

Glen Ellen Town Forum  
Meeting Minutes – Dunbar School  
March 6, 2017

Meeting called to order by Michael Furlong at 7 p.m.

Michael noted that the Glen Ellen Town Forum, at [www.glenellenca.org](http://www.glenellenca.org), is up and is in the process of being built out. The Forum's e-mail address is [forum@glenellenca.org](mailto:forum@glenellenca.org)

The Steering Committee that will serve from March 2017 to March 2018 is:

- Chair - Michael Furlong
- Treasurer - Margie Foster
- Secretary - Tracy Salcedo
- Media - BJ Blanchard
- Coordinator - Leslie Vaughn

Quarterly meetings will be scheduled for Saturdays to accommodate those residents unable to attend meetings on weeknights.

Using the 95442 zip code as a starting point for the geographic scope of the Forum was discussed. About 4,000 people are included within the zip code boundaries, which extend outside the immediate village, which encompasses about 800 people. Discussion focused on why a geographic boundary was necessary. Using the zip code as a baseline invites more people to get involved, and represents a "bigger voice" when dealing with local government entities.

Committee Reports:

Shannon Lee spoke on behalf of the **Organizational & Government Committee**. Her notes are appended to these minutes. Action items for the April meeting:

1. Shall the Glen Ellen Forum begin the process of forming a non-profit organization?
2. Shall the Glen Ellen Forum begin the process of forming a Community Advisory Council?

Alice Horowitz spoke on behalf of the **SDC Committee**. Her notes are appended to these minutes. Action items for the April meeting:

1. Brainstorm ideas for use of the SDC campus

2. Discuss existing ideas for use of the SDC campus as posted at <https://transformsdc.com/>

BJ Blanchard spoke on behalf of the **Community Projects Committee**. Presently, the committee is looking at a number of projects, including:

- A bus shelter
- Accommodations for the homeless
- Public bathrooms
- Burying overhead lines
- Painting the buildings along the post office

Elisa Stancil reported on the status of upgrades and painting of buildings including the post office, the Glen Ellen Grocery, the former veterinary office, and the adjacent dental office. It is expected that the post office will be painted by end of May. Other improvements will include new asphalt, new paint and a new awning for the grocery, and new lighting.

Nick Brown spoke on behalf of the **Traffic & Safety Committee**. He passed out a survey developed by the committee to identify common areas of concern. The survey is on the [glenellenca.org](http://glenellenca.org) website; click the Documents tab.

Michael Wray spoke on behalf of the **Tourism Committee**, which is looking at the impacts of vacation rentals, winery activities, tasting rooms, events, etc. The committee is also working on a survey to determine the most pressing concerns, and is utilizing Survey Monkey to enable residents and others to register comments on how to maintain quality of life. The survey focused on two big questions:

1. What are most important issues?
2. What would you like to see improved?

The survey also addresses demographics, which spurred some discussion, in particular a question focusing on how long respondents have resided in Glen Ellen. Wray expressed that the committee felt it was important because people may have different expectations about quality of life depending on how long they've resided in the area. Another resident expressed her curiosity about the perspective of "old-timers" as opposed to those new to the area. Because the scope of the survey is so broad, Tracy Salcedo asked if it might be possible to "drill down" questions to focus more exclusively on tourism.

It was also suggested that, for the purpose of surveys, the committees look into getting the database/list used by the Glen Ellen Fire Department for a mailing, as well as publicize through the Kenwood Press. Mary Guerrazzi suggested that the Forum get a table at the fire department's annual Mother's Day breakfast as well, since just about all of Glen Ellen attends.

Both the Tourism and Traffic surveys will be posted on the website.

Suzanne Torgeson asked about whether any committee was addressing creek clean-up in the wake of the big winter storms, which have deposited debris and garbage along the streamsides. BJ and the Community Projects Committee will follow up on putting together a creek cleanup involving residents and perhaps the local school. Nancy Padian suggested involving the Sonoma Ecology Center, and Dave Rodondi suggested contacting the Sonoma County Flood Control District.

Shannon Lee noted that rumors that Dunbar School might be closing are not true. The school is researching becoming an international baccalaureate school, focused on project-based learning. Presently, Dunbar is the only school in the Sonoma Valley Unified School District that offers multiage classrooms.

The subject of the atrocious state of area roads was discussed. A link to SoCo Report It has be placed on the glenellenca.org website. Residents are encouraged to report road issues, as well as issues regarding trees, etc. Repairs to bridges are separate from road repair; CalTrans is responsible for bridge repair.

John ??? asked about the size of the Glen Ellen Town Forum. Michael Furlong noted that the group is brand new, moving quickly, and trying to grow. He encouraged spreading the news via word of mouth. A flyer and mailer were also discussed.

The next meeting was scheduled for April 3 at 7 p.m. at Dunbar School; the location may change.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55

#### Attendees

Michael Furlong

Tracy Salcedo

Jim Shere

BJ Blanchard

Leslie Vaughn  
David Rodondi  
Bruce Goldstein  
Alice Horowitz  
Michael Wray  
Nick Brown  
Janie Soto  
Mary Guerrazzi  
Dolores Meyer  
Brooks Bayly  
Jane Witkowski  
Mike Witkowski  
Carrie Castro  
Elisa Stancil  
Alec Peters  
Nancy Padian  
Kevin Padian  
Arthur Dawson  
Stacey Vilas  
Marge Everidge  
Archie Horton  
Margaret Spauldine  
Shannon Lee  
Mary Kate Carter  
Bill Remick  
Ellen McNight  
Jon Torgeson  
Suzanne Torgeson

## **Organizational & Government Presentation; March 6, 2017**

The Organizational & Government Committee was tasked to explore a formal organizational structure for this Glen Ellen Forum group.

Why an organizational structure?

- a. Gain direct access to various funds—donations, county monies, grants, etc.
- b. Create unified voice when communicating with larger government entities and other community or regional groups
- c. Provide a forum so that all citizens have a voice in preserving Glen Ellen's history, establishing goals/objectives on topics most important to our community (i.e. establishing the subcommittees), and shaping Glen Ellen's future

The five organization structures researched included:

- a. Incorporation of the town
- b. Home Owners' Association (HOA)
- c. Community Improvement District (CID)
- d. Community Advisory Council (CAC)
- e. Nonprofit Organization

The committee used the following method to explore these five possible formal structures:

- a. Each of us took a type of organizational structure
- b. We took time to research it and then reported back at a second meeting
- c. The group came to a consensus on best organizational structure to meet our goals as stated

Our recommendation:

1. A combination of forming BOTH a nonprofit and a CAC
2. FYI: these are in no way mutually exclusive NOR do they exclude the possibility of keeping the other 3 possible formal structures on the table for future consideration

**Why a nonprofit?** This allows us a vehicle for raising money via grant application and direct donations. The nonprofit becomes the financial aspect of the Glen Ellen Forum and can require as few as 3 executives (i.e. president, treasurer, secretary), and the need to only meet one or two times a year. These would be volunteer positions (probably with a duration of two year terms), at least at the beginning.

**Why a Community Advisory Council?** This group would provide a unifying voice that could bring together information, goals, ideas coming from across the forum spectrum and then interface with other community, regional, and county/governmental partners. This council would be made of volunteers meeting 4-10 times per year and

could directly connect with other community councils or non-profit boards, such as Friends of Dunbar School, Sonoma Land Trust, Glen Ellen Historical Society, Sonoma Mountain Preservation, Jack London Park Partners, etc.

Action Item #1: Shall the Glen Ellen Forum begin the process of forming a non-profit organization?

Action Item #2: Shall the Glen Ellen Forum begin the process of forming a Community Advisory Council?

### **SDC Committee Presentation, March 6, 2017**

1. SDC Committee met for first time on Feb. 22. We are currently seven; more members are welcome. Several members investigated information on the SDC and researched the Transform SDC website: <https://transformsdc.com/category/sonoma-developmental-center/>

2. Many different entities are interested in having a voice in what happens to the SDC, slated for closure at the end of 2018. Current players include:

- State of California – owner of SDC property
- Sonoma County Coalition (Supervisor Gorin is chair), which is part of the Transform SDC project. The group's mission statement, as established through community engagement process: *“Create a public-private partnership driven by community ideas and values that showcases the site's history, maintains critical services for the developmentally disabled, provides opportunities for creative reuse of the SDC's assets, and preserves the natural resources and open space of the site.”*
- Audubon Canyon Ranch
- Parent Hospital Association
- Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District
- Sonoma County Regional Parks Department
- Sonoma Ecology Center
- Sonoma Land Trust
- Sonoma Mountain Preservation
- Valley of the Moon Natural History Association

- (new!) Glen Ellen Town Forum (SDC Committee requested seat on Coalition, which was granted by Susan Gorin. Tracy Chourre will attend the Coalition's next meeting.)
- Glen Ellen Historic Society

### 3. Quick overview of status of redevelopment planning:

- The existing 300 patients will be transitioned into the community in 2018.
- Transform SDC has conducted some resource studies for the site. The Resource Assessment and Site Transformation Report is at: [https://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/resd/AMB/SDC\\_Files/draft-sdc-report-with-all-exhibits.pdf](https://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/resd/AMB/SDC_Files/draft-sdc-report-with-all-exhibits.pdf) and at <https://transformsdc.com/2016/08/02/state-and-county-kick-off-planning-efforts-for-the-future-of-sdc/>
- State appears interested in community input on future uses of the property.
- Land not for sale.
- Protection of open space a priority at county level, but will need continued support.
- Importance that redevelopment of campus include revenue generation.
- A comprehensive plan is needed to guide future redevelopment and preservation.

### 4. Important information:

- An outside contractor is conducting the Site Assessment and Conceptual Master Land Use and Facilities Reuse Plan Alternatives. Through a competitive bid process, this contractor was awarded the contract by the State Department of General Services, Real Estate Division. The State's Request for Proposals for developing this plan states: *"The purpose...is to assist the State, County of Sonoma, and stakeholders in identifying alternative reuse options for the SDC. The conceptual plans shall give consideration to alternatives that diversify and enhance the Sonoma Valley's economy and establish models for sustainable development and economic self-sufficiency; preserve the distinct character of the Sonoma Valley's rural communities and SDC's natural, historical, and architectural integrity; and, protect SDC's open space, valuable natural and scenic resources to support healthy wildlife populations, water resources, and recreational opportunities."*
- Development has to be economically self-sustaining.
- Open space can be protected only if the developed area is reused/revenue generating.

- Infrastructure would have to support redevelopment (traffic, power generation, water).
- Some buildings degraded and will have to be razed. Buildings on east side could be retrofitted.

5. The Transform SDC group held a public workshop in 2015 and put together the Site Transformation Study that lists community interests in future uses. The land use planning process being conducted by the state will include additional opportunities for community input. At our meeting, we discussed ideas for possible use of campus:

- Open space
- Education (satellite college or university campus)
- Light manufacturing (prosthetic development; biotech)
- Crisis center
- Healing arts
- Veterans Administration support
- Local DMV office
- Equestrian center

6. Action item: Brainstorm session at Glen Ellen Town Forum April meeting. Please give some thought to possible uses before next meeting. Everyone interested should look at the Transform SDC website: <https://transformsdc.com/>, which contains the reports mentioned earlier and other information about the SDC planning process.