

BUILDING Building process 'rights' win OK

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A planning-permit "applicants' bill of rights" introduced by Santa Cruz County Supervisor Fred Keeley sailed through the board of supervisors Tuesday morning.

Several days ago, Keeley — whose district includes the mountainous San Lorenzo Valley as well as Scotts Valley — revealed the results of a survey of his constituents who have had recent dealings with the county planning department. Tuesday, he discussed the survey with his board colleagues.

Almost 23 percent of the respondents found planning staffers either somewhat discourteous or rude. Fifty-five percent of the respondents said planning staff decisions on their applications were excellent or good. More than 18 percent said the planning staff was very unresponsive to their problems. Almost 21 percent said they felt the process was unfair.

Two-thirds said they encountered at least one delay in the process that created some sort of special hardship for them.

At Keeley's suggestion, supervisors unanimously adopted a resolution spelling out what he had called a bill of rights for planning-permit applicants. Those rights include:

- ✓ Complete information about the permit process, including specific steps that must be completed,

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Applicants' bill of rights passes

RIGHTS, from Page 1B
plus a timetable.

- ✓ The right to have a "single point of contact," an individual in the planning department, rather than a plethora of different staff members as the permit process moves along. Just under 40 percent of those surveyed said they

had dealt with such an individual during their permit-application process.

- ✓ Information about appealing staff decisions.

Planning Director Dianne Guzman was directed to return with specific policies for her department.