) Junk accumulation and appropriate disposal of hazardous waste (10);
 - b) Water Supply - where does it come from? (5)
 - c) Rat poison used on pot in public lands affects community health - also grown on private land without knowledge of owners
 - d) Research runoff contaminants off roads, slopes - new culvert on 140/Melody
2. Sewer
 - a) Too many people on small septic system – how is this regulated? Who do I call?
 - b) Motels also have septic systems
3. Other
 - a) Title 24 effect on renovation of historical structures.

➤ Actions

1. Automobile disposal to avoid toxins leaking into shared water sources (10)
2. Grey Water should be captured (6)
3. Sewer Sewer system (4)
4. Protect swimming holes
5. Testing of heavy metal in new wells required?

F. Open Space Management (OSM) - Open Space Management by categories, as follows:

- M: General
- R: Recreation
- FE/S Fire Ecology and Safety
- W: Watershed

➤ Issues and Concerns (OSM)

➤ Actions (OSM)

1. (M) Grazing to reduce hazardous vegetation (6)
2. (M) Open US Forest Service to commercial harvest (6)
3. (M) Tax incentive for small land owners to thin vegetation (5)
4. (M) County accepted land with condition “conservation only”. Timber management is ok. We need a plan with County UMRWC to start to make this land more safe. (5)
5. (M) County needs to take control of land via jurisdiction (4)
6. (M) Way to protect forest, train high school students, skills, jobs WPA, Domestic Corps AKA peace corps
7. (M) County could purchase 152 of Merced college and use for conservation easement
8. (M) County needs to negotiate with Community College regarding managed use of 152 acres for 1) LEED compliant building offices for UMRWC, SFC and SNC; 2) the building will be a model of a fire safe museum; 3) the building will be water efficient
9. (M) Coordinate with college for timber management
10. (M) Fuels Reduction Committee RCD
11. (M) BLM is a partner
12. (M) Recruit local trail users to volunteer to keep trails open. Horsemen will work hard and are willing.
13. (M) Need more signage, information available on historic sites, trails, campfires are appropriate
14. (FE/S) Timber needs to be thinned to release more water and reducing hazardous vegetation (10)
15. (FE/S) Small property owners could start a cooperative to clear hazardous vegetation (7)
16. (FE/S) Encourage prescribed burns (5)
17. (FE/S) Chipping and mastication (5)
18. (FE/S) Address constraints (ceqa, regulation)
19. (FE/S) Federal and private land: cut pile burns broadcast burns
20. (FE/S) Fuel Reduction
21. (FE/S) Cal fire collaboration with property owners and RCD re how to burn – travelling road show
22. (FE/S) Friends of Bear Creek has a program to accomplish shaded fuel breaks - Midpines Park and County 312 acres
23. (FE/S) Fire Defense rally - education
24. (FE/S) Neighborhood Groups need to be formed. ID group organization to coordinate effort: RCD? Fire Safe Council?
25. (WM) Consult with hydrologists about fractured rock wells and ground water studies regarding: recharge rates in different areas; how do various land management strategies affect water availability?
26. (WM) Organize educational forums for residents to share key knowledge re: rainwater harvesting, back to water rainwater availability before development, conservation tools, cost share for fire protection

G. Open Space Resources Production (OSRP)

➤ Issues and Concerns (OSRP)

➤ Actions (OSRP)

1. Keep public lands open to private and public timber harvest

H. Open Space Recreation (OSR)

➤ Issues and Concerns (OSR)

1. Bear Creek Trail – how will it affect private property ? **(5)**
2. What are the pros and cons on Bear Creek Trail? **(1)**
3. Private land vs. public land **(2)**
4. Public Health, Safety and Welfare
5. Balanced use of open space lands
6. Horse and hiker? Cycle and Hiker? All?
7. Forest service access roads are important access for hiking, biking, horse.
8. Liability concerns- could a nonprofit or government agency provide liability insurance ?

➤ Actions (OSR)

1. More hiking, biking, equestrian continuous access **(11)**
2. Need for trail restoration and maintenance **(7)**
3. Develop Bear Creek Trail, connect to other trail systems - Stockton Creek Preserve **(6)**
4. Rails to trails explore developing trail on historical railroad through Merced River Cyn **(6)**
5. Open roads on forest for public use, more fire access **(4)**
6. More access to hiking, biking, equestrian trails and information. Create a guide to trails, fireroads etc. for recreation in Midpines including Bear Creek Trail **(2)**
7. Develop bike lanes a long Hwy 140 to town and the park **(2)**
8. Complete Bear Creek Trail from Midpines Park to the Store; continue to expand trail.
9. Need appropriate infrastructure to support access (parking etc.)
10. Midpines Park will provide access to Public Lands
11. Request BOS open and reopen roads that have been closed for search, rescue, fire.

I. Open Space Preservation/Conservation(OSP/C)

➤ Issues and Concerns(OSP/C)

1. How to keep open space open ? **(5)**
2. Voluntary conservation easements are a good tool for private OS conservation .

➤ Actions (OPS/C)

1. Shielded Lights protect dark night sky – common courtesy

2. Need more outreach to landowners re conservation easements.
3. Community plan should encourage, support conservation easements. (3)
4. Private land conservation and access via trails.
5. Focus on a Merced River Plan

J. Housing

1. Subsidized Senior housing (2)
2. Affordable housing including rentals (1)
3. Co-housing all ages

K. Culture and History

➤ Issues and Concerns (CH)

1. How do we preserve abandoned mine sites and equipment – land form preservation and mitigation (6)
2. Should reclamation include preservation of historical artifacts? (2)
3. Art School within schools – can MP stand alone in programs?

➤ Actions (CH)

1. Community Cultural and History Center include Native American Community (14)
2. Artist Colony - art created, housing and studios, music/arts/kids open up to all kinds, Native American arts (11)
3. A year round place to market arts and crafts-First annual MP arts and crafts show (8)
4. List potential historical sites Kugler House, Newell Chamberlain House, David Clark Residence (Triangle Road) Acorn Inn, Old Richfield Station, Original fire house (@ site of current mobile home park), Outward bound building (8)
5. Annual BBQ (2)
6. Build on things that fire established (1)
7. Conference center (1)
8. Theater – Plays
9. Getting people here/art drive
10. Choir
11. Long term preservation methods – procurement, incentives
12. Education on tools (financial) available – living trusts
13. Midpines signs

IV. Community Forum Short Survey Notes (as written)

A. The most important thing I want the Midpines plan to do is:

1. Be a plan that reflects the majority of land owners and what they want for their community
2. Maintain Midpines status quo and character, increased education and outreach
3. Bring us together to explore needs and reach consensus with conservation and fire protection issues

4. Bring us together as a real community and help our community and fire safety by helping each other
5. Form small geographically contiguous properties so folks can talk about and deal with local related issues
6. Expand the park and access to woods
7. Open up land for hiking and recreation
8. Open Mosher Rd.
9. Conserve open space, develop trails, study resources of the area
10. Work on the Bear Creek Trail
11. Have a feasible plan for fire safety within their community
12. Fire Control and defensible space
13. Plan for disaster

B. Topics Suggested For Discussion with Stakeholders (as written):

1. Fractured Rock Wells
2. Hydrology
3. Conservation and open space management
4. Closing trails with slash
5. Fuel reduction, viewscape, economics

V. Other Writings by Forum Participants (as written):

Midpines plan: Maintain rural community, avoid HDR, locate repair and maintain historic sites, develop a history of Midpines, and acknowledge YARTS as our modern stagecoach

Places that need cleaning for fire safety: Everyone should help by first nominating a committee to organize a schedule for cleaning areas on their property in such a way that everyone helps everyone else so that it is productive and uniform for fire protection throughout.