

August 24, 2024

Easton Ehlers, Asst. Planner  
Marin County Community Development Agency  
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Dear Mr. Ehlers:

I write to voice my opposition to Marin Catholic High School's pending application to install stadium lights on its football field. The light, sound, and traffic generated by this project, involving evening and night-time use, makes it incompatible with Ross Valley and runs afoul of both the Kentfield/Greenbrae Community Plan and the Marin Countywide Plan. The Marin Community Development Agency should deny the application.

### **The Application Violates The Community Plan**

A repeated goal of the Community Plan is to preserve the "residential character of the community." (Community Plan, pdf p. 8.) "The vast majority of land in the study area is zoned for residential use and is used for housing." (p. 102.) The Plan seeks to maintain the cherished community attributes of "open lands, unobstructed views, clean air, quiet, privacy, safe and convenient traffic circulation." (p. 9.) Preserving these characteristics requires deflection of powerful development trends. (p. 9.) This is not a narrow-minded approach against change – it is a necessary measure of preservation, because not all change is progress. (p. 9.)

Four 80-foot light stanchions at this site in the middle of the residential Ross Valley, used with significant regularity for evening and night-time practices and games, would violate the goals of the Community Plan. The lighting, glare, noise, and increased traffic at dusk and dark would substantially, negatively impact the calm and quiet of the surrounding residential areas, convenient traffic flow, and the unobstructed views from all sides of the field.

Due to the residential nature of the adjacent neighborhoods, MC's project is overly disruptive to the existing conditions and is contrary to the Community Plan. This is the type of project that the Plan advocates disallowing despite "powerful, persistent, and ubiquitous" trends which are framed as "progress" but instead are degradations of Ross Valley's cherished characteristics which must be preserved.

## **The Application Violates The Countywide Plan**

The Countywide Plan recognizes that the California Clapper Rail (also known as the “Ridgway’s Clapper Rail”) is a protected species which uses the Bay Area’s wetlands and marshes. (Countywide Plan, Biological Resources, pdf p. 52 & p. 2.4-6.) One of the Clapper Rail’s habitats is Corte Madera Creek, adjacent to MC. The Countywide Plan states that wetlands and other sensitive resources can be affected by “lighting” and other development. (p. 2.4-6.) The Plan’s point is that adequate protection against development-related lighting must be provided to protected species such as the Clapper Rail.

MC’s application to erect and regularly use four 80-foot light poles to illuminate its athletic field during evenings and nights, next to the Clapper Rail’s habitat, violates the Countywide Plan’s goal of protecting sensitive biological resources. Instead, the application relates to the type of human behavior that degrades the Clapper Rail’s marshland home, contrary to the Countywide Plan.

This letter is not an exhaustive discussion of all ways in which MC’s application may run counter to the Community Plan and Countywide Plan. Based on the above, I urge the CDA to deny the application as contrary to key goals of both of those plans.

Thank you.

Brendan Fogarty

Greenbrae

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