

Public Comments **on Items Not on Posted Agenda**

Written Comments Received After 12pm on 06/26/2023



June 26, 2023

City Council Meeting

City Council, Oral Communications: "Wildfire Season" by Ken Miles

Once again, the Wildfire Season is here. Looking back, during 1929, the town of Montara burnt down during a wildfire. Recently, we had major wildfires in Paradise, Lake County, Santa Rosa, Sonoma, Yosemite, and in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Tragically, many lives were lost, and homes destroyed. Ask yourself, "Can that happen here?"

This year, heavy rains produced a bumper crop of vegetative growth and weeds. Within the past week or so, there have been recent grassfires in Napa, Sonoma, and East Bay counties. And, oh boy, the Fourth of July is around the corner. Hopefully, no one will set off dangerous rockets or fiery explosives. Soon the hot dry easterly winds of October and November will be here, and hopefully not to fan flames.

Many of us are concerned that large parts of Pacifica are still unprotected from wildfires, especially in the hills surrounding Linda Mar, Pedro Point, East Rockaway, Vallemar and East Sharp Park which are covered with dense groves of Eucalyptus trees, dead pines, thick shrubbery, and dry grass.

Several years ago, I met and communicated my concerns about wildfires to the City's Emergency Preparedness and Safety Commission. Several points I recall I mentioned to them were:

- Evacuation routes have not been communicated with residents.
- There's a need for firebreaks around Pacifica.
- Has the Commission established how firetrucks can get rapid access to wildfires when narrow roads are clogged with cars, RVs and trailers trying to escape the wildfire?

The Commissioners said, "Yeah, there's a plan", or "We're working on it". Since then, as far as I know, nothing has been done.

The US Parks / GGNRA created a firebreak around the east side of El Granada several years ago to protect the residents in the event a wildfire breaks out on GGNRA's parklands and threatens the community. Couldn't GGNRA provide similar firebreaks wherever the US Park lands that abut parts of Pacifica, such as Sweeney and Milagra Ridge? We could also learn from the Native Californian indigenous people, such as the Ohlone, how they conducted controlled fire burns

for centuries to maintain woodlands and coastal shrubbery, and to protect themselves from wildfires.

North County Fire Dept.'s Chipper Program held in Pacifica several years ago has been a great way for many of us to clear burnable wood and debris from our properties. Unfortunately, property owners with large, wooded lots did not participate in the Chipper Program.

Recently, we learned that insurance companies are going to discontinue approving new fire insurance policies in California. Undoubtedly, many people may see a sharp increase in their fire policies or be required to purchase California's "Fair Plan" and pay more than \$4000 a year for a fire insurance policy, instead of paying about \$600 a year. Oh, and property values could likely decrease !.

WHAT THE CITY SHOULD DO ASAP:

1. The City's Emergency Preparedness and Safety Commission must inform residents and public agencies detailed evacuation plans and instructions not to impede fire trucks and emergency vehicles.
2. Inform all residents about the County's Defensible Space requirements. Assign Code Enforcement Officer to survey priority properties as many jurisdictions do and inform owners to comply with the Defensible Space requirements or face fines or increased property tax fees.
3. Reestablish the City-wide Chipper Program.
4. Work with GGNRA to establish firebreaks where Pacifica residential properties abut GGNRA lands as they've done in El Granada. And/or have trained Native American specialists provide controlled burns where and when needed.
5. Recology Waste Management Company should be advised to acquire additional large green waste cans for residents living in wooded areas or with large lots to dispose of their extra green waste weekly as they have done in the past.
6. Revise building standards to assure structures are built using noncombustible exterior materials, and landscaping meet "Defensible Space" requirements.
7. The City should hold a Public Forum on Wildfires, ASAP, to address our concerns.

From: Coffey, Sarah
Sent: Monday, July 24, 2023 1:55 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: FW: The Cost of Managed Retreat

From: Beckmeyer, Sue <sbeckmeyer@pacificapacific.gov>
Sent: Monday, July 24, 2023 1:22 PM
To: Coffey, Sarah <scoffey@pacificapacific.gov>; La, Emily <ELa@pacificapacific.gov>
Cc: Murdock, Christian <cmurdock@pacificapacific.gov>
Subject: Fwd: The Cost of Managed Retreat

Hi Sarah and Emily,
Could you make sure that Larry Bothan's written comments are included in the permanent record regarding BBIRP II?

He made a public comment at the June 26th Council meeting, fyi.
Thank you,
— Sue B.

From: Lawrence Bothen [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 8:17 AM
To: _City Council <citycouncil@ci.pacificapacific.ca.us>; Woodhouse, Kevin <kwoodhouse@pacificapacific.gov>
Subject: The Cost of Managed Retreat

[CAUTION: External Email]

Dear Council Members,

Below is a copy of my public comments on non-agenda items at last night's Council meeting for your files. I am somewhat comforted by your remarks later in the meeting about all the meetings and activities each of you have been involved in.
But these are things the public needs to know without attending every council meeting. Most of us don't have the time. I believe releasing a monthly newsletter in the Pacifica Tribune that summarizes the activities and initiatives you are working on would go a long way to shine a light on the process of "making sausage." I understand the process can be long and tedious but
a periodic progress report would erase the public perception that nothing is being done. Facts are the best way to control the rumor mill.

Respectfully,
Larry Bothen

The Cost of Managed Retreat

June 26, 2023

"I'm here to ask that City Council holds a study session to update the public on where we stand on shoreline protections and the Coastal Commission's actions to block the City's plans for its Local Coastal Program. In March all our political representatives at the county, state and federal levels visited the site of the Sharp Park seawall. Three months later the

public still doesn't know what came out of that tour. The silence does not bode well. We have to move quickly if we're going to have any chance of securing outside funding for resilience projects.

I understand the City is struggling with all the business in front of it. The Housing Element is a huge challenge. But if we don't move to protect the most vulnerable parts of Pacifica now, none of the other stuff matters. We can't serve two masters.

The Coastal Commission and the progressive element in this City would have us believe the only response to sea level rise is Managed Retreat. Some want to see the coast returned to its natural state. My question is which one? The farms that existed before the Ocean Shore Railroad? The coastside of the Spanish settlers? Or the pastoral coastside of the Ohlone Indians that existed before any of that?

Well, that ship sailed with Portola. Whether or not you call our existing coast progress, that's what we live in. You can't change that with a stroke of the pen. The only natural state that can occur if we remove coastal protections and accept Managed

Retreat is flooding. That means our precious beaches would be under water too.

As a homeowner I am tired of being demonized for my selfish greed to protect what I've bought and paid for my entire working life. No matter when you bought your house, I'm sure most of us could not afford to buy it again now. That's not our fault. But if you think you're off the hook because you're a renter, or because you live in the hills east of Coast Highway, think again.

The cost of embracing Managed Retreat is not just the cost of relocating all our infrastructure east of Route 1. That alone would cost hundreds of millions. Route 1 itself would have to be moved along with homes and businesses. Where would you put them? Most of that space is occupied or unbuildable. No, the greatest cost will be to Pacifica, the state and every taxpayer in it, because there is not enough money in California to compensate every home and business owner that loses their property through the actions of zealots. Managed Retreat is an unfunded mandate that amounts to illegal seizure of private property.

Under the laws of eminent domain the State is required to compensate property owners for land taken for other purposes at fair market value. If beaches are so valuable to California, then let's see how much they're worth as collateral for the loans it would need to pay every property owner fair market value for their property. And who do you think will pay for that? Taxpayers. Unless you're in that tiny minority of the super rich who never pay taxes, that bill will be handed to us. All of us.

Pacifica's response to Sea Level Rise is a Local Coastal Plan that protects the most vulnerable and populous areas of Pacifica. It is the most cost effective way to meet the future head on and preserve it for future generations."

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