

**SOUTH DAVIS GENERAL PLAN CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SDCAC)  
MINUTES OF MEETING ON May 15, 2012  
APPROVED**

**COMMITTEE:** Jim Bernardy, John Cooluris, Stan Dean, Maureen Guerreri, Matt Williams, Olin Woods

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Leroy Bertolero – Yolo County At-Large Planning Commissioner,  
David Morrison – Yolo County Assistant Director of Planning and Public Works,  
Landon Scarlett – Recording Secretary.

**1) Call to Order**

Chair Matt Williams called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM at The El Macero Country Club

**2) Approval of Agenda**

The Agenda was approved as written

MOVED BY: Dean/SECONDED BY: Cooluris

AYES: Bernardy, Cooluris, Dean, Guerreri, Williams

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Woods

**3) Approval of Minutes of February 21, 2012**

MOVED BY: Bernardy / SECONDED BY: Guerreri

AYES: Bernardy, Cooluris, Dean, Guerreri, Williams

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Woods

NOTE: Olin Woods arrived at the meeting at this point

**4) Introductions**

John Cooluris introduced committee member Olin Woods from Willowbank

**5) Correspondence and Announcements: none**

**6) Public Comment: none**

**7) County Update – Morrison**

**Solar Fields:** David explained the applicant has initiated discussions of an alternate site for their solar field project one mile SE of Grasslands, where soils are less favorable for agriculture. The location would have a direct on-site connection to the existing transmission lines and be farther removed from Davis than the currently proposed site. As yet, no amendment to the application has been received by the County.

David reported on a recent solar conference he had attended, noting that 1) the best places for utility scale solar projects are in the inland deserts of Southern California that generate the most average days of sun and glare, and 2) panels need to produce more output to be economically viable because of the recent lapse of solar tax credits and increased connection charges imposed by utilities. It's possible the hype for the technology locally has passed.

**Davis Pass-through Agreement:** David gave the background on the detailed and extensive Pass-through Agreement ("the Agreement") that has existed between Davis and the County since the controversies that surfaced around the approving of the housing subdivision at Mace Ranch. Under the Agreement the County has essentially "rented out" its land use options to the City of Davis for an area 2 to 4 miles around the perimeter of Davis for \$2.8 million paid by Davis to the County annually that has, until recently, been paid for by Redevelopment Agency funds. For the time being, the Agreement still exists, but may need to be renegotiated in the future due to a recently passed state law that eliminated Redevelopment Agencies throughout the state. Matt noted that if the agreement is renegotiated, it could affect land use options in the SDCAC area, and suggested that the SDCAC be aware of the possibilities. David noted that with

Measures J/R and the more active role of LAFCO, it would be more difficult today to do a Mace Ranch Project and that even if the Agreement went away, new projects would be well reviewed. He noted that tension exists between Davis and the County, which have not always seen eye to eye on development, and that doing battle over development issues is par for the course with all cities. David feels that LAFCO is a key. He noted that the Yolo Countywide General Plan ("2030 YCGP") shows no growth around Davis, except as specified at Covell, the Northwest Quadrant around Sutter Hospital, and within existing designated communities.

Jim Bernardy asked about the Yolo County Airport. David reported that the Airport hopes to add more hangers and repave runways although no expansion is planned. There is currently more regional demand for smaller airports. The Airport belongs to the County and is seen as an underdeveloped asset and potential source of revenue.

**County Ag Cluster Housing Ordinance:** David explained that this Ordinance from the 2030 YCGP adopted in 2009 is a voluntary incentive program with a 2013 sunset clause intended to encourage the preservation of large tracts of farmable land in permanent easements, while encouraging those who own the parcels to cluster allowable single family houses on a maximum of 2 ½ acre lots in close proximity to one another, served by common water, sewer, and roads. Parcel sizes larger than the 2 ½ acre maximum may be required to accommodate agricultural buffers or farm worker project, with a maximum size of 4 acres in such cases.. The ordinance allows for "bonus" houses as an incentive, which Leroy Bertolero stated was the reason he did not favor this ordinance when it came to the Planning Commission, as the bonus houses might be growth inducing on rural land. Leroy also noted that several different landowners can combine their parcels to take advantage of the benefits of this ordinance. Maureen Guerreri questioned how this ordinance related to properties currently in the Williamson Act. David said that they were not compatible, but that getting out of the Williamson Act was doable, for a fee. The issue of septic waste (nitrates) affecting groundwater was discussed at some length, and David noted that regulations are getting increasingly stringent and controversial. He noted that setting up cluster housing with its common septic, water, roads and propane would be a complex matter best managed by "associations" (such as homeowner associations) in order to function well. He noted that this Ordinance has not as yet been tested and is not mandatory.

**Agricultural Preservation Alternatives:** There was a discussion of conservation easements and the need for a 3<sup>rd</sup> party enforcing power for a binding agreement on conservation and an endowment (approximately \$4,000/acre) paid by the landowner to the 3<sup>rd</sup> party to cover legal fees and enforcement of the easement. Although the County strongly supports the concepts regarding transfers of development rights, there has been resistance from cities and communities as to which areas would receive the additional development credits.

John Cooluris asked what could be done to put the farmland at the Mace Blvd/Montgomery corner into permanent easement to prevent the possibility of wall-to-wall houses in the future. David replied that the County's attitude is that "housing will happen," and the question is how best to manage it while preserving farmland and open space in accordance with the goals of the 2030 YCGP. The Cluster Housing Ordinance is an attempt to do this. There are a lot of unanswered questions (e.g. implementation will be costly, will banks be willing to make loans to farmers, timing, etc.).

The idea of a mitigation credit bank held by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party was discussed. Private money would be needed. Matt Williams offered to share with committee members a conceptual ordinance on this subject as food for thought. David noted that the problem is that everybody wants the mitigated land but no one wants the houses and that there is not enough demand in the area for mitigation credits at this time to attract the interest of developers.

David described the 2030 YCGP as an ambitious document. He noted that if the land use goal for the County is to have people in the cities, with everything outside the cities agriculture and open land, then the YCGP focuses on that goal noting that Yolo County is #8 in CA in this regard in having 88% of its population in cities and 12% in rural areas. Historically Yolo and Solano County have been successful in this regard. 5% of Solano's population is in rural areas and together the counties function as the "Central Park of the Bay Area". With more voters in the cities over time, attitudes could change. While Davis has traditionally been the largest city in the County, and a strong supporter of preserving agricultural land, David noted that West Sac will soon have more voters than Davis, as will Woodland, which could affect voting patterns and voter attitudes down the road.

NOTE: John Cooluris left to attend another meeting at this point

### **8) Implementation of Standing Rules**

Matt Williams thanked Stan Dean for his fine work on the draft Standing Rules which the Committee reviewed in red and blue line copies prior to the meeting. These Rules were approval with minor corrections.

MOVED BY: Williams/SECONDED: Guerreri  
AYES: Bernardy, Dean, Guerreri, Williams, Woods  
NOES: none  
ABSTAIN: none  
ABSENT: Cooluris

Stan Dean agreed to send a finalized version of the rules to David Morrison.

A discussion of where to post meeting minutes and agendas ensued. Alternatives will be investigated.

### **9) Next Meeting: August 21, 2012 at 5:30 pm, El Macero Country Club**

Note: June and July 2012 SDCAC meetings were cancelled by committee vote.

### **10) Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:



Recording Secretary