

DRAFT
MINUTES
AMADOR COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, July 17, 2019

The meeting of the Amador County Agricultural Advisory Committee was called to order at 5:45 p.m. in Conference Room C at the County Administration Center, 810 Court Street, Jackson, California, by Chair Allen.

The following members were present:

Eric Mayberry, Agriculture Commissioner
Patty Bautista, Assessor's Office
John Allen, District 4 (Chair)
Dan Port, District 2 (Vice Chair)
David Bassett, District 1
Dan Dentone, District 5
Scott Oneto, Farm Advisor

Also in attendance:

Chuck Beatty, Planning Department
Mary Ann Manges, Recording Secretary
Krista Ruesel, Planner
Ruslan Bratan, Planner
Richard Forster, Supervisor District 2
Greg Briski
Jim Giuffra
Dena Kirkland
Jean McBride
Sean Kriletich
Emily Taylor

- A. CORRESPONDENCE:** None.
- B. PUBLIC MATTERS AND PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE REGARDING NON-AGENDA ITEMS:**

Emily Taylor shared the history of her ranch, current agricultural activities, and plans for future expansion. She stated that she believes short term rentals are good for both the County and those zoned agricultural and that allowing short term rentals and agritourism such as corporate retreats and workshops on agricultural land can supplement income allowing owners to hold on to their land and enables owners to educate the public about agricultural activities.

Sean Kriletich shared that if the proposed short term rental ordinance passes, it will become more difficult for those to make a living just with cattle or grapes. He added that it is desired for farmers to stay on the land, keep agricultural enterprises alive, and maintain open space.

He stated that it is important to have agriculturalists talking to visitors from urban areas so that they realize we are stewarding their watersheds and food. He wants to start the conversation to allow more flexibility with agricultural lands, particularly those with Williamson Act contracts, to increase agritourism.

Chair Allen shared that in reworking the County's Williamson Act ordinance, it has to be consistent with State law. He elaborated that this is why Ms. Taylor and Mr. Krietich addressed the Committee. He added that he believes the Committee is going to need to consider agritourism so more city people are introduced to the rural way of life. He stated that we need to consider how agritourism dovetails with the Williamson Act.

Eric Mayberry, Agricultural Commissioner, asked Chair Allen if this is something that Mr. Beatty should add to the next Agricultural Advisory Committee agenda so that the Committee can respond to whatever happens with the Short Term Rental ordinance. Chair Allen commented that he thought that was a good idea.

Scott Oneto, Farm Advisor, shared that he believes that short term rentals and agritourism are two different issues and that it is important on how they relate to farm stays. He added that other counties such as Napa and Sonoma have come up with some pretty good language.

Chair Allen shared that we need to realize that agritourism is more than just short term rentals. He added that it is also introducing urban people to the country way of life, teaching them why things are done the way they are in rural areas, and educating them about why agricultural operations require so much open space.

Mr. Oneto advised that a Homestay Farm Bill was passed in 1999 which allow farm owners to rent rooms in their main residence on a short term basis.

Mr. Beatty added that the bill relaxed the health and safety code standards so farm stays could serve food without meeting restaurant standards. The bill didn't override local zoning authority to regulate short term rental of farm housing.

Chair Allen asked if anyone had more questions or comments.

- C. APPROVAL OF MINUES:** Minutes of the April 24, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved following a motion by Eric Mayberry, seconded by Dan Port.

AGENDA ITEMS

Vice Chair Port suggested to Chair Allen to reverse the order of the agenda items. It was agreed to start with Item 2 and end with Item 1.

ITEM 2 Review and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors, regarding a proposed boundary line adjustment resulting in one parcel of approximately 5 acres for an immediate family member, submitted by Jean L. McBride (Contract No. 22) (APN 044-180-030)

Chair Allen reviewed the application submitted by the applicant.

Jean McBride clarified the location of the proposed 5 acre parcel and shared that her 366 acres are part of a 2800 acre cattle ranch. She added that it is one operation, the same family under one contract.

Discussion ensued amongst the Committee members regarding the Government Code criteria for boundary line adjustments and land divisions, and the Committee found this project consistent with the government code.

Upon a motion by John Allen, seconded by Dan Port, and carried, the Committee recommended approval of the 5-acre parcel to the Board of Supervisors subject to the findings in the government code for boundary line adjustments and land divisions.

AYES: Allen, Port, Bautista, Mayberry, Dentone, Bassett

NOES: None

RECUSED: None

ABSENT: Gladen

ITEM 3 Review and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors, regarding a request to establish an Agricultural Preserve consisting of one parcel totaling 160 acres, submitted by Michael C. Daines (APN 001-200-012-000)

Chair Allen reviewed the application submitted by the applicant.

Discussion ensued to see if the parcel meets the minimum requirements for parcels 160 acres and larger. David Bassett commented that brushing included on the application does not count as an improvement. Ultimately, it was determined that due to the parcel's size there is no question that it would meet the minimum income requirements.

Upon a motion by Dan Port, seconded by David Bassett, the Committee recommended approval of the to the 160 acre agricultural preserve to the Board of Supervisors.

AYES: Port, Bassett, Bautista, Mayberry, Dentone, Allen

NOES: None

RECUSED: None

ABSENT: Gladen

ITEM 1 Review and recommendation to the Planning Commission, pursuant to Amador County Code Section 19.24.036 – AG District Regulations, to allow

for the use of the property at 11125 Courier Rd. in Plymouth, CA 95669 for a commercial recreation and boarding facility (APN 007-020-006)

Chair Allen reviewed the application submitted by the applicants and asked them to explain the current agricultural uses.

Jim Guiffra shared that they currently have about 8 acre vineyard with a 2 year lease with Villa Tuscano and a 5 year lease with Bella Grace to produce wine in their 5000 square foot building.

The Committee requested clarification of the recreational activities that the applicants desire.

Jim Guiffra shared the desired and possible recreational uses such as overnight accommodations, horse boarding, weddings, wine tasting on horseback, mountain biking, hiking, fishing, and gold panning. He added that they also would like to provide educational opportunities with archery, concealed weapon training, vineyard management, and corporate retreats. He stated that they also would like to be available for Search and Rescue and SWAT training. Mr. Guiffra additionally shared history of the ranch and their desire to be able to continue to financially keep the ranch in the family.

Vice Chair Port led the discussion with the Committee about concerns of possible negative impacts to the applicants' and neighboring parcels' agricultural activities from the numbers of people visiting the property and from non agricultural activities. Vice Chair Port asked Mr. Guiffra how many people would be participating in the various non agricultural activities.

Mr. Guiffra responded that only the people that board at the rental house would be staying the night and would be there to participate in the recreational activities. He elaborated that overnight stays for people participating in weddings would be limited to the wedding party not guests.

Conversation continued clarifying the applicants' intentions.

Vice Chair Port asked for clarification from staff that the winery ordinance applies to the applicants since they have a winery.

Mr. Beatty stated that when a parcel has an onsite winery and is in the Williamson Act there is no production standard in the code. He elaborated that they also can have an unlimited number of events with up to 125 people and up to 12 events a year with up to 450 people.

Patty Bautista shared concerns she has heard about larger operations coming into the area and asked if there is a noise ordinance. Mr. Beatty shared that the County does not have a noise ordinance. Mr. Mayberry added that he has received

complaints from people from out of the area complaining about noises, lights, and smells of picking operations that sometimes occur at night at wineries.

Mr. Giuffra shared that his neighbors have told him that they are happy about what he is doing and that guests will be educated about country life before they come to the ranch.

Vice Chair Port stressed that the Committee needs to be careful about not violating the intent of the Williamson Act.

The Committee determined that the applicants' can already do anything allowed under the winery ordinance and that conditions and criteria could be written in the use permit for compatible uses. Mr. Giuffra added that he can add use permit language in his contract.

Scott Oneto initiated discussion that the wording in the use permit should align with the code and the law and that the proposed activities be secondary to the agricultural operation. Mr. Beatty reminded that a use permit activities must be a compatible and incidental use with agriculture and with adjoining parcels. Discussion ensued about the definition of Williamson Act recreation and about the number of people to be allowed at the rental home.

Upon a motion by Chair Allen, seconded by Dan Dentone, and carried, the Committee recommended to the Planning Commission that the project be defined as a boarding and guest facility for up to 8 people at a time with the 8 people participating in the recreational activities.

AYES: Allen, Bautista, Dentone

NOES: Mayberry, Port

ABSTAIN: Bassett

ABSENT: Gladen

There being no further business, Chair Allen adjourned the meeting 7:55 p.m.

John Allen, Chairman

Chuck Beatty, Planning Director