

Wednesday, August 05, 2009 (file cac232)

To: Dan Breedon

Fr: Ed Miller

Subj: Effect of taxing policy on housing costs, coherent communities, green building, chaparral, kooky soils

Ref A: P. Schrag, Paradise lost, California's experience, America's future, U.C. Press 2004

Ref B: J. Bonzo & M. Stevens, Wendell Berry and the cultivation of life, a readers guide, Brazos Press 2008

Ref C: J. Barrows & L. Iannucci, Green building and remodeling, Penguin Group 2009

Ref D: R. Quinn & S. Keeley, Introduction to California Chaparral, U.C. Press 2006

Ref E: <http://www.californiachaparral.com> , The California Chaparral Institute, 8/6/2009 (note that print outs should be in landscape mode)

Ref F: A. Kruckeberg, Introduction to soils and plants, serpentine, vernal pools and other geobotanical wonders, U.C. Press 2006

Highlights and commentary:

1. Ref A describes the effects of taxing policies on housing affordability and possible future options.
2. Ref B expands on the meaning of a sustainable community and relationships. Work communities may not be feasible in our present economy but a disciplined family life can provide many of the features of the pre-industrial agrarian life.
3. Ref C from the green building council describes the "green pyramid" starting with the minimal energy projects leading ultimately to carbon neutral, water neutral structures. A scoring scheme is provided to evaluate performance. For official rating (bronze, silver, gold, platinum) official verifiers are available at www.nahbgreen.org. Additional information is available at www.thegreenhomeguide.org
4. Ref D provides an introduction to California chaparral with a strong emphasis on the fire cycle.
5. Ref E expands on current thinking on chaparral management strongly influenced by the California Native Plant society and their quarterly journal Fremontia. They make a strong case for limited vegetation beyond 70 feet from a dwelling based on the need to limit build up of surface fuels, filtering embers and minimizing erosion.
6. Ref F examines vegetation/animal life and health issues associated with unique soil types. This expands on material presented in References D & E. Asbestos is a health issue effecting road construction. A diversity of plants is available because of the presence of hardpan/serpentine.