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DATE 8/5/08

THE  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
EL DORADO COUNTY

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To the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors:

Last Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, I attended a public hearing on two planned development projects in the Salmon Fall - Malcolm Dixon Road area of El Dorado Hills. The hearing was well attended by the residents of this area due to the large number of additional residential lots being proposed from converting designated 5 acre lots to 1/+ acres and the resulting concerns.

The purpose of this letter is to share with you the perception shared by many that attended as to the lack of professionalism and the downright arrogance of the hearing, and in particular, by the Chairman.

At the commencement of the hearing, the Chariman suggested that the Farren project was going to be tabled until a later date. However, due to the protest of so many that came out to speak to this land developmental project, it was agreed that it would stay on the agenda.

During the hearing, we had to request the commissioners to speak up on many occasions as they were mumbling among themselves. It was as if we were a nuisance, and what they had to say was of no importance to us.

One Commissioner, Dave Machado, was missing from the majority of the conversation on the Alto project and thus, was not included in the recommendation vote by the Commissioners.

During the pubic portion whereby we had the opportunity to speak, at the end of each speaker, we applauded to show support for what the resident had to say. On several occasions, we were chastised by the Chairman (Alan Tolhurst) and other commissioners for showing support through our applause.

One commissioner (Walter Matthews) kept interjecting aspects about his personal life – second wife and Lovers Lane, not seeing any animals when he traveled to the land sites, etc, and was always adding in inappropriate jokes/comments that took away from the seriousness of these hearings.

When the Chairman was inconsistent in his decision making from the morning to afternoon, an El Dorado county called him on it resident. In response, the Chairman angrily reminded us that he had already shut down public comment of which one individual in the audience responded that he thought that this was a public hearing.

It is very apparent that the commissioners look at each project independently, and are not looking at all projects collectively. Currently, there are five development projects, all contiguous to each other, all proposing to use Malcolm Dixon Road, and no one in the county appears to be looking at the potential collective adverse effects. In fact, the Commissioners appear to be actively pursuing a "divide and conquer" approach rather a collective one to best represent the overall impact and resulting concerns of the community.

The DOT representative, Eileen Crawford was called on for her opinion on the traffic on Malcolm Dixon Drive and potential impact to this road from the increased proposed residences. She had looked at this on an individual project basis, but not collectively with all of the current land development projects in application. She responded that she was not aware of any current issues or any traffic accidents that have occurred on this road. Shortly thereafter, numerous residents spoke to accidents that they personally were in, fatalities that they have come across, and the many near misses. It was very apparent that Ms. Crawford was far from thorough on the research and findings. It was decided that this report would be reviewed at the August 24<sup>th</sup> for the Alto project, of which will be past the next scheduled hearing for the Farren land development project on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August - thus, making it nearly impossible to take in an overall collective view and approach.

We understood that the land density bonus allows developers to reduce the residential lot size by setting aside a portion of land for "public use". With these developments, much of the land set aside is not suitable for building – wetlands, dense forests, etc. The chairman said that we needed to be educated on the definition of "public use" and "public benefit" as this doesn't mean that we would have access to it but rather, we would benefit from having birds, animals that use this land. We already have this benefit and more.

This land density bonus is a planning tool (aka developer loophole), and one that appears to be loosely interpreted by the County commissioners in favor of these high-density developments. This needs to be revisited as soon as possible as this is contrary to the prior vote from the public at large as to the overall development plan that called out for LDR 5 acre lots.

The only time that we got some positive enthusiasm from the Chairman is when he adjourned for the 1.5-hour lunch break before reconvening as he said that he needed his lunch break.

Several of the residents met after the hearing to "share thoughts", and we all left appalled at the unprofessionalism of the hearing, and with the same belief – the Chairman was arrogant, and the commissioners are definitely in favor of large developments rather than individual residential concerns. I guess they forgot who elected the board of supervisors that appointed them in these roles.

I would sign my name to this letter, but I don't want to already add to the most likely decisions of this planning commission to vote and recommend in favor of the high dollar land developers. It felt that it was a waste of time, that the hearing was a task on a list, but of no significance.