



# Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC)

## ACTION MINUTES

<b>Location:</b>	<i>Held via Zoom</i>	
<b>Date:</b>	December 3, 2020	
<b>Time:</b>	2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.	
	<b><i>Committee Members</i></b>	<b><i>Staff and Guests</i></b>
<b>Present:</b>	Sherwood Darington* Alex Eastman Michael Ferguson Kurt Gollnick Erik Heacox Nick Huntington Tony Marci Kevin Piearcy Matt Shea Scott Storm** Scott Violini Kirk Williams	Henry Gonzales, Agricultural Commissioner Jose Chang, Assistant Ag Commissioner Nadia Garcia, Ag Programs Manager Mary Perry, Deputy County Counsel Cheryl Ku, Senior Planner
<b>Absent:</b>	No absentees	

\*arrived at 3:02 pm / \*\* arrived at 2:35 p.m.

### I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Huntington at 2:32 p.m.  
*(Committee Member Storm joined the meeting after Item I.)*

### II. Consent- Committee Business

1. Approval of minutes from October 22, 2020
2. 2021 Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule
3. 2021 Agricultural Advisory Committee Special Ad Hoc Subcommittee Schedule

**MOTION:** Committee Member Eric Heacox corrected October 22, 2020 minutes confirming his absence at this meeting. It was moved and seconded by Committee Members Violini and Gollnick to approve the October 22, 2020, meeting minutes, with correction noted. It was also moved and seconded by Committee Members Gollnick and Heacox to approve the 2021 AAC and AAC Subcommittee schedules. Item II passed by the following vote:

**AYES:** Eastman, Ferguson, Gollnick, Heacox, Huntington, Marci, Piearcy, Shea, Storm, Violini and Williams  
**NOES:** None  
**ABSENT:** Darington

**ABSTAIN:** None

### **III. Public Comment**

*Norm Groot, Monterey County Farm Bureau-* Question for the Agricultural Commissioner. Mr. Groot reports he has been receiving requests from the media regarding quantifying the agricultural dollar losses as a result of Covid-19 and the wildfires in Monterey County and is asking if the Ag. Commissioner's Office is contemplating doing a survey to quantify the dollar amount lost due to Covid-19 and the wildfires. Henry Gonzales, Agricultural Commissioner responds that a preliminary survey was done at the onset of Covid-19 and there are some dollar amount figures for that. Commissioner Gonzales reports there are a few ways to do this. One way is to do the survey until the contemplated end of Covid-19, which may be end of Summer 2021. Another way is to wait until the next crop report is generated. Commissioner Gonzales explains there are some issues with obtaining figures, such as growers not obligated to give financial record information to the Ag. Commissioner's Office. Despite missing grower records, in the past, information has been obtained from Ag. Commissioner's permit records which show acreage and commodity types. Commissioner Gonzales adds the real discussion should be with growers asking what their losses were due to Covid-19 and wildfires. Commissioner Gonzales adds that this office is also required and has submitted a report to the USDA on all emergency and/or disasters for allocation of funds from the USDA programs to this County, but this pandemic continues, so its damage to the agricultural industry has not yet been quantified. Committee Member Gollnick adds that the wine industry could provide a figure from the smoke damage. Commissioner Gonzales concludes that the information will be sought and used to capture financial losses at the best appropriate time once Covid-19 is over. Mr. Groot adds that any information so far should be available and provided to the media. Committee Member Violini mentions an upcoming meeting he is having on the cost of replacing and/or repairing fire damaged ag fencing and will be sharing that figure with both Mr. Groot and Commissioner Gonzales, which is approximately \$7 per foot of fence.

### **IV. Agricultural Commissioner's Update**

*Henry S. Gonzales, Agricultural Commissioner*

- INSV report on coordinated efforts to treat weeds harboring this virus which has affected lettuce fields between Salinas and Gonzales. Efforts include obtaining encroachment permits for weed control measures in Caltrans and Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. Taking advantage of the timing, would also benefit the efforts to control Lettuce mosaic virus which also harbors in weeds; Effort underway to conduct site surveys and mapping of weed locations; Outreach and education on the matter will also aide in the effort to eradicate INSV and Lettuce mosaic virus; Ag Commissioner also looking in having abatement authority when a property is deemed a public nuisance for having weeds hosting these pests and abatement notices will be sent out.
- During Covid-19 times, the Ag. Commissioner's Office has been conducting business virtually with the public to help minimize personal contact. For example, issuance of permits, notices and required continuing education classes are being administered electronically using different platforms such as Zoom and DocuSign.
- Industrial Hemp- This year 12 industrial hemp fields were sampled for THC content; 11 of which passed having less than .3 percent THC. The one that did not pass was over this limit and it was destroyed.

- CDFA has issued new regulations governing Direct Marketing such as Farmers Markets. Ag. Commissioner’s Office will conduct a virtual stakeholder meeting in January 2021 to report on the changes.  
*(Committee Member Darington joined the meeting after Item IV.)*

**V. Resource Management Agency- Planning  
Martin Dennis N. TR Et AL (The Sobel Company Inc.)**

- Project Title: Martin Dennis N. TR Et AL (The Sobel Company Inc.)
- Planning File No.: PLN180441
- APN: 113-091-017-000
- Project Location: 211 Harrison Rd, Salinas in the Greater Salinas Area Plan
- Zoning: Light Commercial (LC)
- Project Description: Vesting Tentative Map to divide a 17.96 acre Light Commercial (LC) zoned parcel into ten (10) LC zoned parcels, and a General Development Plan to allow a total of 94,660 square feet of mixed commercial space, including four (4) retail buildings, three quick serve restaurants, a motel and a fuel service station. The project site borders ag land but is separated by a traveled road.

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Make a recommendation to the Monterey County Planning Commission.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Norm Groot, Farm Bureau commented the project is adequately laid out and questioned if there were any plans to install a stop light on Harrison Road, since it appears the project will have two access points from Harrison Road. Ron Sisseem, EMC Planning Group (Agent) responded no stop light will be installed because the traffic analysis prepared for the project did not conclude a need for this based on the anticipated traffic volume. Sisseem also addresses such traffic report has also been reviewed by County Public Works staff and they have not brought up a need for a stop light or any other form of traffic control.

**MOTION:** After discussion which included questions and comments regarding the property being subject to MCC Chapter 16.40 Right-to-Farm disclosure noticing, which puts new property owners and visitors on notice that this County is a “Right to Farm” county and questions regarding City of Salinas future plans for incorporating the subject parcel into their jurisdiction, the Committee had no further questions, comments or concerns. It was moved and seconded by Committee Members Gollnick and Heacox and passed by the following vote to recommend approval of the Martin Dennis Trust (The Sobel Company Inc) project for a Vesting Tentative Map to divide a 17.96 acre Light Commercial (LC) zoned parcel into ten (10) LC zoned parcels, and a General Development Plan to allow a total of 94,660 square feet of mixed commercial space, including four (4) retail buildings, three quick serve restaurants, a motel and a fuel service station. to the Monterey County Planning Commission.

**AYES:** Darington, Eastman, Ferguson, Gollnick, Heacox, Huntington, Marci, Piearcy, Shea, Storm, Violini and Williams  
**NOES:** None  
**ABSENT:** None  
**ABSTAIN:** None

**VI. Administrative Matters**

No administrative matters to report.

**VII. Agricultural Advisory Committee Comments**

No AAC comments.

**VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:13 p.m.