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To: Dan Breedon

Fr: Ed Miller

Subj: Comments on the public workshop meeting series 7 at the Energy Farm Sept 17, 09 .

The overall issue of expanded parcel sizes and uncompensated allocation of land to winter deer herd maintenance dominated the public response. The following breakdown of these problems and potential actions items come to mind.

1. Stakeholders may be tempted to game the system by choosing to subdivide their parcels before Sept 2010 in order to optimize/grandfather their position. The planning commission and board of supervisors need to be sensitive to this issue. Williamson Act roll over parcels may tend not to be renewed to minimize the cost of subdivision. The more likely effect of implied changes to subdivision rules is to introduce paralysis into the planning process and substantial economic impact on near term development.
2. The choice of deer herd corridors and associated special vegetation management, animal survival, highway safety and disease vectors impact on humans will require a careful analysis of available land and compensation for stakeholders. Hopefully we can find high slope/difficult to develop land that might benefit from animal browsing to minimize surface wildland fire propagation well removed from human dwellings and riparian locations. Many parcels include a relatively small buildable section and associated, difficult to maintain/build high slope regions. These areas could be assigned to the department of fish and game for maintenance/responsibility. This might be acceptable at minimal cost to the government or the parcel owner.
3. It is not clear from the general plan how large parcels can be developed as clusters. How is a cluster defined? This level of detail will presumably be treated in the zoning ordinance. This can be seen as a divisive issue in the near future.
4. The discussion on converting Chico to use of DWR surface water to supplement/totally replace ground water suggests that we need to build a case that we may outgrow our local rainfall derived water supply in order to increase our current 27,500 AF allocation for all of Butte County. Because of the sparse governmentally recognized weather stations and the ascending typography of Butte County, the Isohyetal Method of precipitation prediction is recommended. This involves the creation of iso-rainfall contours. This data can be generated along with iso-slope contours and deg-days of heating/cooling. Decisions need to be made with regard to quasi-worst case return periods for marginal well production based on the meteorological records and the upcoming IPCC December recommendations re to climate change. Statistical measures of evapotranspiration and percolation derived from USDA soil maps and vegetation cover need to be recognized. Scaled average precipitation values and percolation/evapotranspiration on an annual basis and late summer-early fall

availability/demand need to be analyzed. The depletion state of ground water aquifers need to be trended/predicted as an additional factor in pleading for additional DWR surface water.

5. Discussion re to leach field size and geometry points up the need to address the problem of specific leach field size and relation to wells particularly in cracked rock/volcanic aquifers. I note in the ER for today that the BOS in recognizing non-gravity septic systems did not imply the elimination of code approved gravity systems. I am not sure that gravity vs. non-gravity septic systems fully the address semantic problem. Simple above ground leach field mound systems with large amounts of material like foam plastic or compost have maintenance problems. A manufactured cover over a mound with a hydraulic discontinuity provide by properly sized stones can minimize the installation costs and may be appropriate for substantial slope parcels but still operate as a gravity based/reliable system. A covered mound needs to be differentiated from formal aerobic systems similar to those manufactured by Food Machinery Corp primarily for large cluster facilities. The gravity leach field is still the gold standard for residential black water treatment. The leach field geometry may vary under the code. There are still issues involved in septic field-well isolation in dense soils and special coupling situations in volcanic regions with structures like dykes. The state legislature has been prescribing the enforcement of septic tank cleaning and inspection. This probably needs to be discussed in the general plan or zoning ordinance.
6. Under promotion of a sustainable energy supply COS-P3.3 on p 196 the statement is made that utility lines shall be constructed along existing utility corridors where feasible. I have so far not been able to find documentation describing/specifying corridors other than height constraints mandated by the state. Ultra high voltage transmission systems need to be differentiated from moderate voltage local distribution systems near residences, industry or schools. In the zoning ordinance we will need to address these issues. Minimizing the cost impacts on land owner, utility operators, and rate/tax payers should be part of the game. Within the general plan the intent needs to be shown that we are sensitive to the issues that include aesthetics, health and noise with increasing voltages. Ultimate conversion of electrical energy to source generation of fuels like hydrogen need to be recognized as an alternative to expanded electrical transmission systems.
7. The selection of the Energy Farm, now under construction, as a site for the meeting should give the public the feeling that Butte County is on track for industrial development/employment and a sustainable future.