

DRAFT ALAB MEETING MINUTES

Monday, June 4, 2012

Members and Alternates Present: Dee Lacey, Jean-Pierre Wolff, Tom Ikeda, Don Warden, Bill Struble, Lisen Bonnier, Claire Wineman, Dick Nock, Charles Pritchard, Eric Michielssen, David Pruitt, Joy Fitzhugh, and Lisa Bodrogi

Absent Members: Richard Hawley, Mark Pearce, Noah Small, Mary Bianchi, and Neil Roberts

Guests Present: Jim Brabeck, Farm Supply; Jackie Crabb, Farm Bureau; Susan DeCarli, City of Paso Robles.

Staff: Marc Lea and Lynda Auchinachie, Agriculture Department; Jason Giffen, Dana Lilley, Karen Nall, and Trevor Keith, Planning Department.

Call to Order: 6:05 PM. Quorum present.

- **Open Comment:** Joy Fitzhugh provided information regarding the possibilities to establish a watershed cooperative well monitoring program. The deadline for submitting requests is June 15, 2012. Joy has additional information available.

1. Previous Minutes:

MOTION: Approve minutes: **Motion – Bill Struble. 2nd – Chuck Pritchard. Approved: Unanimous.**

2. Presentation on Amendments to the Economic Element (Jason Giffen and Dana Lilley, Planning Department)

- Chair Lacey introduced Jason Giffen, Director of the Planning and Building Department. Jason indicated that the Economic Element is an optional general plan element and that it is currently being updated. The intent of the update is to identify goals and policies that complement the regional economic strategy that was developed by the Economic Vitality Corporation (EVC). Jason shared that the update process has been a coordinated effort with local industries and that representatives from all six industry cluster groups identified by the EVC participated in the development of the Public Review Draft Economic Element. Jim Brabeck and Jackie Crabb participated in the effort representing the various interests of the agriculture industry.
- Dana Lilley acknowledged that the existing Economic Element, adopted in 1999, is outdated and that the document included far too many programs that were government centric rather than partnerships with local industry. The current draft version is a reflection of the County's partnership with the EVC. Dana indicated that part of the update process included reviewing Economic Elements of various jurisdictions throughout the state and using the information he gathered through this process to create an administrative draft document. It was this document that was shared with the EVC industry cluster representatives for input. The Planning Commission hearings will begin in August or perhaps sooner. To ensure incorporation of public comments, Dana requested comments be sent to him no later than June 15, 2012.
- Lisa Bodrogi indicated that it was difficult to compare the existing Economic Element with the current draft proposal. Dana stated a document identifying the proposed changes will soon be available to assist members of the public reviewing the document. In general, he stated that policies appearing in other elements were deleted in order to reduce redundancies. Dana indicated that policies relative to agriculture and open space resource protection exist in both the Agriculture Element and Conservation and Open Space Element and therefore were deleted from the Economic Element.

- Jim Brabeck shared his appreciation for the collaborative process and receptiveness of the planning staff to incorporate recommended changes by industry representatives. Jim indicated that there was a cross section of interested parties participating in the effort and it was a very interactive and productive. Jim encouraged ALAB members to solicit input from their industry groups to ensure the direction of the document is appropriate.
- Claire Wineman shared that the document could be improved by recognizing the importance of agricultural exports, the need to accommodate farmworker housing, and creating a separate section for production agriculture therefore separating it from tourism.
- Jean-Pierre Wolff asked what was learned from studying various Economic Elements. Jason Giffen responded that it was apparent we needed a flexible document that complimented the industry clusters of the county rather than one that attempted to predict what is best for industry.

3. Update on the North San Luis Obispo County Habitat Conservation Program (Trevor Keith, Planning Department)

- Trevor Keith indicated that while the North San Luis Obispo County Habitat Conservation Program (HCP) had been put on hold since last year, additional grant funding has been provided to continue the process this summer. Trevor shared that the HCP effort was initiated by the County and the City of Paso Robles to provide for one stop permitting of discretionary development projects that require federal and state permitting for the incidental take of endangered species. The HCP would apply generally to the north and east portions of the county.
- ALAB members raised concerns regarding several HCP related issues including potential costs, overlapping streamlining efforts, unnecessary/harmful bureaucracy, and additional regulations.
- Susan DeCarli provided examples of how developers and others that may need federal or state permits could benefit from HCP streamlined permitting. Benefits include cost savings, reduced time for permit processing, and a level of certainty once activities are underway. Susan emphasized that participating in the program is voluntary and everyone would continue to have the option to obtain permits without participating in the HCP.
- Susan and Trevor closed by indicating it is still in the early stages of the process and additional stakeholder participants are welcome. The stakeholders, not the regulators, will be defining the activities that will be covered by the HCP.

4. Proposed Ordinance Amendments for Olive Oil Processing and Farmstands (Karen Nall, Planning Department)

- Karen Nall shared that a group of local olive oil growers and producers requested the county amend Title 22 – Inland Land Use Ordinance to allow for the production of olive oil without the use of solvents under the definition of Ag Processing (land use). The group's request also included recommended development requirements for the processing component as well as changes to Roadside Stands requirements to allow for olive oil sales and tasting. Karen indicated that in addition to the changes requested by the group, the proposed ordinance amendments include replacing the current Roadside Stand definition and requirements with an Agricultural Retail Sales definition and associated requirements for both field and farm stands.
- Jean-Pierre Wolff inquired if a permitted winery and tasting room could also have an olive oil processing component. Karen indicated that the possibility exists and would be reviewed on a

case-by-case basis.

- Eric Michielssen and Joy Fitzhugh expressed concerns regarding the use of temporary stands for seasonal sales. Karen indicated that sales “structures” that do not require a building permit would not require site plan review. Such sales from the field would be considered Crop Production and Grazing.
- Karen indicated that Planning Commission hearings will be scheduled for August. Specific information on the hearing schedule will be forthcoming.

5. Discussion of Federal Farm Bill (Chair Lacey)

- ALAB members acknowledged the inequities in the amount of money that was distributed to California through the 2008-2010 Federal Farm Bill. Members discussed whether they should request the BOS lobby for additional funding in the proposed 2012 Farm Bill for specialty crops and other California production and programs. ALAB members discussed the pros and cons of such a request without making a motion.
- Marc Lea indicated that the current Farm Bill proposal includes funding for pest and disease management in which 31% of those funds are directed to California.

6. ALAB Membership Items (Chair Lacey)

- Marc Lea indicated that Claire Wineman is the official representative for the vegetable industry and Richard Quandt is now the alternate. Marc also shared that Neil Roberts was reappointed for the wine grape industry; however, this position was supposed to be rotated between wine grape industry groups and regions. In the spirit of cooperation, Lisa Bodrogi will step down as the alternate and another industry member from south county will take her place.
- Dee Lacey announced her resignation as a member of ALAB. Dee indicated Cindy Steinbeck will be the new District 1 representative. Vice-Chair Jean-Pierre Wolff will handle Chair responsibilities until future elections are held.

7. Economic Element Discussion Continued

- Lisen Bonnier indicated that the term local is not universally defined and in some instances locally grown could mean beyond state boundaries. Lisen shared that perhaps the term “local” is misunderstood like “organic” 20 years ago and that local should not suggest that exports are not an equally important component of agriculture. Lisen agreed with earlier comments regarding the importance of our agricultural export market and that this should somehow be represented in the Economic Element.

Motion – Recommend that the Economic Element include a separate paragraph indicating support for our export markets. **Motion:** Lisen Bonnier. **Second:** Eric Michielssen. **Approved: 9-2. Abstentions: none.**

- Don Warden and Tom Ikeda indicated that they did not support the motion because they do not want exports to be stigmatized. ALAB members discussed the issue in greater detail and recommended rewording Policy EE 3.8 to address concerns.

Motion – Recommend Policy EE 3.8 be reworded as follows: Encourage increased local access to locally grown, produced or provided goods and services. **Motion:** Tom Ikeda. **Second:** Don Warden. **Approved: Unanimous. Abstentions: none.**

Future Agenda Items: Election for Chair replacement.

Meeting adjourned: 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Lynda Auchinachie, County Agriculture Department.