

Sidnie Olson

From: Marilyn Lang [heishe@yahoo.com]
nt: Friday, May 05, 2006 4:55 PM
to: Sidnie Olson
Subject: Balloon Tract CEQA Scoping Comments

To: Sidnie L. Olson, Senior Planner
Community Development Department
531 "K" Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Subject: Balloon Tract CEQA Scoping Comments

Dear Senior Planner Olson,

I would like to submit my personal scoping comments on the City of Eureka General Plan Amendment and rezoning requested for the Big Box Mall project proposed for the Balloon Tract and adjacent areas.

I feel strongly that this project will have a significant negative impact on the people of Eureka and Humboldt County for a number of reasons, chief among them, the health risks posed by toxic contamination and the economic impact of the proposed project on our community,

Toxic Contamination

The toxic contamination situation poses a serious danger to the health of our community. It must be cleaned up to the fullest extent possible given today's state-of-the art technical knowledge. This should include 1) a comprehensive appraisal of the composition and distribution of all toxic materials on the site, 2) a full and comprehensive study and report on all known and potential risks, as well as cumulative risks from these toxins to human health, water quality, sport and commercial fisheries, oyster mariculture, as well as other resources such as wildlife and plants. 3) consideration of the known and potential movement of toxins into ground water and/or the receiving waters of Humboldt Bay at present and across a longer term time scale.

The toxicity should not be paved over. It should not be left to future generations to deal with and cleanup should not be charged to the people of Humboldt County, but must rest with the railroad which is responsible for its creation.

Besides the current Big Box Mall proposal, the EIR should consider a wide range of other land use alternatives. Our community is known for its concern for the environment and for its creativity. These principles should guide all planning. Options such as, but not limited to no retail at all on the site, public facilities use, light industrial use or a mix of these which would be suitable on the waterfront should be given careful consideration.

Economic Impact

The EIR should be charged to provide a comprehensive study, documentation and disclosure of the full range of the proposed project's economic effects on the region's economy. Much is known about the impact of big box retail on local economies similar in size and type to Eureka and Humboldt County. What can these communities' experiences tell us about potential changes to area wage levels, probable reallocation of retail spending, changes in employment levels, loss of profits from the area as monies go to big box corporate offices in other areas, costs to local government for infrastructure, indirect subsidies through increased public costs for social services, etc. What will be the economic effect be county-wide for local communities, small business owners and their employees?

I am very concerned that our community not take the short view. We have the opportunity to learn from the experiences of other communities, many, in my humble view, which caved to the pressure of hard-sell developers and have become part of one large national expanse of malls and big box mediocrity. Our community's chief assets are our environment and our creativity. We should capitalize on these and create something uniquely suited to the needs of our citizens.

I worry further that a zoning change will open the way for the Wal-Mart style development which was resoundingly rejected by voters in 1999. It seems to me that the voters have spoken repeatedly on this matter. One reason my family has chosen to live in this area is because of the strong community feeling that is here and which so many communities across this nation lack. I do not believe that rich and powerful developers should have more say in the future course we take than do the citizens who live, work and raise their families here. I am personally insulted by the ram-rodging political rhetoric from those whose main interest, in my view, is their own profit.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Lang
2203 H St.
Eureka, CA 95501
heishe@yahoo.com

Sidnie Olson

From: sue leskiw [sueleskiw@cox.net]
Sent: Friday, May 05, 2006 11:59 AM
To: Sidnie Olson
Subject: Scoping Comments on Balloon Tract CEQA

May 5, 2006

Dear Ms. Olson:

I regret that work deadlines do not permit me to comment in depth or detail, but I would like to relay two major concerns about the Marina Center project site.

1. **Traffic circulation.** I do not want construction of this project to serve as a justification for completing the ill-conceived Waterfront Drive Extension south of the site. On behalf of Redwood Region Audubon Society and several other groups, I have commented extensively on reasons why constructing a road through the Eureka (aka Palco) Marsh and behind the Bayshore Mall is inappropriate. The Coastal Commission and regulatory agencies have agreed and relayed those concerns to the City of Eureka, only to be ignored. This project remains on the drawing board and increased traffic on Broadway resulting from construction of the Marina Center project should not be used to push for construction of Waterfront Drive Extension.

2. **Cleanup of toxic materials.** The unwillingness of the current owner to remove toxic materials from the site should not be used as a justification for limiting use of the property (e.g., nonresidential, no park). Why should the railroad not have to deal with the results of its operations over the years? Capping (aka paving over) is not a solution to stop these materials from migrating through soil and water.

I appreciate the opportunity to share my concerns and hope they will be reflected in the decision-making process.

Sue Leskiw
5440 Cummings Rd
Eureka, CA 95503
sueleskiw@cox.net

Sidnie Olson

From: Donna Lin [linpress@humboldt1.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 04, 2006 5:25 PM
To: Sidnie Olson
Cc: mcp
Subject: Balloon Tract opinion

Re: Balloon Tract
May 4, 2006

Dear Mr. Olson,
I live in Trinidad and do most of my shopping in Eureka. I have lived in Humboldt county for 9 years having moved here from Weston, Massachusetts. Weston and neighboring Natick consisted of 12 miles of thickly settled stores and malls flanking Route 9. It is the most disgusting, visually ugly, community devoid stretch I've ever known. There were two Home Depots. They are large and unattractive. Humboldt county is a breath of fresh air. I have loved our move here. Please build the shop buildings and fill them with local businesses. Please build the apartments and fill them with residents who love it here. Please do not build a Home Depot for it stoops to conquer. Piersons is empty most of the time. There are more check out clerks than customers. We do not need the homogenous look of all across America. Home Depot is not needed. Perhaps a Trader Joe's might be considered. Possibly a Crate and Barrel - a small one. There are only 126,000 people in this entire county. Too many stores make the area ugly - you know that. We already have too many, very empty, very unnecessary stores. Home Depot will also be empty. I will never shop there you can be sure. Molestation is a crime against the unwilling. Please go away.

It is good of you to receive comments from the public before any decisions are made. It will be very good of you to actually consider the content and act on the comments received. The balloon tract could use the attention but a Home Depot is inappropriate and unwelcome. Build bonds with residents here. Please do not come and take and push and shove your way onto our properties.

Thank you
Sincerely

Donna Lin

Trinidad
677-9010

Sidnie Olson

From: scott.menzies@realizingcommunity.org
Sent: Friday, May 05, 2006 9:37 AM
To: Sidnie Olson
Subject: Balloon Track Tract

Good Day Senior Planner Olson,

I am writing to express my concern that about the Big Box development planned for the Balloon Track Tract.

My greatest concern is the social impact of such a project, insofar as it will provide no place for the community to become stronger - only weaker. I doubt this is part of the Environmental Impact Report required by the California Environmental Quality Act, I would encourage this issue to be considered.

Likely more in the realm of the EIR, I am extremely concerned about how the toxins in the ground can travel away from the area. I don't believe capping it will truly keep these toxins under control. They need to be cleaned up entirely, and I would like to see the EIR clearly investigate what not cleaning them up will do. I am worried about leakage as well as what might happen in earthquakes, which can facilitate the movement of underground materials, especially in watery areas.

Having an understanding of the negative economic impacts of such developments, I would like to see the economics of this development also thoroughly investigated.

I do not believe such a development will help Eureka socially, economically, or environmentally, and want to ensure that this EIR looks at

all these details very closely, as much as is possible within the EIR capabilities. All options should be left open for this land to be developed, for it to be most socially and economically beneficial to Eureka. In order to have all those options the tract must be environmentally sound, which means it must be cleaned up completely, not just capped. Please ensure that the EIR looks at all of these components and presents an honest assessment of the impacts this development will have in all the above areas.

Thank you,
Scott Menzies
Graduate Student - Environment and Community Program, HSU

Sidnie Olson

From: Morton, Lance [LMorton@co.humboldt.ca.us]
Sent: Friday, May 05, 2006 4:18 PM
To: Sidnie Olson
Subject: INPUT ON EIR

Ms. Olson - I am writing to provide you with "scoping" comments on the City of Eureka General Plan Amendment and rezoning requested for the Marina Complex proposed for the Balloon Track. My comments/questions are as follows:

1. What studies have been done (here and in other communities facing the same issue/s), or will be done to determine likely Home Depot impact on local retailers?
2. What will the prevailing wages and benefit packages be for those employed by Home Depot?
3. How many of the Home Depot employees will be full versus part time?
4. How will the tax base be changed by Home Depot being added to the project (i.e., additions to the tax base versus the losses expected because of deflation of local retail revenue)?
5. How long would "capping" the property prevent toxic run-off into the bay? Where else has this mitigation effort been implemented? Outcomes? What are the cost/benefits of other methods of eliminating the toxic waste on the property?
6. What are the legal challenges to holding the rail road industry accountable for cleaning up the balloon track? Has the City initiated a legal challenge?
7. What will the transportation impact be on main thoroughfares in Eureka be. Will the City need to reroute traffic, establish more one way roads? What will increased traffic do to local accident and insulate rates be?
8. Does Home Depot have a minority hiring plan? If yes, what is it?
9. How can the City force the developers to reveal prospective profit margins to determine if a "big box" is necessary to make the project profitable. Without this information, how can City residents balance the downsides/upside of including a big box versus using the land for local businesses?
10. How can City residents insure that no government funds will be used for the developer to make the project feasible? If tax payer dollars are to be used, e.g., to offset infrastructure costs, road improvements, increased water, energy, waste capacity, etc., how will they be able to determine if they are willing to do this?

I see advantages and disadvantages to such a project. I just want to make sure that Eureka residents know exactly what the costs/benefits and options are regarding the project so we can make an informed decision. Best way to get buy in from the largest number of residents once a decision has been made. Transparency is key.

Thanks for taking this in. Lance G. Morton

Sidnie Olson

From: ruth3@humboldt1.com
Sent: Friday, May 05, 2006 1:14 PM
To: Sidnie Olson
Subject: balloon tract

The Arkeleys are out to buy Eureka without Eureka's consent. Listening to the man in charge of transportation this morning on KMUD with a big box the traffic will be more of a nightmare than it is now and definitely not a people friendly place. It's hard enough to cross 4th or 5th street. And the air quality will be even worse than it is now. So NO to the Arkeleys.

Sincerely,
Ruth Mountaingrove, Arcata, CA

Kevin McKenny

May 5, 2006

PO Box 115
Cuttan, CA 95534

Sidnie Olson
Eureka City Planning Department

Pursuant to your request for comments on the environmental document for The Marina Center, I offer the following for inclusion into the impact issues.

Being involved in small business entities in Eureka, I feel the development of Home Depot will affect many local livelihoods. With that said, I think an environmental assessment of the economic impacts should be done regarding Home Depot.

The next issue is parking and circulation. The project utilizes a combination of warehouse and retail areas to come up with a parking space allotment. This amount is lower than comparable retail only requirements met by the existing businesses. That said, the standard practice of Home Depot is to fill the parking lot with merchandise for sale. This is never addressed by them at the environmental stage. The traffic analysis numbers are directly related to sales areas given. Home Depot's general practice of adding merchandise to the parking lot is never divulged. When questioned about this during the EIR process they placate the public and regulators with words only to do what they want later. See Reno, Nevada's permit violations for these tactics. The fact is that this throws off the traffic element of your review. How can you mitigate for that? The circulation in the parking lot can be blocked with merchandise, which sends traffic in the wrong direction. This also skews the aesthetics aspect of the environmental analysis with chain link fence surrounding plant and hard scape products for sale. This adds a tremendous amount of retail sale space to the proposed 115,000 sf plus 25,000 sf nurseries, totaling of 140,000 sf of sales area without the parking lot added in. All projected impacts are skewed by this common practice by Home Depot because the city can not enforce planning violations after the store opens up.

The developers, while proposing a worthwhile development of this site, may not be aware of these issues. Their final development with Home Depot as a part will not reflect the environmental work done to justify the project. This can adversely affect their solid reputation of redeveloping the Eureka downtown. In my opinion, the Home Depot aspect is out of scale with the rest of the project and needs added scrutiny in the EIR process.

Thank you for your consideration regarding this matter,

Kevin McKenny

Sidnie Olson

From: Melvin McKinney [mmckinney@humboldt1.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 04, 2006 3:02 PM
To: Sidnie Olson
Subject: Notice of Preparation EIR Marina Center Mixed use Project Comments.

My comments regarding the scope of the EIR are provided below:

1. Would the project expose expose the public to toxic materials through the open water ditch for storm water runoff to be emptied in to the bay.
2. Would the project conflict with the Eureka General Plan or any LCP or ordinance protecting biological resources? Example Gen. Plan. P 6.A6- 6 A 7 and 6. A 8.
3. Would the project comply with State and Federal laws to have a full clean up of the site from toxic materials.
4. Would the project impact the 150 foot Rail Way rite of way and how would that be solved if the NCRA would not sell the property.?
5. Would the project be allowed to be rezoned before the environmental clean up is completed.
6. Would the project interfere with the Public Trust Titles on the NCRA. rail road properties in the project.
7. What is the relative criteria for determining the safe environmental clean up levels versus technically feasible clean up levels.
8. What effects does tidal action have on the seepage of toxic materials from the project site to the bay.
9. What are the likely and potential effects of liquefaction due to seismic activity on the movement of toxic materials both laterally and vertically in the ground from this project,
10. Would the project the project allow NCRA to retain the full right of way for the rail road all the way through the Marina Center project?
11. Would the project expose the city to a long and protracted legal challenge for the taking of NCRA. rail road Trust Property?
12. Would the project cause an economic impact to the community by having Big Box retail on this project?
13. Would this project do a study to address the job base effect on the existing business within a 20 mile radius of the city and how it will effect local business if a Home Depot and Best Buy is established on this project?
14. Would this project develop a Economic Impact Assessment for new retail development on this

project?

15. Would the project develop a study on Brown Field Clean UP using EPA services?

16. Would the project identify and survey all wetlands and comply with the Coastal Act on set back standards in their respective zones?

17. Would the project install pollution separators and filters on the storm water drain ages to the Bay

18. Would the project preserve open space and put to a vote of the city any Big Box proposals for this project?

19. Would the project create a hazard to the public or environment through routine transport, use, storage or disposal of hazardous materials?

20. Would the project cause a safety hazard to the traffic flo pattern on Hy way 101 from traffic entering and leaving this project on 101?

Melvin McKinney

Sidnie Olson

From: Carol McFarland [cmcfarland@cox.net] ✓
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2006 10:21 PM
To: Sidnie Olson
Subject: Scoping meeting

----- Forwarded Message

From: CREGmail <cregmail@cox.net>
Date: Thu, 13 Apr 2006 18:56:47 -0700
To: Carol McFarland <cmcfarland@cox.net>
Subject: Re: Re:

Should we assume you have sent this email to: solson@ci.eureka.ca.gov ?
 If so, thank you and if not, please do!

On Apr 13, 2006, at 4:19 PM, Carol McFarland wrote:

We are categorically opposed to this project as it now stands. We are mostly concerned about contaminants and we do not wish to see this project as another "big box", convention center, mall-type installation.

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Carol McFarland and Don Nielsen  
 1983 Foster Avenue  
 Arcata, CA 95521-9503  
 USA

email: cmcfarland@cox.net  
 Telephone: 707.822.0726

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on 4/12/06 10:19 PM, CREGmail at cregmail@cox.net wrote:

*While this is the only public hearing that will be held to collect Scoping input, written comments will be accepted until Friday, May 5, 2006.*

**Arkley Big Box Mall Proposal for Balloon Tract  
 Gets First Environmental Review Hearing**

Today -- Thursday, April 13, 2006 from 4:00 to 7:00 pm, a Public Scoping Hearing will be held at the Eureka City Council Chambers, 531 'K' St., Eureka, CA.

This session is for the purpose of receiving public comment on the scope, focus and content of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

This is a crucial opportunity to have your concerns and questions entered into the official record of the issues the public wants addressed in the EIR.

While this is the only public hearing that will be held to collect Scoping

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input, written comments will be accepted until Friday, May 5, 2006. "Comments on the range of actions, alternatives, environmental effects, methods of assessment, and mitigation measures" can be submitted to Sidnie L. Olson, Senior Planner, Community Development Department at the address listed above or by e-mail to: [solson@ci.eureka.ca.gov](mailto:solson@ci.eureka.ca.gov)

Check the CREG website at [www.SaveEurekaWaterfront.org](http://www.SaveEurekaWaterfront.org)  
<<http://www.SaveEurekaWaterfront.org>>  
<<http://www.SaveEurekaWaterfront.org>> for information  
on the CEQA environmental review process as well as sample questions for  
scoping.

These sample questions barely scratch the surface of the potential pool of questions that need to be asked. The broad spectrum of knowledge, experience and history of the residents of Eureka and Humboldt County at large is the ultimate insurance for achieving a comprehensive and complete review of all the potential and likely impacts associated with development of this contaminated site. This is also an opportunity for generating creative ideas for eliminating or mitigating those impacts. The CEQA process is also the first and best initial opportunity to propose a wide range of alternatives to the unilateral imposition of the proposed BIG BOX MALL and its exploitation economics model.

We look forward to seeing a large turnout for this critical exercising of our democratic process. We urge you to prepare written comment as well in advance of the May 5th deadline. Thanks for your support and we'll see you there!

CREG

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Citizens for Real Economic Growth  
post office box 738  
Eureka, CA. 95502  
[www.SaveEurekaWaterfront.org](http://www.SaveEurekaWaterfront.org)  
<<http://www.SaveEurekaWaterfront.org>>  
[cregmailto@cox.net](mailto:cregmailto@cox.net)

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Richard Salzman  
Community Coordinator

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Citizens for Real Economic Growth  
post office box 738  
Eureka, CA. 95502  
[www.SaveEurekaWaterfront.org](http://www.SaveEurekaWaterfront.org)  
[cregmail@cox.net](mailto:cregmail@cox.net)

----- End of Forwarded Message

## Sidnie Olson

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**From:** Carol McFarland [cmcfarland@cox.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 04, 2006 11:04 PM  
**o:** Sidnie Olson  
**Subject:** The Balloon Tract EIR

My comments are based on the fact that I am rooted in this community as a fourth generation Humboldtter whose ancestors homesteaded and operated businesses here.

I was born in Eureka in 1939, attended local schools (including HSU), and worked as a newspaper reporter on the Humboldt Standard from age 14 to 20. I lived elsewhere for 31 years, but returned 16 years ago to complete my career as a professor at HSU. My mother was born at Bayside and my father was born in Eureka; my maternal grandparents founded the Big Four Inn restaurant at Trinidad and my paternal great-grandparents homesteaded on Table Bluff where my great-grandfather built the unique round barn. In addition, my parents operated The Club DeLuxe (near Ten Window Williams' jewelry store), a popular restaurant for many years.

From a historical standpoint I can't help noticing that Rob's dad chopped down the trees leaving vast tracts of ravaged wilderness. And now it seems that Rob is willing to chop down the remainder of our heritage -- to continue the Arkley tradition of wrecking what is left of our natural beauty.

Over the years when I visited home, I witnessed the ugly changes which were transforming my home town: The Eureka Mall, the mall at the North end of Eureka, the McKinleyville Mall, and worst of all -- the Bayshore Mall. It wasn't hard to figure out that besides being ugly, Bayshore Mall was the last straw for many of our local merchants, and it was apparent to all that those malls killed our historic downtown with all of its potential to support home-town store keepers and the next generation of Humboldt entrepreneurs.

So why build another "state of the art" mall for out-of-area investors which eventually looks like every other shopping center eyesore when we can build a park, create an open space, or honor our heritage with something other than chain stores and investment opportunities for people who care only about paving over open spaces with big box stores and motels?

Case in point: Ernie Pierson was a wonderful man who built attractive, sturdy houses (including one for my parents). When Ernie built the Eureka Mall and the McKinleyville Mall everyone said he was a visionary and some merchants moved there from downtown. Where are they now? Today those malls house the big boxes which can afford to come and go. However, local merchants can't compete with them and eventually cease operation.

Although I live in Arcata, I do my best to shop both here and in Eureka with local merchants -- my neighbors. In spite of their well-publicized plan to capture our interest in their project, I don't think we need what the Arkleys are proposing: More big box stores and chain shops and motels with headquarters and executives operating from distant states or countries.

Please reject the Arkley plan and focus on keeping what is so beautiful and characteristic of our community. The Arkley project will simply make Eureka look like all the other tourist towns and further rob this area of its most sought-after qualities: natural beauty, clean air and water, and small town charm.

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Carol Kirkby McFarland
83 Foster Ave.
Arcata, CA 95521-9503
707.822.0726