

**SUISUN VALLEY AGRICULTURE WORKSHOP
SOLANO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AGRICULTURAL SUBCOMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 6, 2007**

Question: What county policies/regulations impede/enhance agricultural productivity?

Participant Responses

1. In other counties the Board of Supervisors have made statements that agriculture is important and we need the Board of Supervisors here to understand that agriculture is important in Solano County

Economic development

1. Maybe there could be a local commission that would give farmers a voice. If there are changes over time that affect farming this commission should be responsible and make the Board of Supervisors of the changes.
2. I have a problem with the idea of a local commission, and it could be a lot of conflicts. It depends on who is going to be on the commission. I don't think it is a good idea.
3. The interpretation of the Williamson Act by the County should be reviewed.
4. Placer County has an agricultural advisory committee that brings recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and the Board supports them.
5. The Suisun Valley name should be next to the North Connector and I-80. All agricultural commercial should be consolidated there because it is a logical place for it.
6. I am on the Suisun Valley Ag Committee. If we had someone at the County level in a paid position with knowledge of farmers' needs that would be helpful to the farmers and could be politically effective.
7. I don't want more bureaucracy. We need someone more like an ombudsman for the farmer. Find the right person and it can be done.

Permits and fees

1. Processing fees are excessive, confusing and not consistent. We need a reasonable standard and consistent process.
2. The fees should be based on the cost of the building rather than on square feet.
3. The County knows how to do permits for houses not for farmers, crops etc.

Land use

1. The real estate industry needs to tell buyers about the Right to Farm law.
2. Need to be family oriented and have a place to raise children and get back to nature. We have a good location for farming here near the Bay area and Sacramento where there is a large population for our products.

Zoning

1. Where do you stop in reducing parcel size for agriculture? When does agriculture become economically unviable for farming? If you bring it down to anything less than A40 my fear is that you open the door for even more trouble.
2. Under the family compound concept we could provide houses on the farm for children without doing parcel splits.
3. We still need acreage to farm. I can't see putting three houses on A20 acres.

Buffer zones (mainly discussion but not anything new)

Transportation

1. We need infrastructure and wider roads if we want to get ag tourism out into Suisun Valley.
2. The traffic is really bad here in the morning. If someone gets hurt on the farm at 6 am or 5 pm there is too much traffic on the roads to get help.
3. People in the cities who enjoy what farms bring (open space, etc.) should be willing to pay for infrastructure.
4. Not enough parking in Mankus Corner is a problem.
5. We can't survive unless we have infrastructure to bring in people. Our County needs to be proactive to build the infrastructure. We need help.

Regulations

1. I'm worried about the watershed, septic systems, and traffic from the Rockville Trails project.
2. In Napa Valley there is not a problem with their regulations. They are strict but allow 20 acres for a vineyard and it seems to work

Agriculture Subcommittee members present: Larry Clement, Patricia Gatz, and Sandy Person. Members absent: Ian Anderson and Nicole Byrd.