



## CONTRA COSTA COUNTY'S TWO CHANGES TO ALAMO

What the Board of Supervisors Did on August 11

### They Eliminated the SRV Regional Planning Commission

This body of County-appointed residents of the San Ramon Valley had legal authority. It made decisions (which could be appealed to the Board of Supervisors) about new sub-divisions and developments in Alamo, it made the only legally required recommendation to the Board of Supervisors about rezoning and changes to the County General Plan for Alamo, and it was legally required to notify neighboring properties about new development in Alamo. It was staffed by professional planners.

**Who were the public members who attended the August 11 meeting of the Board of Supervisors to ask the supervisors to eliminate the Regional Commission?**

**Three land use attorneys, a developers' lobbyist, and a San Ramon City Council member!**

### They Created a Municipal Advisory Council (MAC)

MAC members will be seven Alamo residents appointed by the County and advisory to the District III County Supervisor, in the way that existing advisory bodies R-7A (for parks and recreation) and Zone 36 (for beautification) are advisory to the Supervisor. The MAC will fold in the functions of these two advisory groups. It will have no authority.

The MAC will also assume the official advisory role to the County for planning in Alamo – including advice about Alamo land use and roads. It will not be staffed by professional planners, but by District Office staff of the District III County Supervisor. And, because the MAC will include functions besides planning, it is likely that not all seven MAC appointees will have planning experience and expertise.

Also, although the MAC, as an entity, is allowed to interact independently about parks and recreation with other specified, non-County entities, it is not allowed to interact independently with other non-County entities (except LAFCO) about planning, land use, and roads – effectively precluding independent interaction with key decision-makers in Alamo roads planning like the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and the Tri-Valley Transportation Council (TVTC).

*Alamo citizens who are interested in serving on the Alamo MAC can go to the "Maddy Book" home page on the Contra Costa County website at <http://contra.napanet.net/maddybook/>, click on "Application Procedures", and click on the link at the bottom of the page that says, "Click here for an Adobe Acrobat version of the application form". The MAC application form is a generic form for County advisory bodies.*

### **What is the typical role of a MAC?**

**"The most common subject of activity is land use planning. The County often uses the group as a planning advisory council to draft or revise the community's portion of the county general plan." (Guide to Government, League of Women Voters of California)**

## CHANGES TO WATCH FOR AND OPPOSE IN THE ALAMO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

### Commercial Development in the Residential Blocks of Danville Boulevard

The County General Plan currently confines commercial development on Danville Boulevard to within the north/south limits of Alamo's existing downtown, protecting the sanctity of residential living and the property values of Alamo homeowners on three-plus miles of the road.

Alamo citizens successfully lobbied the County to include this guarantee in the San Ramon Valley Area General Plan in 1977, and AIA urged the County to continue it in the County General Plan in 1991. AIA does not favor individual General Plan amendments to weaken it, and we would vigorously oppose any future attempt to eliminate it.

### Widening of Danville Boulevard

In the late 1960s, the County made a proposal to widen Danville Boulevard to four lanes (between Rudgear Road in Walnut Creek and Del Amigo Road in Danville). In the mid-1980s, it proposed widening Danville Boulevard to three lanes (from downtown to Rudgear). Alamo citizens successfully opposed both proposals.

More recently, the County has made incremental widening along Danville Boulevard, made an unexplained request for an easement along the road, and included a fourth lane for an undisclosed distance on Danville Boulevard as part of the 2008 County-proposed widening of the downtown intersection (the "Ultimate Configuration") at Stone Valley Road.

At the request of AIA, the 1991 County General Plan continues the stipulation of the 1977 San Ramon Valley Area General Plan that Danville Boulevard is to stay at two lanes in the residential areas between Rudgear and Del Amigo Roads, except for "minor improvements to provide additional safety and increased capacity". AIA does not favor incremental widening of Danville Boulevard and would vigorously oppose removal of the two-lane protection in the County General Plan.

### Residential Re-zonings to Less than Half-acre Minimum

Since 1991, the County General Plan for Alamo has prohibited residential lots of less than 20,000 square feet in Alamo, unless the County chooses to implement its "Planned Development" zoning, which allows up to three units per acre. AIA asked the County for the Alamo General Plan prohibition and would vigorously oppose any future attempt to weaken it.

### Regional Commercial Development – Big Box Stores

The County General Plan limits commercial development in Alamo to neighborhood and community-serving uses. AIA would vigorously oppose any efforts to weaken this limitation, which supports local businesses that serve Alamo needs, and prevents regional-serving businesses like big box stores from threatening their smaller, local-serving competitors.

*Going forward, AIA will continue to review Alamo development projects that the County refers to the AIA Planning Committee; will monitor advice about planning, land use, and roads that the MAC will give to the County; and will continue to monitor the agendas and actions of elected decision-makers on the County Board of Supervisors, committees of the Board of Supervisors, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, and the Tri-Valley Transportation Council.*