



**RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT AGENCY
COUNTY OF TULARE
AGENDA ITEM**

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ALLEN ISHIDA
District One

PETER VANDER POEL
District Two

PHILLIP A. COX
District Three

J. STEVEN WORTHLEY
District Four

MIKE ENNIS
District Five

AGENDA DATE: March 22, 2011

Public Hearing Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scheduled Public Hearing W/Clerk	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Published Notice Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advertised Published Notice	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meet & Confer Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electronic File(s) has been sent	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budget Transfer (Aud 308) attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personnel Resolution attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Resolution, Ordinance or Agreements are attached and signature line for Chairman is marked with tab(s)/flag(s)	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
CONTACT PERSON: Celeste Perez PHONE: 559-624-7000						

SUBJECT: Amendment to Parts A, C and D of Section 16.2 of Uncodified Tulare County Ordinance No. 352 as Amended (commonly known as the Zoning Ordinance of Tulare County) pertaining to abolishing the Site Plan Review Committee and transferring duties and authority to the Tulare County Planning Commission

REQUEST(S):
That the Board of Supervisors:

1. On March 22, 2011, introduce and waive the first reading of an ordinance amending Parts A, C and D of Section 16.2 of the Tulare County Ordinance No. 352, (commonly known as the Zoning Ordinance) pertaining to abolishing the Site Plan Review Committee and transferring duties and authority to the Tulare County Planning Commission.
2. On April 5, 2011, find there is no substantial evidence that the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance will have a significant effect on the environment and that a Notice of Exemption for said Zoning Ordinance Amendment reflects the independent judgment of the County and has been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and the State Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended.
3. Waive the final reading and adopt an ordinance amending Section 16.2 of Tulare County Ordinance No. 352 pertaining to abolishing the Site Plan Review Committee and transferring duties and authority to the Tulare County Planning Commission.
4. Direct the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to publish the adopted ordinance and to post a certified copy of the full ordinance amending the Tulare County Ordinance No.

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352, with the names of the Board of Supervisors voting for and against the amendment, within fifteen (15) days as required by Government Code section 25124 and to cause the Notice of Exemption to be filed with the Tulare County Clerk-Recorder.

SUMMARY:

On March 8, 2011, The Board of Supervisors considered a request to amend Parts A, C and D of Section 16.2 of Uncodified Tulare County Ordinance No. 352 as amended (commonly known as the Zoning Ordinance of Tulare County) pertaining to abolishing the Site Plan Review Committee and transferring duties and authority to the Tulare County Planning Commission. This was considered to be the first step of a larger effort to reorganize the process by which discretionary permits are reviewed and processed. Following this reorganization, staff intended to bring a request to the Board to establish a Project Review Committee that would review development proposals during weekly meetings and provide early comments and feedback to applicants in order to better guide applicants and staff during the formal review process. The intent of this reorganization was to accomplish the following goals:

- Reduce time spent by staff holding multiple meetings that are similar in nature and intent, consolidating discretionary approval into one body.
- Allow applicants to get an early response from staff on their development proposals, prior to the formal submittal of an application.
- Give applicants a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their proposals early in the process and a clear understanding of the subsequent steps in the process.
- Resolve issues and concerns early in the process to prevent them from becoming larger problems later on.
- Save applicants time and money by developing a clear perspective of the complete process and staff expectations.
- Save applicants time and money by identifying projects that are problematic or unlikely to get approved early in the process before significant amounts of money are spent.
- Improve the efficiency of project processing by staff by having potential project issues clearly identified up front.
- Reduce time spent by staff on projects that are likely to be withdrawn or denied, maximizing their time for other projects.

Since this proposed ordinance does not re-zone properties or impose any additional zoning regulations pertaining to the use of property as set out in Government Code Section 65850, the Board of Supervisors is able to adopt it without going through the

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Planning Commission and requiring a noticed public hearing.

Instead, the ordinance was submitted to the Board of Supervisors for the introduction and waiver of a first reading at one meeting and returned to the Board for waiver of the second reading and adoption at the next regular meeting. The ordinance would be published in full within 15 days of adoption. The ordinance would then go into effect 30 days after adoption.

At the public meeting comments were received from Jim Winton and Fred Webber (both local land surveyors) expressing concern over proceeding with the changes without having the Project Review Committee process set up at the same time and the length of time it might take to reorganize the zoning ordinance to accommodate the changes. Also, after the meeting, a letter was received from Neil Zerlang another local land surveyor with similar concerns and questions regarding the details and logistics of running the proposed Project Review Committee and having duties transferred to the Planning Commission. His letter is included in this report as Attachment No. 4.

For the benefit of all, staff has provided responses and clarifications to the questions raised included in this report as Attachment No. 5.

At the March 8, 2011 meeting, the Board of Supervisors asked that an interim plan for the introduction of a Project Review Committee be prepared for consideration and use. The plan is included in this report as Attachment No. 4 and includes details of the composition of the proposed Project Review Committee and the manner in which the proposed meetings will be held and conducted. Upon the ordinance going into effect, this interim plan would be initiated and carried out.

Projects currently scheduled for the Site Plan Review Committee meetings and Zoning Administrator meetings would still be heard by those review bodies, however, new public hearings would begin to be scheduled for the Planning Commission. Projects, currently in the system, but not yet scheduled for hearing, that have not had the benefit of the Project Review Committee meeting will have the option to proceed to hearing with the Planning Commission, or be reviewed by the Project Review Committee at the applicant's discretion.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:

Code Amendment projects are funded through building permit fees. Each building permit is charged a \$38 fee to help fund updates and amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and other County Ordinances. There is no net County cost to the General Fund.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF TULARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN:

The Zoning Ordinance Amendment is linked to Economic Well-Being Initiative of Tulare County's Strategic Business Plan 2006-2011 by promoting effective growth management and quality standard of living. This Amendment will streamline and simplify development processes.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Direct that the Amendment be modified.
2. Deny the proposed Amendment.

INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER DEPARTMENTS OR AGENCIES:

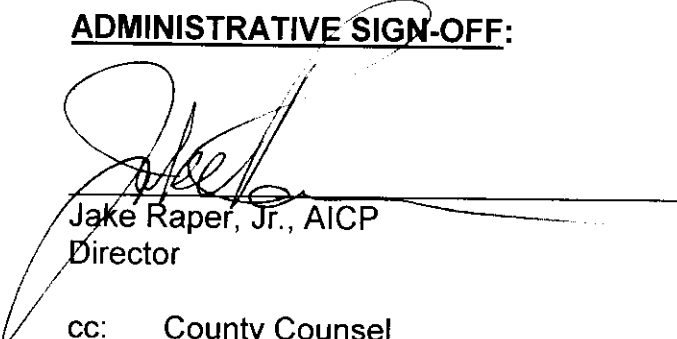
During the past six months, staff has presented this idea (in concept) to the following groups:

- The Tulare County Board of Supervisors
- The Tulare County Planning Commission
- The Tulare County Homesite Parcel Stakeholder's Group (Consisting of Members of the Agricultural Advisory Committee and Local Engineers and Consultants)
- The Agricultural Advisory Committee
- The Local Chapter of the Engineer's and Surveyor's Professional Organization

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ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:



Jake Raper, Jr., AICP
Director

cc: County Counsel
County Administrative Office (2)

ATTACHMENT 1 – Notice of Exemption
ATTACHMENT 2 – Proposed Ordinance
ATTACHMENT 3 – Interim Operating Plan
ATTACHMENT 4 – Letter from Neil Zerlang
ATTACHMENT 5 – Staff Response to Neil Zerlang
ATTACHMENT 6 – Letter from Jim Winton

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

 County Clerk
County of Tulare
Courthouse, Room 105
221 South Mooney Boulevard
Visalia, California 93291

From: County of Tulare, RMA
Government Plaza
5961 South Mooney Blvd.
Visalia, Ca 93277

Project Title: Amendment to Tulare County Zoning Ordinance Code Abolishing the Site Plan Review Committee

Project Location - Specific: N/A

Project Location- Section, Township, Range: N/A

Project Location - City: N/A **Project Location - County:** Tulare County

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

An Ordinance Amending Parts A, C and D of Section 16.2 of Uncodified Tulare County Ordinance No. 352 as Amended (Commonly Known as the Zoning Ordinance of Tulare County) Pertaining to Abolishing the Site Plan Review Committee and Transferring Duties and Authority to the Tulare County Planning Commission.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Tulare, Resource Management Agency

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Benjamin A. Kimball, Chief Planner

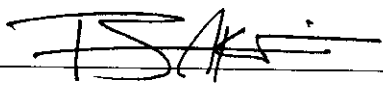
Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- General Rule: CEQA guidelines 15061 (b)(3)
- Categorical Exemption: State type(s) and section number(s):
- Statutory Exemptions: State code number

Reasons why project is exempt: The elimination of the Site Plan Review Committee will have no bearing whatsoever on what can be constructed in Tulare County, how that construction looks, is conducted or how it impacts the area. There are no foreseeable impacts to the environment that would result from the elimination of this position.

Lead Agency: County of Tulare

Project Planner: Benjamin A. Kimball Area Code/Telephone: 559-624-7000

Signature:  Date: 3/9/2011 Title: Chief Planner

- Signed by Lead Agency
- Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____
Date Sent to the Clerk of the Board: _____ You
have five days from project approval.

BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF TULARE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF AN AMENDMENT TO)
PARTS A, C AND D OF SECTION 16.2 OF) RESOLUTION NO. _____
UNCODIFIED TULARE COUNTY ORDINANCE)
NO. 352 AS AMENDED (COMMONLY KNOWN)
AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF TULARE)
COUNTY) PERTAINING TO ABOLISHING THE)
SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE AND)
TRANSFERRING DUTIES AND AUTHORITY)
TO THE TULARE COUNTY PLANNING)
COMMISSION)

UPON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR _____, SECONDED BY
SUPERVISOR _____, THE FOLLOWING WAS ADOPTED BY THE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, AT AN OFFICIAL MEETING HELD ON APRIL 5, 2011,
BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

ATTEST: JEAN M. ROUSSEAU
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1. On April 5, 2011, found there is no substantial evidence that the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance will have a significant effect on the environment and that a Notice of Exemption for said Zoning Ordinance Amendment reflects the independent judgment of the County and has been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and the State Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended.
2. Waived the final reading and adopted an ordinance amending Section 16.2 of Tulare County Ordinance No. 352 pertaining to abolishing the Site Plan Review Committee and transferring duties and authority to the Tulare County Planning Commission.
3. Directed the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to publish the adopted ordinance and to post a certified copy of the full ordinance amending the Tulare County Ordinance No. 352, with the names of the Board of Supervisors voting for and against the amendment, within fifteen (15) days as required by Government Code section 25124 and to cause the Notice of Exemption to be filed with the Tulare County Clerk-Recorder.

Attachment #2

ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PARTS A, C AND D OF SECTION 16.2 OF UNCODIFIED TULARE COUNTY ORDINANCE NO. 352 AS AMENDED (COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF TULARE COUNTY) PERTAINING TO ABOLISHING THE SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE AND TRANSFERRING DUTIES AND AUTHORITY TO THE TULARE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION.

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF TULARE ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Part A of Section 16.2 of uncodified Tulare County Ordinance No. 352 as amended from time to time is amended to read:

A. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this section is to enable the County to make a finding that proposed development is in conformity with the provisions of this ordinance and the goals and objectives of the General Plan.

Section 2. Part C of Section 16.2 of uncodified Tulare County Ordinance No. 352 as amended from time to time is amended to read:

C. **SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE: PLANNING COMMISSION:** The Site Plan Review Committee is hereby abolished. All duties of the Site Plan Review Committee are transferred to the Tulare County Planning Commission and the Tulare County Planning Commission is directed and authorized to execute all of the duties, responsibilities and authority formerly vested in the Site Plan Review Committee by any and all state and federal laws, statutes, regulations, agreements and directives and other official instruments and all of the duties, responsibilities, and authority formerly vested in the Site Plan Review Committee by any and all County of Tulare Ordinances, resolutions, agreements, directives, letters, certifications or

other official instruments. All references to the Site Plan Review Committee in the Ordinance Code of Tulare County, this Tulare County Ordinance No, 352 as amended (commonly referred to as the Zoning Ordinance of Tulare County), any and all other County of Tulare Ordinances, resolutions, agreements, directives, letters, certifications or other official instruments shall be deemed to refer to the Tulare County Planning Commission. All rules adopted by the Site Plan Review Committee to govern the transaction of business or other affairs of the Committee are repealed and the rules adopted by the Tulare County Planning Commission shall apply.

Section 3. Part D of Section 16.2 of uncodified Tulare County Ordinance No. 352 as amended from time to time is amended to read:

D. POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE: All powers and duties of the Site Plan Review Committee are transferred and assigned to the Tulare County Planning Commission. The powers and duties include:

1. Any power or duty of the Site Plan Review Committee to serve in an advisory capacity to the Planning Commission required by this Ordinance is abolished. Instead, the Planning Commission will take into consideration, as part of the Planning Commission's decision making process, the same matters that the Site Plan Review Committee would have considered in advising the Planning Commission. Any power or duty of the Site Plan Review Committee to serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors required by this Ordinance shall be transferred to and performed by the Planning Commission.

2. Review and approval, conditionally approval or disapproval of site plans where required by this Ordinance.

3. Review and make recommendations to applicants on the conformity of preliminary development plans with the provisions of County Plans, policies and regulations.

4. Such other duties as the Board of Supervisors has directed the Site Plan Review Committee to exercise.

Section 4. The foregoing ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days from the date of the passage hereof, and prior to the expiration of fifteen (15) days from the passage hereof shall be published once in the _____, a newspaper printed and published in the County of Tulare, State of California, together with the names of the Board of Supervisors voting for and against the same.

THE FOREGOING ORDINANCE was passed and adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Tulare, State of California, on the ____ day of _____, 20__, at a regular meeting of said Board duly and regularly convened on said day by the following vote:

AYES: _____

NOES: _____

ABSENT: _____

Chairman, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST: JEAN M. ROUSSEAU
County Administrative Officer/
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
of the County of Tulare

By: _____
Deputy

Attachment #3

Interim Plan

For the Processing of Planning Projects after the Elimination of the Site Plan Review Committee and the Zoning Administrator.

Project Review Committee

The Project Review Committee shall be established by ordinance and consist of the Planning Director, the Public Works Director, the County Health Officer, the County Fire Chief, the County Building and Housing Manager, or their designees. The Project Review Committee shall review development proposals for the following projects through the Pre-Application Review Process:

1. Agricultural Preserve Cancellations
2. Agricultural Preserve Diminishments
3. Agricultural Preserve Formations
4. Changes of Zone
5. Development Agreements
6. Flood Variances
7. General Plan Amendments
8. General Plan Initiations
9. Planned Developments
10. Planned Unit Developments
11. Preliminary Site Plans
12. Revisions to Tentative Maps and Parcel Maps
13. Setback Variances
14. Special Use Permits
15. Special Use Permits – Dairy
16. Specific Plans
17. Surface Mining Permits – Reclamation Plans
18. Tentative Parcel Maps
19. Tentative Subdivision Maps
20. Zone Variances

The following projects will not need review by the Project Review Committee:

1. Agricultural Preserve Full Non-Renewals
2. Agricultural Preserve Partial Non-Renewals
3. Building Permits
4. Certificates of Compliance
5. Exceptions
6. Extensions of Time
7. Final Site Plans
8. Lot Line Adjustments

9. Minor Modifications
10. Road Names
11. Voluntary Mergers
12. Projects Requiring only Administrative Approval

Mandatory Pre-Application Review

Pre-application review is a process that is intended to provide information on relevant General or Specific Plan policies, zoning and subdivision regulations, development standards, building and fire codes, and procedures related to projects pursuant to the adopted County Zoning Ordinance and policies.

The Project Review Committee shall meet weekly to review submitted projects in a noticed meeting where the public is invited to attend and observe. However, there will be no public hearings held during these meetings so there will not be an opportunity for the general public to comment on these projects or items. The applicant and their agents will have an opportunity to hear staff's concerns and suggestions, as well as seek answers to their questions regarding the projects. This meeting will take the place of Preliminary Site Plan Reviews as described in the County Zoning Ordinance, as well as other preliminary reviews.

No actual voting or actions will take place during these meetings.

Payment of Fee.

No application will be accepted for pre-application review without payment of a fee established by resolution of the Board of Supervisors and submission of materials that the Planning Director, or his/her designee, has determined necessary to conduct such review.

Staff will be recommending that a flat fee be charged for pre-application review of \$750 as was discussed in our original conversations and that this fee be credited toward the cost of discretionary permit applications when submitted for processing.

Submittal Requirements:

The applicant shall submit to the Planning Director, or his/her designee, nine (9) copies, or as may be determined necessary at the time of submittal, of a preliminary map, site plan drawn to scale and dimensioned, and other materials to indicate the essential characteristics of the project. For subdivisions, the preliminary map shall be of the same size and scale required for other discretionary permit applications, and shall contain the following minimum information:

1. Key map showing adjacent property, subdivisions and roads or streets, proposed streets in the subdivision, and other development that would affect the subdivision (when subdividing).

2. Name and address of the owner of record, sub-divider and engineer or surveyor.
3. Date, north point and scale showing the general topography contours and features.
4. Location and widths of proposed and existing street rights-of-way.
5. Location, average size and number of lots (when subdividing).
6. Acreage of proposed subdivision (when subdividing)
7. The intended land use and information on utilities, sanitary sewers, drainage, water and other improvements.
8. Additional information, such as title reports, deeds, and other support documentation as needed.

Review:

The Planning Director shall then, within sixteen (16) days, schedule a meeting of the Project Review Committee with the applicant on the proposed project. The Project Review Committee will make available information to the applicant regarding the proposed project and shall recommend consultations by the applicant with such other public or private agencies as it shall designate. This information shall include any needed adjustments to meet County codes and policies, and a list of tentative conditions of approval and needed improvements to the site(s).

Summary of Comments:

The Project Review Committee shall furnish written copies of its research to the applicant, which can include preliminary conditions applicable, but in no way should be considered final conditions of approval.

Permit Streamlining Act:

An application that is accepted for pre-application review are not subject to the requirements of the California Permit Streamlining Act.

Attachment #4

March 8, 2011

To County Board of Supervisors and RMA Staff;

Comments regarding the Abolishment of the Site Plan Review Committee and the Abolishment of the Zoning Administrator

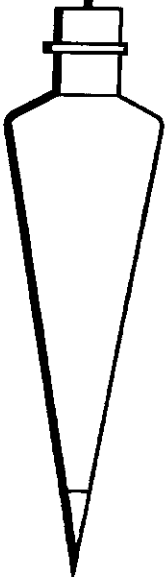
- I question the accuracy of the statement contained in the information packet regarding the involvement of other departments or agencies. Being a member and regularly attending the Tulare County Homesite Parcel Stakeholder's Group, I only recall the subject of abolishing these entities as mentioned as informational only. No formal comments were garnered. Although the Stakeholder's Group strongly supports anything that would streamline processing, there are questions as to whether or not this action is the method by which to attain the stated goals.
- What are the proposed savings in staff time and processing time of projects? How quickly will the new Project Review Committee provide the necessary comments to further process a project? How quickly will a project be set for a hearing before the Planning Commission? What is the Planning Commission's workload and can they adequately handle the burden of hearing all items previously heard by the Site Plan Review Committee and the Zoning Administrator?
- What are the proposed changes in the application fee structure? Is there an added fee for the Project Review Committee? An additional fee would seem to indicate that additional costs and staff time are necessary for this new process -- an admission that the new process is not reducing staff time or reducing the cost of processing an application.
- From a private consultant's point of view, this is an addition of another process and committee before my project goes to public hearing. How can the addition of another process possibly reduce processing times or costs?
- As a private consultant I must now attend a Project Review Meeting and a Planning Commission Meeting for the same project. Will these be timed items or will I have to spend all day at RMA waiting for my Project to come up? These projects may be sent to Planning Commission on the consent calendar, but what happens if it is pulled from the consent calendar for discussion by a commissioner or a member of the public? I must now be available for the public hearing and for any questions that may arise.

All being said -- I'm very skeptical that this change is going to streamline any of the projects that I typically submit -- parcel map and lot line adjustment projects. I believe more thought and input should be utilized before implementing this change in processing.

Respectfully,

Neil Zerlang -- Land Surveyor

NEIL ZERLANG - LAND SURVEYOR, INC.
2908-B West Main Street ♦ Visalia, CA 93291
(559) 739-1616 ♦ (559) 739-1610 (Fax) ♦ neil.nzls@sbcglobal.net



Attachment #5

Reponses and Clarifications to questions raised by Neil Zerlang (Attachment #4)

Comment #1: Being a member of the Stakeholder's Group, I only recall the subject of abolishing these entities as mentioned as informational only. No formal comments were garnered.

Response #1: After describing these changes during the meetings, staff asked the group if this was a good idea. Most in the room nodded their heads. Staff followed up by asking if there were any questions or comments. There were a few heads shaking, indicating no comments and no comments or questions were provided to staff. Staff then informed the group that the next step would be to take the ordinance amendment to the Board of Supervisors to formalize the changes. No one voiced any concern with this action. Most of the surveyors and engineers in the room are already familiar with this process and have extensive experience with it in their work in the incorporated cities of Visalia, Tulare and Porterville. Several of the surveyors have expressed privately that they appreciate the opportunity to meet informally on projects and that it helps the process work more smoothly, as well as have the benefit of helping their clients understand what is going on.

Comment #2: There are questions as to whether or not this action is the method by which to attain the stated goals.

Response #2: This proposal has been demonstrated to be successful in effectively resolving concerns and smoothing out the development process, saving time and money for applicants in the Cities of Visalia, Tulare and Porterville. Staff believes that the County can enjoy some of the same success by implementing these proposed changes.

Comment #3: What are the proposed savings in staff time and processing time of projects?

Response #3: This can only be calculated individually for each project as it largely depends on the nature of the request and the potential issues and political interests that are associated with them. What we are seeing now is a large number of projects put on hold because certain information is missing, or what they are proposing does not meet the required standards. In the current system, this is only discovered after the planner has completed the lengthy, formal review process. Then, after a significant amount of time has been sent processing the project, and a significant amount of money has been spent by the applicant to pay the cost recovery fees expended by staff as well as monies paid to the consultant(s) by the applicant, a response is given and the applicant is asked to resubmit. With the Project Review Committee, an informal examination of the project by the key staff members at the very beginning could flush out major issues before the staff member spends a significant amount of time, and before the applicant spends very much money. In cases where the project is so problematic that the

applicant does not wish to proceed, then there would be a total savings in staff time and applicant money from that point forward. Where they wish to proceed and make the necessary adjustments, staff will have a less issues to deal with and would be able to wrap up the analysis more quickly. This process would have the likely result of reducing the number of meetings that staff currently experiences trying to find solutions to problems.

Comment #4: How quickly will a project be set for a hearing before the Planning Commission?

Response #4: When a project is deemed complete, the time it takes to reach a hearing before the Planning Commission will be according to state noticing periods, and the environmental review process.

Comment #5: What is the Planning Commission's workload and can they adequately handle the burden of hearing all items previously heard by the Site Plan Review Committee and the Zoning Administrator?

Response #5: The Planning Commission's workload varies, as there is no consistent pattern each month. During the past year, there has only been two meetings that has had enough items to cause the meeting to last more than three hours. Most meetings only have one or two items. Some of the meetings are cancelled completely for a lack of items. Some Planning Commissioners, who drive a long distance to attend the meetings state that they spend more time driving than actually in the meetings. However, there may be times where there are a number of items that may take a considerable amount of time, especially when there is a large turnout of people to speak on the item. To address this concern, staff is proposing that Parcel Maps and other relatively simple requests be handled in a consent calendar or similar fashion, where they may be voted on in one motion, unless pulled from the agenda.

Comment #6: What are the proposed changes in the application fee structure? Is there an added fee for the Project Review Committee?

Response #6: This is decided by the Board of Supervisors in their annual fee adjustment reviews. This issue was brought up several months ago during the conceptual discussion with the Board of Supervisors where we settled on a fee of \$750 to take a project through the Project Review Committee Pre-Application Process. Based upon our experience at the permit center during the last few years there is a significant number of individuals that submit requests, but are not serious about developing their properties. These requests often take considerable amounts of staff time to research, with no compensation back to the county in fees, or in actual development. There is a concern that not having a fee associated with the Project Review Committee would accommodate a large number of applicants submitting

projects or “fishing” without any intention or ability to pursue the project further. During a time of significant staff and budget reductions, and a significant backlog of projects already in the system, this could have a devastating impact to the timely processing of other projects. Establishing a fee, even if just a small amount, has in the past, helped eliminate excessive numbers of requests for “fishing” projects and helped maximize staff efficiency in handling true development requests. This issue is currently being discussed by the Board of Supervisors and being weighed against the need to create a more business friendly environment and reduce the cost of doing business. It is anticipated that there will be considerably less time spent resolving problems late in the process and therefore a savings in time and expense.

Where applications, such as land divisions that have fixed fees, staff is proposing to credit the amount spent on the Project Review Committee fee towards their future application, therefore there would be no net increase in fees.

Comment #7: How can the addition of another process possibly reduce processing times or costs?

Response #7: The time saved in having the initial review is anticipated to be the time spent after project processing in resolving issues, conducting special meetings, confusion by applicants and decision makers at public hearings, and in some cases appeals. Where a project does not have a significant number of issues and just needs to be processed through the system, that staff is going to spend time analyzing a project. This change would be simply moving that time spent on analysis to the front of the project, with no significant changes to the time needed to process. The savings in costs, are the savings in time spent by staff processing requests.

Comment #8: As a private consultant I must now attend a Project Review Meeting and a Planning Commission Meeting for the same project.

Response #8: Attendance at either the Project Review Committee or Public Hearing is never mandatory. Although it is often in the applicant’s best interest to represent themselves at such meetings, the processing and hearing of items can take place with or without the applicants or their agents. Where an project is non-controversial, and likely to be approved without incident, an applicant may not want to invest the time and effort to appear. However, where there is significant controversy or complexity regarding a project, it is in the applicant’s best interest to meet with staff in the pre-application meeting.

Comment #9: Will these items be timed items or will I have to spend all day at RMA waiting for my Project to come up?

Response #9: It is unclear whether or not this is in reference to the Planning Commission Meetings, or the Project Review Committee Meetings. RMA's typical practice now for the Planning Commission meetings is to have timed items for public hearings. Staff is proposing that Parcel Maps and other relatively simple requests be handled in a consent calendar or similar fashion, where they may be voted on in one motion, unless pulled from the agenda.

Comment #10: What happens if [these projects are] pulled from the consent calendar for discussion by a commissioner or a member of the public? I must now be available for the public hearing and for any questions that may arise.

Response #10: Availability by an applicant is not obligatory, however, if an item is pulled, a public hearing will allow testimony by the applicant, representative and the public, as well as discussion by a commissioner. However, this will not constitute a change from the way it is now. Currently, with the Site Plan Review Committee and Zoning Administrator hearings provide for discussion by the review board or members of the public and the applicant has the choice to be available for any questions that may arise.

Comment #11: I'm very skeptical that this change is going to streamline any of the projects that I typically submit – parcel map and lot line adjustments projects.

Response #11: Lot Line Adjustments are handled administratively by the Planning Director or his designee and would not be affected by the new process.