



"Jobs, Homes & Property Rights "

January 26, 2010

Mr. Clif Clendenen, Chairman
Board of Supervisors
Humboldt County
825 Fifth Street
Eureka, California 95501

Subject: Housing Element Update / Revision

Dear Chairman Clendenen and Members of the Board:

We are extremely concerned about the manner in which your Planning Director is proceeding with the update / revisions being made to the Housing Element.

In the State Housing and Community Development Department's November 30, 2009 letter to the County, HCD Deputy Director Cathy Creswell states:

"As noted in the previous review, the County should continue to engage the community, including FOL, through the revision and adoption of the housing element. These efforts are particularly important given community interest in identified sites in the previous and current planning period."

Because HELP and other organizations have not been contacted by the Planning Department to participate in the current revisions to the Housing Element, I scheduled a meeting with Director Kirk Girard. We met late last Thursday afternoon for over an hour and a half. I tried to convince him to include the community, and FOL in the revision work. Mr. Girard stated clearly that he disagrees having the community involved.

Instead, he informed me that staff has drafted the revision (behind closed doors) and that it was being circulated internally at the County last week. He said he will be sending a draft of the element to HCD at the State prior to bringing it to your Board on February 23, 2010. He has convinced the Planning Commission to by-pass them all together, by saying there is no need to bother them with reviewing the draft or making recommendations to your Board.

Mr. Girard told me the only way he would change the path he is on, is if your Board directed him to do so.

For many years members of various organizations such as Humboldt Association of Realtors, Northern California of Home Builders, The Builders Exchange, HELP, and more recently, Humboldt Coalition for Property Rights, and FOL (Find Our Lots), have tried to convince the County to involve the public, in a meaningful way in the update of the General Plan and the Housing Elements. This extensive and sincere effort has fallen on deaf ears.

Mr. Clif Clendenen, Chairman
County Board of Supervisors
January 26, 2010, cont'd

During what your planners refer to as "Outreach Meetings", some of your citizens have been told to "sit down and be quiet". A few of us have been told similar things in the middle of our 3-minute testimony at Planning Commission meetings. Thankfully the Chair of the Commission allowed us to continue our comments.

Many in our community are outraged at what has been going on for years. This is the final blow. The truth and the law continues to be ignored. We all want a legitimate Housing Element. And we are ready, willing, and able, to assist in it's update / revision.

Please – please, instruct your Planning Director to involve the community, including FOL, in the revisions to the Housing Element as required by the State.

Very truly yours,

Kay Backer, representing
Humboldt Economic & Land Plan

cc: County Board of Supervisors
County Planning Commissioners
Phillip Smith-Hanes, County Administrative Officer
Wendy Chaitin, County Counsel
Kirk Girard, Community Development Services Director
Michael Richardson, Senior Planner
Kathy Hayes, Clerk of the Board
Norma Lorenzo / Sharyn Lodes, Planning Commission Clerk
Bonnie Blackberry, Civil Liberties Monitoring Project
Lynn Jacobs, Director, State Housing & Community Development
Cathy Creswell, Deputy Director, State Housing & Community Development
Paul McDougall, Program Manager, State Housing & Community Development

Helpcountyclendenen2

P O Box 168, Eureka CA 95502 + 707.834.8006 + help@helphumboldt.com + www.helphumboldt.com