

**PUBLIC COMMENTOR 245 - MAUREEN MIDDLEBROOK, SEPTEMBER 24, 1996**

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Madam Mayor, members of the council, Vice Chair Dowd, members of the board and sir, if -- during this process of the development of this EIR/EIS, if you've been on the mailing list, it would be difficult to argue that you haven't received enough information. That you haven't been invited to enough meetings. That you haven't had enough opportunity for input in writing, verbally, face to face. And that you haven't spent enough money creating this public process.

I personally want to commend you for that, because I think it's been quite extraordinary. I am a rate payer in the system and that's why I'm here today.

This is one more opportunity for public input. I think that there's been a lot of important things said here today. I certainly want you to seriously consider what has been said here today. But I am encouraging you, urging you to continue to move on with your forward momentum and certify the EIR/EIS so you can get on to the next step of choosing the most environmentally safe, reliable system, seriously taking into account your fiduciary responsibility to me and the other rate payers in the system. Thank you.

**Mayor Wright:**

Next is -- we're going to take about two more, then we're going to take our lunch break. is Loretta Borges still here? What about Alex Shore?

Then we'll take our lunch break. We're going to take a break -- dinner break. We will reconvene the evening session at 7:00 o'clock promptly. Thank you all for your patience in being here.

(dinner break taken.)

I would like to reconvene the public hearing on the EIR/EIS Long-Term Wastewater Project. Before we get started with the public comments, I have a couple of announcements I would like to make. If there's anyone who is in need of the listening-assisted devices, we have a few that are available at the front desk in the center of the building. If you would like listening-assisted devices, we do have some available for the audience.

Second of all, the fire marshal asked -- hopefully we won't have a problem this evening -- that if everyone could sit in the open seating rather than stand, it would make it easier for their control.

I would like to go over a few of the points and a few of the rules for this evening. This is a joint public hearing of the Santa Rosa City Council and the Santa Rosa Board of Public Utilities and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps is represented today Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Thompson. Our Board Chairman -- Board of Utilities

Chairman Tom Yokoi could not be here today, but he will listen to all the tapes prior to any action on the EIR.

This hearing is being conducted to receive oral and written comment from the local, state, and federal governmental agencies, groups, and interested individuals on the adequacy of the Draft Environmental Impact Report and the Environmental Impact Statement, the Santa Rosa Subregional Long-Term Wastewater Project dated July 1996. The Draft EIR/EIS was released on July the 31st, 1996 at which time the comment period began. The comment period is scheduled to close on October the 7th, 1996.

In addition to any testimony received today, agencies, groups, and interested individuals are welcome to submit written comments within the comment period. In fact, given the number of people who may want to speak to us about the Draft EIR/EIS and the short time available for each speaker, more detailed comments are encouraged to be placed in writing and submitted to us. And there are boxes at the back of the room where you can deposit that information. The testimony that's given today is being recorded by a court reporter, audio taped, as well as video taped. All testimony given today and all written comments on the Draft EIR/EIS submitted during the comment period will receive written response in the Final EIR/EIS. Today, the hearing board, staff and consultants will not be answering any questions about the document. That will be done in writing in the Final EIR/EIS.

There's been many people who have participated in the preparation of both of the Draft EIR and EIS, and those comments and concerns were incorporated in the document that we're reviewing this evening.

I want to make clear that only comments received during this comment period will become part and receive responses to the Final Document EIR/EIS. In the interest of time and the many speakers we anticipated, we have set a few ground rules. All speakers are required to fill out a speakers card so that we may put the speakers in order and maintain an adequate record of the speakers. Those are the green cards, and staff has those. They can hand them out. There's some at the back of the room. So be sure if you want to speak you fill out one of the green speaker cards.

We will ask for comments from elected officials first, then comments from local, state, and federal agencies next, then other concerned individuals are invited to comment. Within those groups, comments will be taken in the order that the cards are received.

We will periodically post the names of speakers, so that those whose time is approaching can prepare themselves to be ready and move to the microphones. So the list of speakers will appear up on the board with the viewfoil.

We are limiting statements of interested -- we are limiting statements, all speakers to five minutes. However, if anyone wishes to speak longer, they may stay. After everyone has had an opportunity to speak their five minutes, the hearing board may decide to allow additional comments from people who have already spoken.

There are timing devices. There's one timing device on the center podium. It will -- it will go on after you've stated your name and address. It will give you a warning 15 seconds before your time is up. The red light will flash and a beeper sound will go off at the end of your five minutes. We've found this to be particularly helpful, and it's the most fair way to receive comments from all that are here tonight. This hearing began at 1:30 p.m. today. A break was taken for dinner, and we are now resuming the evening session. It will continue until there are no more speakers, or until those holding this hearing decide that it's time to take a rest.

If there are more speakers at that time, we will discuss and make any decision about the continuation of this hearing.

I would like to point out that the process from here to any ultimate decision about a project is somewhat different under the California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA and the National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA. Specifically, pursuant to CEQA, a Final EIR will be prepared with a summary of all comments, response to the comments, and any revisions deemed appropriate by the authors of the Draft EIR.

The Board of Public Utilities and the City Council will then be asked to make a determination about the adequacy of the Final EIR.

If the Final EIR is deemed to be adequate, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has asked the City to identify a preferred alternative based on the Final EIR. If that preliminary preferred alternative is one which requires actions by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the City is required to complete the appropriate applications for federal permits and make any other changes in the document which the corps deems to be appropriate to conform to federal regulations. Then the corps will oversee the preparation of the Final EIS, which will be circulated for comment to federal agencies and to other interested parties according to the regulations of the corps of engineers. The Corps retains the discretion to have or not have additional public hearings on that document.

It is important to note that the purpose of this hearing is to receive public comment on the adequacy of the Draft EIR/EIS. If you disagree with any conclusions in the Draft EIR/EIS, it would be most helpful to provide data and evidence to support your viewpoint.

This is not a hearing on the preferred alternatives and the advocacy of one alternative over another alternative is not useful in discussing adequacy of the Draft EIR/EIS. After the City has certified the Final EIR as complete and begins its deliberation on the preferred alternative, there will be additional public meetings and opportunity for comment.

As I have stated before, it would be helpful to submit additional detailed comments in writing and summarize your views when you give your testimony. Not only does this save time which may be needed for others to comment, but it will allow for consultants to understand more clearly the comments you are making. It is not necessary for you to

repeat what other people have said. Every comment will receive a response. If the comments are the same, they will be grouped and receive the same response. .

The evaluation of adequacy by the consultants and persons holding this hearing will not be determined by the number of persons who hold a particular opinion. As the chair of this hearing, I reserve the right to ask speakers to limit themselves to comments germane to the question of adequacy of the Draft EIR/EIS.

And as we begin and start, I'm going to ask those that have signs -- we know there's a lot that do -- if you want to hold them up while we're having the hearing, if you would stand at the back of the room, because you're blocking other people's view. That would be helpful. Thank you.

The -- the speakers' names are on the viewfoil. I would ask as your name is called if you will go to a microphone, give your name and address for the record, limit your comments to five minutes. And if you can be prepared, as I said in the earlier statement, to take your position as your name comes up in the line. The first individual is Loretta Borges. Is Loretta here? She had left early. I don't see her. Alex shore? Is Alex here? No. Okay, Brenda Adelman.