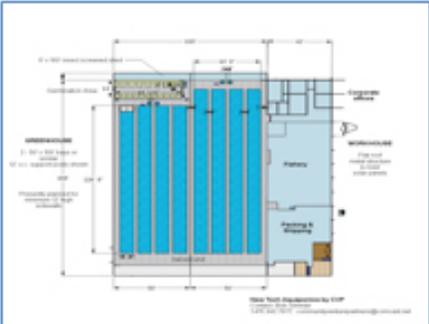
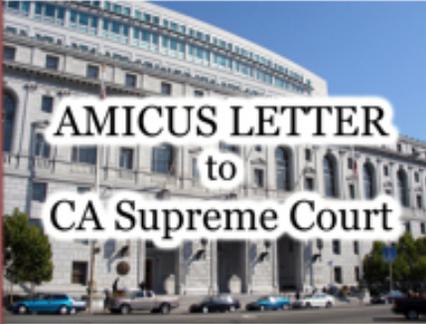


Community Venture Partners, Inc.

A Catalyst for Sustainable Solutions



2019 Annual Report

COMMUNITY VENTURE PARTNERS

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Letter from the President

November 2019

Dear Friends and Supporters,

There has been no lack of issues needing to be addressed in 2019, at the state, regional, and local level of government. Local administrators have been inundated by an onslaught of new legislation and seem increasingly helpless in the face of it. More and more, CVP's work involves doing what our local and county leaders are failing to do on behalf of our residents.

The sheer number of new laws being signed by Governor Newsom that directly impact how our local governments operate, how our cities are zoned, planned, and developed, and whether small communities have any say anymore in any of it is changing almost daily. Although the effects of these new laws may take years to physically manifest themselves, the time to be vigilant is now in order develop strategies that are available to the general public, to address them.

Toward that end, CVP has continued to promote the voice of the community through our initiatives and the publication of the [Marin Post](#). The Marin Post is fundamental to our commitment to "Educate" elected leaders and the general public, and give voice to dissenting public opinions.

CVP's second charge is to "Advocate" for the community. It is unfortunate that government agencies have increasingly adopted a "bunker" mentality in response to community input, so that more often than not, legal action is the only recourse available. CVP has become a respected force in that regard. The thoroughness of our research, our professionalism, and the quality of our arguments has laid the groundwork for that.

Of the 13 challenges to local planning decisions and legal processes that we have undertaken since 2014, in cities throughout Marin County, we have prevailed in 13 out of 14 overall: 3 of 3 in Marin Superior Court, and 10 without having to go to court. In those cases, city, county, and regional agencies remedied their actions, making litigation unnecessary. We are currently appealing our single losing case, the San Francisco Superior Court's denial of our Petition for Writ of Mandate regarding ABAG's multiple violations of the Brown Act.

In addition, the County of Marin has appealed the Marin Superior Court's decision in favor of CVP, in our Alto Bowl CEQA challenge against the Marin Open Space District. The San Francisco 1st District Court of Appeal heard oral argument on this case on October 29th of this year. A more detailed discussion is found below, in this report.

Finally, CVP has continued to work to "Demonstrate" community serving/community supported development that is economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and socially just. For more information on specific projects, please see page 20 of this Report.

SUPPORT CVP

CVP remains the *only* fully independent, donor-supported 501(c)(3) nonprofit, advocacy organization working across the full spectrum of public policy issues in Marin County, while also providing free services and assistance to community groups and local government agencies. CVP is a pro-active, *solutions-driven* organization promoting a positive vision for the future of Marin County, the San Francisco Bay Area, and California.

CVP receives no funding from corporate interests or government entities. We rely solely on donations from individuals and nonprofit foundations, and we will continue to need your support in the coming year to work on your behalf for government transparency, responsible public finance, environmental protection, sensible growth, and sustainable planning. Our workload continues to increase and your ongoing support is greatly appreciated.

As we noted in [last year's Annual Report](#), CVP is also pursuing the longer term goal of demonstrating innovative, sustainable development projects, which are intended not only to showcase our ideas but to also cover our basic operating expenses, so that fundraising drives will only be needed to support the costs of specific initiatives, programs, and legal actions. This is the best way to ensure that we can remain an unbiased, independent voice for the community.

We are extremely grateful to all of you who continue to support our efforts. CVP would not exist without your generosity. CVP accepts donations in all forms, including common stock and other negotiable securities ([contact us](#) for more information). Also, please remember to sign up on [Smile.Amazon.com](#), and designate Community Venture Partners as your charity beneficiary, so that .5 percent of the value of all your purchases on Amazon will be automatically donated to CVP by the Amazon Foundation.

[Please click HERE to make your annual donation to CVP](#)

As always, we promise to make every dollar count. I remain available to meet with each of you throughout the year, to hear your thoughts and concerns. Thank you for your continued confidence and support.

Sincerely,
Bob Silvestri



President

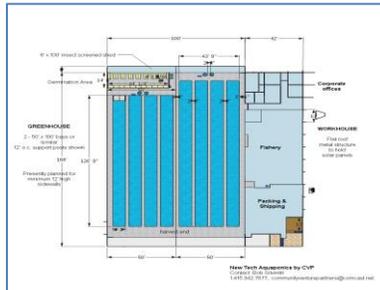
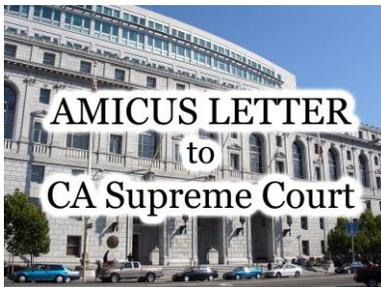
CVP and the Marin Post continue to enjoy pro bono, legal support from [Wilson, Sonsini, Goodrich & Rosati](#), for which we are very grateful.

PLEASE NOTE: CVP has gone paperless and become fully interactive. We will no longer send out printed copies of our Annual Reports or Updates, unless requested. Throughout this report you will find blue text links to more detailed information about each topic discussed. Please [click on the blue text links](#) to learn more (Hint: if you right click on the link, your browser will give you the option to open it in a "New Tab", so you'll still have the Report opened in the original tab). Please be sure we have your correct email address so you are kept up to date on our activities.

COMMUNITY VENTURE PARTNERS 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

EDUCATE - ADVOCATE - DEMONSTRATE

CVP's community serving efforts include *educating* the public and decision makers about issues of general concern, *advocating* for local voices and adherence to state and federal laws and regulations, and *demonstrating* better solutions to growth, planning, and affordable housing.



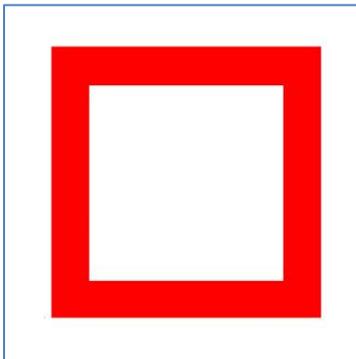
This Report provides an update on our most significant accomplishments and initiatives in each of these areas activity, during the past 12 months.

EDUCATE

Keeping the community informed is essential to effective civic engagement.

We continue to support community organizations, initiatives, and events, and publish research and commentary on a wide range of issues. CVP provides free consultation and advisory services to municipal agencies, elected officials, and bona fide organizations that seek our assistance. We also collaborate with and help promote and empower other local community organizations such as The Citizens for Sustainable Pension Plans, CO\$T, and Livable California.

THE MARIN POST



[The Marin Post](#) remains the single most impactful initiative CVP has undertaken to empower community voices. The Marin Post has become a recognized voice in the North Bay and remains the premiere self-publishing platform for alternative views and investigative citizen-journalism.

The Marin Post recently surpassed 95,000 unique visitors/readers, while providing a publishing platform for 174 writers since our launch in June 2015. The breadth of topics covered continues to expand and each week the percentage of new readers continues to increase. 75 percent of our monthly readers are now new to the site and we are growing at *over 2,500 new readers every month* (Google Analytics data).

The Marin Post has also become an integral part of how CVP updates our supporters about our activities.

We've continued to add improvements and new features throughout the year. For a list of those [please click here](#).

As we've noted in the past, maintaining a secure, user-generated content website is challenging in today's high-speed environment. Malicious viruses and hacking are a fact of life as are ongoing increases in operating costs, coding consultant fees, and maintenance requirements. The Marin Post's servers, robustly hosted by Amazon AWS and Digital Ocean, presently fend off more than one security attack per minute, 24 hours a day.

Marin Post Advertising

The Marin Post just released its proprietary advertising App. Over the past year, we have received inquiries about how to advertise on the Marin Post. However, adding advertising was a major challenge because we didn't want to use the invasive methods that have become ubiquitous on the Internet. We didn't want to annoy readers with popups, jumpy ads, or big banners that block the page. We also didn't want to use Google Ads or other off-the-shelf solutions that track user behavior and record personal data.

Fortunately, we were able to enlist the help of an MIT-trained, computer engineer to build our own advertising platform from scratch, custom-tailored to target the kinds of local advertisers we anticipate in Marin and the San Francisco Bay Area. Our ad solution includes unique algorithms that ensure better results for advertisers.

The Marin Post offers a cross-platform advertising opportunity that displays on all computers, tablets, and mobile devices. It is unarguably the best online advertising value in Marin.

Marin Post readers are highly educated professionals of all ages, who are actively engaged in their communities.



According to the "Web Competitive Index," an independent analysis of website advertising competitiveness, the Marin Post is now 4th in the North Bay in marketing reach!

Please consider [placing an ad on the Marin Post!](#)

Dynamic Page Placement

This feature ensures that every advertiser has equal exposure to Marin Post readers. Ads on the Marin Post are displayed in a different order each time a reader arrives on the page or the page is reloaded. Our "randomization" generator guarantees that each advertiser will have an equal chance to have their ad be first at the top the page, and first in the mobile device slide show, over the average publishing period (one week, one month, or one quarter).

Dynamic Pricing

To ensure that we offer the best possible value, our pricing is based on web metrics generated by audience reach, seasonality, user demand, the average number of unique visitors, the length of time a visitor remains on a page, etc. We compare our overall “web competitiveness” (shown above) with other online publications in our market, and set our pricing accordingly to deliver the best possible value.

Fully Automated

The Marin Post app is the only fully automated, online advertising solution in the San Francisco Bay Area. We have literally cut out the middleman and the commensurate administrative expense on the backend, and passed the savings on to our advertisers.

Support the Marin Post

Please consider becoming a contributor of content and [MAKING REGULAR MONTHLY DONATIONS](#) so the Marin Post can continue to provide the best possible services.

[Click here to donate](#), and note the “Marin Post” in the “purpose” box when you donate online.

REGIONALISM - METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION, THE ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS, AND THE CASA COMPACT

In 2019, CVP continued to push back on the unbridled over-reach by state and regional agencies, backed by corporate and national real estate development interests that are promoting the concept of “regional governance.” This is an issue about which locally elected officials have done an extremely poor job of representing the voices of their constituents.



The concept of regional governance states that every part of the San Francisco Bay Region is responsible for providing employee housing and infrastructure for the benefit of major corporate employers that are responsible for most of the region’s jobs growth, even if those jobs are not in our county.

Certainly, coordination between local governments to deal with impacts of regional growth is a worthy goal. But the creation of unelected regional agencies to issue mandates and control local growth, planning, and zoning is not just a bad deal for California taxpayers but it violates the California State Constitution.

The most egregious example of this regional-thinking overreach is the Committee to House the Bay Area, also known as CASA.

CASA is one of the most powerful unelected organizations in the SF Bay Area, directing public policy for Bay Area affordable housing and planning, and most people have never heard of it.

CASA's mission statement reads, "The Committee to House the Bay Area... convenes a "diverse," multi-sector set of partners in the Bay Area to identify and act upon game-changing regional solutions to the Bay Area's chronic housing affordability challenges."

The problem is that their operative definition of "diverse" is not one that includes the majority of San Francisco Bay Area taxpayers. The [CASA Steering Committee](#) includes executives from major tech companies, real estate and banking interests, and heads of politically-connected housing nonprofits and advocacy groups who financially benefit from this grand vision. Only a few members are elected representatives, who have been "chosen" by the unelected heads of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

Worse still, their 32 member Technical Committee of Advisors all work for corporations and organizations that stand to benefit financially from increased growth and development at the taxpayers' expense. Yet, this group has succeeded in promoting the idea of unelected regional government with the power to levy development fees, sell debt, and put tax measures on the ballot: a vision which has now been codified into law, by Governor Newsom's [signing of Senate Bill 1487](#).

CVP has published ongoing commentary and research about the false assumptions and cherry-picked statistics being used to support the CASA Compact plans. We continue to work with other local and regional organizations, statewide to help craft and promote alternative solutions.

Please click on the titles below to learn more.



The Committee to House the Bay Area and the coming tax tsunami
Published October 25, 2018 (not included in the 2018 Annual Report)

David Crane, the guest speaker at a recent COST event, and the founder of [Govern for California](#), made a compelling presentation about the coming financial crisis in our state. He summed up his predictions about taxes, pension costs, and costs of public services by saying "You ain't seen nothing yet."

Some of the many reasons for Crane's well-reasoned predictions included the State's bogus accounting tricks, its imaginary, future investment return projections, and its skyrocketing retiree benefits and healthcare obligations.

Crane also noted how California's tax revenues have become lopsided and increasingly dependent on fewer and fewer super-wealthy individuals, so that the next recession promises to be long and painful and expensive.



CASA's Housing Compact - How ideologically-driven policies will make housing less affordable. Published December 9, 2018

CVP published an exhaustively researched, three-part series on the potentially dire consequences of the CASA Compact's policies, and a thorough listing of what we could be doing to really address our affordability challenges in a realistic and financially sustainable way.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, we are at risk of drowning in the politically correct view that embracing big government and a no-holes-barred, hyper-growth agenda built on preposterous regional plans, is the best way to address affordability. These policies are being aggressively funded by a highly vocal minority of interests, who are hell-bent on placing the blame for every conceivable dysfunctional outcome on middle-class, suburban families.

Even the recent wildfires in California are being used as an excuse to promote high-density urbanism over all other forms of development. The claim is that if we would only outlaw all single-family zoning and all suburban zoning, all inequities would be resolved, even though the basic human values that have historically made suburban and rural life highly desirable have endured for hundreds of years.

This ideology claims that increased taxation and top-down control of growth and planning, combined with the removal of local zoning laws will unleash powerful market forces that will magically solve all our affordable housing problems. It is a belief system based purely on emotions and ideology, with no basis in facts.



CVP has continued to challenge Sacramento's "tax and spend" mentality and dissect the misguided assumptions of state zoning, planning, and growth policies.

When did California politics lose its common sense? Published May 26, 2019

In the wake of public protest against the state's top-down overreach, growth advocates disguised as "housing" advocates and well-funded by major financial and corporate interests have turned to attacking the messenger because they cannot argue the facts.

Middle class, single-family homeowners, most of whom have worked their entire lives to be able to afford to purchase a home for their families, in the North Bay, have overnight become labeled as de facto racists and elitists and indulgent in a lifestyle that is something to be ashamed of.

In its research and reporting, CVP has worked to remain a voice of reason in the mix and a voice advocating for middle class and working class residents in the Bay Area.

ADDRESSING AFFORDABILITY

CVP continues to publish investigative studies and analysis about the false assumptions underlying popular notions about housing affordability. The thoroughness of the work has become respected throughout the state and republished in other journals such as the Berkeley Daily Planet, the LA Planning Report, and others.

The issues surrounding “affordability” are extremely complex, but they are unfortunately being reduced to slick marketing slogans and soundbites for political purposes. CVP has investigated the national “unaffordability” crisis facing small cities and the middle class, particularly in California, who are being inundated with threats of taxes and fees and penalties on all sides.



CVP has worked to inform the general public about how the housing development business really works, what governments could be doing, right now, to create more affordable housing in ways that are less negatively impactful on existing communities, and why “affordability” is not just confined to housing. See [Running Faster: Losing Ground: The “Crisis” of Middle Class Affordability](#), published September 20, 2019.

Sacramento remains focused on passing a landslide of laws that giveaway the store to major banking, union, and development interests in a desperate attempt to get any kind of housing built. At the same time, they fail to consider that increasing taxation, too many conflicting housing laws, excessive state compliance obligations for small cities, and “top-down” control are the major reasons housing is so scarce.

When it comes to taxpayers, Sacramento’s operating mantra seems to be, “The beatings will continue until moral improves.” But, the fundamental questions are, why can’t people afford to buy the housing that developers can afford to build? And why has the “market” stopped working?



A solutions-driven concept, as a way of addressing affordable housing, promoted by CVP is called "New Suburbanism."

New Suburbanism describes ways of making suburban and ex-urban living less impactful through technological innovation, better design and planning. See ["New Suburbanism 2.0" - A new way to look at planning, growth and the greening of our world.](#)

We believe this must include a new way to look at growth and land use, based on localism and incorporating a bottom-up, locally-driven process that enables communities to solve their own growth, affordable housing, and planning challenges in environmentally, economically and socially sustainable ways.

CONSEQUENCES OF PROPOSED HOUSING LEGISLATION

Black and white thinking is the death of creative problem solving. And the tendency to argue by “sound bite,” which has become so normalized by social media, leads to policies based on nothing more than noise.

At one extreme, advocacy groups and politicians gravitate only to ideologies supporting more government and top-down solutions. At the other extreme, outlier groups promote a world free of all government intervention as the panacea for all that ails us. But, neither is realistic. It’s not only about more government or less government. It’s really about “smarter” government. And the best way to examine what is or is not smart is through the cold lens of economics and data.



Affordable housing solutions: more government, less government, or smart government? Published January 13, 2019

All real public wealth is the result of the efficient utilization of private manpower and capital (the tax base), which is measured as “productivity.”

The efficient utilization of capital is absolutely critical to addressing any large scale, systemic challenge such as affordable housing. And capital is always limited. ... [for more click here »](#)

As a result of local and state government’s ignorance or intentional disregard for these basic economic truths, they are making California into the most expensive state in the country to live in and steering us into inevitable bankruptcy. To defend themselves against this and to keep their ideologies afloat, Californians are currently experiencing a tsunami of new laws that seek to significantly reduce and in some cases completely remove locally elected government’s control of local zoning, land use, and real estate development approvals for high-density housing and mixed-used development.

Ironically, these proposals will hurt the poor and those most in need and disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Among the legislation CVP has reviewed and published commentary on in the past year, includes but is not limited to Senate Bill 2, SB 3, SB 35, SB 50, SB 350, SB 827, AB 744, AB 330, SB, AB 1487, AB 1486, AB 1763, AB 1515, and many more.

CVP has also increased our one-on-one interactions and conversations with state legislators and their staff, regarding the unintended consequences and local impacts of this legislation.

Unfortunately, the results of these efforts have been extremely disappointing.



[Senator Mike McGuire bows to Wiener's SB 50 plan to outlaw single family zoning](#), published April 24, 2019

In April 2019, CVP was invited to meet with State Senator Mike McGuire to discuss his support of Senate Bill 50, which would have overridden local zoning and allowed denser, taller multifamily housing throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.

Senator McGuire, played a key role in moving this legislation forward. He was in the position to push back and work for appropriate solutions that might actually produce affordable housing, but he wasted his opportunity.



[Oblivious to reality, Senator Wiener trips over American's third rail](#), published May 17, 2019

In its work, CVP has emphasized the importance of home ownership and a path to home ownership for all members of our community, rich and poor, and the unintended consequences of that state's misguided "fair share" legislation.

Toward that end, CVP has worked to expose the incompetence and potentially draconian impacts of the laws being proposed by San Francisco Senator Scott Wiener. His recent anti-local control of planning proposal, Senate Bill 50, is a case in point. ... [click here for more »](#)

QUESTIONING THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF NEW HOUSING LAWS



CVP has provided elected representatives with public policy analysis and [commentary regarding the constitutionality of recently proposed housing laws](#) that remove local control of zoning and planning. In our opinion, these laws violate the State Constitutional protections against usurping local control of zoning and land use planning. There are several lawsuits about this, by cities against the state, which are currently making their way through the courts.

Marin County and other parts of the North Bay are under immediate threat of unrestricted, higher density development, the costs of which for public services, infrastructure, schools, traffic, etc., will be borne by residents. Laws such as [AB 1487](#) and [SB 330](#) and SB 592 now give unprecedented powers to regional agencies and unelected (read that as "politically appointed") groups to levy fees and taxes to fund state growth and housing mandates, which override local control of zoning and planning. These laws also open the door for 3rd party advocacy groups to sue for compliance. We believe this will ultimately have disastrous financial consequences for small cities and middle class families, and that the constitutionality of these laws needs to be challenged.

THE IMPACTS OF “OPPORTUNITY ZONE” LEGISLATION

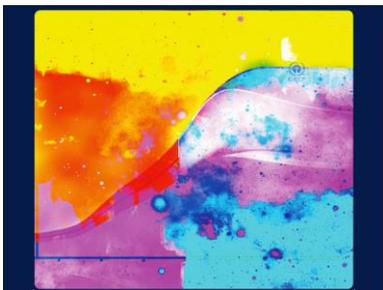


Opportunity Zones: Opportunities Wasted, published January 31, 2019.

Opportunity Zones and the use of Qualified Opportunity Funds are the result of a relatively small provision in the [2018 Federal Tax Reform Bill](#). Simply put, the law establishes “opportunity zones” (land parcels in every state and city that designate where the tax code incentivizes investment) to provide a way for private investors, who have unrealized capital gains in one type of investment, to move those gains into a new type of investment (real estate / new business creation) within one of those designated opportunity zones. In doing so, they can defer all taxes on the capital gains on their original investment until 2026, and if that new opportunity zone investment is maintained for 10 years or more, the investor pays zero taxes on all their unrealized gains.

This is actually a fantastic concept. However, it is deeply flawed because it fails to address housing *affordability* in any way. And, by tying “opportunities” to fixed, physical parcel maps, instead of prescribing opportunity “types,” it removes the ability for investors to build where it makes the most economic sense and for local agencies to tailor development to fit their General Plans. The legislation was essentially written by large investment banking and national real estate development interests, for those interests, and not for local developers or smaller cities. As such, it has missed a unique opportunity to use the tax law in a way that could have incentivized the market to profitably develop more affordable housing.

RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT SHARED ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS



CVP supports environmental preservation and reducing the negative environmental impacts of uncontrolled development and growth. A recent article published by CVP, entitled, *IPBES Reports nature’s decline is ‘unprecedented’ and species extinction ‘accelerating’*, May 6, 2019, lends credence to the thesis that we cannot keep building and urbanizing using the same century-old techniques, if we have any hope of significantly impacting climate change. In addition, CVP has published investigative reporting and commentary on how environmental issues are inextricably connected to economic sustainability and social justice.

Please see *Elections, climate change, and the colonization of Mars*, published November 2018 (published after the release of our 2018 Annual Report).

ADVOCATE

CVP LEGAL CHALLENGES AGAINST LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATE AGENCIES

As discussed in this year's Letter from the President, CVP has become a formidable advocate for community voices in the eyes of local and even regional government. We continue to engage government agencies in the courts to counter their abuses of power and illegal actions.

Note that in instances where CVP takes on legal challenges and files legal actions, we consult with our corporate legal counsel at Adler Colvin of San Francisco, to ensure that such actions fall properly within our nonprofit, public benefit purposes.

CVP V MCOSD - CEQA



[CVP v. MCOSD goes to the California State Court of Appeals](#), published February 16, 2019

In 2017, CVP won its argument in Marin Superior Court against the Marin County Open Space District for their violation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), following their approval to open the Alto Bowl Preserve to mountain biking without doing any environmental assessment of impacts. The County appealed that decision.

In 2017, CVP won its argument in Marin Superior Court against the Marin County Open Space District for their violation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), following their approval to open the Alto Bowl Preserve to mountain biking without doing any environmental assessment of impacts. The

County appealed that decision. Following the filing of initial briefs and amicus briefs, answered by both sides, the case was heard for oral argument in the 1st District California Court of Appeal in San Francisco, on October 29th. At that hearing, the County continued to promote its false and circular narrative that claimed that they did need to comply with CEQA, but that they had complied with CEQA, even though the record clearly shows that had they not been caught in the act of violating the law, they would have opened the trails to bicycles without ever giving CEQA a second thought. Their trumped up "CEQA compliance was after the approval decision was made, not before, as required by law.

The outcome of that hearing may take anywhere from 6 weeks to a year to be decided.

Throughout the year, CVP has kept our donors and supporters informed by publishing updates at each step of the legal process. Complete details can be found at the following links:

[CVP v Goliath and "friends"](#), published March 31, 2019, [The League of California Cities oversteps their organization's mandate](#), published April 7, 2019, and [CVP submits Respondent's Answer to Amicus Briefs in CVP v MCOSD](#), published May 2, 2019.

CVP AND LIVABLE CA v. ABAG - BROWN ACT



CVP, in collaboration with Livable California, submitted a cease and desist letter to ABAG (See [Livable California and CVP file cease & desist letter with ABAG Board for Brown Act violations](#), published April 18, 2019). We subsequently filed a petition in San Francisco Superior Court against ABAG for their multiple violation of the state’s open meetings law, the Ralph M. Brown Act (See [CVP and Livable CA file Petition for Writ of Mandate against ABAG for Brown Act violations](#), published June 5, 2019).

CVP lost this case in the trial court in what can only be described as one of the most bizarre hearings we’ve ever witnessed. This case is a classic example how disadvantaged small plaintiffs are in the face of the court’s deference to large, public agencies, and how this can result in decisions that would never happen if the situations were reversed.

The substantive arguments in this case revolved around clearly stated provisions in the Brown Act that require public agencies to make a record of who voted for or against any motions put to a vote. ABAG failed to do this, as was clearly evidenced in the meeting minutes and on video tape. ABAG also violated the clear provisions in the law regarding how to “remedy” such a violation (See [CVP/LC v ABAG in San Francisco Superior Court - Round One](#), published August 1, 2019).

In the course of prosecuting this case, ABAG denied, in writing, the alleged violations of the Brown Act and stated that therefore “no remedy was required.” Then in court, ABAG claimed they had subsequently “cured” the violation (which they had previously said they did not commit) under a new and novel definition of “remedy” (that is not in the law), which they called a “community notice.” This “notice” was said to be evidenced by an acting director making a vague statement about “the importance of the Brown Act” at a subsequent public hearing.

ABAG claimed that this comment, which was not recorded in the meeting minutes nor publicly noticed on the meeting agenda, as required by law, was sufficient to satisfy the legal requirement for an “unconditional commitment” in writing, approved by a proper motion and recorded vote at a publicly noticed hearing, acknowledging their violation and promising to not violate the Brown Act again.

To add insult to injury, when CVP’s legal counsel objected to the absurdity of ABAG’s post-hoc, nonsensical arguments, the Judge, Ethan Schulman, responded by saying, “So what? No one was hurt, right?” Basically, his opinion was that it didn’t matter whether ABAG broke the law or not, because “The Brown Act is a hyper-technical law” that’s just too hard to follow.

Needless to say, CVP is now in the process of appealing Judge Schulman’s unfathomable decision to the State Court of Appeal.

For more, please see [CVP/LC v ABAG in San Francisco Superior Court - Round Two](#), published August 17, 2019.

CVP AND LIVABLE CA v. BART - BROWN ACT



CVP, in collaboration with Livable California, submitted a cease and desist letter against BART for their violation of the state’s open meetings law, the Ralph M. Brown Act, when they illegally endorsed Senate Bill 50, which promotes high density development on BART parking land (See [Livable California and CVP send BART cease and desist letter for Brown Act violation](#), published April 13, 2019).

In stark contrast to the ABAG case, noted above, our complaint resulted in BART properly “curing” their violation at their subsequent, properly noticed, public hearing (See [CVP and Livable California prevail in challenge to BART’s illegal endorsement of SB 50](#), published May 5, 2019).

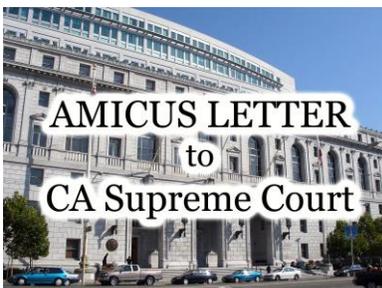
TOWN OF CORTE MADERA - HOTEL ORDINANCE



After spending three years successfully contesting the proposed renovation of the Corte Madera Inn, which included the destruction of a federally protected wetlands, the Town of Corte Madera Planning Commission attempted to pass a new hotel ordinance in violation of CEQA requirements for assessment of the impacts on traffic.

However, since CVP had been working collaboratively, for two years, with Town Council members and the Town Planner to develop a comprehensive hotel ordinance, a legal CEQA challenge was not needed to remedy this violation. The Town of Corte Madera is to be commended for their responsiveness. The Town is now committed to a proper CEQA assessment process. For more information, please see [Corte Madera sets a precedent for community engagement](#), published August 21, 2019.

CVP AMICUS LETTER TO CA SUPREME COURT ON “INCENTIVE ZONING”



In September of 2019, CVP was asked to file [an Amicus Letter to the State Supreme Court](#) in a challenge to the published decision by the State Court of Appeal in the case of *Sacramentans for Fair Planning v. City of Sacramento et al.*

This case involves the Appeal Court’s ruling that cities can engage in a practice known as “incentive zoning,” whereby a local agency can offer favored developers special zoning rights so long as they “feel” that development provides a “public benefit.”

The ruling does not require any findings of facts nor does it in any way define “public benefit.” It is CVP’s conviction that this decision creates circumstances that are ripe for political influence, favoritism, and corruption. Unfortunately, however, the Supreme Court recently declined to hear the case. It is therefore highly likely this ambiguous decision will be the subject of future litigation.

COMPLAINT TO MARIN D.A. - ILLEGAL ACTS AND REGULATORY VIOLATIONS BY MARIN COUNTY



As a result of Public Records Act requests submitted during the preparation for [the CVP v MCSOD court case](#), CVP discovered suspicious record-keeping by the County of Marin, with regard to multiple payments of taxpayer funds to the Marin Bicycle Coalition and other organizations.

The resultant 16-month long investigation produced a 185-page Report outlining illegal and unethical record-keeping and payments practices by the County of Marin under its so-called “Community Service Contracts Program.” As a result, CVP discussed the matter with the State Attorney General, the Office of the State Auditor, and the State Controller, and subsequently submitted a complaint to the Marin County Grand Jury.

Then in September of 2019, CVP also [filed a formal request for an investigation with the Office of the Marin County District Attorney](#), alleging numerous illegal acts and regulatory violations by the County of Marin, the Marin County Board of Supervisors, the office of the County Administrator, and other associated Marin County staff.

The total funds misappropriated and incorrectly accounted for in the County’s Annual Budgets, over that 15 year time period, were approximately \$27 million. Our request included our Investigation Report, entitled: [The Marin County Community Service Contracts Program - Investigative Report by Community Venture Partners, Inc.](#), with [Appendices A](#) and [B](#) - Exhibits (the “Report”).

Based on the evidence presented in our Report, allegations of wrong-doing by the County of Marin, include but are not limited to:

- Accounting fraud and conspiracy to commit accounting fraud and falsification of Marin County budgets and accounting records;
- Failure to keep adequate and complete records of financial transactions regarding public monies;
- Failure to adhere to state competitive bidding regulations for contracts for services, including but not limited to failure to provide public notice or public solicitation of such services;
- Violation of the California State Constitution regarding gifts of public funds; and
- Violations of the Ralph M. Brown Act, over a period of 15 years, for their failure to properly and accurately describe and disclose the true nature of items posted on public agendas, regarding such so-called contracts.

The outcome of the District Attorney’s investigation into this matter is currently pending.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS



Throughout the year, CVP provides strategic support and technical assistance to a variety of local, grassroots community organizations. One example is our ongoing assistance to the Friends of West Tam Valley (FWTV) in their challenge against the illegitimate project-approval process that the County of Marin has used to review a proposal for housing development on an isolated site in the Wildland Urban Interface. As submitted, the developer's proposal for large single-family homes violates CEQA, the Map Act, and fire safety regulations.

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With CVP's guidance and assistance, FWTV has raised their concerns exhaustively in discussions and correspondence with County officials, since 2016. However, to date, FWTV's concerns have been largely ignored. CVP continues to assist FWTV in their efforts. To learn more, please see Parts I and II of [Friends of West Tam Valley comments on the Alta Way Extension development proposal](#), published in August 2019.

WILDFIRES & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

CVP has made considerable effort, in 2019, investigating wildfire and fire-safety preparedness in Marin County. In particular, we have actively argued against Mill Valley's misguided policies and regulations regarding wildfires, emergency preparedness, and evacuation in the event of a catastrophic event, and the city's false claims of CEQA exemption.

CVP v. CITY OF MILL VALLEY - CEQA VIOLATIONS FOR MILLER AVENUE PARKWAY PLAN



Starting in 2007, Mill Valley undertook a public process that eventually produced the Miller Avenue Streetscape Plan, in 2016. All totaled that process included over one million dollars in consultant's time, hundreds of hours of workshops, hearings, and public input, and four different volunteer task forces, all of which resulted in a plan that was unanimously approved by the City Council.

However, in the 11th hour, City Council member Stephanie Moulton Peters in collusion with a group of bicycle activists, fabricated a "public petition," in support of a new plan, and [hijacked the approved planning process](#), which led to the adoption of an alternative plan – a plan that has put all residents of Mill Valley at significant fire safety risk.

As a result, the Mill Valley [City Council voted to decrease traffic capacity in the Parkway section of Miller Avenue](#) (from Millwood St. to Willow St.) by 50 percent, reducing traffic lanes on the city's main evacuation route from two lanes in and out of town to only one lane in each direction.

ADVOCACY FOR REALISTIC AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND FIRE-SAFETY POLICY



In response to the events noted above, CVP published and submitted numerous comment letters about how [Mill Valley continues to carelessly endanger the lives of residents](#), with its misguided policies and its failure to [honor its commitment to an open public process](#), and its failure to acknowledge the significant risks it has created in the event of a canyon wildfire.

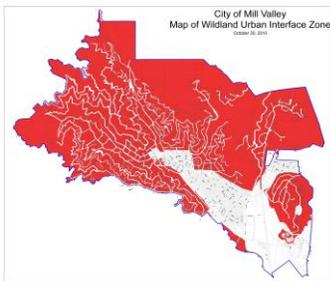
The City Council has stubbornly and somewhat belligerently ignored [the lessons of the Paradise Fire](#), and failed to acknowledge its [lack of ability to deal with an inevitable catastrophic event](#).

The City's response to criticism was, essentially, to attempt to discredit the messenger.

CVP's protests could not have proved to be timelier. In June of 2019, [the Marin County Grand Jury confirmed CVP's opposition to the narrowing of Miller Avenue Parkway](#) in their Report entitled, *"Wildfires - Partners in Prevention" - Marin County Civil Grand Jury*, published July 1, 2019.

Unfortunately, the City has continued to stubbornly stick with their misguided plans.

These decisions by the City of Mill Valley were followed by an equally controversial proposal for their proposed Vegetation Management Fire Ordinance. The public commentary and [events surrounding the proposal of the Vegetation Management Fire Ordinance](#) led to CVP researching fire-safety in Marin County, in general.



In a recent article, entitled, [Audacity and ignorance are as lethal as a firestorm](#), published September 4, 2019, CVP provided an analysis of the likely outcomes and impacts of the Mill Valley Ordinance—something the City had failed to do, because they had denied any need for a proper assessment, as required under CEQA.

Like many other cities in Marin, Mill Valley has a history of categorically claiming non-existent CEQA exemptions each and every time they undertake a new project or propose to pass a new ordinance.

This remains an ongoing battle requiring constant community vigilance. And recently, a separate community organization, Mill Valley Residents for the Protection of Wildlife, [has filed suit to block the City's Fire Ordinance](#) approval.

EMPHASIZING FIRE-SAFE HOME CONSTRUCTION



In response to the massive October 2019 PG&E blackout, CVP has focused on analysis and commentary about future solutions.

Our observation, as noted in our recently published article, entitled, [*Rethinking Fire Safety Solutions*](#), is that something has been sidelined in our fire safety conversations: home design and home construction methods. Much is being made of the need to “harden” our environment and denude our landscape near homes, but too little is being discussed about hardening our homes, themselves.

This needs to be included in any comprehensive discussions about overall impacts and any fire-safety ordinance proposals. We need to balance the need to protect lives and property with the environmental impacts of proposed "solutions" have on habitat and plant and animal species, such as the Mill Valley Vegetation Management Fire Ordinance.

Aside from concentrations of dense, dry underbrush, homes and other man-made structures are the most flammable things in the WUI. Our emphasis, therefore, needs to focus equally on questioning our preconceptions about home design in order to address fire-hazard challenges.

Advancing new and innovation solutions is also an important part of CVP third primary purpose: to demonstrate sustainable solutions.

DEMONSTRATE

CVP is working to promote “community-serving and community-supported” development that is economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and socially just. CVP’s projects are part of our longer term goal of financial sustainability for CVP, so that revenues can cover our basic operating expenses and fundraising drives will only be needed to support the costs of specific initiatives, programs, and legal actions. This is the best way to ensure that we can remain an unbiased, independent voice for the community.

LARKSPUR LANDING SENIOR ASSISTED LIVING & AFFORDABLE HOUSING

After successfully defeating the Larkspur Landing Station Area Plan, CVP began working on a proposal to sustainably develop a mixed-use project on the 10 acre parcel at Larkspur Landing, currently owned by the Ross Valley Sanitary District (RVSD). CVP’s proposal demonstrates our commitment to create community-serving growth and address Marin’s housing challenges.

RVSD is in the process of an EPA-supervised remediation of PCBs in the soils, which they anticipate to be completed by the end of 2019. Indications are that RVSD will then move to sell the parcel.

This property is already zoned for housing, a hotel, and commercial uses. So, this is not a question of *if* it will be developed, it is a question of *how* it should be developed to provide improvements that have the fewest negative impacts on traffic, schools, infrastructure, and the environment.

CVP began working from the “bottom-up” with local community groups to gather input, more than three years ago. After several false starts with developer partners, who wouldn’t accept the financial sacrifices and high design standards that we felt were required in Marin, CVP has now assembled a team to develop senior assisted living units, independent living senior housing, very low income housing for Marin residents with developmental disabilities, and a boutique hotel (required by the City of Larkspur). The CVP proposal will meet all regulatory and local planning requirements.

CVP’s proposed project will be made possible by significant grants by private donors. CVP is pleased to announce that we have secured private donor commitments of approximately \$4 million in support for the affordable housing component of the project.

Our ability to undertake this project is, of course, subject to RVSD accepting our purchase offer, when and if the parcel is put up for sale. At that time, we will be reaching out to our network of community supporters and collaborators, to help us create the best possible development outcome for this important property.

THE NEW TECH AQUAPONIC FARM & EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER

The New Tech Aquaponics Farm & Educational Research Center is a demonstration of collaborative, community-serving and environmentally sustainable development, using advanced engineered agriculture technology. A primary goal is to address food security by donating 10% of annual revenues in fresh produce to those in need, in each community in which we are located.

There is no question that engineered agriculture will be an important part of the future of food. New Tech Aquaponics is committed to advancing locally-grown food production by:

- Dramatically *reducing* environmental impacts and resource demands;
- Using cutting-edge grow systems technology to dramatically *increase* crop yields;
- Creating a replicable, infill model for urban and suburban communities;
- Offering public education and school programs;
- Offering 21st century jobs training for veterans and economically disadvantaged residents;
- Paying a living wage and providing healthcare benefits to all employees; and
- Advancing collaborative research and the science of aquaponics by implementing "open source, cloud-based" data sharing application software.



[CLICK ON THE IMAGE](#) to watch an informational video. Sound system is required. Password: CVPNTA1

CVP is currently in negotiations with landowners in Half Moon Bay, for a long-term land-lease of approximately 1.3 acres. County planners and building officials have encouraged us to bring this project to the community, which is trying to remain an agricultural center in the Bay Area.

CVP is currently seeking grants to allow us to move into Phase 2 engineering of the project, prior to final bidding. We are also seeking nonprofit foundations interested in making a "program-related investment" in our project.

Total investment capital needed will be approximately \$2.5 million. The return on investment over a 10-year period is currently estimated to be 20% ROI and 30% IRR with a ten year return of capital. Complete projected income / expense financial proforma available upon request.

New Tech Aquaponics (NTA) is a social-benefit "B" corporate venture controlled by Community Venture Partners, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and [Ouroboros Aquaponic Farms](#), the largest aquaponic farming operation in Northern California.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS:

- **Smart greenhouse** technology automatically maintains ideal growing environments that adjust for weather, available sunlight, temperature, humidity, air pressure, and more;
- **Less than 5% of the water consumption** of best practices, in the ground farming;
- **Up to 25 times the yield per acre** of conventional farming;
- **Unmatched productivity:** growing over 300 varieties of fresh vegetables and herbs;
- **A USDA Food Safety certified facility;**
- **Solar-powered** fisheries and greenhouse systems with three full days of battery backed up/emergency power;
- **Programmable LED lighting** "recipes" maximize growth;
- **Vegetable waste compost-to-soil** production and CO2 capture for plant dosing to maximize foliage growth;
- **Fish waste to fertilizer** production;
- **Rainwater and evaporation capture and recycling;**
- **Real-time nutrient demand and spectral growth monitoring** creates ideal growing conditions for a wide variety of produce at any time of the year;
- **Decoupled aquaponics** for enhanced crop yields and precise nutrient, temperature, and pH monitoring;
- **Advanced airlift bio-filter technology** reduces moving parts and energy usage by 90%;
- **Cloud-based, cost benefit analytical software** of varying combinations of fish and plant species input to output income/expense impacts;
- **Custom ordering on demand,** Internet mobile app;
- **Diffusion exterior glazing** for enhanced natural light balancing.

*Socially,
environmentally, and
economically
development.*

*Cutting edge
technology and
agricultural research to
produce abundance.*

*Our commitment to food
security - donating free,
fresh produce, every
year, to those most in
need in the community
in which we are located.*

THE NTA NONPROFIT / FOR PROFIT “HYBRID” BUSINESS MODEL

New Tech Aquaponics (NTA) employs an innovative, nonprofit / for profit "hybrid" business model taps the power of private capital investment in collaboration with the benefits of nonprofit funding to maximize public benefits and financial returns.

NTA is a for-profit “B” corporation incubated within its nonprofit 501(c)(3) parent company, Community Venture Partners, Inc. This provides measurable social benefit opportunities for grant makers and investors to participate and maximize financial and social outcomes, for both.



PROJECT ADVISORS

A partial list of our current project collaborators and advisors includes:

Charlie Schulz, Lead Faculty for the Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) program at Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) in New Mexico,

David Warner, President, Redhorse Constructors, Oakland, CA

Don Ruggles, AIA, Ruggles Mabe Studio, Denver, CO

Dr. Jackson Gross, M.S.P.H., Ph.D. Department of Animal Science, Aquaculture UC Davis CA,

Dr. James Rakocy, Ph.D., Founder School of Aquaponics, University of the Virgin Islands

Dr. Ron Malone Ph.D., PE, Civil and Environmental Engineering, AST, New Orleans, LA

Edward Harvey, Founder, Harvey Economics and Environmental Analysis, Denver, CO

John Flavin, Principal, Real Estate Development & Finance, Sausalito, CA

Maisie Ganzler, Vice President, Bon Appetit Management Company in Palo Alto, CA.

Rick Harris, Institutional Investment Banking and Municipal Finance, Mill Valley, CA

Thomas Azwell Ph.D., Berkeley Global Research Campus, College of Natural Resources,

Victor Grey, Internet Applications Technology, Concord, CA

Wilson Sonsini & Rosati, Law, Palo Alto, CA (general counsel)

CVP Income / Expense: October 31, 2018 to November 1, 2019

Income		
Donations		\$ 108,443
Investment Income		
Corporate Bond & Other Interest	\$ 7,036	
Dividend Income	\$ 690	
Interest-Savings, Short-term CD	\$ 685	
Total Investment Income		\$ 8,410
Program Service Fees		\$ 239
Total Income		\$ 117,092

Expense		
Bank Charges		\$ 38
Business Auto Expenses		\$ 840
Business Registration Fees		\$ 995
Computer & Internet Expense		\$ 70
Dues & Fees		\$ 495
Equipment		\$ 507
Insurance		
Business Umbrella Coverage	\$ 357	
Errors & Omissions	\$ 1,007	
Health Insurance	\$ 3,158	
Liability	\$ 1,127	
Meals & Meetings		\$ 871
Merchant Fees - Paypal		\$ 361
Operating Costs		
Advertising	\$ 600	
Postage, Shipping & Delivery	\$ 87	
Printing and Copying	\$ 42	
Supplies	\$ 529	
Telecommunications		
Internet	\$ 2,776	
Telephone	\$ 739	
Payroll Expenses		
Employee	\$ 46,649	
Payroll Expenses - Fee	\$ 506	
Payroll Taxes	\$ 13,086	
Professional Fees		
Accounting Fees	\$ 1,350	

CAD drafting	\$	250
Consultants - Tax	\$	850
Legal & Consultant Fees	\$	8,247
Legal Accounts Payable	\$	15,819
Publications	\$	75
Security	\$	460
Travel		
Airfare	\$	611
Conference, Convention, Meetings	\$	212
Hotel/Lodging	\$	821
Parking	\$	296
Tolls	\$	200
Travel Auto Expense	\$	17
Transportation - Other	\$	22
Travel - Misc.	\$	53
Travel Meals & Entertainment	\$	230
The Marin Post		
Applications	\$	486
Consultants - Coding	\$	15,046
Web Sites Domain Registry	\$	377
Web Site Hosting	\$	1,204
Total Expense	\$	121,466
Net Profit / Loss	\$	(4,374)

NOTES:

CVP President is paid \$20 / hour for all operations and management. Expenses include sums owed on contracts. We anticipate expenses to increase by 15% in the coming year.

SUPPORT COMMUNITY VENTURE PARTNERS

CVP's ability to respond to the significant challenges ahead will only be possible with your continued financial support. Please help us continue to push back on flawed government decision-making and ill-conceived planning in Marin. Please help us continue to build an expanding network of community collaboration for change.

Community Venture Partners is solely dependent upon donations from individuals like you.



Donations by Mail

Make checks payable to:

Community Venture Partners, Inc.

73 Surrey Avenue

Mill Valley, CA 94941

We accept donations of common stock and other types of securities. [Contact us](#) to make special arrangements for transfer and delivery.

Donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. We advise all donors to seek financial advice from a qualified tax professional.

The names of all CVP donors are kept strictly confidential.

SUPPORT THE MARIN POST EVERY TIME YOU PURCHASE ON AMAZON!

The Amazon Foundation will donate 1/2% of the total value of your purchases to Community Venture Partners, every time you buy something on their site -- at no additional cost to you!

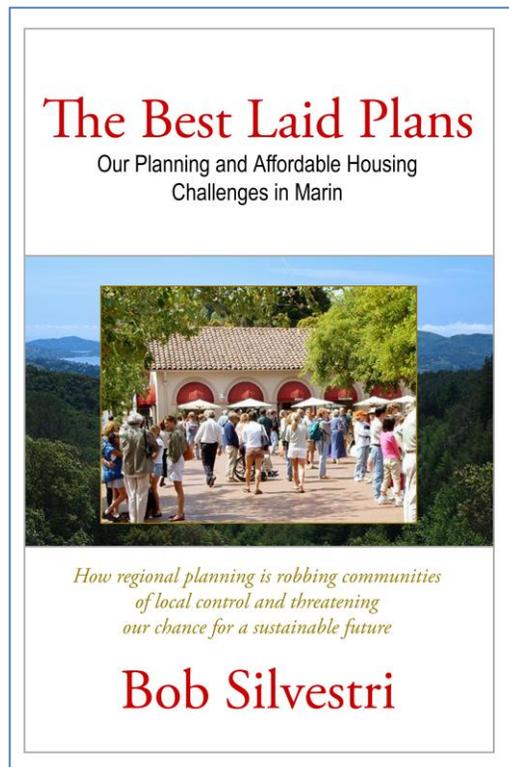
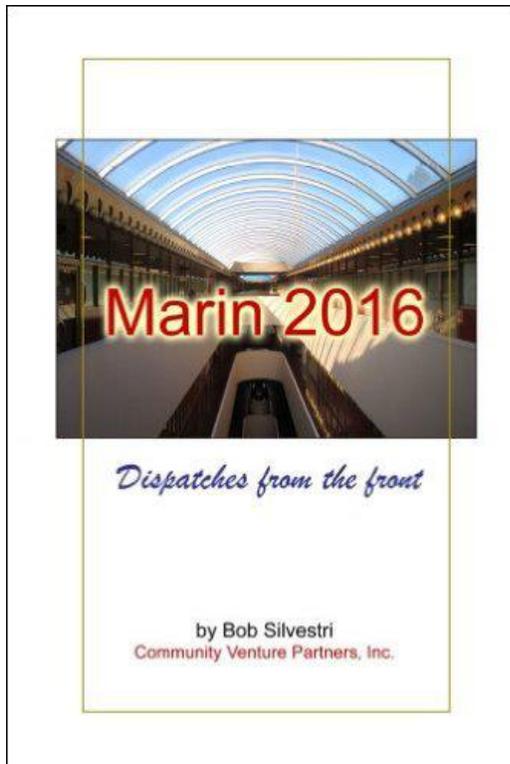
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Select Community Venture Partners as your designated charity then shop the same way you normally would. It's easy and free!

Books by Bob Silvestri, President of CVP

Online at smile.amazon.com

Click on the images to order.



Thank you for supporting CVP