



COUNTY OF SOLANO GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

County Administrative Center
First Floor Multi-Purpose Room
675 Texas Street, Fairfield

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF The Solano County General Plan Update Citizen's Advisory Committee April 23, 2007

The regular meeting of the Solano County General Plan Update Citizen's Advisory Committee was held Monday, April 23, 2007, in the Solano County Administration Center, Multi-Purpose Room, 675 Texas St., Fairfield, CA 94533.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Curtola, Ian Anderson, Nicole Byrd, Larry Clement, Randy Dawson, Michael Fortney, Patricia Gatz, Scott Greenwood-Meinert, Eva Laevastu, Carol Landry, Jerry LeMasters, Sandy Person, Anthony Russo, Brian West

MEMBERS ABSENT: Curt Johansen, Ronald Jones

OTHERS PRESENT: Birgitta Corsello, Director, Resource Management; Mike Yankovich, Planning Manager, Resource Management; Dale Cardwell, Senior Planner, Resource Management; Harry Englebright, Englebright and Associates; Jeff Henderson, EDAW; Paul Tuttle, EDAW; Elizabeth Boyd, EDAW

Public Comments on Items on the Agenda

(Limited to 15 Minutes, limited to 3 minutes per speaker)

John Fadhl wanted to know if there would be an agricultural element in the update. An agricultural issue he wanted to bring up was allowing structures such as pole barns in the flood plane.

Maurry Koch stated that the proposed Rockville Trails development is not acceptable. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board responded to the Draft EIR on the project and stated it was "incomplete, inadequate and unacceptable". The four sewer dams as currently designed would have overtopped during the 2005-06 rainy season. He also stated that the earthen dams would seep sewerage into the well water of the development and surrounding neighbors.

June Guidotti stated that LAFCo updated their out of agency service contracts and the proposed amendments were changed. She also stated that she submitted a letter dated April 23, 2007 to the Citizen's Advisory Committee

(CAC) regarding comments and recommendations on air quality and noise issues and policies to address in the Solano County General Plan update. She referred to her comments on page four of the letter. She also wanted to be advised of the contact person who will be taking over for Dale Cardwell.

1. Review/Approve March 26, 2007 Minutes

The minutes of March 26, 2007 were approved.

2. Special Studies Update and Subcommittee Appointments

Mr. Curtola briefly summarized the Special Study Area and Agricultural subcommittee appointments. Mike Yankovich will advise the subcommittee members of the County staff assigned to each group. Mr. Curtola also added that the Board of Supervisors will hear a review of General Plan land use issues for consideration as part of the General Plan Update Program on April 24, 2007.

3. Discussion: Air and Noise Quality Issues and Policies

Jeff Henderson referred to the summary of policies, State general plan requirements and the summary of the gaps for air quality and noise found in the CAC workbook. The CAC was asked to provide guidance for staff to proceed with the draft policies of the air and noise quality sections of the General Plan. Current General Plan policies descry p 1-12 are drawn chiefly from the 1980 Land Use and Circulation Element and the 1977 Health and Safety Element. The State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) guidelines are a little more specific regarding the waste content than the air quality content.

For noise the OPR requires a mandatory element that addresses the spatial relationships between land uses including the relationship between noise and pollution generating land uses and their effect on schools, residential and other sensitive land uses. State law also requires an analysis of concentration of noise levels and the extent of noise exposure to actual measurements for noise modeling. Actual measurement typically used for existing conditions and the noise background report includes measurement statistics from throughout the county. Noise modeling is used to predict future conditions taking into account what we will know about placement of land uses including sensitive land uses.

There were three noise policy recommendations. Firstly the policies and programs established in the current Health and Safety Element related to noise are generally on track. Some may need to be adjusted to conform to specific provisions of current and update State laws regarding acceptable noise levels. Secondly noise standards for the Airport Land Use Plans for Travis AFB, Nut Tree and Rio Vista airports should be incorporated in the General Plan update. Thirdly an updated discussion of noise sources, noise contours and noise problems throughout the County based on new studies and information should be included in the General Plan update. Sources of significant noise include railways, airports, roads, and significant point sources such as industrial facilities. Mr. Henderson asked the Committee if

they had any comments such as were there any additional gaps in the current county noise policies or issues.

A member asked if there were policies in place to protect schools from significant noise sources. Mr. Henderson answered that policies identifying key point sources and development of sufficient mitigation could be used to protect noise sensitive land uses. Another member suggested that language allowing for higher noise levels at Travis AFB be included in noise policies to provide for possible mission changes at the Base.

Mr. Henderson asked the Committee if there were any particular locations with high noise levels in Solano County that may require special treatment beyond the standard noise policies imposed throughout the county other than the significant noise sources mentioned earlier. One member suggested areas with 24 hour agricultural operations. Another member stated that the rail corridor running through Solano County may become an issue as development encroaches upon it. Residential development in close proximity to that corridor should be discouraged. Another potential conflict could occur if development was allowed too close to areas that currently or in the future involve extraction of mineral resources.

Mr. Henderson stated that Air Quality was one on the topics where new policies will need to be developed for the General Plan update. Staff was recommending providing comprehensive goals and policies to achieve and maintain good air quality in Solano County. Cooperative measures to improve air quality include regional coordination between local agencies and regional air quality management districts. Land use planning approaches that ensure good air quality such as land use designations and zoning to provide a jobs/housing balance. Other cooperative measures included pedestrian approaches, traffic/roadway related approaches, bicycle approaches, and development approaches. Mr. Henderson asked the CAC which types of approaches they would like to emphasize in the General Plan to improve air quality.

One member stated that 99% of air pollution in unincorporated Solano County is generated by agricultural sources rather than the items described in the workbook. General Plan policies need to look at agricultural generation of pollution. Mr. Henderson stated that a potential obstacle to regulate agriculture thru air quality policies is the Right to Farm Ordinance. A balance needs to be found between the two. Other members thought that many of the cooperative measures listed in the workbook were more suited to urban areas rather than unincorporated Solano County. Another member thought that cooperative efforts between the cities and County should be encouraged. Mr. Yankovich reminded the Committee that transportation issues such as the increasing volume of interstate traffic spilling over onto county roads is something the update process needs to consider. The efficiency of the circulation system should be improved to reduce overall congestion. A member suggested keeping truck traffic to established routes that are designed to accommodate it. Mr. Englebright added that agriculture also improves air quality by virtue of growing plants. A member stated that there should not be any tighter regulations on agricultural than there already is.

Another member suggested encouraging ethanol plants. There being no further comments the discussion moved to item four of the agenda.

4 & 5. Health and Safety Preliminary Goals, Policies and Programs

Mr. Henderson stated that the CAC would be reviewing preliminary health and safety policies, goals and potential implementation programs towards the goal of providing staff with recommendations for the refinement of said goals and policies. The preliminary policies are more general than the existing General Plan policies to provide broad policy level guidance that can withstand the test of time for 20 plus years. Other agencies and mechanisms of County government will provide more of the detailed regulation associated with the General Plan policies.

The first topic discussed was flooding. One member suggested that Policy HS-3 read "*Require that storm waters be used for ground water recharge when possible and that existing recharge areas be considered for retention*". Another member proposed that the word "retention" be replaced with the word "detaining". A member suggested the creation of a regional floodwater retention plan for groundwater recharge. Another member thought that many small basins would be more efficient and cost effective than one large system. A member asked which agency has control over flood control in Solano County. The answer was that there was no one single agency to oversee flood control in Solano County. The State, cities, County and other agencies all have their own plans. The idea is to encourage all the jurisdictions and agencies to work together on flood control and take a proactive approach rather than reactive approach. Some members suggested a policy that encouraged a countywide flood control plan that would remedy the current lack of coordination between jurisdictions and agencies.

A member suggested amending a sentence in HS-4 to read "*Land uses within the primary floodplain shall (rather than should) be limited to agricultural and open space uses or other non-urban, low-capital investment uses*". A suggested implementation was to minimize hardscape surfaces and replace them with permeable surfaces that would reduce polluted runoff, recharge groundwater and reduce flooding.

Another member stated that HS-7 was impractical to require single family homebuilders to do a levee or dam analysis. Another point was that the inundation area for Monticello Dam covers a large area of the north county.

Again regarding implementation programs a member stated that it was also important recognize natural resources such as farmland, wetlands, flood plains, habitat, open space, etc... as assets for flood protection, water quality improvement, groundwater recharge and long term water resource sustainability.

The next topic discussed was seismic safety. A member recommended that maps showing seismic safety and geologic hazard areas be available to the public. Mr. Henderson stated that those maps have already been prepared in the background reports. A member suggested using other kinds of scales for measuring/locating potential seismic hazard areas in addition to the Alquist-

Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones. A member asked if HS-10 included the placement of roadways and utilities in identified Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones. Another member did not think that creating special landslide prevention and maintenance districts to provide funding for hillside stability improvements was needed.

Land stability was the next topic covered. A member suggested slope standards for land with a 15% or 20% slope. Mr. Englebright stated that the existing Health and Safety Element restricts against an assumption that there will be a site suitable for building in areas with steep slopes, high fire danger, limited access and water supply. Current standards state that a septic system cannot be located on a slope greater than 25%. Currently there is no standard that identifies a slope grade as too excessive. An issue will be how to identify the degree of slope grade that will trigger building restrictions on hillsides. Another member suggested limiting development within Landslide Areas 3 and 4 (Health and Safety Background Report) to non-urban, low capital investment uses such as agriculture and open space.

The next topic discussed was fire hazards. A member suggested that HS-18 be reworded to read "*Require that structures be built in fire defensible spaces and limit construction of public facilities (rather than "roads") in high or very high wildfire risk areas*". And that HS-20 be reworded to read "*Require that new (omit residential) development in high and very high wildfire risk areas to incorporate fire safety building methods and site planning techniques into the development*".

Under the first potential fire implementation program one member suggested it read "*Ensure appropriate water supply and other requirements to support firefighting are provided in new development*". Another member proposed rewording the third implementation program to read "*In high and very high wildfire risk areas, require the placement of units on individual properties to provide for more localized and effective fire protection measures and to create defensible spaces*". A member suggested establishing funding mechanisms such as impact or mitigation fees. Another member recommended adding the following implementation program. *All county unincorporated areas with ISO ratings below average in performance shall require: (1) sprinklers in all homes from 1 to 20 units in a subdivision; and (2) a new fire sub-station be constructed by any applicant seeking to subdivide and develop more than 20 units.* Another member thought that a policy had been proposed at the last meeting to work with the fire districts and LAFCo to improve their ISO ratings to achieve a higher level of fire protection.

The topic of hazardous materials was discussed next. A member asked if the County has certain roads where hazardous materials cannot be transported. The answer was that there are designated routes where hazardous materials can be transported. Another member suggested that implementation program four be rewritten to read "*Significantly increase regulation and inspection of businesses that handle large quantities of hazardous materials*". Another

suggestion was to change the wording to “*Continue regulation of businesses that handle reportable, regulated quantities of hazardous materials.*”

Disaster preparedness was the next topic covered. A member suggested rewording HS-28 to read “*Communicate and cooperate with local, State, and Federal agencies in disaster planning and preparedness*”. It was also suggested that the following two additional policies be added. (1) “*Encourage full cooperative with medical facilities, schools, non-profit organizations, and the private sector in disaster planning and preparedness.*” (2) “*Ensure that special needs populations requiring special assistance are included in disaster planning and preparedness.*” Another member suggested the following addition to the Disaster Preparedness Implementation Program. “*Develop the county’s capability to handle mass shelters for people and pets in case of major disaster not only in Solano but from neighboring counties (such as earthquake in the Bay Area and major levee break in Sacramento). Train volunteers and negotiate agreements.*” Another suggestion was to encourage regional agency coordination to work with national emergency preparedness programs.

The last topic discussed was public health. A member suggested adding the following two public health policies. (1) “*Streets, pedestrian paths and bike paths should contribute to a system of fully-connected and interesting routes to all destinations. Their design should encourage pedestrian and bicycle use by being small and spatially defined by buildings, trees and lighting; and by discouraging high speed traffic.*” (2) “*To encourage pleasant physical exercise, the community should contain an ample supply of specialized open space in the form of squares, greens and parks whose frequent use is encouraged through placement and design.*” It was suggested that these two proposed policies could be implemented under Policy HS-29.

6. Review of Vision Statement for Consistency with Health and Safety Policies
Comments on the Ian Anderson’s proposed revisions to the Vision Statement presented at the March 22, 2007 meeting were discussed. With the exception of a grammatical change the proposed revisions to the Vision Statement were approved by the CAC. Review of the Vision Statement for consistency with Health and Safety policies was continued to the next meeting.

7. Chair/Committee Member Comments

A member suggested that an index and page numbers be added to the Workbooks.

Public Comments on Item not on the Agenda

June Guidotti wanted to bring to the Committee’s attention that tomorrow the Board of Supervisors will be hearing a report on General Plan land use issues. She also stated that LAFCo had met to discuss Out of Agency Service Contracts.

Since there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The next regular meeting of the Solano County General Plan Update Citizen's Advisory Committee will be held on Monday, May 14, 2007 in the Solano County Administration Center, Multi-Purpose Room, 675 Texas St., Fairfield, CA 94533

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