



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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ALVIN JAMES, DIRECTOR

March 1, 2001

AGENDA: March 13, 2001

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, California 95060

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATION REGARDING GENERAL PLAN/LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENTS AND COUNTY CODE/LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AMENDMENTS RELATED TO NEW MILLENNIUM HIGH SCHOOL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Members of the Board:

The matter before your Board at this time is the consideration of the Planning Commission's recommendation regarding the proposed amendments to the County General Plan/Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan and implementing ordinances related to the New Millennium High School MOU. This report will provide your Board with an analysis of the issues involved, and proposed General Plan/LCP Land Use Plan policy amendments, proposed County Code/LCP Implementation Plan ordinance amendments, and a proposed ordinance to implement the proposed zoning change.

On March 14, 2000, the Board of Supervisors entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Watsonville and the California Coastal Commission (Attachment 6) as part of the agreement to allow the proposed New Millennium High School to be built on the Edwards property (APN ,018281-19) in Watsonville's portion of the Coastal Zone, west of Highway One and north of Harkins Slough Road. The MOU was developed as part of the Coastal Commission's agreement to approve City of Watsonville's proposed Local Coastal Program (LCP) Major Amendment Number 1-99, which changed the City's LCP to allow a high school to be built on the Edwards property. The MOU was a compromise which established the parameters under which the Coastal Commission would cease its opposition to allowing the high school to be built on the environmentally sensitive and potentially growth inducing Edwards site. The MOU includes provisions to prevent any further westward urban expansion by the City, including limitations (to be enforced by both the City of Watsonville and the County) on wastewater and potable water pipeline extensions from the City to areas west of Highway One.

The MOU includes several specific actions that both the City of Watsonville and the County of Santa Cruz must take by certain dates. According to the MOU, by March 16, **2001**, the County is required to:

“ . . .act in good faith and hold a public hearing to consider the adoption and submission for certification by the [Coastal] Commission of amendments to the County’s LCP and similar amendments to its General Plan.. .”

These amendments are to include the following elements:

- a. Establishment of a “one-foot wide utility prohibition overlay district” that would run along, and immediately adjacent to, the City of Watsonville’s city limits west of Highway 1 (with some minor exceptions explained below).
- b. A policy/standard that limits the width of Harkins Slough Road to the minimum necessary to serve the new high school, and which encourages improvements that would enhance habitat connectivity under the roadway.
- c. A policy/standard that requires the County to reserve an at least one-foot wide non-access strip around any wastewater or potable water supply easements granted to the City of Watsonville over or through County-owned land (including County rights-of-way) west of Highway One.

In addition, the MOU also requires that any future amendments to these General Plan/LCP Land Use Plan policy changes, including revocation, require a super majority vote of the Board of Supervisors.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

To carry out the County’s responsibilities under the MOU, the Planning Department is proposing to implement these requirements through the attached General Plan/LCP Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance/LCP Implementation Plan amendments (see Resolution Attachment 1, Exhibits 1 -A and 1 -B). The proposed amendments are summarized below:

a. Utility Prohibition Strip:

This utility prohibition overlay district around the Watsonville City limits west of Highway One is proposed to be implemented through application of a combining (i.e. overlay) zoning designation to those unincorporated parcels bordering the western city limits and/or the Highway One right-of-way. While the underlying zoning of these parcels would remain unchanged, the combining zone overlay would establish a one-foot wide Utility Prohibition Strip on each affected parcel, along the parcel boundaries that lie directly adjacent to the City limits (or the Highway One right-of-way) west of Highway One (see Attachment 3 for map). All wastewater and potable water supply utility pipelines would be prohibited from crossing the foot-wide prohibition district/strip, with certain exceptions. The exceptions include the Green Farm parcel (APN 052-27 1-04) if it is annexed into the City, the Gilbertson parcel (APN 052-011-46), the agricultural uses principally and conditionally permitted under the present County Commercial

Agricultural Zoning district including agricultural worker housing, construction of a possible future landfill leachate pipeline between the City's wastewater treatment plant and the County and City landfills, and construction of irrigation pipelines for environmental restoration, maintenance or enhancement projects. Also, for the specific purpose of accommodating new development east of Highway One, expansion of the main wastewater utility line from the City sewer plant is exempted from this prohibition.

To implement the Utility Prohibition Strip, a General Plan/LCP Land Use Plan amendment (Attachment 1 -- Exhibit 1-A), and a Zoning Ordinance/LCP Implementation Plan amendment (Attachment 2), are proposed. In addition, an ordinance adding the overlay zone of the specific parcels located on the periphery of Watsonville, west of Highway One is included (Attachment 4).

b. Harkins Slough Road Improvement Restrictions:

The Harkins Slough Road widening/improvement restrictions are proposed to be implemented through two General Plan/LCP Land Use Plan policy amendments (Attachment 1, Exhibit 1 -A) and two corresponding Zoning Ordinance/LCP Implementation Plan amendments (Attachment 2). One of the proposed new General Plan/LCP Land Use Plan policies states that any improvements to Harkins Slough Road, including road widening, be limited to the minimum necessary to serve the new high school (or other permitted development on the Edwards site). The other proposed new General Plan/LCP Land Use Plan policy states that any Harkins Slough Road improvements undertaken should also incorporate habitat connectivity enhancements between the portions of West Branch of Struve Slough to the north and to the south of Harkins Slough Road. The road bisects the slough/wetland and currently has only a small culvert(s) allowing water to flow under Harkins Slough Road. To improve habitat connectivity, the policy states that a new bridge span should be built over the slough unless an environmentally equivalent or superior alternative is proposed.

c. Pipeline Non-Access Strip:

The third element of the MOU requirements is a minimum one-foot wide non-access strip, around any wastewater or potable water pipeline easements granted to the City by the County. This is proposed to be implemented through a General Plan/LCP Land Use Plan amendment (Attachment 1, Exhibit 1-A) stating that any pipeline easements on County right-of-way or other County-owned land, granted to the City of Watsonville, be conditioned on restricting the capacity of the pipeline to that necessary to serve the approved use, and contain a one-foot wide non-access strip around the pipeline that prohibits any hook-ups or tie-ins to the pipeline, thus preventing sewer or water services to urban uses other than those for which the original pipeline was intended.

Staff has prepared the attached amendments to meet the obligations set forth in the MOU, and has determined that the amendments are categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (minor changes to land use limitations). An exemption form is attached (Attachment 5).

Planning Commission Action:

The Planning Commission, on February 28, 2001, following a duly noticed public meeting, adopted a Resolution recommending approval of the amendments to the General Plan/Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan and implementing ordinances (Attachment 7), and the CEQA Categorical Exemption (Attachment 5). The Planning Commission approval includes revision of the language of the ordinances to implement the requirement for a super-majority of the Board of Supervisors for any future amendments of the ordinances.

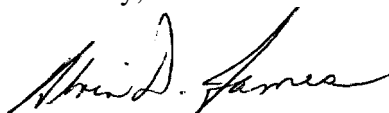
Expected Outcome:

The overall effect of the proposed General Plan/LCP Local Coastal Plan and County Code/LCP Implementation Plan amendments will be to prevent any expansion/extension of urban services to the undeveloped, rural areas west of the City of Watsonville. Consistent with the intent of the New Millennium High School MOU, this should have the effect of discouraging additional urban development in the farmlands, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas in the Coastal Zone west of Watsonville.

It is, therefore, RECOMMENDED that your Board:

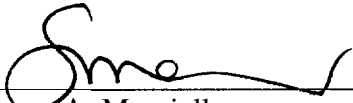
1. Adopt the Resolution amending the General Plan/Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan and implementing ordinances to implement the requirements of the New Millennium High School Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment 1); and
2. Adopt the Implementing Ordinances (County Code Sections 13.10.490 through 13.10.493, 17.02.08 1, and 16.32.090(c)(A)(11)) relating to the New Millennium High School Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment 2); and
3. Adopt the Ordinance amending County Code Chapter 13.10 by changing the zoning of certain parcels west of the Watsonville City limits (Attachment 4); and
4. Certify the CEQA Categorical Exemption (Attachment 5) for the amendments; and
5. Direct the Planning Department to transmit the Local Coastal Program and implementing ordinance amendments to the California Coastal Commission for review and certification of the amendments.

Sincerely,



Alvin D. James
Planning Director

RECOMMENDED



Susan A. Mauriello
County Administrative Officer

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Attachments:

1. Resolution Recommending Approval of the Proposed General Plan/Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan Amendments

Exhibit 1-A: Amendments to the County General Plan/Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan

Exhibit 1 -B: Ordinance amending County Zoning Ordinance/LCP Implementation Plan (County Code Sections 13.10.490 through 13.10.493, 17.02.081, and 16.32.090(c)(A)(11))
2. Ordinance amending County Zoning Ordinance/LCP Implementation Plan (County Code Sections 13.10.490 through 13.10.493, 17.02.081, and 16.32.090(c)(A)(11))
3. Map showing route of Utility Prohibition District and affected Parcels
4. Proposed Ordinance amending County Code Chapter 13.10 by changing the zoning of certain parcels west of Watsonville City limits
5. CEQA Exemption
6. New Millennium High School Memorandum of Understanding
7. Planning Commission Resolution
8. Minutes of Planning Commission Meeting of February 28, 2001
9. Planning Commission staff report, including revised General Plan/LCP Land Use Plan Amendments (Attachment A- 1)

cc: County Counsel
California Coastal Commission, Central Coast District
Assembly Member Fred Keeley
Pajaro Valley Unified School District
City of Watsonville
Department of Public Works