



County of Santa Cruz

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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FIFTH DISTRICT

AGENDA: 5/21/02

May 20, 2002

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: ITEM 79 - COUNTY GRADING ORDINANCE

Dear Members of the Board:

I am unable to attend the May 21, 2002, Board meeting due to a death in my family. However, I would ask that the Board consider the following recommendations regarding Item 79, the proposed changes to the County Grading Ordinance regarding design standards for roads and driveways.

There are a number of differences between the County's proposed Grading Ordinance and what the members of the public have suggested. Some of these differences seem to be technical and would therefore be difficult for either the Board to resolve or to resolve in another community meeting. Other differences would more appropriately be addressed in changes to the County Fire Code.

For instance, the County Planning Department proposal would require a 12 foot wide turnout on a 12 foot minimum width road while Big Creek Lumber representatives have proposed 6 foot wide turnouts on a 12 foot wide road. There are also differences in proposed exceptions to the standards. The County proposal is more general and leaves fire departments broader discretion in making exceptions, while Big Creek has proposed specific criteria.

At the same time, I believe it is necessary to have a functional County Grading Ordinance in place. The revisions underway were in response to an error in the current County Grading Ordinance surfacing standards as well as to bring the ordinance into compliance with the County Fire Code.

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In order to continue our efforts to determine specific modifications to the Grading Ordinance, I recommend that the Board take the following actions:

1. Adopt the attached resolution amending County Code Section 16.20.180 - Grading Ordinance Design Standards for Private Roads and Driveways (Attachment 1) giving final approval to the proposed amendments.
2. Consider approval of an ordinance repealing subsection (h) **of** Section - Design Standards for Private Roads, Driveways and Bridges - of the County Code and replacing it with the language **of** that subdivision as it existed prior to the 1999 amendment. Direct the Planning Department to transmit the amendment to the California Coastal Commission as a Local Coastal Program Implementation Plan amendment for their approval and certification. This would repeal language approved in 1999 that contains an error in surfacing requirements.
3. Approve the establishment of a Private Road Standards Task Force. Using the public input provided in the four community meetings as a basis, the Task Force would be charged with recommending design standards for private roads and driveways that would provide adequate fire and safety access, including changes to the Fire Code, County Grading Ordinance and General Plan.
4. Direct the Planning Department to return on or before August 13, 2002, with a list of recommended appointees to a Private Road Standards Task Force. I would suggest that the Task Force should include, but not be limited to, a civil engineer, general engineering contractor, a representative of the fire departments, a member of an environmental group, a member of the community, and appropriate County staff.
5. Direct the Planning Department to return on or before August 13, 2002, with a proposed time line for meetings of the Task Force, including a date by which Task Force recommendations would be returned to the Board for consideration.

Very truly yours,



ELLEN PIRIE, Supervisor
Second District

EP:ted
Attachment

cc: Planning Department

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