

Reynolds Ranch plan heads to Lodi council

By Jake Armstrong

Lodi News Sentinel, Friday, August 11, 2006

The Reynolds Ranch plan is headed to the Lodi City Council for approval, after the Lodi Planning Commission deadlocked 3-3 late Wednesday on deciding whether to recommend the plan for council approval.

Commission Chair Randy Heinitz and Commissioners Doug Keuhne and William Cummin voted yes. Commissioners Wendel Kiser, Tim Mattheis and Dennis White voted no. Commissioner Gina Moran was absent from the meeting.

The City Council is scheduled to hear the plan at a special meeting Aug. 30.

Heinitz said he supported the project because of the potential to save existing Blue Shield jobs while eventually adding hundreds of others and creating of a 75-foot-wide agricultural buffer at the south end of the site.

"It's a perfect venue to do that," he said. "It achieves a lot of things."

He said the General Plan crafted over a decade ago, which designates the land as residential reserve, identifies the land as a probable location for housing.

"It's not like we're going outside there and just grabbing a piece of property," Heinitz said.

Mattheis said he had concerns that the project is outside the scope of the General Plan and needed to be better planned since it is close to the proposed greenbelt area.

"All of this area in General Plan reserve has always been to longtime Lodians a little bit sacred," he said. "What goes into that greenbelt buffer area needs to be very well planned and thought through."

The 220-acre Reynolds Ranch project, bordered by Harney Lane to the north, Highway 99 to the east and railroad tracks to the west, would consist of 1,084 homes, a 20-acre campus for Blue Shield of California and acreage for 350,000 square feet of retail space, when completed. The first phase consists of 150 homes and the office campus, which would be completed by 2008. The second and final phase would be completed by 2030.

Mattheis also questioned the need and demand for more retail space.

The project is contingent on Blue Shield being a part, city staff said.

Kiser said he couldn't support the project due to the EIR not accounting enough for transportation impacts and negative effects on air quality, which was identified in the environmental report as a consequence of the project.

"I want to make sure we do things the right way. We've got to live with these decisions for a long time after we make them," he said.

Both Kiser and Mattheis said they supported keeping Blue Shield's jobs, but not in the proposed project.

The company is seeking a freeway adjacent location and was unable to reach agreement on other properties in Lodi and near Stockton.

Kiser questioned whether the project would affect expansion at White Slough. City Engineer Wally Sandelin said the fees the developer is paying will cover the cost of serving the development.

The project includes a development agreement between the city and developer San Joaquin County Land Co. that exchanges exclusion from future growth moratoriums and some impact fees for rehabilitation of Eastside homes, a community facilities district and a downtown impact fee on retail uses.

Kathi Lucke, Blue Shield's vice president of finance, said the company will be in need of a new location soon after its lease expires in 2007 on two buildings on Guild Avenue. Additionally, the health-care firm seeks a property close to Lodi, as well as retail services, because many of its workers live in Lodi and as many as 80 percent are working mothers, she said. Moving to a location without basic retail services, such as in an industrial area, could disrupt the working mothers' access to childcare, she said.

Lucke said the company is not currently looking at other sites.

News Briefs

Applications sought for environmental award

Lodi News Sentinel, Friday, August 11, 2006

San Joaquin County businesses are invited to apply for the 13th Annual Environmental Excellence Awards.

The awards are conferred by Targeted Opportunities to Prevent Pollution in San Joaquin County or TOPPS. Deadline for applications is Sept 1.

Applicants must be located in San Joaquin County and have done a project that focuses on the prevention or minimization of pollution and has been in practice since 2005. Projects should also show how the company

- reduced the use of toxic chemicals, water energy or raw materials
- recycled a material that otherwise would have been waste
- used equipment that reduced emissions of a pollutant
- other pollution prevention activities.

For a brochure about the awards and an application form, businesses and other organizations are encouraged to call Jan Stanley, awards coordinator, at 464-8707. Applicants can also write to: TOPPS, PO Box 773, Stockton, 95202 or send an application via e-mail at hotline@buethepr.com.

A new idea to fight global warming

CO2 emissions could be liquefied, pumped under sea

Keay Davidson, staff writer

S.F. Chronicle, Friday, August 11, 2006

Global warming could be slowed by injecting carbon dioxide into the Earth's crust -- perhaps in oceanic sediments that surround the U.S. coastline, according to a new scientific report.

The United States has enough coastline to bury thousands of years' worth of carbon dioxide emissions from factories and other stationary sources, scientists report in the most recent issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. They propose liquefying the gas and

burying it under several hundred feet of sediment. Those sediments -- located off both East and West coasts -- are beneath ocean waters about 2 miles deep.

For years, experts have also investigated and tested ways to bury carbon dioxide underground on land, for example by squirting it into abandoned oil wells. President Bush has mentioned so-called "carbon sequestration" as one potential answer to climate change.

But some environmentalists argue there are better, cheaper and more immediate solutions to global warming, such as energy conservation.

Some scientists believe carbon sequestration is worth additional study because the planet will probably continue burning fossil fuels for decades. The burning of fossil fuels in cars, factories and elsewhere generates greenhouse gases, notably carbon dioxide, which absorb infrared radiation that would otherwise escape into outer space.

Kurt Z. House, a Harvard University scientist and lead author of the study, said such deep-sea burial might safely dispose of from one-third to half of the carbon dioxide generated annually by the United States.

However, the downsides are steep. For one thing, he said, managing a nationwide carbon dioxide sequestration program could cost hundreds of billions of dollars a year. Funding it might require levying a tax of up to \$50 a ton on carbon dioxide producers, he said. The average U.S. resident emits about 20 tons a year of carbon dioxide by doing things like driving a car or heating homes with natural gas.

Offshore seabeds are cold enough to keep liquid carbon dioxide from reverting back to a gas and leaking to the surface, House said. At that depth, carbon dioxide will stay liquefied up to 80 degrees, he calculated.

By contrast, on land, Earth's crust tends to be warmer, which means that carbon dioxide buried there is likelier to try to force its way through cracks and fissures, according to the article printed Tuesday.

Still, "I certainly wouldn't want to go as far as say we've solved global warming" with their proposal to bury carbon dioxide along U.S. coastlines, House said. Carbon sequestration is expensive and "would require a pretty stiff policy like a carbon tax to motivate (people to use) this (sequestration) technology."

Factories and other stationary sources emit about 7 billion tons of carbon dioxide per year, House said. He estimates that trapping and burying that much carbon dioxide could cost between \$150 billion and \$200 billion a year.

Authors of the Proceedings article include House, a doctoral candidate in geoscience; his Harvard colleague Daniel P. Schrag; Charles F. Harvey of MIT; and Klaus S. Lackner of Columbia University.

Ken Caldeira, a climate scientist at the Carnegie Institution's branch institute at Stanford University, expressed a mixed view. On the one hand, he said, carbon sequestration appears to be a safe way to store emissions, possibly for millions of years.

Yet "there are still questions about whether the approach is technically feasible. Nobody has ever tried to do this before," Caldeira said.

The environmental group Greenpeace attacked the idea, calling it an unproved and expensive technology.

Chris Miller, a senior campaigner for Greenpeace USA, said what's really needed is more investment in renewable energy like solar and wind power.

Peter Brewer, an ocean chemist at Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute who has investigated carbon sequestration, is cautious. On the one hand, he said, "it's a fascinating research area. It's important that we look at these things; otherwise society speculates forever instead of having hard knowledge to make decisions," he said.

Right now, he added, "the big challenge is, how can we do it economically? The disposal in the ground is not the major cost -- the major cost is capturing the carbon dioxide from the power plant.

"And you have to be careful which ground to put it in. Some geological areas are more safe than others."

County dedicates green power plant at jail

Santa Rita facility — which has been up, running since May — will save taxpayers about \$266,825 annually

by Roman Gokman

Tri-Valley Herald, Friday, August 11, 2006

DUBLIN — With a flip of the switch, Alameda County and energy officials "activated" the new fuel cell power plant at the Santa Rita jail Thursday, even though the power plant has been running at full power since May 30.

The ceremony was part of a dedication attended by more than 100 county, state and private sector officials. Santa Rita jail is the fifth-largest jail in the country and the third-largest in the state. It currently serves about 3,800 inmates.

The plant is expected to save taxpayers \$266,825 annually on the jail's electric bill.

"Alameda County is an example we would like to see replicated throughout the state of California," said Bruce Ludemann, a vice president of sales at FuelCell Energy Inc., which designed and built the power plant next to the jail. "It transforms fuel into energy without burning."

A fuel cell plant, in layman's terms, is similar to a giant, continuously running battery. It takes fuel and turns it into energy without combustion by pulling out the hydrogen and combining it with oxygen.

A traditional coal-fired plant emits tons of pollutants and greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide and mercury.

A Sacramento-based clean-energy advocate, Bernadette Del Chiaro of Environment California, applauded the new power plant, calling it "the wave of the future."

"It's good to see government agencies being leaders on this," she said. "Instead of building a giant coal-fired plant out in the middle of nowhere and having the rest of us pool our resources on transmission lines, it's better to create technologies that sit right on the site."

Besides energy, the fuel cell plant creates "waste heat."

Jim Davis, president of Chevron Energy Solutions, which integrated the power plant with the jail, said this particular power plant is more efficient than other.

"Chevron designed this ... to capture waste heat," Davis said.

The power plant is able to take the waste and use it to heat water and various spaces throughout the jail.

"This brings many good things for the environment," Davis said.

At one megawatt, the power plant is the first of its kind in size in California. It will generate 8 million kilowatt hours of electricity, about half of the jail's needs. Along with the solar panels on the jail's roof, which provide the other 50 percent, all of the jail's energy is now "green" energy.

The fuel cell will have 98.5 percent lower nitrogen oxide emissions than standard power plants, the equivalent of planting 900 acres of trees, officials said.

"You're going to be amazed how small it is compared to the power it generates," Assistant Sheriff Robert Maginnis said. "This is, indeed, the future."

At the dedication, a PG&E representative presented a check for about \$1.4 million to the county as part of its incentive program for the jail's switch to self-generating energy production.

Construction on the fuel cell power plant began in November 2005 and cost about \$6 million.

Business writer Janis Mara contributed to this report.

Talent

SEEKING STUDENT ARTISTS Through Sept. 30

Modesto Bee, Friday, August 11, 2006

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District is looking for student artwork for its 2007 Clean Air Kids Calendar. 557-6400.

Dublin mayor to run again

Lockhart is running unopposed as of today; this will be her final term

by Rebecca F. Johnson

Tri-Valley Herald, Friday, August 11, 2006

DUBLIN — Dublin Mayor Janet Lockhart is running for another two-year term to complete some unfinished business.

"I think as a city, we've done a good job of getting a vision and goals to achieve and establishing values of how we're going to get there," she said. "Over the next two years, I want to make sure we implement them."

Lockhart, 58, was first elected to the City Council in 1996. In October 2001, she took over as mayor for Guy Houston when he left to serve in the state assembly.

Currently, there is no one slated to run against Lockhart in November. The filing deadline is today. However, because voters implemented term limits on both council and mayoral seats, this will be Lockhart's last term if she is re-elected.

"There's a couple of projects I really want to follow through on in the next couple of years and then I'll be happy to turn it over to new leaders," she said.

Lockhart said she would like to see the proposed Dublin Historic Park, renovated Shannon Community Center and anticipated Camp Parks development — on land expected to be turned over to the city in an exchange process — come near or to fruition.

During the next term, Lockhart would also like the city to concentrate on the downtown area by completing the consolidation of three area-specific plans, establishing design guidelines and building a new project adjacent to the incoming west Dublin/Pleasanton BART station.

"We have things under control in terms of development surrounding neighborhoods about and working with partners in the east, she said. I want all the same energy and enthusiasm focused on the downtown area.

Lockhart sits on numerous committees and boards, currently serving as chairwoman of the Local Agency Formation Commission, which oversees annexations and other land issues. She is a board member of the Tri-Valley Housing Opportunity Center and the Valley Childrens Museum.

Lockhart said she is particularly proud of the local efforts to draw attention to Interstate 580 needs, one of the subjects she has worked on as a member of local and regional transportation agencies. She sits on the boards of the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency, Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority, Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority and [Bay Area Air Quality Management District](#).

Lockhart said she is also pleased that Dublins Senior Center, now a year old, and the adjacent affordable senior housing complex is thriving.

It was a real goal to provide a home away from home for our seniors and I think weve accomplished that, she said.

A resident for nearly 35 years in Dublin, Lockhart has two children and five grandchildren. Her husband, Steve, manages a large collision repair facility in Concord.

Lockhart completed some courses at Modesto Junior College and Las Positas College and occasionally works as a international consultant.

[Modesto Bee, Guest Commentary, Friday, August 11, 2006](#)

Is your priority price or fighting pollution?

By DAVID A. BULTENA

Our valley has concerns with air pollution, traffic congestion and the high cost of gas. If I were to seek a solution to each of these problems at the same time, the first place I would look is at a fuel-efficient and economical automobile.

Since I own a fine car and am not really in the market for a new car, I decided to do some virtual shopping. After careful analysis, I settled on economy as my most pressing need; size and speed aren't as important now as they once were.

The word "economy," however, can have two distinct meanings when it comes to the purchase of an economy car. I may be able to save gas or I may be able to save money, but it may be difficult to do both.

For example: Let's suppose I purchase a Toyota Prius hybrid, which is similar to other hybrids. I pay an initial price of about \$22,000 plus the usual tax, license, etc. The car is rated at 60 miles per gallon in the city and 51 mpg on the highway. The reason the city stop-and-go mileage is higher is because of the capture and storage of braking energy by hybrids. More braking results in more energy recovery, which increases city miles. In addition, it shuts itself off in stop-and-go traffic, so it doesn't pollute nearly as much as a gas-only vehicle.

On second thought, I decide to buy the Toyota Yaris, a small gasoline-only economy car with about the same room as the Prius. The Yaris costs about \$12,000, so it is quite a bit cheaper, but its gas mileage is less — 34 mpg in the city and 40 mpg on the highway.

If gas is \$3 a gallon and I drive 50 miles a day in city driving, I will save about \$1.92 a day driving the hybrid. If the cost of gas remains stable, I would save about \$700 a year with the hybrid over the gas-only car. But wait, I paid \$10,000 more for the hybrid. I may have saved some gas, but I haven't saved any money.

So what do I do? The price difference becomes even more pronounced when I consider that hybrids, because of low production and higher development costs, usually are subsidized by the manufacturers. If I added that cost (not on the sticker), the financial spread between my low-end gas-only car and the hybrid would make the hybrid seem less economical.

There are no easy answers in this situation. The old conundrum "if you want economy, you're going to have to pay for it" is truer now than ever before. How much can we afford up front? How long do we plan to use the item? Will there be any real savings or will the biggest savings occur if we don't buy it at all? That is how I handled my virtual shopping spree.

Whichever route you take, you should think of the valley's air quality. The hybrid, with its extra costs, is for you if your primary concern is the environment rather than initial cost. Gas-only small cars may be your only choice if money is a concern. But either way, the valley air benefits when an old, more polluting car is off the road.

[Sacramento Bee, Letters to the Editor, Friday, August 11, 2006](#)

Protect the air we breathe

Re "Clearing air on California's success in pollution fight," column, Aug. 6: Daniel Weintraub cites the progress we've made in fighting air pollution. The progress is worth noting, but let's not get carried away with congratulations before the job is done.

Breathing shouldn't be an activity that harms your health. Yet on too many days in Sacramento, it's not good to breathe, especially if you are physically active. Weintraub cites positive trends in the number of violations of the rescinded federal air quality one-hour standard for ozone. However, we've racked up an average of 40 to 50 days a year for the last decade with violations of the new and more stringent federal eight-hour standards now in effect and the California standards.

These violations of health-based standards show our region has more to do. Plus a million more people and their cars are coming in just the next 20 years, and global warming threatens to boost ozone formation even further.

I find it difficult to get through the day without breathing, so I'd like the air to be clean. Our vulnerable children and the elderly, and everyone else, deserve to breathe clean air all the time. That doesn't seem to be too much to ask.

Walt Seifert, Sacramento,
Executive Director, Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

Mega-dairies are mega-polluters

Re "Governor asks for federal aid," Aug. 3: I was saddened to read about the record number of California dairy cows that died in the recent heat wave and surprised to read that taxpayers are expected to foot the bill.

To increase profits, most dairies keep the maximum number of cows in the minimum amount of space. Cows often live in crowded, hot, dusty and manure-filled areas that, like any denuded landscape, absorb heat. It's little wonder these cows succumb to heat.

A few years ago, The Bee reported that taxpayers were paying dairies for over-production of milk, which drove prices to record lows. Such subsidies come on top of the environmental costs of mega-dairies. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, dairy cattle and other livestock are a major source of methane gas, which contributes to global warming. Each dairy cow produces about 120 pounds of wet manure daily, leading to serious water pollution problems. Further, dust and dried manure particles kicked up by cows on crowded feedlots pollute the air.

It's no surprise that in the American Lung Association's 2001 report on air pollution, all of California's major dairy-producing counties received an "F" for air quality.

It's time for mega-dairies, not taxpayers, to take responsibility for their industry.

Monica Engebretson , Sacramento

[Tri-Valley Herald, Guest Commentary, Thursday, August 10, 2006](#)

Want to be green? Give up second home

COME August, there are two kinds of people in the world: those with country homes, and those without country homes. If you, unlike me, are in the first group, we need to have an inconvenient talk.

We need to talk about your "carbon footprint," a concept you may have learned from Al Gore. If you've seen "An Inconvenient Truth" or read the best-selling book, you know how strongly he feels about everyone's duty to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

He advises you to change your light bulbs, insulate your home, and cut back on driving and air travel. If you must make a trip, he notes helpfully, "buses provide the cheapest and most energy-efficient transportation for long distances."

Fine advice, and it would be even better if he journeyed to his lectures exclusively on Greyhound. But he seems to prefer cars and planes.

When you tally up his international travel to inspect melting glaciers and the domestic trips between his homes — one in Washington and another in Nashville, not to mention the family farm in rural Tennessee featured in the movie — you're looking at a Godzilla-sized carbon footprint.

No matter how many fluorescent light bulbs you install in your second home's basement, you could save a lot more energy by eliminating the whole place.

Even if you dutifully shut down each home when you leave it — turning off the electricity, draining the pipes and turning off the heat, etc. — you're still expending extra energy commuting between your homes. A trip to a weekend house can easily burn more gasoline than a commuter uses all week.

Yet somehow, in all the years I've been reading lists of energy-saving tips, I've never noticed, "Sell second home."

A cynic might attribute this oversight to a high correlation between fervent environmentalism and second-home ownership — Robert Redford and his place at Sundance, the Kennedys and their compound on the Cape, Laurie David and her home on Martha's Vineyard, John Kerry's seaside and mountainside manses.

Granted, some environmentalists deal publicly with their carbon footprints. Gore and David say they offset their energy usage by sponsoring reductions in greenhouse gases through alternative forms of power and energy conservation (like building wind farms and paying farmers to turn methane into electricity). But are "carbon offsets" sufficient compensation? Not to activists like Charles Komanoff, an economic consultant to environmental groups.

He argues in *Grist*, an environmental magazine, that paying a penny or so per mile to offset the carbon from driving your car isn't the moral equivalent of riding your bike instead.

It's more like the Catholic Church's old system of selling indulgences so the rich could avoid something scarier than global warming: purgatory. Quoting Gandhi — "Be the change you want to see in the world" — Komanoff says his fellow environmentalists should stop offering "get out of purgatory free" cards to the rich and instead insist that everyone personally reduce energy use.

I'm not such a purist myself — I'd let the average person salve his conscience with a carbon indulgence. But I'd hold environmentalist preachers like Gore to higher standards, especially when they're engaging in unnecessary energy use. And since I cannot afford a second home, I can objectively determine it to be unnecessary.

If you're going to own a second home while ordering everyone else to carpool, you must atone for your excesses, and it's not enough just to offset the carbon. Gaseous emissions aren't the only externalities of your home.

By owning it, you're also inducing envy in your neighbors. You're contributing to the competitive urge that the economist Robert Frank calls "luxury fever." When you go off for the weekend, those of us left sweltering in the city start lusting for our own second homes. We start dreaming of cutting down carbon-dioxide-absorbing forests to make room for neo-Adirondack cabins with central air and heated pools.

The best way to tamp our enthusiasm — or, I as prefer to put it, to reward our virtue — would be with money. Besides paying farmers not to waste methane, you should be paying us not to build second homes. You could make the payment directly to your neighbors. Or, if you prefer, mail it to me, and I'll distribute it among the worthiest of my fellow single-home owners.

If you're short of cash, you could still atone with an in-kind payment: Let me stay in your country home while you perform your energy-saving penance back in the city. It wouldn't have to be a long penance. By my calculations, the month of August would just about wipe out your sins.

John Tierney writes for the New York Times.

NOTE: The following clip in Spanish discusses that a Federal Court has found the EPA's efforts to protect public health from toxic air pollution to be "grossly delinquent". If you need more information contact Maricela at ext. 5849.

Una corte responsabiliza a la EPA por negligencia en el control de emisiones tóxicas

En un muestreo de unas 12 regiones, la Contraloría General del país determinó que la EPA descuidaba la inspección a las emisiones tóxicas por carecer de recursos para imponer reglamentos de calidad del aire

Aire Libre, California

Radio Bilingüe, Friday, August 11, 2006

Una corte federal en la capital del país responsabilizó a la Agencia federal de Protección Ambiental, la EPA, de descuidar el control de emisiones tóxicas al aire en California, en violación a la ley federal, Acta de Aire Limpio.

La corte falló en favor de organizaciones ambientalistas nacionales, como Sierra Club y Earth Justice, con base en una auditoria de la Oficina de Contraloría General del país.

En un muestreo de unas 12 regiones, la Contraloría determinó que la EPA descuidaba la inspección a las emisiones tóxicas por carecer de recursos para imponer reglamentos de calidad del aire.