



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 9/17/2008

Agenda Placement: 9A

Napa County Planning Commission Board Agenda Letter

TO: Napa County Planning Commission
FROM: John McDowell for Gitelman, Hillary - Director
Conservation, Development & Planning
REPORT BY: Hillary Gitelman, Director - 253-4805
SUBJECT: Sign Ordinance Amendments

RECOMMENDATION

SIGN ORDINANCE UPDATE

PROPOSED ORDINANCE #P08-00501 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF NAPA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AMENDING CHAPTER 18.116 AND SECTIONS 18.120.010 AND 18.126.060 OF THE NAPA COUNTY CODE AS THEY RELATE TO REGULATION OF SIGNS

CEQA Status: The project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to Section 15305 of the California Environmental Quality Act (Class 5 – minor alterations to land use limitations) and is not subject to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA guidelines General Rule 15061(b)(3)

Request: Minor amendment to signage-related regulations to: 1) Allow signage to identify viticultural areas; 2) clarify the type and duration of temporary signs exempt from permitting; 3) expansion of the definition of agricultural association signs to allow identification of Napa County Land Trust properties; 4) transfer of regulations for temporary off site seasonal agricultural signs from the County Policy Manual to the sign ordinance and 5) other minor technical clarifications and consolidations.

Staff Recommendation: That the Planning Commission recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of the ordinance.

Staff Contact: Hillary Gitelman 253-4805

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ordinance No. 511 regulating signs in the unincorporated area of Napa County became effective in 1976 and has not been substantially amended since 1999. The proposed ordinance has been prepared to address technical clean up and clarification of numerous issues that have arisen since the ordinance was last amended. The

revised ordinance will specifically: 1) Provide for AVA signs to identify federally-designated viticultural areas; 2) Clarify the temporary signs that are exempt as provided in Section 18.116.120 by eliminating conflicting section 18.116.030(f); 3) Expand the definition of agricultural association signs to allow for signs identifying Napa County Land Trust properties; 4) Insert regulations regarding temporary off-site signs for seasonal agricultural sales (e.g. pumpkins) that are currently located in the County Policy Manual; and 5) Clarify other sections of the ordinance and add illustrations.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The project is Categorical Exempt pursuant to Section 15305 of the California Environmental Quality Act (Class 5 – minor alterations to land use limitations) and is not subject to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA guidelines General Rule 15061(b)(3)

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Within the last several years, County staff was approached by members of the wine industry who were interested in erecting signs along major roadways indicating the boundaries of federally-designated viticultural areas. At the same time, the Napa County Land Trust inquired regarding their ability to erect signs to identify properties subject to conservation easements. Neither type of sign would be permitted under the current sign ordinance.

As a result, Planning Department staff undertook revisions to the ordinance, and saw an opportunity to correct and clarify other sections as needed. The result is a comprehensive revision to Chapter 18.116 of the Napa County Zoning Ordinance. The revisions:

- | Allow for up to four signs along roadways where drivers enter viticultural areas (AVAs)
- | Allow for agricultural association signs to be used to identify properties subject to conservation easements;
- | Add illustrations and other clarifications throughout;
- | Eliminated duplicative or contradictory sections;
- | Added temporary off-site signs that were previously addressed in the County Policy Manual;
- | Clarified the County prohibition on neon and internally illuminated signs; and
- | Make conforming amendments to other sections of County Code.

Please see the attached redline copy for the specific changes proposed.

As a whole, the proposed revisions and the signs they would permit would result in few, limited changes to the physical setting of Napa County, and as a result, the proposed ordinance has been determined to be exempt/excluded from review under CEQA. The limited nature of potential visual changes to Napa County also means that the proposed ordinance would be consistent with the Napa County General Plan. General Plan Policy CC-3 states in part: "Signs shall be used primarily to provide necessary information and business identification

rather than advertisement of goods and services. Sign size limits and locational requirements shall be established to avoid over-proliferation of signs..." The proposed ordinance includes size limits and locational requirements, and would be generally consistent with the Napa County General Plan and supportive of Napa County's rural, agricultural character.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- A . Proposed Ordinance -- Tracked Changes Version
- B . Proposed Ordinance -- Clean Version

Napa County Planning Commission: Approve
Reviewed By: John McDowell