

Building

Supervisors vote to put the lid on development

Building restrictions in the Pajaro Valley, Scotts Valley and San Lorenzo Valley School Districts were clamped on Tuesday morning by Santa Cruz County supervisors.

With Phil Baldwin dissenting and Marilyn Lid-dicoat absent, supervisors put into effect new state regulations which allow building restrictions in districts where the schools are overcrowded.

The supervisors' action bans the creation of new parcels until the overcrowding is alleviated. Applications to the planning department for minor land divisions, rezonings and approval of tentative maps for subdivisions will be held in abeyance.

Later, if supervisors adopt a proposed "school facilities dedication and fee ordinance," they could ban construction on existing parcels in overcrowded districts. Also, the ordinance would require developers of subdivisions involving more than 50 parcels to dedicate lands to the districts for school facilities as a condition of the development permit. Developers of less than 50 units would not be required to dedicate land, but would be charged a fee.

The land dedications and fees collected would be used for portable classrooms.

However, Supervisor Gary Patton maintained the fees will only pay a small share of school expenses.

Brad Macdonald, of the Santa Cruz Board of Realtors, was concerned the new restrictions would boost the cost of single family homes. He said school districts which are not overcrowded, such as the city of Santa Cruz district, should accept children from other districts.

The supervisors had been sent data from the three districts showing overcrowding does exist.

Supervisors Patton and Baldwin maintained the ordinance should not be adopted until a growth management plan is adopted for the county.

Supervisor Baldwin opposed the moratorium, saying "this is not the way out." He wondered "how many parents with children can afford to buy a house."

Marjory Burett, representing Scotts Valley School Trustees, and Don Rhodes, superintendent of schools for the San Lorenzo Valley District, both said they were in favor of the supervisors' action.