

LETTERS: Covell designation is a win/win

Jim Provenza
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Davis

This is to clarify the action of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors as to the Covell/Pole Line property (recently known as Covell Village). Although nearly surrounded by the city of Davis, this 383-acre parcel is not located in Davis. It is in Yolo County. On July 21, the board voted 4-1 to change the General Plan designation of this property from "industrial" to "specific plan."

Under the specific plan designation, Covell may be used as farmland pending either annexation by the city of Davis or the development of a specific plan by the county. A specific plan is the most flexible designation possible. It protects Davis by requiring a planning process, public hearings, Planning Commission review and Board of Supervisors approval before Covell may be developed as county land.

The county General Plan will be in effect for 20 years. Although some assume Davis will annex Covell for residential or mixed use (senior housing and related uses are currently being considered), there is no guarantee that this will occur.

Under the prior industrial designation, there was nothing to prevent an application from being submitted to the county seeking to locate industry at Covell as a matter of right. The specific plan gives Yolo County the ability to protect Covell from industrial development while not precluding any particular use in the future.

The county takes no position on proposals that would involve annexation to Davis and mixed-use development of Covell. The Davis City Council and Davis voters will make this decision through the Measure J process. Because Covell is in the Davis planning area, it is subject to an agreement providing that Davis decides how the land is to be used.

If Davis were to request annexation, the city and the county would negotiate an agreement that fairly compensates the county for loss of land. The flexibility of the specific plan protects the county's financial interest in maintaining the value of the property while preventing unwanted development in Davis.

The new land-use designation is a win/win for the city of Davis and the county of Yolo.

Jim Provenza

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