MIDDLE GREEN VALLEY
SPECIFIC PLAN

Preliminary DRAFT

December 21, 2009

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SPECIFIC PLAN

: SOLANO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA :

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[directory]

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This is a very significant accomplishment; to work together to accomplish change . . . not based on which side of the issue we are on. We all share a deep feeling for this special place.

- Herb Hughes, Neighbor and CAC Member

[PREAMBLE]

Middle Green Valley is unique and spectacular. The City of Fairfield, to the south, and unincorporated Solano County to the north, have continued to entitle subdivisions, while Middle Green Valley has remained largely undeveloped agricultural and open space land in the center. There is long-standing conflict between the open space desired by neighbors and development rights desired by landowners. The landowners of Middle Green Valley are under substantial pressure to both preserve their rural culture, even as the basic economics of agriculture are eroding the financial viability of their lands, and to develop their property to realize the economic benefit of their property. Many of the landowners, some whose families have cultivated the land for more than 150 years, wish to realize the development value of their land while, at the same time maintaining the integrity of the open space, agricultural productivity and farming legacy.

In accordance with the goals and policies of the General Plan, the County saw an opportunity to try to resolve this conflict, and avoid the piece-meal subdivision that would inevitably occur in the absence of a comprehensive plan. At the same time, the County also wants to ensure that the houses developed under the plan are in keeping with the unique setting: practical, clustered, rural in character, sustainable, and complementary to the existing landscape.

At significant cost and with no guarantee of success, the Solano County Board of Supervisors proposed a Specific Plan process for this part of Green Valley as part of the updated 2008 General Plan. That General Plan, with landowner and neighbor support in Green Valley, was passed with a 65% approval in November 2008. In January of 2009, the County appointed Hart Howerton, and consultant team to work with a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) which was divided equally between landowners and nearby residents. Their joint task was to produce a plan that meets the goal and policies for Middle Green Valley set forth by the General Plan. This Specific Plan is a result of that successful, collaborative effort.

Like all successful designs, this Specific Plan captures a moment in time when community representatives were able to develop a shared vision for an agriculturally-centered community founded on conserving a remarkable landscape, based on a stewardship ethic. No plan can be perfect, however, and many people spent countless hours discussing and ultimately compromising, where necessary, for the long term benefit of the whole area. This was an extraordinary opportunity for neighbors, landowners and local agencies to have an open dialogue about real long-term interests, and understand how financial, environmental, and cultural aspects of a community plan can fit together.

it's all here

we set the seeds, speak
to the sky
nurture the plants, drink
the rain, give back
to the soil, curse
the cold, dance
to the sun, sing
with the wind, weep
at the passing, dream
with the moon. we open
our hands and accept another
season of hope fulfilled
or not,
balancing burdens with blessings,
rocks and eagle feathers,
carrying the harvest home.
listen.
The birds are singing the earth
awake. the spiraling cosmos
is bursting open seeds climbing
to the light. there's a crackle
of joy in our hearts, ignited
by the sun----a flower filled
with flame. listen. the plants will tell you
of sending roots deep to survive
the dry times.
the seasons will show you how nothing
is ever really gone but keeps
turning out and over
again and again and again,
just as the ancestors
smile down from the clouds
onto the faces of children
yet unborn shining up
from rain spattered stones on the path
we walk.
listen.
it's all here.

-Sherrie Mickel, 1995