



COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

April 1, 2009

Farm Bureau Office
180 Industrial Way
Buellton, Ca

APPROVED MINUTES

These minutes reflect the actions and general discussion of the Committee.

The Agricultural Advisory Committee was called to order by Kari Campbell-Bohard, Chair, at 2:00 pm at the Farm Bureau Office in Buellton.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: 7

Kari Campbell-Bohard, Chair
Willy Chamberlin
Grant Cremers, Vice-Chair
Dorothy Laine
Debbie Morawski (Alternate for Paul Van Leer)
Richard Quandt
LeRoy Scolari

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: 5

Brian Caird
Greg France
Carl Stucky
June Van Wingerden

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: 5

Mike Hays, Noel Langle, Pat Saley & Stephanie Stark, Planning and Development
John Baker, Assistant CEO and Planning Director

NUMBER OF INTERESTED PERSONS: 9

I. Pledge of Allegiance

II. Public Comment –

Re: Fire Code development standards – Andy Mills

Re: County's Rural Regional Plan – Willy Chamberlin

III. Minutes:

Motion: Willy Chamberlin moved, seconded by Leroy Scolari and carried by a unanimous vote to continue the consideration of the March 4, 2009 minutes until the next meeting.

IV. Report from the Planning Director - John Baker

- Senior Ag Land Use Planner position – All County departments were asked to provide information to the Board about a 10% cut in General Fund money would impact their department. P&D included a list of proposed layoffs that included the senior Ag Land Use Planner position. Mr. Baker assured the AAC the position will not be cut.
- Rural Regional Plan (RRP)– The Board gave a preliminary approval to include the Gaviota Coast portion of the RRP in Long Range Planning's 2009/2010 Workplan. The final decision will be made during budget hearings in June. Mr. Baker assured the AAC future presentations to the Board will include the AAC's concerns and ag planning will be involved in the development of the RRP. A discussion about the AAC's perspective on the RRP and LRP's response followed. The AAC acknowledged the Gaviota Coast's unique qualities, but are firmly opposed to using urban planning tools such as a RRP or Community Plan to govern rural areas. The AAC requested they be updated regularly if the RRP moves forward.
- City of Goleta Sphere of Influence – LAFCO voted to approve a sphere that is co-terminus with the existing boundary for the City of Goleta. The sphere of influence will not extend into agricultural areas outside the City boundary.
- La Purisima – The Board did not approve a General Plan Amendment for the Hunter/La Purisima project.
- Wind Energy Project – The project was approved by the Board but a recent lawsuit was filed.

A discussion followed about the AAC fund as well as the AACs involvement with County development of ag related policies.

V. Reports From Agricultural Planners – Mike Hays & Stephanie Stark

Mike: The Santa Ynez Community Plan Final EIR was released and is posted on Long Range Planning's website. Several public meetings are scheduled for May.

NRCS Permit Streamlining – In 2004, there was a board approved amendment in the Grading Ordinance to exempt NRCS practices from NEPA or CEQA review on federal cost share projects. However, the Grading Ordinance was never officially changed and many of the landowners don't take federal money but do follow the same NRCS practices. Mike is working towards resolving the existing issues with the already approved grading ordinance amendment.

Ag buffer policy – Mike is still in the preliminary stages and of gathering information and he agreed to keep the AAC updated as he proceeds.

Stephanie:

Project list - A project list was included in the pre-meeting packet. The Committee had specific questions about the Plantel, Rancho La Laguna and ARC vineyard development projects. A discussion followed about the County's procedure for determining agricultural viability and biological resource protection policies.

VI. Land Use Development Code Streamlining Update – Pat Saley

On January 28, 2009, the Planning Commission and AAC held a workshop to discuss streamlining certain permit processes on agricultural land. Since the workshop, Pat and Noel have been meeting regularly with the Ag Planners and have resolved most of the issues. A list of these issues was provided during the meeting. P&D requested AAC input on two remaining items - the Scenic Provisions and Development Plan Thresholds. After a brief description of the suggested changes, the AAC did not have additional proposed changes. The AAC requested the County to come back when the environmental document is released. The item is scheduled to be reviewed by the Planning Commission on June 17th.

VII. Reports from Committee Members

There were no reports from Committee members.

VIII. Adjourned at 4:30 pm

NEXT MEETING: The next AAC meeting is on scheduled for Wednesday, May 6th. However, the Chair is unable to attend and the meeting may be rescheduled.