

MEETING DATE: October 6, 2010

PREPARED BY: M. Jones

PRESENTED BY: M. Jones

## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY REPORT

**APPLICATION NO.:** CDP 6-10, DR 8-10

**OWNER/APPLICANT:** City of Fort Bragg

**AGENT:** Dave Goble

**REQUEST:** Adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for: 1) the acquisition of an approximately 11.5-acre parcel to establish the Noyo Center for Science and Education, and 2) a Coastal Development Permit and Design Review for construction of the Noyo Center for Science and Education which is proposed to include: a 5,600 SF Nature Center with a variety of interpretive exhibits, including 30,000 gallons of public aquarium; a 4,200 SF marine conservation research laboratory; a 1,400 SF essential support facility; and related parking, access roads stormwater management, landscaping and restoration.

**LOCATION:** Address Unassigned. Directly south of the City Wastewater Treatment Facility and east of the Fort Bragg Coastal Trail parcel, on the Georgia-Pacific Mill Site.

**ASSESSOR'S PARCEL #:** 018-430-10/14

**ZONING:** Timber Resources Industrial (IT)

**ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:** Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared for potential adoption

**SURROUNDING LAND USES:** North – Wastewater Treatment Facility  
South – Vacant industrial land  
East – Vacant industrial land  
West - Vacant industrial land, future site of Fort Bragg Coastal Trail

**APPEALABLE PROJECT:**



**Can be appealed to City Council**

## **BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **Background**

In 2003, the City initiated a community planning process which prioritized the development of a marine science and education facility as a reuse option for a portion of the Georgia- Pacific (GP) Mill Site. The City began planning for development of a marine science and education center to be located on a portion of the former Georgia Pacific Mill Site, and in 2006, the City, with the assistance of consultant Susan Lohr and a group of scientists and administrators of successful biological field stations from across the nation, prepared a Strategic Plan for the project, and coined its name: Noyo Center for Science & Education at Fort Bragg (“Noyo Center”). Subsequently, in 2008, the City retained consultant Paul Siri to prepare a Detailed Project Program for the Noyo Center to help define the facility’s design, programs, and operation. In 2009, the City and Sonoma State University School of Science and Technology (SSU) began to discuss the possibility of a collaborative partnership which would enable the facility to be owned and operated by SSU as part of its Preserves Program. In 2010, the City and SSU selected a design team to prepare conceptual plans for the Noyo Center facility to assist with fundraising efforts and to inform environmental review and permitting. In July 2010, the City applied for a \$7M grant from the Prop 84-funded “Nature Education Facilities” program (a categorical exemption was prepared for this grant application).

The attached Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared for the project in order for the City to proceed with site acquisition and eventually apply for a Coastal Development Permit and Design Review for the project. In order to be considered for the Prop 84 grant application the City must be in escrow to purchase the site by the end of 2010. The City has applied for Coastal Conservancy funding to acquire the site, and the Coastal Conservancy must have an environmental document, prepared according to CEQA guidelines, in order to consider the funding request. The City, as lead agency for the project, has prepared the attached Mitigated Negative Declaration both so that the Coastal Conservancy can make a decision on land acquisition funding and so that the Planning Commission can eventually consider an application for a Coastal Development Permit and Design Review. The applicant is not requesting either Design Review nor a Coastal Development Permit at this time because the applicant does not have sufficient information about drainage, stormwater management, and other aspects of the project to apply for these permits.

### **Project Description**

The proposed Noyo Center, to be located on an 11.5-acre site of the former 425-acre Georgia-Pacific Mill overlooking the Pacific Ocean, would provide nature education, exhibits and marine research labs.

The Noyo Center as proposed would include: a 5,600 SF Nature Center with a variety of interpretive exhibits, including 30,000 gallons of public aquarium; a 4,200 SF marine conservation research laboratory; a 1,400 SF essential support facility; and related parking, access roads stormwater management, landscaping and restoration.

- The proposed Noyo Discovery Center would educate 60,000 to 80,000 visitors, residents, working people, and school children per year. It will increase public understanding and knowledge of marine and coastal resources by providing high quality visitor exhibits that are directly tied to the research of the Marine Research Center and actions that visitors can take to reduce their impacts on the ocean, rivers, forests and coastal prairie. For each of the exhibit zones (Forest, Prairie, River, and Sea) the Discovery Center will present: 1) the basic description of the original resource and its desired restored condition; 2) historical use and/or abuse/extractive uses and their costs contrasted with the current condition of the resource; 3) the state of evaluative research and science - resource science, monitoring and restoration techniques; 4) options for desired solutions - tactics, opportunities, activities, and issues; 5) direct action possible by visitors- personal, community or political; and 6) the long term impacts and local effects of climate change on the resource.
- World-class marine research would be supported by the Center's laboratory, the only such marine laboratory located along this 250-mile stretch of coast. Research would address climate change and resource management in cold-water marine environments, and provide information for exhibits that engage the public in learning and hands-on science.

### **Circulation of the Draft MND**

The draft MND was circulated to all relevant resources agencies, including: the Army Corp of Engineers, the Department of Fish and Game, Coastal Commission, Coastal Conservancy, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Caltrans, and the Air Quality Management District. The MND was circulated 30 days prior to this hearing date to provide interested agencies with an opportunity to provide comments and critique of the adequacy of the document.

### **Comments on the MND**

City staff received comments from the Air Quality Management District and the Coastal Conservancy (Attachments 3 & 4). The document has been revised to address the comments of these agencies. City staff received no comments from the public.

### **Environmental Compliance and Monitoring**

Upon application for a Coastal Development Permit and Design Review Permit the City will have to complete the following steps as required by the Coastal Land Use and Development Code section 17.72.150 B:

1. Before the application is submitted to the review authority for final action, the Director shall prepare a list of all proposed conditions of approval, including those required to reduce to levels of insignificance any identified environmental impacts, and conditions required to ensure project compliance with applicable City codes, policies, and regulations.

2. Each condition shall be written so that it is either time specific or quantifiable, and shall specify the City department or other agency responsible for monitoring compliance.
3. A copy of the proposed conditions, along with the staff report shall be provided to the applicant.
4. Following final City action to approve or conditionally approve the application, the applicant shall sign a copy of the approving action indicating full understanding of, and agreement to comply with all of the conditions.

The applicant (the City) will be obligated to comply with all the mitigation requirements enumerated in the MND if the project is approved by the Planning Commission.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

- Hold a hearing, close the hearing, deliberate, and make a decision at this Planning Commission meeting.

## **ALTERNATIVE ACTION**

- Hold a hearing, close the hearing, deliberate without a decision, and revisit the application at the next scheduled meeting for a decision and the addition of any new findings.
- Hold the hearing, and continue the hearing to a date certain if there is insufficient time to obtain all input from all interested parties. At the date certain the Commission may then deliberate and make a decision.

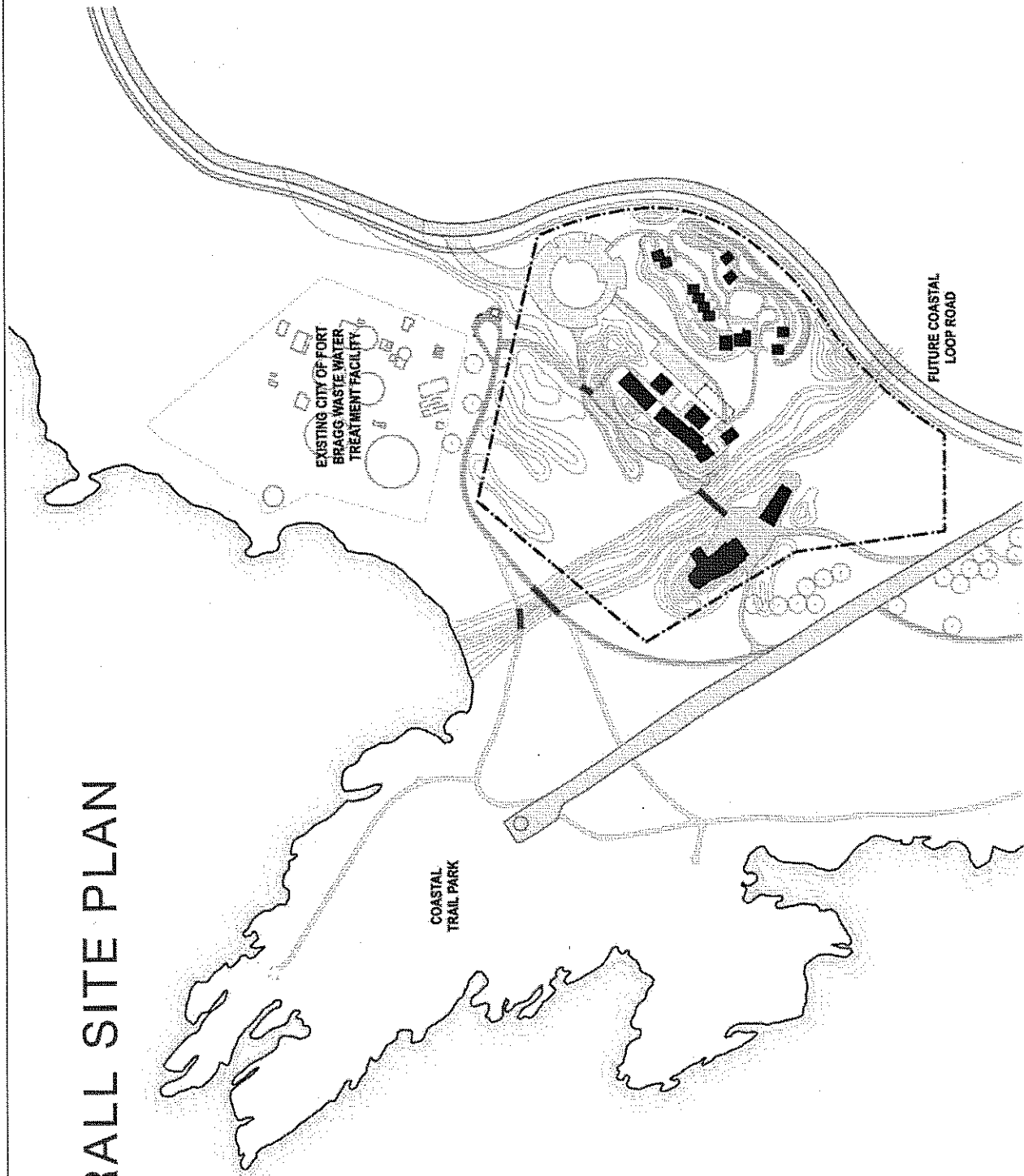
## **RECOMMENDATION**

- Staff recommends adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Site location map
2. [Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Noyo Center for Science and Education](#)
3. Memo from Chris Brown, Mendocino Air Quality Management District
4. E-mail from Matt Gerhardt, Coastal Conservancy

# OVERALL SITE PLAN



SCHEME

**ATTACHMENT 1**  
Site Location Map

REC'D SEP 13 2010

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**MENDOCINO COUNTY  
AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT  
MEMORANDUM**

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MENDOCINO COUNTY  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.  
SEP 13 2010  
RECEIVED

DATE: 9/9/2010

TO: Marie Jones, Fort Bragg Community Development Director

CC: Dave Goble, City of Fort Bragg Public Works

FROM:  Christopher Brown AICP, Air Pollution Control Officer

SUBJECT: Noyo Center Project

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The District has received and reviewed the Draft EIR for the above project and has the following comments at this time -

- The Environmental Setting does not discuss Air Quality, although general air quality information is discussed in the Air Quality section.
- Section 5.3 (a) identifies a fireplace for the proposed project – although the fuel for this device is not identified. New wood burning fireplaces are not allowed except in Residential buildings that are not part of a major subdivision by District Regulation (4.1).
- A fireplace would seem to conflict with the intent to have a “LEED Certified” “sustainable” Green Building since wood fired devices are one of the dirtiest and least efficient sources of heat available.
- This project will require a grading permit from the District since the amount of area disturbed exceeds 1 acre.
- The proposed plan does not have any discussion of the air quality impact of the proposed gravel roads and parking areas. EPA provides emission factors for unpaved roads as part of AP 42 <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/chief/ap42/ch13/final/c13s0202.pdf>
- There is no discussion of the volume of traffic and anticipated maintenance of the unpaved surface.

Unpaved road surfaces generate excessive dust compared to paved surfaces. Unpaved surfaces also result in track out onto paved roads which generates dust and runoff from re-entrained road dust.

**ATTACHMENT 3**  
Memo from Air Quality  
Management District

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**From:** Matt Gerhart [mailto:mgerhart@scc.ca.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 14, 2010 2:31 PM  
**To:** Jones, Marie; Ruffing, Linda  
**Cc:** 'Joel Gerwein'; 'Karyn Gear'  
**Subject:** Noyo Center Staff Recommendation and priority next steps  
**Importance:** High

As we discussed we'll be relying on your MND and will need to have it adopted by our board meeting date, which it sounds like it should still go fine. I am adding a CEQA discussion into the staff rec based on your draft, Marie, and compiling specific comments for you which I'll get shortly. However, a few things that I know based on legal feedback that we'll need you to add into your discussion, at least in some form, are: some additional discussion of construction GHGs (Bay area thresholds only address operational GHGs) and potential cumulative effects considering adjacent ongoing redevelopment activities; we'll need to see as well your mitigation monitoring and reporting plan, which we have to adopt as well; and get a copy of your DFG filing fee receipt.

Thanks again, I'm available to discuss these when you want and perhaps we can get Joel in on any calls help with continuity as he and I transition.

Matt

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