

COLAB SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

WEEK OF JANUARY 8-15, 2012

INSIDE THIS UPDATE:

SAVE THURSDAY MARCH 22, 2012 FOR COLAB SLO'S ANNUAL
DINNER AND AUCTION

IS CAMBRIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTUALLY ALLOWED?

IS THE COUNTY ANNUAL REPORT:
AN OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS?
SLO'S VERSION OF THE NORDSTROM CATALOG?
AN INCUMBENT CAMPAIGN ADVERTISEMENT?

FINAL VOTE ON BAG BAN: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2012, 1:30 PM
1055 MONTEREY STREET, SLO

Board of Supervisors Meeting of January 10, 2012 (Scheduled)

No Significant Policy Decisions On the January 10 agenda

There are no significant policy decisions on the January 10, 2012 Board Agenda; however there are some items which are of background interest and raise broader policy questions.

Web Site Development Contract for Cambria Chamber of Commerce: The County is paying \$63,750 for the Cambria Chamber of Commerce to redesign its web site and is approving a contract with Verdin Marketing Ink, Inc. of San Luis Obispo to do the work. Ostensibly this is an economic development effort. The item is interesting in that it contains quite a bit of information about the importance of the hospitality industry within the San Luis Obispo County economy. For example, visitor spending in the County was \$820 million in 1999, peaked at \$1.2 billion in 2007, and declined to \$1 billion in 2009. The report contains a copy of a marketing analysis that provides breakdowns of the origin of county visitors and reasons for their visits to the county. The LA metro area is the largest source, followed by the Central Valley and the Bay area. Interestingly, a major source constitutes visitors who are willing to drive farther and to bypass Santa Barbara because it is regarded as too expensive and a bit snooty (Bacara backlash?). This same behavior is

repeated on a smaller scale by Bay area and Silicon Valley people, who for the same reasons bypass the Monterey Peninsula and Carmel, in particular.

Bigger Implications: Given the apparent consensus that tourism is ok (not counting ATVs in the dunes), it would seem that there could be a strategic policy push to explore the development of a world class destination resort; equestrian events and festivals; a nationally positioned classical music festival, like the Burlington, Vermont Mozart Festival, the Tanglewood Music Festival (and summer home of the Boston Pops) in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, or Santa Barbara's Music Academy of the West Summer Series; and the marketing of the emerging and distinct Central Coast sound music scene (like the Austin Texas scene).

Excitement, Fun, and Job Creation: Suppose successful Cal Poly alumni were to create a foundation to finance the development of a Cal Poly NCAA Division I status sports team (for instance, football, especially since UCSB gave it up) and to build a new state of the art Mustang Stadium. Eventually, Cal Poly would play against teams such as Boise State, UCLA or Texas, and home games would be broadcast on national TV ("We are in beautiful San Luis Obispo on a perfect day for football!"). The commentary would be accompanied by video displays of scenes of the area which would be seen by millions of viewers across the nation. Imagine 50,000 or 60,000 of the faithful from both schools pouring into town. Such efforts would engender a whole new throng of annual scheduled visitors who would come again and again, year after year (a tradition). The local businesses would be showcased and the airport would have more volume, which in turn would generate more flight choices to more destinations, such as direct flights to DFW, SFO, and SEATAC.

Oops We Forgot: These projects would generate in excess of 1050 metric tons of CO₂E per year per project, cause people to hold charitable events, encourage vacation rentals, baffle the visitors with the single use bag ban, cause automobile traffic, hire unemployed people, and create economic multipliers which would stimulate the creation of new business, invigorate the construction industry, and stop the slide in home values. This in turn would undermine the enviro-socialist agenda of promoting poverty, government dependence, and expanding government control. Forget it.

So why would the Board promote tourism in Cambria? Development is currently banned because there is insufficient water. What if more tourism creates economic multipliers and demand for homes, motels, restaurants, or even a world class- resort (or was this already rejected)?

County 2011 Annual Report Released

The County Administrator has released an electronic version of the County Annual Report. (You can see it at www.slocounty.ca.gov/admin/2011_Annual_Report.htm) The report is very pretty and colorful and contains basic information about the County Government and County demographics. There is a cover letter from 2011 Board Chairman Adam Hill crowing about the Board's accomplishments in economic development and business. There are two feature articles. The first extolls the great job the Supervisors did on Supervisorial District redistricting, and the second applauds the economic projections, job projections, and environmental benefit projections on the two solar projects that the Board approved

during 2011. The projections are drawn from the project environmental impact reports and do not contain actual live performance to date on job creation, taxes paid, the number of County residents hired, and other purported benefits. There is one live statistic which claims that, since September, San Luis Obispo County businesses have received \$20 million in contracts from the projects. There is no list of which ones received the contracts, the value of the contracts, or the relative importance of the \$20 million in terms of total project cost. Remember, these projects are in the billions of dollars.

A Public Relations Document – Not a Performance Report: Most of the report contains one or two page presentations by each of the County departments. Again, these are very colorful and some contain embedded links to videos or related information about particular departments. While the presentations have a consistent graphics format, performance information is random or selective and unrelated to the performance measures in the Budget. No bad performance was reported. Many of the “performance statistics” contain data that is not placed in context. “We did 200 more reports this year than last year” or “we have less money to handle our workload.” Since there is no comparative or base data, it is impossible for the public to judge how a particular service is performing. The report simply conveys that the County is doing hundreds of wonderful things for cuddling grannies (see the cover) and smiling children, all in a beautiful flowery environment with green hills, a blue ocean, and gorgeous people.

One significant statistic did stand out: The Assessor reported that the Department analyzed 56,000 properties and reduced the assessments on 47,000. It is not known from this uncontexted statistic how many total properties exist in the County or how much the reductions will cost the budget of the County, the school districts, cities and other taxing jurisdictions. Unless there are properties which rose in value to offset the reductions, the statistic suggests that there is a continuing economic problem.

Government’s most important purpose is to protect the rights and freedom of its citizens. A secondary and important role is to provide services which should not be provided by private entities (courts, public prosecution, the army, etc.) or which the private sector cannot or will not provide. In order for government to be accountable, it must report the performance of its activities in a relevant, understandable and consistent format. The annual report should be such a document. Selective reporting of positive anecdotes and achievements in a colorful public relations promotion should not substitute for the real thing. After all, the County’s work is much more important than a Mercedes Benz brochure or the Nordstrom Christmas Catalog. Even more important, the report should not double as incumbent reelection literature produced at public expense.

Planning Commission Meeting of January 12, 2012 (Scheduled)

There are no items of general policy consequence on the January 12, 2012 agenda.

A hearing on the Excelaron, Huasna Valley Oil Development permit will be considered by the Planning Commission on February 23, 2012.

Integrated Waste Management Authority Meeting of January 11, 2012

Bag Ban Final Vote: The IWMA will hold its second hearing on the proposed bag ban, which it tentatively approved back on November 9, 2011. It is the intent of the Executive Director and the Board majority to adopt the ordinance, which would go into effect in September, 2012 (conveniently after the June Board of Supervisors election). As readers may recall, the ordinance was preliminarily approved on a split vote of 7 to 5. The issue is close. There are some indicia that one of the yes votes is changing to a no vote. There was one commissioner who was absent for the November 9 meeting. There are also some indicia that a switch in one vote from yes to no may cause one of the other yes votes to switch to no. For this reason, it is important for those who oppose the ban to attend or email their representative and strongly advocate that he or she vote no.

Remember that this is yet another symbolic feel-good enviro-socialist assault on common sense. Also remember that beginning in September, 2012, if the ban is approved, you will be required to buy, maintain, and always carry the manufactured reusable bags. If you forget your reusable bag, the store will be required to charge ten cents for each "recyclable" paper bag.

Future Events

APCD Project Development CEQA Greenhouse Gas Emission Thresholds: Public Hearing, January 25, 2012.

COLAB and the Home Builders Association of the Central Coast met with the APCD staff to review the proposed regulation and ask questions. As a result, the staff agreed to do some rework and try to clarify some of the wording and tables. We will report back as soon as the changes are known. A separate attachment accompanying the distribution of this Weekly Update contains a letter prepared by the Home Builders Association of the Central Coast. This is an excellent analysis of why the APCD should not adopt the thresholds for new construction.

Background: The APCD could adopt its greenhouse gas "threshold guide" as early as January 26, 2012. Architects, engineers, project planners, surveyors, developers, realtors, land use attorneys and others with interest in future residential, commercial, and industrial projects should go to the APCD web site (www.slcleanair.org) and review the document. Those potential applicants with projects in design should take notice prior to progressing too far or they could be faced with substantial rework and cost.

The guide will be issued to the cities and the County, which in turn will be required to utilize the standards in the guide to determine if a particular development project is likely to exceed specified greenhouse gas (GHG) generation limits (in metric tons) during 1) construction and/or 2) its operational life. If the project does exceed the guide limits, the permitting agency (city or County) must impose GHG reducing design alternatives and/or mitigations. There are 3 proposed methods for calculating the greenhouse gas thresholds: one would require projects that exceed 1050 metric tons of CO₂E per year to mitigate the level to a lower level; the second would require that projects that generate 4.9 metric tons

per year of CO₂E per resident and/or employee per year over the life of a project would require mitigation; and the third would require stationary industrial projects (for example, boilers, oil processing plants, etc.) that generate in excess of 10,000 metric tons per year to apply mitigations. The calculations used by the APCD to establish these thresholds are very arcane and confusing.

An Emerging Contradiction: APCD has indicated that proposed projects that otherwise comply with a jurisdiction's adopted Climate Action Plan (CAP) can avoid compliance with one or more of the thresholds by meeting requirements contained within a particular jurisdiction's CAP. APCD has further stipulated that in order for a proposed project to comply under this method, the CAP must have bona fide requirements which are measurable and reported. Contradicting this is the thorny problem that the County has already promised the community that its recently adopted CAP is voluntary, is incentive based, and does not contain requirements. The Board of Supervisors may choose to convert many of the "suggestions for requirements" into ordinances in the future, but at present the CAP does not comport with APCD's requirements.

All this is a result of AB 32, SB 97, and SB 375 (GHG reduction laws passed to forestall climate change).

This is a new level of regulation and will be applied as part of the CEQA review.