

COLAB SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

PRIOR ACTIONS AND COMING ATTRACTIONS REPORT

WEEK OF JULY 4, 2011-July 11, 2011

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY

In 1662 King Charles II of England issued a Charter to twelve subjects to encourage them to establish a colony in New England. Part of the Charter stated:

And further, Our will and pleasure is, and we do for us, our heirs and successors, ordain, declare, and grant unto said Governor and Company, and their Successors, That all, and every subject of Us, Our heirs, or Successors, which shall go to inhabit said Colony, and every of their Children, which shall happen to be born there, or on the Seas in going thither, or returning from thence, shall have and enjoy all Liberties and Immunities of free natural Subjects within any Dominions of Us, Our Heirs, Successors to all Intents, Constructions and Purposes whatsoever, as if they and every of them were born within the Realm of England .

By 1775 King George III was demanding surrender of the Charter because of its fundamental grant of liberty and equal citizenship. The patriots of Hartford refused and hid the Charter in the hollow of a sturdy oak tree on a hill overlooking the City. The agents of the crown (what today we would call the secret police) and the Royal Marines came to seize the Charter. Not one citizen would betray the location even after brutal interrogation, torture, and hangings.

After the Revolution the Charter was placed in what is now the Historic Connecticut Statehouse and remained there until the 1930's, when it was enshrined in the Connecticut State Library. The oak tree, which became known as the Charter Oak, survived until the great New England hurricane of 1938 blew it down.

This clause of the Connecticut Charter became the foundation for the United States Constitution.

Independence Day is sacred.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board of Supervisors

Board Meeting of Tuesday June 28, 2011 (No Meeting Held)

Board Meeting of July 5, 2011 (No Meeting Scheduled -- too close to the 4th of July Holiday)

OTHER GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Planning Commission Meeting of June 30, 2011(Completed)

Events Ordinance. This continued hearing from June 9, 2011, ran for over six hours. There were only a few speakers. The speakers primarily represented not-for-profit organizations which conduct fundraisers at ranches, vineyards and historic barns/houses. These organizations are very nervous about some of the restrictions noted last week (see below). One of the speakers was a representative of the Hearst Ranch, which hosts some major large fundraisers critical to the survival of some not-for-profits. Hearst's representative pointed out that the Ranch contains 88,000 acres and that its events are miles from any neighbors. In fact the major neighbor is the Hearst Castle Museum, which hosts an average of 1000 visitors per day and is the location of many events itself. It was pointed out that with respect to the shuttle bus requirement (see below), San Simeon Village would be the parking area from which the buses would depart and return. The Ranch spokesperson pointed out that the Ranch has far more parking than the Village.

This provoked a long wrangle between the Commissioners, Planning staff, and County Counsel about exceptions, the equal protection doctrine, and fairness. The issue of how to treat larger properties which host events was a constant theme throughout the day. It was not resolved.

The Commission went through the proposed ordinance page by page, asking for clarification and directing wording changes. What is an "event"? What if my daughter's big wedding is not held at my house (which is exempt from the ordinance as private) but at Grandma's ranch which is not my house? Is it still private and exempt? Because Grandma has consanguinity with the bride it might be all right. But what if the wedding is at the ranch of a friend who is not related? What if I want to rent a ranch or estate house to have the wedding?? The public is not invited. Is it still private and exempt?

The Fire Department was present for most of the day, supporting strict rules for parking, access, the number of guests, sprinkler requirements, sheet rocking historic barns, and inspections as part of requiring permits.

There was a long discussion about distance set-backs for parking and the actual event site from the nearby agricultural activities. What if the guests get too close to the cows?

The general consensus of the Commission seemed to be in favor of strict rules to protect neighbors from frequent events which would be a disturbance. By the end of the day the staff and Commissioners appeared exhausted. The matter was continued to July 28, 2011. The Commission hopes to wrap up and send the proposed ordinance to the Board of Supervisors.

In the end, all this is a slippery slope.

Background

*Purpose: The purpose of this section is to establish a set of regulations applicable to the various types of events held throughout the County. The Board of Supervisors through adoption of these standards recognizes the important role that events play including promoting countywide tourism, **providing a source of additional income to agriculturalists and landowners**, as an educational or **recreational tool for the public** and support of nonprofit organizations. The Board also recognizes that, **even as they provide economic, educational and recreational benefits**, events **also** have the potential to **negatively impact surrounding residential or agricultural uses by increasing burdens to infrastructure**, such as rural roads and add noise or other impacts that may negatively affect the rural and neighborhood character, the essential quality on which tourism and **the County's economy** depends. The specific purpose of this Section is to set standards for events to ensure compatibility with surrounding residential and agricultural uses.*

Some other changes from prior versions:

Nonprofit events:

- Will be limited to 3 per year on any property.
- Maximum attendance is limited to 500 (no COLAB dinner in a tent).
- Any event with over 175 must bus people from the nearest urban or village area.
- No more than 50 vehicles allowed to park on site.

All events:

- Ministerial Permit required for events 175 or less; event is subject to all requirements.
- Minor use Permit required for events 176-250.
- Conditional use permit required for 250 or more.
- Decreased setback from a water course (blue line stream) from 300 ft. to 100 ft.
- Parking allowed on public roads outside urban or village reserve line where traffic control plan allows.