



# COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**July 2, 2008**

Farm Bureau Office  
180 Industrial Way  
Buellton, Ca

### APPROVED MINUTES

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*These minutes reflect the actions and general discussion of the Committee.*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee was called to order by Bill Giorgi, Chair, at 2:00 pm at the Farm Bureau Office in Buellton.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Grant Cremers  
Greg France  
Paul Van Leer  
Bill Giorgi, Chair  
Dorothy Laine  
Andy Mills (Alternate)  
LeRoy Scolari  
Carl Stucky  
June Van Wingerden

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Kari Campbell-Bohard  
Richard Quandt  
Brian Caird

#### **COUNTY STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dianne Black and Stephanie Stark, Planning and Development  
Bill Gillette, Agricultural Commissioner's Office

## **I. Pledge of Allegiance**

## **II. Public Comment**

- Re: Santa Ynez Community Plan Draft EIR has been released and contains incorrect information about the Santa Ynez Valley being in a state of overdraft – Bob Fields
- Re: AB 2686 would amend the California Water Code to reorganize Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District into a new special district called the Santa Ynez Valley Water District.– Bob Fields

## **III. Minutes:**

**Motion:** Paul Van Leer moved, seconded by Dorothy Laine and carried by a vote 8-0-1 to approve the June 4, 2008 minutes provided the suggested correction be made. Andy Mills abstained.

## **IV. Report from the Planning Director and Agricultural Commissioner**

### **Agricultural Commissioner Report - Bill Gillette**

- Committee membership change – The following nominations were approved by the Board of Supervisors: Paul Van Leer as Farm Bureau representative; Debbie Morawsky as Farm Bureau alternate representative; Lisa Bodrogi as California Women For Ag alternate representative.
- Budget Hearings – The senior Agricultural Land Use Planner (P&D position) and the Oak Tree Specialist (Ag Comm position) positions were restored. Also, \$100,000 was placed in the AAC's fund. The County's process for approving all contracts is under review. Information will be provided to the Committee.
- Artichoke Thistle – Access issues to the private properties has been resolved and weed control treatments have begun. The program has secure funding and control may take several years. Committee members had concern with timing of applications.
- Legislation – AB 2881 will strengthen the Right to Farm Ordinance if adopted. This may further support AAC's position that real estate agents should notify potential home buyers of Right to Farm Ordinance and potential land use conflicts.
- Light Brown Apple Moth – No new finds or news to report at this time.
- Ag Planning position – From the Ag Comm perspective, the ag planning program is working better now that it is in the P&D department. Many of the prior issues with communication and coordination have been resolved because ag planning reports to the P&D Director. The Ag Planners remain in the Ag Commissioner's Office. Through the project review process, Ag Planning and Ag Comm are tracking interpretation of existing ag related County policy and developing positive working relationships with other agencies. The Committee requested to

be kept informed of these improvements and ag related projects. Ag planner(s) should email project lists (not just hardcopy) to members and provide monthly reports at the AAC meeting.

### **P&D Report – Dianne Black**

- PIT process – maybe doing a joint meeting with the AAC and Planning Commission. P&D will keep the Committee in the loop.
- Gaviota Preservation Workshop – Board meeting has been changed from July 14<sup>th</sup> to Aug 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Santa Ynez Community Plan Draft EIR Public Meeting is on July 9<sup>th</sup> and comment period ends July 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **V. RAU Ordinance – Bill Giorgi**

The existing RAU ordinance will sunset on July 6<sup>th</sup>. Bill Gillette summarized the history of the issue and why he recommended the ordinance sunset. The Department of Conservation and Farm Bureau do not support residential ag units on contracted land because the use could be for non-agricultural uses and non-compatible with the agricultural operation (letters were distributed). Some Committee members were concerned they were not involved in the decision to allow the ordinance to sunset because RAUs provides housing for family members on ag preserve land. A subcommittee consisting of Paul Van Leer, Bill Giorgi, and Andy Mills was formed to explore the RAU issues and explore options.

### **VI. Residential Second Units on ag zoned land not enrolled in the Ag Preserve – Bill Giorgi**

This item was trailed until next month

### **VII. Expansion of membership on the AAC to include COLAB**

Bill Giorgi addressed the Committee about expanding AAC membership to include a COLAB representative. Since COLAB attends many of the Board meetings, a representative could assist the Committee with keeping track of County processes and provide another perspective. During the discussion, a COLAB representative, Andy Caldwell, clarified that the representative would serve as a non-voting member and in an advisory capacity. This addressed some of the concerns which included a potential conflict of interest and COLAB's approach to controversial issues. Committee members asked for more time to make a decision. This topic brought up another issue – the complexity of the agenda items and need for understanding the County process better.

**Motion:** Greg France moved, seconded by Dorothy Laine and carried by a unanimous vote to table the item until next month.

### **VIII. Santa Barbara Ranch Update and Review of Draft Ag Conservation Easements**

Dianne Black summarized the long history of the Santa Barbara Ranch project also known as the Naples Townsite Project (summary provided in packet). She explained the County is finalizing the EIR at this point but the Board would like the Committee to provide input on the efficacy of the proposed Ag Conservation Easement (ACE). Discussion focused on Alternative 1B and questions about the ACE included the location, zoning, acreage, contract specifics, designated open space and the quality of ag land being developed versus that being protected. Under the proposal, some of the agricultural land will be protected by both a Williamson Act Contract and an ACE. These were less of a concern to the Committee because they would still be subject to the minimum restrictions of the Ag Preserve Program. However, ag land that will be taken out of the Williamson Act Contract and placed only under an ACE agreement were a concern because the details of the ACE were not clear and open to negotiation. The Committee felt the ACE agreement details are very important and they would like additional information. Other concerns were impacts on agland, greenhouse restrictions, water resources, prime farmland, and potential land use conflicts with neighboring ag operations. The Committee will work with the County and the agent, Brent Daniels, to arrange a site visit which will help them gain a better understanding of the complex project. The item will be on the AAC agenda for next month.

#### **IX. Weed Management along County roads update**

A recent meeting between the County Roads and Ag Commissioner's Office did not have the desired result and there is still no written IPM Weed management program that addresses weeds in rural areas. It was agreed that Bill Gillette will go back to Roads, work out the issues and present a draft version (including pilot program and funding) to the AAC for Board approval.

#### **X. Reports From Committee Members – none**

**Next agenda items:** AB 2686; AB 2881; Right to Farm Ordinance Real Estate disclosure; Santa Barbara Ranch, possible workshop for AAC members to better acquaint themselves with county processes; Process to use our funding for things like reviewing the SYV Community plan as it relates to Ag; Recommendation to the BOS to support the SBC Fish and Game Commission's Wildfire Taskforce concept.

**NEXT MEETING:** Next meeting is on Wednesday, August 6, 2008 from 2:00 – 4:30 pm at the Farm Bureau Building meeting room located at 180 Industrial Way in Buellton. *Remember parking is allowed along Industrial Way or in one of the few parking stalls located in front of the building to the left of the sycamore tree.*