

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION #2

For Planning Commission Agenda of September 3, 2020

- ☐ Consent Agenda Item
- ☐ Continued Hearing Item
- ☒ Public Hearing Item
- ☐ Department Report
- ☐ Old Business

Re: **Humboldt County Fair Association**
Conditional Use Permit for Concerts and Motorsports Events
Application Number PLN-2019-15519
Assessor's Parcel Number(s): (APN's) 100-181-003, 030-071- 001,
030-011-003, 030-021-003, 030-112-017,030-112-020, 030-081-006

The following items are attached for the Planning Commission's record and review:

1. *Letter from Humboldt County Fair Association, dated September 1, 2020*

In their letter, HCFA:

- offer to reduce the total number of annual events by 50% through
 - reduction of the number of concerts from 10 to 5 per year
 - reduction of the number of motorsports events from 4 to 2 per year.
- offer to restrict motorsports events to motorcycle racing only
- clarify that each "event" is confined to a single day of activities
- agree to use a third-party for event-related noise monitoring and data collection
- agree to submit noise monitoring data to the county within 30 days of each event
- agree to continue to perform noise monitoring and reporting for five (5) years

2. *Letter from Whitchurch Engineering, dated September 1, 2020*
"Response to public comments regarding the Noise Impact Study and Addendum.."

In their letter, Whitchurch Engineering respond to comments on the Noise Study provided by Noise Monitoring Services, William F. Dexter and Arne R.W. Petersen, Stephen Avis, and others.



Humboldt County Fair Association - 1250 5th Street – Ferndale, California 95536

September 1, 2020

Humboldt County Planning & Building Department
Attention: John Ford and Steve Lazar
3015 H Street
Eureka, CA 95501

RE: Humboldt County Fair Association/PLN-2019-15519

Dear John and Steve,

Humboldt County Fair Association would like to address some of the concerns brought forward regarding PLN-2019-15519 and offer some revisions we are willing to make to address and/or clarify said concerns.

1. HCFA is willing to amend the number and types of events put forward in our Conditional Use Permit application as follows:
 - Concerts – Reduce the number of concerts from 10 to 5 per year.
 - Motorsports Events – Reduce the number of motorsports events from 4 to 2 per year. Eliminate Monster Truck, Tractor Pulls, 4X4 Truck and Go-Kart events from the application. In other words, we are willing to narrow the motorsports events to motorcycle events only.
2. The duration of an “Event” as per the application is defined as a 1 day occurrence.
3. Third party noise monitoring will be enlisted for events specified in permit. Noise monitoring data will be submitted to the county within 30 days following an event.
4. Noise monitoring and reporting will continue for 5 years upon approval of permit.

Please contact me if you think there are other items the HCFA needs to address in regards to our application.

Best regards,

Andy Titus
President,
Humboldt County Fair Association

September 1, 2020

Steve Lazar
Senior Planner: Humboldt County Planning & Building Department
SLazar@co.humboldt.ca.us
707-268-3741

Subject: Response to public comments regarding the
Noise Impact Study and Addendum, supporting the draft Initial Study
and MND for Humboldt County Fair Association, CUP for
flat track racing and concerts

JN: HCF1802

Dear Mr. Lazar,

Per your request, we have reviewed the comments received from the public regarding the proposed conditional use permit and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Humboldt County Fair Association. Several of the comments questioned the methodology and conclusions of the Noise Impact Study and its associated Addendum completed by this office. The purpose of this letter is to provide responses to the public comments. Our responses are in *italics*.

The following comments and issues were raised by Noise Monitoring Services (who were hired by Friends of Ferndale for a Livable Community):

- A-1. "If the proposed events at the facility are to be held at weekends then the ambient measurements should be obtained on weekend days."
- A-2. "To properly document ambient sound levels, 24-hour sound measurements should be obtained at a selection of sensitive receptors in the area that are potentially impacted by the project."
- A-3. "The CNEL levels should be directly measured and should not be estimated from brief measurements."
- A-4. "The measurement program should include sensitive receptors in quieter areas located away from roads to ensure that worst-case (lowest) ambient noise levels are documented."

Response to A-1 through A-5: *The above statements are true however because the level of significance is not determined by an increase in ambient noise, our conclusions remain the same.*

- A-5. "The estimated ambient CNEL's have therefore almost certainly been significantly overestimated."

Response to A-5: *Potentially our ambient CNEL value is “overestimated,” however even if it is, it would not affect our conclusions as stated in the study. If the ambient CNEL value has been overestimated, this would result in a conservative estimate. Reducing the ambient CNEL would in-turn reduce the CNEL value of the motorcycle racing value CNEL which would place the project in a more acceptable noise level.*

A-6. “In our opinion the estimated unmitigated noise levels of 93.4 dBA L_{max} and 77.4 dBA CNEL at the receptors on Arlington Avenue, and 93.7 dBA L_{max} and 75.7 dBA CNEL at the receptors on Highway 211 have been calculated appropriately and are valid.”

Response to A-6: *In light of a concurrent opinion from a consultant firm specializing in noise monitoring, we assume that the methodology for obtaining those values is validated as well.*

A-7. “[A] suitable assumption for their exterior-to-interior noise reduction is 20 dB. The actual interior noise levels are likely to be 20 dBA higher than stated in the Whitchurch report. Based on an assumed exterior-to-interior sound reduction of 20 dB, the interior noise levels will exceed the County’s interior noise limit of 45 dBA CNEL for any scenario where the exterior level exceeds 65 dBA CNEL.”

Response to A-7: *The California Building Code (2019) Section 1206.2 specifies that no new construction will have wall construction of sound transmission class less than 50, or not less than 45 if tested. Several of the homes on Arlington way have been built in the last two decades, and would be built to this standard. Older buildings on Arlington way would at minimum be built of ½” gypsum board, 2x4” wooden studs, and some form of wooden sheathing. Based on that and the gypsum manual and this generic construction, the STC rating of this wall would be between 35 to 39 (refer to GA File No. WP 3514), which would be the upper end of our estimate of 40 dB reduction. Given the age of the buildings along Arlington Way it would be reasonable to assume that the buildings include some form of insulation within its walls. This assumption allows us to increase the STC rating for the building to comfortably within our 40 dB estimate.*

The following comments and issues were raised by William F. Dexter and Arne R.W. Petersen:

B-1. “Used an inappropriate Caltrans sound study standards of traffic noise on state highways and streets to evaluate a motorcycle racing event inside the footprint of a city’s limits.”

B-2. “Caltrans ON-highway vehicle standards and methodology was applied to OFF-Highway vehicles racing on a closed oval course. They are totally different occurrences.”

Response to B-1 and B-2: *Noise Monitoring Services accepted the model used, but did have questions about data collection methods. See comments A-1 through A-5 and response.*

B-3. "The technical survey that included test motorcycles did not replicate a race-environment for the number of competitors, proximity to each other or engine RPM."

B-4. "The study failed to follow SAE J-1287 or EPA F-76A standard test methods for off-road vehicles."

Response to B-3 and B-4: *Noise Monitoring Services accepted the calculated results. See comment A-6 and response.*

B-5. "Used a "Cherry Picked" approach to test remote site selections that did not represent the probable noise exposure that residential neighbors within a few hundred feet from the track would experience."

B-6. "Conducted sound transmission testing through a path that had physical interference from buildings and fences."

Response to comments B-5 and B-6: *Testing locations were selected as the nearest residential receiver, and the nearest main thoroughfare through the town, which is also the center of business within Ferndale. The location on Arlington Way was selected as it meets the surface coverage standards for noise studies by Caltrans. There are no solid fences interfering with noise from the flat track at this location. Concerns over existing buildings blocking received noise are negligible as the measurement device was in direct view of the race track between the buildings. The Highway 211 sampling location has no physical fences or buildings between it and the flat track.*

The following comment is representative of comments raised by several other writers:

C-1. Stephen Avis - "Anecdotal reports from several parts of town indicate that the reflected sound traveled unevenly across town and caused disturbance farther away from the racetrack where the noise study measurements were taken."

Response to comment C-1: *See comments B-5 and B-6 and response.*

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Laikam, PE
RCE 68586