



COUNTY OF SOLANO GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

SUISUN VALLEY COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #1

Solano Community College

Room 1625
4000 Suisun Valley Road, Fairfield

May 29, 2007
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

MEETING SUMMARY

Nearly 50 people attended the community workshop held at Solano Community College on May 29, 2007. The purpose of this initial workshop was to learn about concerns and issues community members want to have addressed in any planning process for the Suisun Valley area. A brief introduction by Carol Landry, the CAC Suisun Valley subcommittee chairman, began the meeting. She welcomed attendees on behalf of the Solano County Board of Supervisors.



Jeff Henderson from EDAW gave a short presentation and asked for community input. Time was spent discussing opportunities and areas of concern for Suisun Valley, as well as raising overall questions. Attendees generated solution oriented ideas and offered comments focused on a vision for Suisun Valley and possible land uses, other than agriculture, that may be appropriate in the valley.

Opportunities

- Suisun Valley's positive economic and social impact on county as a whole
- New markets opening

Areas of Concern

- Fire protection/Emergency service
 - Income and budget shortfalls / municipal annexation possible?
 - I-80 bypass
- Income for agricultural production
 - Create an enterprise zone
 - Value added farming, additional processing to add value to crops produced: example, walnuts and jams
 - Economic programs for farming; low interest financing
- Maintain agricultural flavor and character of area
 - Appropriate zoning
 - Description of vision / character
 - Appropriate population
 - Permitting
- Infrastructure
 - Traffic / flooding → Abernathy Road
 - High school increase traffic
 - Suisun Valley Road does not support agricultural trucks
 - Abernathy Road flood problems
- Urban encroachment
 - Buffers / right to farm
 - “Make believe” farms
 - Incompatible uses
- Upstream/downstream impacts

- Regulation preventing opening farms to public
 - “Draconian regulations”
- Farm opportunity costs
 - Gasoline and other overhead items

Questions Raised

How can community and county invest in farming?

- Connect cities to farms
- “People currently working for free,” maintaining fire/farms on a minimum budget.
- Demand equal share of opportunities
- Possible bond use to provide investment
- Provide tools farms need to survive as a business

What impact will local residents have on the General Plan?

- Just the people who own the land?

Is conserving agriculture, conserving land?

- a statement on difference between parks/open space and farm

How are infrastructure issues addressed?

How does EDAW and citizen advisory committee fit into process?

- Is EDAW local? EDAW’s office is located in Sacramento.

What can be done right now?

- Before general plan?

Impacts of Williamson Act funding in future

Will agriculture tourism degrade agriculture?

- Issue of scale
- Problems in Sonoma
- Must find a balance!

What are the appropriate uses for Suisun Valley other than agriculture?

Ideas Generated

- Use direct and niche marketing to open new markets
- Concentrate on adding value to crops produced in Suisun Valley
- Proactive effort needed
- Consider special districts as a tool
- Cater to possible investors, “offer coffee and doughnuts to investors!”

Possible Appropriate Uses Other than Agriculture

- Farm stands – commercial
- Agricultural processing without condition use permit
- Bed and breakfasts
- Ability to process crops from off your property
- Uses that encourage and sustain agriculture
- Community processing facility
- Private investment
- Create centers - what are the positives and negatives?

Vision

- Agriculture tourism
- Small family farms, example: France, 3-5 acre small family farms typical
- Flexible and easy to understand/use regulations that foster “highest and best use”

- Vibrant fun community
- Value added agriculture, example: Apple Hill

Information needed

- Provide maps online
- American Farmland Trust Vision and case studies: who has adopted it? make it available online
- Pleasant Valley Planning
 - Noticed / information on websites
- CAC vision statement
 - Emerging / work in progress
- More accurate base information needed
 - Topo/landmarks – streams – layering – prime soil, etc.
 - GIS information should be made available to the public

Next Steps

Workshop - June 19

Ms. Landry and Mr. Henderson closed the meeting at 9pm and thanked everyone for attending. It was announced that future meetings would be held in the same room or changes would be posted on the General Plan website:

<http://www.solanocountygeneralplan.net/SPA-SuisunValley.htm>

SUISUN VALLEY

SPECIAL STUDY AREA
WORKSHOP # 1

OPPORTUNITIES

- ECONOMIC/SOCIAL IMPACT ON COUNTY AS WHOLE
- NEW MARKETS OPENING

CONCERNS

- FIRE PROTECTION/EMERGENCY SERVICE**
 - INCOME/MIHL ANNERATION
 - I-80 BYPASS
- AG FLAVOR**
 - APPROPRIATE ZONING
 - DESCRIPTION OF VISION/CHARACTER
 - APPROPRIATE REGULATION
- VALUE ADDED FARMING**
 - PERMITTING
 - INFRASTRUCTURE
 - TRAFFIC/FLOODING → ABERNATHY RD
 - VIOLATION ENCROACHMENT
 - BUFFERS/RIGHT TO FARM
 - INCOMPATIBLE USES
 - UPSTREAM/DOWNSTREAM IMPACTS

VALUE ADDED
-ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS TO ADD VALUE EX: WILDLIFE (WAT)
HIGHSCHOOL INCREASE TRAFFIC!!!

- REGULATION PREVENTING OPENING FARM TO PUBLIC
- ECONOMIC PROBLEM FOR FARMING
- LOW INTEREST FINANCING
- HOW CAN COMMUNITY AND COUNTY INVEST IN FARMING P/ST
- CONNECTION CITIES TO FARMS!!!

DEMAND BOOM
SHORE OF OPPORTUNITIES
-POSSIBLE BOND ISSUE
-TO PROVIDE INFRASTRUCTURE
PROVIDE TOOLS FARMS NEED TO SURVIVE AS A BUSINESS!!!

INTER-URBAN ZONE!!!
PEOPLE WORK FOR FREE MAINTAINING FIRE/FARMS ON A BUDGET

WHAT IMPACT WILL LOCAL RESIDENTS HAVE ON GENERAL PLAN? -JUST PEOPLE WHO CAN LAND? CONSIDER SPECIAL DISTRICTS

IS CONCERNING AG, CONSERVING LAND, SPOUSEMENT ON DIFFERENT DISTRICTS, PARTICIPATION - FOCUS

HOW DOES EDWIN & GUYTON ADVISE? CONSIDER FOR THE PROCESS? ARE THEY LOCAL??

WHAT CAN BE DONE RIGHT NOW? -SUPPORT GEN PLAN

WILL AG TOURISM DEGRADE AS P - SCALA OF SCALE - PROBLEMS IN SANTA



INFO NEEDED

- MAPS ONLINE
- APPLY VISION: WHO'S ADAPTED/MAKE AVAILABLE
- PLEASANTS VALLEY PLANNING
- CAC VISION STATEMENT
- MORE BASE INFORMATION
- ACCURATE INFO!!!

NEXT STEPS

JUNE → 9
NEXT WORKSHOP

LEAVE STUDIES
LEAVE STUDIES
TOP/LANDSCAPE/SPECIFIC...
PRIME SOILS/BE UTILIZED/INFORMED BY PUBLIC!!!

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GRAPHIC RECORDING