

Save Shollenberger Park: Councils Unite to Stop Dutra Plant!

By Magick

The proposed Dutra Asphalt Plant, that would be a disaster for the newly restored wetlands of Shollenberger Park, offers the perfect opportunity to strengthen the power of local government and the will of the people.

This ill-conceived, toxic and inappropriate plan is raising awareness and activating other city councils and county residents to support the people and council of Petaluma.

The entire Petaluma City Council opposes the plan and they presented their case at the last meeting of the Board of Supervisors, BOS.

The group called "Friends of Shollenberger Park" submitted a petition with 3000 signatures and yet the BOS took a straw vote in favor of amending our county General Plan to allow this travesty. The sole voice of dissent came from Shirley Zane, (thank you for your wisdom), with a few reservations expressed by the new West County Supervisor, Efrén Carrillo who needs to be pressured to do the right thing.

Possibly the most egregious aspect of this saga is the Board of Supervisors unconscionable disregard for local city government and the public outcry that they are attempting to marginalize and belittle.

The silver lining to this potential toxic cloud is that city councils throughout the county are galvanizing to support Petaluma.

It was the hot topic of discussion at the recent city councils gathering and Mayor Gurney and the City Council of Sebastopol have unanimously supported their Petaluma counterparts by sending out a letter, (read this powerful letter from Mayor Gurney in this issue) to the Board and other councils that they shall not be shunted aside just because the area in question is not within the city limits. It is, however, within the City of Petaluma's Urban Growth Boundary.

Shollenberger Park is an amazing accomplishment that signals a turn in the right direction. Rather than continuing to allow industry to muscle its way into any place that serves profits as paramount, this restored wetland is giving back what should have never been taken in the first place.

All beings have responded to this miracle of love. Birds are plentiful and newborns arrive in safety, and humans have made this the most popular spot to commune with nature in the Petaluma area.

We can create a new world by reintegrating ourselves into the natural order of existence. There can be no more compromises and no going back to money as the bottom line. We have reached that bottom line and we are finding that below that is community and the amazing resiliency of life.

In the political realm it is a perfect time to strengthen and uphold the newly revised General Plan of Sonoma County by refusing to amend it the first time big business wants its way.

Actually, this should have been a no-brainer, the General Plan does not allow this, the zoning is clear, and the only way for the GP to hold water as the people's constitution is to set a precedent that amendments will be rare and only for the benefit of the people, not profits.

What if the federal constitution had been constantly amended every time greed came knocking? It would have no meaning, after centuries there are only 27 amendments, on the local level we need to have the same commitment to our body of law.

Our representatives are not dealmakers, they are meant to preside over the enforcement of agreements made by the people through our democratic process.

The General Plan is for the whole county, this would violate the General Plan; the people want the board to uphold the law. Could that be any clearer?

Call, write, email, talk to your friends and attend the meetings at the Board to stop this disaster that would damage our environment and weaken our democracy at the same time.

Go to www.saveshollenberger.com and www.momsforcleanair.net and you will find the info you need and the emails of your own councils and the board.

This is the entrance way to our county do we want to send a message of environmental excellence or the smell of toxic fumes?

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