

Save Rural Angwin Quarterly Update

August, September, October 2015

For more than a decade, Save Rural Angwin's mission has been and continues to be "to protect agriculture and the natural environment, the twin sources of Napa County's prosperity and quality of life." Our primary work has been to achieve appropriate land use designations for the rural and unincorporated community of Angwin. This has been done through our participation in the County's scheduled update of its General Plan. We have met our goal with considerable success, seeing much of the land formerly designated as urban changed to Agriculture, Watershed, and Open Space (AWOS) or Public Institutional (PI). However, some urban-designated areas still remain to be considered for a change in designation, and it is our aim to see them changed to non-urban designations consistent with goals stated throughout the Napa County General Plan and General Plan policy statements already written for the Angwin community. In particular, we hope to see the open area south of Angwin Avenue, west of Howell Mountain Road and immediately east of Conn Creek designated as AWOS. We consider this area essential to the rural character of unincorporated Angwin.

Over the past three months SRA representatives, as coalition members of VISION 2050, have engaged in some of the broader County-wide issues that also potentially impact the rural character of Angwin. In September, SRA representatives were notified of an application to CalFire for a timber harvest plan (THP) to potentially cut old growth timber in the upper reach of Bell Canyon near the Friesen Lakes. The application was filed by Mike Davis, owner of the Davis Winery on Silverado Trail across from Larkmead Lane. The area proposed for clear-cutting falls entirely within the Bell Canyon watershed and also is a bridge between two sections of the Dunn-Wildlake Preserve. The City of St. Helena is concerned this proposed project could affect the quality and quantity of water in the Bell Canyon Reservoir, a significant water source to the city. In addition to our e-mail request to SRA supporters asking you to weigh in on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for this proposed project, SRA hosted a meeting of official representatives from the City of St.

Helena, County of Napa, Sierra Club, Land Trust of Napa County, Cal Fisheries Unlimited, Quercus Group, and other concerned individuals. At the time of this writing, a division of Cal Fire that oversees THP's has a second review of the project pending. Cal Fire is required to respond to every document and letter sent; several were lengthy and complex. We thank SRA supporters who wrote letters to Cal Fire. Should this project ultimately be approved, certainly more protections for the watershed and wildlife should be incorporated and negative consequences truly mitigated.

In the last Quarterly Update, we reported on activities of the Agricultural Protection Advisory Committee (APAC) established by the Board of Supervisors to make recommendations to the Planning Commission on specified topics. After almost thirty-one hours of work, in ten meetings spanning four months, the APAC turned its proposals over to the Planning Commission. APAC's Final Report (dated August 24, 2015) can be seen on the SRA website at www.SaveRuralAngwin.org. The Land Use issue of Angwin is peripherally addressed in Recommendation #10 and in the more detailed arguments provided in the report's Appendix.

During this past year the makeup of both the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission has changed. In December 2014, Governor Jerry Brown appointed lifelong Napa resident Alfredo Pedroza to the District 4 Board position previously held by Bill Dodd, now State Assemblyman. Supervisor Pedroza took time this September to tour Angwin with SRA representatives. As noted in an earlier SRA Quarterly, Anne Cottrell replaced Bob Fiddaman on the Planning Commission. Also in September 2015, Matt Pope, who served on the Planning Commission for six years, resigned due to time constraints after he became executive director of the Napa Earthquake Recovery Group. We wish him well in his new endeavor. In his District 5 seat on the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors appointed Jeri Gill, CEO of Sustainable Napa County. Her term, like Supervisor Pedroza's, lasts through December 2016. She comes to this appointed position having served on APAC. How these changes to the make-up of the Board and Commission will affect the Angwin land use decision is unknown. We are optimistic that General Plan Action Item 114.1 (to complete the Angwin land use designations) may still come before the Board this year.

However, given the deluge of weighty issues before the Board, we would not be surprised to see our item deferred yet again. The SRA Steering Committee strongly urges SRA members to express your support to the new Commissioners and Supervisor in addition to the long-standing Supervisors for maintaining a rural Angwin and, especially, for a decision designating the green field in the heart of Angwin as Agriculture, Watershed and Open Space (AWOS).