

Unincorporated Area

RE SC - Growth

County Growth Rate 2.4 Percent

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A growth rate of 2.4 percent based on a projected population of 103,567 in the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County by the end of 1980 was set by the Board of Supervisors Tuesday.

"It's too damned high," Supervisor Gary Patton said after his recommendation for 1.7 percent was defeated on a 3-2 vote.

The 2.4 percent rate was urged by Supervisor Dan Forbus, a middle figure in the recommendations of county planning staff.

Patton noted the rate was higher than the 2.2 percent set for 1979 and that it was going in the wrong direction from the long-term rate of 2.1 percent the board set last year.

The new rate will allow 1,055 housing units for 1980, compared to last year's 930 units.

While Patton, the author of the growth management measure (Measure J) passed by voters in 1978, complained the rate was too high, he joined another 4-1 vote to set it for next year and said, "Measure J is working."

The single vote against the new rate was

cast by Supervisor Pat Liberty, although she supported the rate when Forbus recommended it.

Liberty changed her vote after she unsuccessfully tried to get the board to drop last year's carryover of 130 low cost units.

She said that adding the carryover to the 1,055 units meant the county was approving a 2.7 percent rate and "that's too high."

It appears the county will have no trouble dealing out its permits as there are applications in for 1,500 units or more.

Application filing period closed Nov. 30 and the permits will be prioritized throughout the year.

Planning Director Kris Schenk indicated there may be some chance that applicants for homes in the rural portion of the county will have an opportunity to apply for a permit later in the year.

Rural applicants in November for the 1980 allocation about matched the 370 rural permits (1.9 percent) to be allowed. The board set a rate of 2.85 in the urban area (685 units). Using the respective percentages of 1.9 and 2.85 result in the overall 2.4 rate.

The board also gave itself discretion to

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commit future year permits for major housing developments.

Also, the board set a three-year period to provide low and average-income cost homes, plus the ability to borrow permits from categories that are not used up.

In a recent Superior Court decision, the board was stopped from borrowing 80 low cost permits this year and issue them as regular permits. It was explained that the board's apparent resistance to the court decision was to given the county a legal

basis in the event of an appeal.

Patton voted against the three-year "borrowing" ordinance.

Of the 1,055 units allowed this year, 158 will have to be low and average cost homes. In 1979, only 10 of the 140 low cost home permits were issued.

Following the meeting, both Supervisors' Chairman Marilyn Liddicoat (an opponent of much of Measure J) and Supervisor Chris Matthews said they were satisfied with the board's decision.