

From: [Susan Nolan](#)
To: [Lippre, Suzanne](#)
Subject: Re: Southern Humboldt Community Park GPA/CUP/FEIR Project # 6111
Date: Sunday, January 01, 2017 8:32:33 PM

Dear Ms. Lippre,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on plans for the Southern Humboldt Community Park. This zoning change process is the only opportunity for the community to participate effectively in determining the future of the property, which could have a huge impact on the community. I feel there are a number of problems with the proposed park development, and urge you to reject the proposal.

The phrase "community park" is somewhat confusing. It suggests a government project, whose management is answerable to voters. That is not the case here. The park is a private holding controlled by a board of directors, whose meetings are not open to the public. The public has no say in the selection of these people and cannot vote them out if they are unhappy with what they do. The community seems to be seen by the management as audience and consumer, but not stakeholder.

This "park" will include a number of income-generating aspects. While a community garden is a public good, generating food for local food programs and educational experiences for school kids, leasing land to a private vineyard is a different matter, reducing public space and wildlife habitat. The controversial large events appear to be also intended to be money-makers. The ambitious plans for the property will call for a big investment in construction and maintenance, it starts to feel like "sometimes you have to destroy a park in order to save it."

The plan includes a 1000 square foot bathroom--the size of a two-bedroom house. That, plus two more 400 square foot bathrooms, additional bathrooms in other buildings, plus a public kitchen, will generate a huge amount of sewage. I was unable to find any mention of sewage disposal in the EIR. The soil in the park's bottomlands is quite porous and may allow sewage by-products (specifically nitrogen) to enter the river. With the volume of sewage production and large water withdrawals, the park could aggravate the Eel River's problems with toxic algae, which thrives in nutrient-rich warm water. The same effects will impact endangered salmonids, which need cold, clean water to survive.

Does southern Humboldt, with its small population, really need an elaborate sports complex? Is it worth sacrificing 16 acres of prime agricultural land--scarce in southern Humboldt--for two baseball fields, a soccer field, and a football field, when such facilities are already in place at local schools? A collaborative effort to enhance existing facilities could benefit the impoverished schools, and provide all the opportunities needed for local adult teams at much lower cost financially and environmentally.

Sprowell Creek Road is narrow, with a sharp turn with poor sight lines. In places it has no safe shoulder for pedestrians or vehicle pullovers, due to slopes uphill and downhill. There is no turnaround for large vehicles for the mile between Garberville and the park itself. This is not a good road for events attended by hundreds or thousands, and it's also not a safe road for lots of buses.

The EIR provides 25 pages on noise control, with numerous charts and tables, without providing what the neighbors want: assurance that noise from the park will not diminish their quality of life.

One good thing in the proposal is straightening out the zoning of Tooby Park, long overdue.

Thank you for your work on this project. It could have a huge impact on a beautiful spot on the Eel, and the community around it. Please help keep that special place intact.

Sincerely,
Susan Nolan.