



Save Rural Angwin Quarterly Update

November, December 2014 and January 2015

The Save Rural Angwin Steering Committee and Advisory Council are deeply saddened by the loss of our dear friend and mentor, Volker Eisele. Volker has long been a pivotal force on land use issues in Napa County. His obituary and a number of heart-felt tributes are posted on www.SaveRuralAngwin.org (see Volker Eisele link on the Home page).

Long-time Planning Commissioner Bob Fiddaman retired from the Commission. Appointed in his place as District 3 Commissioner is Anne L. Cottrell. Commissioner Cottrell is a graduate of Yale University and University of California at Berkeley School of Law with specialization in environmental law. She has over a decade of private-practice attorney experience as well as non-profit leadership work including serving as Board member with Land Trust of Napa County and Nimbus Arts (St. Helena). She has hit the ground running with the Commission.

On December 16, 2015, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Draft Final Housing Policy for 2015-2023. It is "draft" because it still requires final certification by the State. The adopted Housing Policy is available on the SRA website. Angwin Site A (adjacent to College Avenue and Brookside Drive) and Site B (adjacent to Las Posadas Road) continue to be identified for potential permitted-development of 114 housing units and 77 housing units respectively, each requiring very specific percentages of affordability levels. SRA does not oppose these specific affordable housing sites as described in the Housing Policy, but we will continue to oppose development of any kind in the green fields on the west side of Howell Mountain Road.

Supporters may recall that the Board of Supervisors re-visited the General Plan Action Item regarding Angwin last July. Further discussion was anticipated to return to the Board's agenda in March 2015; however, it is now apparent the Angwin land use designation issues will not be heard until at least late summer 2015. Planning

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*In Memory of
Volker Eisele*

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Director David Morrison is quoted in the North Bay Business Journal (January 12, 2015) in summary saying, “Questions (about development projects) from neighboring residents (all over the County), growers and vintners about impacts on groundwater, traffic and rural character...as well as appeals of approvals have led the County Board of Supervisors over the past several months to call for better analysis of current conditions and community input.” With District 3 Supervisor Dillon now Chair of the Board, a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Board is scheduled for March 10, 2015, to tackle what Dillon called “the big picture” concerning land use, traffic and water. Revisiting County policies could become a key directive for County planning staff.

County officials are not alone in their “big picture” concerns. More than a dozen organized groups from across the county met earlier last month to discuss land use, the on-going drought, and conservation of watersheds and open space. They discussed how citizens’ interests can best be represented in the permitting process for what seems an ever-increasing number of large-scale development applications. SRA recognizes the potential benefits to forming a coalition of organizations that would share resources to accomplish over-arching goals. Active participation by SRA would depend on many factors including but not limited to the defined mission of the coalition, the formal structure of the group, and the group’s proposed objectives and strategies. At this time, SRA remains an interested observer.

Speaking of “watersheds”, you can learn about the assault taking place on watersheds by attending a free screening of an important movie at St. Helena Cameo. The event is sponsored by The Defenders of the East Napa Watersheds. More information is posted on our home page at www.SaveRuralAngwin.org.