



**AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE AND
SEALER OF WEIGHTS & MEASURES**

Gary Caseri
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Agricultural Advisory Board

MINUTES

January 4, 2010
Stanislaus County Agricultural Center
Conference Room H/I
10:00 a.m.

Committee Members Present:

John Herlihy	Tom Maring	Tom Orvis
Ray Prock, Jr.	Ed Perry	Rowe Barney
Wayne Zipser		

Committee Members Absent:

Norman Kline	Alan Cover
Richard Gibson	John Azevedo

Ex-Officio:

Supervisor Jim DeMartini – Present
Supervisor Vito Chiesa (Alternate) - Present
Gary Caseri, Ag Commissioner – Present

Others Present:

Al Brizard, Stanislaus Farm Bureau	Vance Kennedy, Hydrologist/Farmer
Cynthia Darmstandler, Ag Comm Office	Raul Mendez, Stan Co. Chief Executive Office
Angela Freitas, Stan Co Planning Dept	Rachel Wyse, Stan Co Planning Dept
Denny Hoeh, Ag Commissioner's Office	

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no public comment.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 14, 2009 MEETING

The minutes from the December 14, 2009 meeting were approved.

IV. AGRICULTURAL BUFFER ALTERNATIVE

USE PERMIT NO. 2008-17

DIAMOND BAR ARENA – ALTERNATIVE TO THE AGRICULTURAL STANDARDS

The applicant is seeking to expand a legal non-conforming equestrian arena, training and boarding facility and to legalize an un-permitted second dwelling with an office for permanent housing for a full-time employee on an approximately 11 acre parcel, located at 6055 Central Ave., south of E. Keyes Road in the Ceres area. The expansion would allow the existing operation to hold events open to the general public and has proposed an alternative to the Ag buffer standards.

While there is a fence in place, it is not a solid fence. Trees are dispersed and are deciduous. The project site does not meet the required buffers to the east, south and west sides. It was questioned whether the neighbors have been noticed. Also asked was if there was any type of dust control.

There are orchards on three sides of the property and to the north are ranchettes. Discussion centered around the fact that the arena has been in operation for 40 years with equestrian events. There were some questions about pesticides used in the neighboring orchards and if it would be considered to be people-intensive activities taking place on the site. It was expressed that since this has been in operation since the 70's, it seems like it's legal non-conforming. There was also a concern that if the alternative buffers were approved, it might set a precedent not to require buffers.

It was M/S/P (unanimous) to accept the alternative buffers as proposed based on the fact that the facility has been in use for many years, and there have not been known complaints over the years.

V. GROUNDWATER SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT AND CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED GROUNDWATER ORDINANCE FOR APPROVAL AND RECOMMENDATION FOR ADOPTION BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The subcommittee report and draft proposed ordinance were distributed. It was discussed about how to get this out to stakeholders. It was suggested to have a 45-day comment period and then come back at the March meeting to consider approval.

Chris Hartley registered two concerns and stated that changed uses are not addressed and urban uses are exempted from the ordinance. There was also a question about permits, and Al Brizard clarified that permits would not be required if the water is not going out of the County, and this draft ordinance only deals with exporting groundwater out of Stanislaus County.

It was M/S/P (unanimous) to accept the work of the subcommittee and notify stakeholders of a 45-day review period for written comment on the proposed draft groundwater ordinance, which will be brought back for consideration by the Ag Advisory Board for approval and recommendation for adoption by the Board of Supervisors at the March 1, 2010 meeting.

VI. NEXT MEETING

A. Meeting Date/Time:

The next scheduled meeting is Monday, February 1, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.
(*Note: This meeting was cancelled, and the next meeting will be March 1, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at the Stanislaus Ag Center, Harvest Hall)


B. Agenda Items

- ✓ Alternative Buffers, if applicable
- ✓ Proposed Draft Groundwater Ordinance Discussion

Please contact John Herlihy, Gary Caseri or Cynthia Darmstandler with items you wish placed on the agenda.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman John Herlihy adjourned the meeting.

Minutes Respectfully
Submitted,

Cynthia Darmstandler
Confidential Assistant IV
Stanislaus County