



CITIZENS COMMITTEE TO COMPLETE THE REFUGE

453 Tennessee Lane, Palo Alto CA 94306

Tel 650 493-5540

Fax 650 494-7640

Florence@refuge.org

June 2, 2011

Dear Executive Director Travis, Chairperson Randolph, and Commissioners,

I regret I am unable to attend the workshop today. After reviewing the latest iteration of the proposed Climate Change Amendments, I believe comments I submitted on May 26, 2011 remain pertinent.

Once again I urge the Commission to direct staff to adopt a definition of "infill" [Climate Change Finding "p"] consistent with state law – SB 375:

21061.3. "Infill site" means a site in an urbanized area that meets either of the following criteria:

- (a) The site has not been previously developed for urban uses and both of the following apply:
 - (1) The site is immediately adjacent to parcels that are developed with qualified urban uses, or at least 75 percent of the perimeter of the site adjoins parcels that are developed with qualified urban uses, and the remaining 25 percent of the site adjoins parcels that have previously been developed for qualified urban uses.
 - (2) No parcel within the site has been created within the past 10 years unless the parcel was created as a result of the plan of a redevelopment agency.
- (b) The site has been previously developed for qualified urban uses.

Still unresolved in this latest draft is the fact that when reviewed in total, the public interest, i.e. preservation of the Bay's natural resources and all the economic, societal, environmental, and aesthetic benefits that result from such protection remains subservient to the consideration of development. Struck from this iteration of the Climate Change Amendments are critical passages from the California Adaptation Strategy that identify "avoiding future hazards and protecting critical habitat" as "top priority actions to combat sea level rise." I urge the Commission to direct staff to reinstate Climate Change Findings "x" and "y".

x. The California Climate Adaptation Strategy establishes avoiding future hazards and protecting critical habitat as top priority actions to combat the impacts of sea level rise. The strategy recommends that state agencies should consider project alternatives that avoid significant new development in areas that cannot be adequately protected (planning, permitting, development, and building) from flooding or erosion due to climate change. The strategy indicates that the most risk-averse approach for minimizing the adverse effects of sea level rise and storm activities is to carefully consider new development within areas vulnerable to inundation and erosion, and to consider prohibiting development of undeveloped, vulnerable shoreline areas containing critical habitat or opportunities for habitat creation. The strategy recommends that state agencies should generally not plan, develop, or build any new significant structure in a place where that structure will require significant protection from sea-level rise, storm surges, or coastal erosion during the expected life of the structure. However, the strategy also

acknowledges that vulnerable shoreline areas containing existing development or proposed for new development that has or will have regionally significant economic, cultural, or social value may have to be protected, and infill development in these areas should be closely scrutinized. The strategy recommends that state agencies should incorporate this policy into their decisions.

y. To promote habitat protection in the face of sea level rise, the California Climate Adaptation Strategy recommends that the state should consider prohibiting projects that would place development in undeveloped areas already containing critical habitat, and those containing opportunities for tidal wetland restoration, habitat migration, or buffer zones. The strategy encourages projects that protect critical habitats, fish, wildlife and other aquatic organisms and connections between coastal habitats. The strategy recommends pursuing activities that can increase natural resiliency, such as restoring tidal wetlands, living shorelines, and related habitats; managing sediment for marsh accretion and natural flood protection; and maintaining upland buffer areas around tidal wetlands.

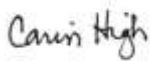
These passages are the heart of effective climate change adaptation strategies – Do not place the public in harms’ way, do not burden future generations with the protection of new development located in vulnerable areas, increase the natural resiliency of communities, and protect the sustainability of natural ecosystems, while protecting significant infrastructure that already exists where feasible.

Climate Change Policy 4 – The ending sentence must be reinstated. Development in areas vulnerable to future flooding that currently sustain critical habitats or species should be discouraged. This language is consistent with the recommendations of the California Climate Adaptation Strategy.

Climate Change Policy 1 – I continue to urge the Commission to strike this entire passage. BCDC should not abrogate its authority under the CZMA. BCDC does not have the authority to change the requirements of CEQA.

Thank you for your considerations of my comments. I hope future iterations of the Climate Change Amendments will strong and clear policies for review of potential projects within BCDC jurisdiction and guidance for undeveloped, vulnerable shorelines that is more protective of the public interest.

Sincerely,



Carin High
CCCR Vice-Chair