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## Despite crowd of Meadow Vista activists, supervisors side with Chevreaux, 5-0



By: Gus Thomson, Journal Staff Writer

Meadow Vista residents opposed to an asphalt plant at Chevreaux Aggregates were again steam-rollered in their attempts to find some relief at the county level.

Placer County supervisors voted 5-0 on Wednesday to uphold a June determination by Planning Director Michael Johnson finding in favor of continued "intermittent" operation of an asphalt plant at the Bear River shoreline site.

A truck from the Chevreaux Aggregates operation in Meadow Vista passes a sign put up by residents protesting an asphalt plant at the site. Photo by Ben Furtado/Auburn Journal

Requested by Chevreaux, the finding that the 1972 use permit has grandfathered in "intermittent" asphalt manufacturing at the plant turned up in court proceedings that found the business in a legal wrangle with the grassroots Meadow Vista Protection group.

Weimar resident Richard Goodwin appealed the Johnson decision to the Planning Commission last July -- and lodged the second appeal to the Board of Supervisors after the commission voted 5-1 to support the director's stand.

The July meeting drew 165 people. Wednesday's hearing attracted an estimated 100 people, with Goodwin and 15 speakers supporting his contention that the permit had lapsed because an asphalt plant had not operated for lengthy periods over the past 35 years.

Goodwin, who said he heard the asphalt plant operating in the last few weeks, appealed to supervisors to consider the health of the community's families because of increased air pollution from the plant and increased trucking from the site. He added that supervisors should also consider the negative impact the plant would have on property values in the area.

Speaking on behalf of Chevreaux Aggregates, Mike Fleming of Western Planning and Engineering said the concept of the asphalt plant's intermittent use had been regularly mentioned in county documents since 1972, when the initial permit was issued.

"We have 35 years of continuous history that informs the decision today," Fleming said. "Michael Johnson's determination is a compilation of the facts."

Banging page after page of papers on a desk as he spoke, Meadow Vista Protection President Jeff Evans reeled off a list of concerns his group has, including truck explosions, spills, dust, noise and reverberations from onsite blasting at Chevreaux's Meadow Vista plant.

"What we have here is an expansion of operations," Evans said.

Fleming disputed Evans' contention that Chevreaux had been issued 44 notices of violation from the state Regional Water Quality Board. He said he had been contacted three times during that time period by the board.

"I'm not sure where the 44 violations came from," Fleming said. "I'm pretty sure it's an exaggeration by fanatics."

Before voting, supervisors took nearly an hour asking staff questions about the impact of Chevreaux on the surrounding community in terms of air pollution.

Roseville-area Supervisor Rocky Rockholm said he wanted to compare the impact of the asphalt plant -- which is allowed about 1,000 pounds of emissions each quarter -- to other emissions sources. County Air Pollution Control District Officer Tom Christofk said there are 6½ tons a day of wood-burning emissions and nine tons from trains.

Supervisor Kirk Uhler, representing the Granite Bay area, said that Chevreaux's presence decreases the mileage trucks would use to haul aggregate materials from other sources to the Auburn area.

Chairman Bruce Kranz, whose district takes in the Meadow Vista area, listed several initiatives by the county to reduce air pollution, including developing biomass energy plants, a wood-chipping program available to residents and encouraging people not to do open burning.

"We are doing a lot of things to help with the air pollution," Kranz said.

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