



MARIPOSA PLANNING

COUNTY OF MARIPOSA


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Sarah Williams, Planning Director
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MEMORANDUM

Date: October 23, 2019
To: Catheys Valley Community Planning Advisory Committee
From: Sarah Williams, Director 
Topic: **ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INPUT** from Cathi Boze for Agenda Item No. 4 for October 24, 2019 meeting – **CPAC Review Required**

Attached to this memorandum is additional public input for your consideration regarding the above referenced agenda item. This is correspondence from Cathi Boze to the Catheys Valley Planning Advisory Committee and Mariposa Planning Department, dated 15 October 2019.

The correspondence from Cathi Boze was received at Planning on October 15, 2019 and was inadvertently omitted from the meeting packet. Please note that public input (both verbal and written) must be taken by the Community Planning Advisory Committee up to the close of the public portion of this agenda item, at Thursday's (tomorrow's) meeting. The Committee must consider all public input, prior to taking action. The fact that this correspondence was not included in the meeting packet does not change the fact that you must consider this input, prior to taking action.

I ask that you take time to review this correspondence prior to your meeting tomorrow night.

If there is any additional correspondence received between now and your meeting, I will provide that to you as soon as possible.

See you tomorrow!

To: Catheys Valley Planning Advisory Committee
Mariposa Planning Department

Subject: **Comments on the Potential Amendments to the Catheys Valley Community Plan
– 23 October 2019, Catheys Valley Planning Advisory Committee Meeting**

Date: 15 October 2019

After years of discussion and community input over 15 years, the Catheys Valley Community Plan (CVCP) was finally adopted on 4 December 2012. The current boundary was selected by the community to surround potential residential development areas with unsubdividable agricultural lands.

Why the rush to change/amend it now? Where is Option #4 (which should be Option #1), leave the Catheys Valley Community Plan as it is – i.e. do nothing! Who are these people that want the plan amended? Who are these "local ranchers", and why do they wish to be outside of the current planning area? Are there upcoming plans for Catheys Valley that would impact their ranches, something that would be detrimental to their ranching operations, or is the use of "*some local ranchers*" just being used as a wedge issue for some unknown outcome that is coming to Catheys Valley down the road? Why should the few dictate to the many when the Catheys Valley Community Plan was put in place with plenty of community input and discussion for good reason?

I have property in both the Ag/Working Landscape and residential/mountain home classifications within the current Catheys Valley Community Plan boundaries. So I do have a dog in this fight so to speak. The County General Plan allows for 2.5 acre parcels, whereas the Catheys Valley Community Plan has a 5 acre minimum requirement to ensure the rural appearance, open space, and scenic beauty of Catheys Valley.

The County General Plan will equal more development and commerce with all the accompanying congestion, roads, and additional water use in an area where many already have water issues. Quite a number of properties (31 at last count) in Catheys Valley already require water deliveries due to dry wells or impaired wells. In fact, we have had to put in a storage tank and booster pump on our residential property on Old Highway in order to provide a sufficient supply of water.

Again, I fail to see what is the rush to change things, unless it is from undue pressure from those who want to develop property within the Catheys Valley Community Plan boundaries and it is not currently allowed under the 5 acre minimum restrictions. It took over 15 years to develop the current Catheys Valley Community Plan and now the Catheys Valley Planning Advisory Committee wants to consider, discuss, provide direction, and vote on changing the Catheys Valley Community Plan boundaries in two meetings. What is the rush? This is something that could and should take a long time. This is something that should be weighed in on by both old and new Catheys Valley residents after much discussion, thought, and reasoning. They need to understand the current Catheys Valley

Community Plan and its protections as well as the potential implications and effects on their property, property value, and rural life style that any of the 3 scenarios proposed by the Planning Department would bring if enacted.

For that reason, I again ask who brought this forward and why? Why is it being brought up now? Who are the property owners/ranchers and what do they stand to gain from this change? As the retired Mariposa County Agricultural Commissioner, I do not believe that any of the 3 scenarios proposed by the Planning Department benefits agriculture as has been put forward by the District 3 Supervisor. What is the underlying reason for this request?? In the past I have always found that there is some underlying reason and agenda when things like this are proposed, seemingly out of the blue for no good reason.

Removing the protection of the Catheys Valley Community Plan and changing to the County General Plan (in any of the 3 scenarios proposed by the Planning Department) which allows for 2.5 acre parcels with the accompanying increase in potential houses and development would have a potentially significant impact on both the visual quality, rural character, and agriculture of the rural foothill area that is Catheys Valley. This increased development would significantly impact the view shed, i.e. *Historic Landscape*, the scenic vistas, open space, and agricultural landscape of the area – all of which are an integral part of Catheys Valley. In addition to the aesthetic concerns, there are other potential impacts such as availability of potable water, invasive noxious weeds, traffic, and road safety issues. Any of the 3 scenarios proposed by the Planning Department will lead to increased development in Catheys Valley, which ultimately means increases in roads, trash, water usage, sewage systems, fire protection, and sheriff's protection just to name a few as well as the increased taxes needed for maintenance and to fund public services. I do not believe that we have the capacity, or the desire, in Catheys Valley to sustain that kind of growth.

A song is worth a thousand words, so I would like to paraphrase the lyrics from Big Yellow Taxi (Joni Mitchell)/They Paved Paradise (Counting Crows) –

*They paved paradise and put up a parkin' lot
With a pink hotel, a boutique, and a swingin' hot spot*

*Don't it always seem to go
That you don't know what you got till it's gone
They paved paradise and put up a parking lot*

Some of the Catheys Valley Planning Advisory Committee members argue that we don't need the Catheys Valley Community Plan to begin with because the County General Plan is good enough, while others want to ensure that we keep the rural appearance, openness, agriculture, etc. of Catheys Valley, and stick to the 5 acre minimum rule because under the County General Plan, 2.5 acre parcels are more common along with clustering aspects. I understand that we need more affordable housing in Mariposa County, but there are much more desirable areas already designated and much closer to County services to fill that need than the Catheys Valley area.

Keeping the Catheys Valley Community Plan boundaries as they are is important in an effort to preserve both the rural agricultural character and heritage of Catheys Valley in the face of development. Please remember, those who buy property and want to live in Catheys Valley expect it to remain the same with the open landscapes, rural agriculture, and historic vistas. The current Catheys Valley Community Plan boundaries protect everyone's investment in buying here, whereas none of the 3 scenarios proposed by the Planning Department amending the Catheys Valley Community Plan will do that. Keeping Catheys Valley as it is with its open landscape, beautiful views, and rural character helps the County as a whole because tourists come to Mariposa County to see open spaces, Gold Country history, and rural agriculture, not houses and development.

For all the above reasons, I ask you, the Catheys Valley Planning Advisory Committee members, to vote for and recommend Option #4 - leave the Catheys Valley Community Plan boundaries as they are – i.e. do nothing!

Thank you for your kind attention.

Cathi Boze

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