



HCD WEB NEWS

California Department of Housing and Community Development

July 3, 2009

TODAY'S NEWS

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

BERKELEY DAILY PLANET: Zoning Board Approves Housing Projects for Homeless – By Riya Bhattacharjee // The Berkeley Zoning Adjustments Board on Thursday, June 25, approved use permits for two new residential projects that plan to make use of President Barack Obama's economic stimulus funds to provide affordable housing for homeless youth and low-income seniors. Berkeley-based nonprofit Affordable Housing Associates proposes to build a new four-story, mixed-use development for transition-age youth at 3240 Sacramento St., including 16 residential units and about 800 square feet of social services offices and meeting space.

<http://www.berkeleydailyplanet.com/issue/2009-07-02/article/33254?headline=Zoning-Board-Approves-Housing-Projects-for-Homeless>

THOUSAND OAKS ACOORN: City of Thousand Oaks works with Many Mansions on affordable housing – By Nancy Needham // To allow for the construction of a 60unit multifamily affordable housing project, the City Council voted 4-0 in favor of a change in the city's General Plan from low-density residential to medium-density residential. Councilmember Dennis Gillette was absent from the recent City Council/redevelopment agency public hearing on land use. Now five family home sites have been combined to create one parcel where affordable housing will be constructed.

<http://www.toacorn.com/news/2009/0702/community/025.html>

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

CONTRA COSTA TIMES: Developer seeks approval for new homes near San Ramon – By Lisa Vorderbrueggen // A Jordanian businessman has resurrected a decades-long quest to develop his Tassajara Valley grazing land. Samir Kwar and his partners, owners of FT Land LLC, filed an application with Contra Costa County seeking approval for what they call "New Farm," a 186-unit development on 771 acres east of San Ramon that sit outside the urban limit line. The plan calls for clustering homes on 5 percent of the property and devoting the balance of the land to irrigated agriculture and open space. The effort comes two years after the Board of Supervisors authorized a developer-funded study of the New Farm concept.

http://www.contracostatimes.com/growth/ci_12743611?nclick_check=1

LAND USE / PLANNING / REGULATION

BERKELEY DAILY PLANET: Planning Commission Ponders Housing Law Update – By Richard Brenneman // Mandated by state law to analyze the city's Housing Element, a key section of the city's General Plan, for constraints on building new housing, Berkeley Deputy Planning and Development Director Wendy Cosin couldn't find any. That's what she told the Planning Commission June 24, when commissioners held a hearing to see if any changes were needed to the Housing Element. While citywide development standards resemble those of other cities and can't be restrictive of adding new housing units to the city, "in the commercial zones where there is no density set, it's the opposite of a constraint," resulting in high-density housing, Cosin said.

<http://www.berkeleydailyplanet.com/issue/2009-07-02/article/33253?headline=Planning-Commission-Ponders-Housing-Law-Update>

THE MANTECA BULLETIN: Manteca housing in a tight squeeze – By Vince Rembulat // Lisa Stallings has concerns about the Manteca housing market. The local realtor for RE/Max continues to see people lose their jobs and subsequently their homes. The Housing Element Update is one of the seven mandated elements of the general plan, with the City obligated to provide affordable housing at existing and proposed sites. This also includes promoting affordable homes with regulatory incentives while removing constraints and providing the funds. By the end of August, the California *Department of Housing and Community Development*, to make sure things are in compliance with state laws, could review the document during a 60-day process before the plans are sent back to City Council later in the fall.

<http://www.mantecabulletin.com/news/article/5057/>

TIMES-HERALD: Affordable housing on Benicia agenda – By Tony Burchyns // The City Council and Planning Commission will hold a special meeting tonight to discuss Benicia's affordable housing needs. The two boards will review a presentation of Benicia's updated "Housing Element" draft for 2007-2014. Afterward, City Council members and planning commissioners may provide feedback to staff on proposed strategies for meeting state-mandated housing numbers. California cities must update their housing plans every seven years. The Bay Area Association of Governments determines residential growth targets for local cities. Benicia has been required to plan for 532 more homes. But that number can be reduced by the planning permits issued since January 2007. Taking that into account, the city has 431 of the allocated units remaining -- mostly in the very-low to moderate income categories, according to draft plan.

http://www.timesheraldonline.com/news/ci_12739434

MILIPITAS POST: Milpitas updates plan for future housing – By Ian Bauer // Milpitas City Council voted 4-0 at its last meeting to approve updates to a draft five-year plan that officially guides development of new housing stock in the city. The council's June 16 approval of the Milpitas General Plan Housing Element is one of seven mandatory elements of a general plan update required by California Government Code. The council also directed city staff to submit Milpitas' draft Housing Element to California *Department of Housing and Community Development* for official certification. "The Housing Element is the only element that the state requires on a five-year cycle," Felix Reliford, principal housing planner, said.

http://www.themilpitaspost.com/ci_12735071

HOUSING MARKETS / REAL ESTATE

NBC LOS ANGELES: Riverside Property Tax Bills Drop // Property tax bills for more than half of Riverside County homeowners will be lower this year because home values across the county have plummeted, the county assessor said Thursday. An analysis by the Assessor's Office determined that property value assessments should be reduced an average of \$144,000 for single-family homes and \$111,000 for condominiums, saving property owners counted in the re-assessment an average of \$1,600 in property taxes, which are due in December.

<http://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Riverside-Property-Tax-Bills-Plunge.html>

MORTGAGE & FORECLOSURE ISSUES

SACRAMENTO BEE: Deadline passes for California's new-home tax credit – By Jim Wasserman // They're gone – for now. The California Franchise Tax Board announced the end Thursday to new applications for a \$10,000 state tax credit that was snapped up faster than expected by buyers of new, unoccupied houses. "We're not taking any more applications," confirmed tax board spokeswoman Brenda Voet. The move, announced after just 124 days and during the busiest time of the homebuying season, called for a midnight Thursday deadline to shut off the fax machine accepting applications.

<http://www.sacbee.com/topstories/story/1997310.html>

MODESTO BEE: U.S. housing chief visits troubled Merced – By Scott Jason // U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan stood Thursday in front of two foreclosed houses here to reiterate plans to offer more help to distressed homeowners. As he did Wednesday in Las Vegas, Donovan announced that more homeowners will be eligible to modify their loans under the Obama administration's Making Home Affordable program, which targets people who have mortgages owned or guaranteed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac. The loan-to-home-value ratio had been set at 105 percent. It's now 125 percent, which Donovan said will increase the number of people eligible in California by 60 percent.

<http://www.modbee.com/local/story/768826.html>

HOMELESSNESS

SACRAMENTO BEE: Sacramento homeless march to call for a campground – By Julie Johnson // The day after Sacramento's temporary homeless shelter closed for the season at Cal Expo, more than 250 homeless people and advocates marched to promote their latest idea for providing beds for Sacramento's growing homeless population. What organizers call "Safe Ground" sites would be legal campgrounds where homeless people can live without fear of being arrested for crimes associated with homelessness.

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/news/story/1994529.html>

ECONOMY / EMPLOYMENT

VENTURA COUNTY STAR: Enterprise zones a boon for California economy (Opinion) – By Bruce Stenslie and Steve Kinney // Re: Sacramento Bee columnist Dan Walters' June 29 column, "Do California enterprise zones really generate jobs?": Walters questioned the value and effectiveness of California's economic-development policies. He took particular aim at California's enterprise zones, which are intended to encourage employment and economic growth. Given our economic crisis, and the tough challenges in Sacramento and locally to identify investment strategies that will aid our recovery, it is critical we consider every option and strategy. We welcome Walters' thoughts on the state's economy, but think his recent comments lead us in the wrong direction.

<http://www.venturacountystar.com/news/2009/jul/02/enterprise-zones-a-boon-for-california-economy/>

INFRASTRUCTURE / BONDS

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS TIMES: Urban housing firms grab \$150M in grants – By J.K. Dineen // Bay Area developers have raked in more than \$150 million in state grant money to jump start housing projects, a list of big winners that included the John

Stewart Co., the Emerald Fund, Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corp., and a development group that includes former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Joe Montana. After a 12-hour marathon meeting June 20th Sacramento that drew hopeful housing builders from across California, the state's Local Assistance Loan and Grant Committee handed out money set aside for urban infill housing development under Proposition 1C, a \$2.8 billion bond measure California voters approved in 2006.

<http://www.bizjournals.com/sanfrancisco/stories/2009/06/29/daily83.html>

GOVERNMENT SITES:

California Dept. of Finance – Governor's Budget

http://www.dof.ca.gov/Budget/Historical_Documents.asp

California Dept. of Housing & Community Development - Press Releases

<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/news/release/>

California Dept. of Housing & Community Development – Housing Policy Development Bibliographies

<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/hpd/biblio.html>

California Dept. of Housing & Community Development – HCD Web News

<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/hpd/news/index.html>

California Housing Financing Agency

<http://www.calhfa.ca.gov/>

California Tax Credit Allocation Committee

<http://www.treasurer.ca.gov/ctcac/>

California Debt Limit Allocation Committee

<http://www.treasurer.ca.gov/cdlac/>

HUD Newsroom

<http://www.hud.gov/news/>

Fannie Mae Foundation- KnowledgePlex

<http://www.knowledgeplex.org/>

Federal Register, Today's Table of Contents

http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/fr-cont.html

Federal Register, Year 2008 Recent Table of Contents

http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/frcont08.html

U.S. Census Bureau

<http://www.census.gov/main/>

California Supreme Court Decisions / California Courts of Appeal Decisions (last 100 days are posted in full text)

<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/opinions/>

COVERAGE INFORMATION:

California Department of Housing and Community Development WEB NEWS service coverage:

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays each week includes electronic format articles retrieved from newspapers or news services that report housing and community development news in California and some national services. Coverage is for California newspapers that are available electronically via the Internet – and any significant related breaking news.

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