



President's Note

Building Community by Getting to Know our Neighbors: Bob Praetzel, Saving Marin from Marincello

If you're grateful for the vast amounts of open space in Marin, you should thank Kent Woodlands resident Bob Praetzel, and others like him, for fighting to protect it from development in the 1960's.

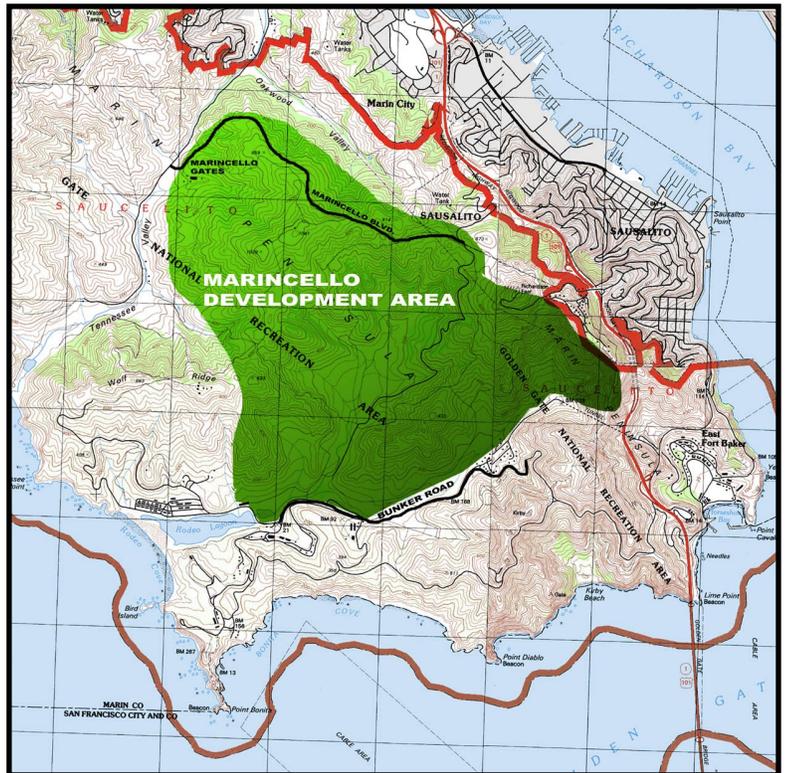
Bob and his wife, Nancy, have lived in Kent Woodlands since 1964. When they bought their property, Crown Road was unpaved and there was no sewer system yet. Nancy, who grew up in San Anselmo, had gotten to know Kent Woodlands as a Campfire Girl, volunteering at the annual "Grape Festival" fundraisers for Sunny Hills Orphanage at the Kent Estate. In those days, in the 1930's and 1940's, she says there were very few homes in Kent Woodlands other than the Kent family's houses.

Bob, a lifetime Environmentalist – or "Conservationist," as they were called in those days – also grew up in Marin. He practiced law here beginning in 1954. His first "environmental" case involved a first-growth redwood forest on the Olema Ridge whose owner intended to let a timber company cut it down. Protestors prostrated themselves on the access road and were arrested. Bob represented most of them. Their defense was "prevention of a crime," as Bob explained that "It'd be a crime to cut down those redwoods." The District Attorney dismissed the case and Bob's clients were released.

Then, in 1964, as Bob tells the story, "Gulf Oil acquired over 2,100 acres of property in Southern Marin County. The land consisted of valleys and rolling hills, bound on the east by the City of Sausalito and on the west by the Rodeo Lagoon, which was a stone's throw from the Pacific Ocean. It was Gulf's plan to turn this agricultural area into a self-sustained city called Marincello with a population of between 25,000 and 35,000 people."

The plan was to include "528 acres of commercial property, 175 acres of industrial property, offices, motels, fifty 16-story high-rise living units, a mile long mall, and at the highest point, a hotel" in the Headlands.

The Marin County Board of Supervisors approved the plan. What followed was "a classic battle between those who favored development, even on fragile land, and environmentalists." Both the Marin IJ and the Pacific Sun newspapers were in favor of the project. But there was substantial community opposition. Opponents claimed that this was too large a development with too much density, that it would cause terrible traffic problems, and that it would be a precedent for further development in Marin County. Also, as Bob points out, "The property was right in the middle of the proposed Golden Gate Recreational Area."



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Bob Praetzel, Saving Marin from Marincello (continued from page 1)

Ground was actually broken for the project in 1966, and construction began on Marincello Boulevard. The Tennessee Valley access road was built and the “Gate to Marincello” was erected. But construction was stopped in 1967, due to the lawsuits brought by Bob and his group of “rebels.”

The full story of the defeat of Marincello is a detailed one involving many determined people, petitions, lawsuits, etc. In 1970, a state appellate court found that the Marincello planners had failed to follow the law in the zoning appeal process. This victory was due to the hard work and legal savvy of Bob and others who identified at least ten occasions where the County of Marin completely ignored both California law, the Marin County Code and many court cases.

The Board of Supervisors withdrew their support for the project. And the area around the Golden Gate was eventually protected as the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, due to the work of others including the late Huey Johnson, who was then with the Nature Conservancy. According to Bob, “Huey obtained an option from Gulf to purchase the property. He then secured interim funding from Martha Gerbode and was able to hold the land until it was acquired by the government as part of the Golden Gate National Seashore.”

Bob estimates that he put in over 1,000 hours of pro bono work to successfully defeat Marincello. For that, we all owe him our thanks.

For more information: See the documentary, “Rebels With a Cause.” Narrated by Frances McDormand, the film tells the story of the battle against Marincello, as well as about the formation of the Point Reyes National Seashore and Golden Gate National Recreation Area. rebelsdocumentary.org/the-film/synopsis/

— Ann Becker, President

KWPOA does not endorse or promote any business or product mentioned in the President’s Note.

If you know a Kent Woodlands resident who you think would be a good subject for a future column, please let me know. Email me at abecker@kwpoa.com with “Subject for President’s Note” in the Subject Line.

Wildfire Safety Webinars

Have you checked out FIRE Safe Marin’s excellent “Living with Fire” webinar series?

If not, you can view past presentations at firesafemarin.org/living-with-fire.

You’ll also find a schedule of upcoming seminars covering all aspects of wildfire preparedness.



From the KWPOA Board Regarding Alternative Energy Options:

Feel free to explore alternative energy options, such as solar panels and storage battery, or sound-muffled generators. The Architecture Committee will work with you to help you through the approval process. Since 2015, the Architecture Committee has received 33 solar applications and has approved all but one, which is pending. Contact Michael Barber, AC Coordinator, for information on the approval process, at mbarber@kwpoa.com.

Architectural Applications: September 2020

Please note: This newsletter is your **official notice** from the KWPOA regarding property improvements submitted for approval by the Architectural Committee. Please review this section very carefully as some planned development may affect you. Note that Architectural Committee actions are not final until ratified by the Board of Directors.

THIS MONTH'S ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW MEETING: Tuesday, September 15

Important Notice: Due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation, this month's AC meeting will be held via teleconference. Please email mbarber@kwpoa.com or jwilliams@kwpoa.com for participation instructions. As this situation continues, it may be necessary to reschedule, or change the format of, AC meetings. Accordingly, consult the KWPOA event calendar at kwpoa.com for any meeting changes.

Property Address	Applicant	Category/Project Description
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New Applications for September

1 Orchard Way	Schow	C-3 Preliminary review
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Applications Approved in August

101 Crown	Henderson	C4 - Significant Change in Appearance
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Open Enforcements

14 Madrone (enforcement on hold)

67 Ridgecrest

421 Crown

Exempt and Administratively Approved Applications

40 Rancheria	Underwood	Tree Removal
90 Upland	Springfield	Solar Panels
11 Rancheria	Centeno	Tree Removal
9 Madrone	Rowe	Tree Removal
316 Goodhill	Segars	Solar Panels
115 S Ridgewood	Leon	House Paint
120 Evergreen	Fourty-Two, Inc.	Solar Panels
122 Goodhill	Walker	Generator
141 Upland	Geissberger	Solar Panels
37 Evergreen	Janzer	Tree Removal
351 Evergreen	Desmarais	Minor Addition

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE: Jim Schafer (Chair), Anne Barr, Tom Nicholson, Bill Riley

AC COORDINATOR: Michael Barber

MEETINGS: Held at the KWPOA office at 1010 Sir Francis Drake Blvd., #200, Kentfield, CA on **the 2nd and/or 4th Tuesdays of each month from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.** To be noticed in the newsletter and placed on the agenda, **COMPLETE** applications must be received by the 21st of the preceding month (or the Friday prior if the 21st falls on a weekend or holiday). All calls concerning Architectural Committee matters should be directed to Michael Barber at the KWPOA office at 415-721-7429 or mbarber@kwpoa.com. Materials and applications may be mailed to P.O. Box 404, Kentfield 94914, or delivered to the office by appointment only.



Kent Woodlands Property Owners Association
PO Box 404
Kentfield, CA 94914

Next Board Meeting Agenda

**Thursday, Sept. 24, 2020 - 6:00PM via videoconference.
Contact jwilliams@kwpoa.com for info.**

- Call to Order
- Public Comment
- Approval of August 27, 2020 Meeting Minutes
- AC Report and Ratifications
- Fire Safety Report and Related Votes
- Officer Reports
- County Update
- Social Events Update
- Solar Panels Approval Process - Report/Vote
- Tree Removal Rules vis á vis Fire Safety - Report/Vote
- Proposed Survey of Members re: Paint Colors - Report/Vote
- Administrator's Report
- Next Regular Board Meeting Agenda
- Adjourn and Reconvene in Executive Session

Executive Session Agenda:

- Call to Order
- Approval of August 27, 2020 Executive Minutes
- Enforcements and Legal Matters
- Personnel
- Adjournment

(This is a preliminary agenda. Final agenda will be posted at our office 96 hours prior to meeting.)

KWPOA Contact Information

Mailing address: PO Box 404, Kentfield 94914
Office address: 1010 Sir Francis Drake Blvd. #200
Kentfield, CA 94904
Phone: 415-721-7429
Web Site: www.kwpoa.com
Email: info@kwpoa.com

Board Members and Staff

Ann Becker, President	abecker@kwpoa.com
Bitsa Freeman, Vice President	bfreeman@kwpoa.com
Sara Wardell-Smith, Treasurer	swardellsmith@kwpoa.com
Kirk Baierlein, Secretary	kbaierlein@kwpoa.com
Anne Barr, Director/AC	abarr@kwpoa.com
Jeff Leh, Director	jleh@kwpoa.com
Matt Kursh, Director	mkursh@kwpoa.com
Jeanne Williams, Administrator	jwilliams@kwpoa.com
Michael Barber, AC Coordinator	mbarber@kwpoa.com