



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO Department of Agriculture/Measurement Standards

2156 SIERRA WAY, SUITE A, SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA 93401-4556
ROBERT F. LILLEY (805) 781-5910
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER/SEALER FAX: (805) 781-1035

AgCommSLO@co.slo.ca.us

Ag Tourism & Direct Marketing Work Group

May 25, 2006

Draft Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Michael Isensee, June 9, 2006

Present:

-Alison Denlinger (alt)	-Debra Garrison	-MaryAnn Vasconcellos	-Michael Isensee (staff)
-Angela Thompson	-Elizabeth Rolph	-Roy Parsons	-Brenda Ouwerkerk
-Charlie Whitney	-Lora Pankey Eade	-Steve Sinton	(staff)
-Colleen Childers	-Mary Bianchi	-Steven Knudsen (alt)	

Absent:

Anne McMahon, Deanne Gonzales, Dick Rogers, Doug Filipponi, Duane Waddell, Eric Michielssen (alt), Holly Sletteland, Jamie Kirk, Joy Barlogio, Karen Mansfield (ATF monitor), Kate Loftus (alt), Kim Pasciuto, Sandra Wallace (alt), Karen Nall (staff)

Handouts:

1. Agenda & Draft minutes (purple)
2. Sign #8 overview & ordinance (buff)
3. Sales committee #4 mtg notes (yellow)
4. Events #3 mtg notes (pink)
5. Second draft lodging—dude ranches, etc (#7) (goldenrod)
6. Lodging/B&B #6 mtg notes (tan)
7. Final draft camping, hunting & fishing clubs (blue)
8. Ag & Open Space Element Policies 6 Visitor Serving, 7 Service Commercial, 8 Intensive Ag Facilities

Minutes Review (Michael)

Approved with change to clarify areas of disagreement regarding dude ranches

Process Check (Brenda & Mary Bianchi)

Continued thanks for the ongoing effort and time commitment of the group. We are 7 months into work group meetings (11th meeting plus countless committee meetings and emails).

This is an immense task and staff is grateful for the perspective and interests represented in our group

Mary Bianchi presented process for recent GMO work group. It was smaller but equally diverse and met over a period of 6 months. It had a single task of outlining agricultural issues related to the production of genetically modified ag crops in the county. In the process the group had to agree to disagree but to listen to the collected thoughts and wisdom of each other as allies in the process. Its goal was to deliver information to decision makers (Board of Supervisors). It was not possible to reach any kind of consensus, but the process enabled everyone to highlight specific concerns, focus the debate on those areas of discord, and framed the questions. The process showcased what consensus did exist while highlighting the disagreements within the group. It has enabled the ag community to move into a new phase of working to craft coexistence guidelines for organic, conventional, and GMO ag to each occur without impinging on one another.

Work group members discussed how this relates the current process. Since it is clear that there are many areas without consensus, a similar approach that highlights the areas of agreement and disagreement is recommended.

This enables outstanding issues that could not be resolved to move to the forefront as staff and decision-making bodies (Ag Liaison, Planning Commission, Board) review and vote on standards in the future. Committee reports are encouraged to underscore “issues not completely resolved” as well as areas of agreement or consensus.

Brenda & Michael are to develop a template for how to include areas of concern in committee reports

It was noted that key factors in the entire effort are (1) considering the cumulative impacts of all of the changes being recommended and (2) oversight of the uses over time and enforcement of the standards once finalized as a ordinance.

Introduction: Signs (Committee #8 Signs) (Michael)

Committee comprised of Colleen, Roy, Alison, Anne
Handout outlines existing sign ordinance. SLO County is fairly permissive in types and amount of signs allowed. There is a special allowance for wineries to have off-site directional signs. No other businesses in county are currently allowed this. It may serve as a model for a uniform sign for direct marketing and/or other agricultural tourism sites.

Presentation Final Draft: Sales – (Committee #4 Sales) (MaryAnn)

- Group focused only on sales area rather than entire structure. However, know that staff needs to make some decisions regarding overall scale of use but needs to consider what other uses might be allowed in a structure (processing kitchen for food & kindred products, etc)
- For an owner-grower, limited built display area based on building code rules and Env Health exemption. However, unlimited outdoor sales area/ u-pick would be allowed if grown on site.
- Gift sales: most felt that limiting to 100 sq.ft. was too little. Group recommends 10% of farmstands and 25% of farmstores sales area be allowed for gift sales.
- The overall structure size should be scaled to what is grown on site. It should also be tied to road size. “Big roads” such as Hwy 46, 41 & 101 should be allowed to have the largest structures. Medium roads (El Camino) should have a lesser size and small roads (See Canyon, Garden Farms) should be the most restrictive for overall size/scale.
- It was noted that El Dorado County is revising their recent ranch marketing ordinance due to problems with gift sales.
- Selling what you grow should be emphasis.
- General feeling from work group was that the committee’s work was very well balanced. It was noted that there could be a problem with tying the gift sales area to the overall indoor and outdoor sales area at the peak season, while recognizing that an allowance needs to be made for farms that sell their products outside.

Presentation Third Draft: Temp/Special Events – (Committee #3 Events) (Elizabeth)

- Still struggling on a definition of an event—ranges from 20-125 people at a site depending on committee member. There is agreement that some # of people should define an event, while private gatherings and normal business activity at a farm store or u-pick is not an event.
- Certain types of events should be exempt from regulation, as we want to promote them. There would be educational in nature (tours and possibly other educational activities).
- There is not agreement on whether events that are nonprofit in nature, sponsored by nonprofits, or associated with a nonprofit should be also exempt. Some feel the types of impacts can be the same, while others primarily see the community-wide benefits outweigh localized impacts.
- Considering 2 categories of events: agricultural events and special events.
- Agricultural events would be on sites with active agriculture, would only be subjective to ministerial permit approval, and need to be themed to the on-site ag activity. The # of events and # of people have yet to be decided/agreed to.
 - Parking should be on-site or the use of group transit from an urban area/park and ride/etc
 - No larger permanent structure should be allowed, although there is not agreement on if “smaller” structures such as restrooms and staging/storage facilities would be allowed.
 - Setbacks should mirror winery setbacks for the event, but no agreement on parking area setbacks
 - Amplified sound remains a significant potential issue and area of disagreement.
- The committee did not discuss the parameters for special events.
- The work group offered the following suggestions:
 - Work to try to set up a lesser permit process, but require a renewal or a time limit, so if problems occur a discretionary permit can later be required.
 - Consider a site plan option to address site specifics
 - Nonprofit activities are generally more sedate & some what to advantage them since they benefit the community
 - Issues exist with amplified music, alcohol use and trash.
 - Look into exemption for education events by gov’t agencies/other organizations

Presentation Second Draft: Dude Ranch – (#7 Committee Lodging) (Roy)

- A final presentation was made on the dude ranch standard
- Some issues were clarified by the committee, including
 - that it wanted to define a guest unit as a room for up to five people rather than a strict number of people,
 - the definition of a working ranch should be made by planners rather than the work group, as this has been a point of disagreement without resolution,
 - the general feeling was that raising the site area from 160 to 320 acres would preclude most problems,
 - that reducing the overall number of units also resolved the credibility factor that was previously raised when a 1000-acre dude ranch would be allowed to have up to 200 guest units (1 per 5 acres).
- It was stated that a dude ranch would typically be on a property so large as to not impact neighbors.
- There remained a concern that the guest unit definition does not work well.
- A continued concern was enforcement and making regulations where such uses would not cause impacts to neighbors due to noise, trespass, and visible new development.

Camping Comments

- The final report was distributed, since it was not available at the last meeting. It was noted that RVs are (or can be) a problem on smaller properties and at least some members of the work group would prefer no camping on ag land.
- Others do not see it to be a problem, as most camping occurs on large parcels and is typically associated with another activity such as a hunting club or private hunting on large properties.

Report on Lodging/B&B (Committee #6 Lodging) (Steve)

- The latest thinking of the committee was presented, along with an accompanying document from one committee member representing this member’s areas of concerns and areas of consensus.
 - The latest committee work focused on B&Bs that could be obtained with zoning clearance.
 - The number of rooms would be based on parcel size, starting with 3 rooms on 10 acres going up to 8 rooms on 480 acres.
 - A certain number of rooms could be in a second (detached) residence. In some cases the second residence would need to be collated with the other residence.
 - Maximum size would range from 2,400 to 6,000 square feet, with an allowance for up to 1,500 additional square feet if not visible and a MUP was issued.
 - Historical buildings would be treated differently
 - The purpose of a B&B and what differentiates it from a farmstay remains an issue. It was explained that a B&B is an ag location, but not an ag experience, while a farmstay would be an ag location and an ag experience. Based upon the report, a B&B would be secondary and incidental to the other residence, while a farmstay would be secondary and incidental to a farm operation.
- A continued question is why the work group would further expand the B&B option when it will compete with farmstays. At least some feel a farmstay better implements policy of supplementing the agricultural use of a site and being secondary and incidental to the agricultural use.
- Work group comments included the following (there was not necessarily agreement on any of these points):
 - consider site plan review as a way to address potential issues so applications are not thrown into CEQA
 - provide a method of neighbor notification and ability to comment on applications
 - 3-room B&Bs do not provide an adequate income. Need to be larger.
 - B&Bs are commercial uses and an applicant should pay and apply for a use permit

Upcoming schedule

June 13: Templeton
 #4 Sales - Final Draft
 #1 Products – First Draft
 #3 Events – Latest Draft
 #6 Lodging – Latest Draft
 Final package
 Enforcement/Cumulative effects

June 29: Templeton
 #8 Signs – First Draft
 #1 Products—Second Draft
 #3 Events – Final Draft
 #6 Lodging – Final Draft

July 11: SLO – Final Work Group Meeting
 #8 Signs – Final Draft
 #1 Products – Final Draft