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MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 19, 2007 Agenda of: December 13, 2007
TO: Planning Commission Item #: 12.c.
FROM: Peter N. Maurer, Principal Planner
SUBJECT: Revised Draft Oak Woodland Management Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept public comments regarding the Draft Oak Woodland Management Plan (OWMP) and provide Planning Commission comments to staff.

BACKGROUND

On October 24, 2007, staff presented the Planning Commission with copies of the revised Draft OWMP and a brief overview of the OWMP.

The OWMP consists of a brief user's guide, maps of the locations of oak woodland Priority Conservation Areas, and the Conservation Fund fee ("Option B fee"). The user's guide also includes the applicability and exemptions to the requirements, and discusses the responsibilities of property owners, as well as flexible mitigation options.

The appendices of the document contain the background and support information. It includes the information that is necessary for individuals or organizations to apply for oak woodland conservation grants from the state Wildlife Conservation Board.

Staff has identified several policy decisions that will need to be made by the Board of Supervisors. These include the amount of the Conservation Fund fee, the ratio of the fee for landowners that prefer to pay a fee instead of on-site replanting for Option A, and the policy language exempting Agricultural Cultivation.

DISCUSSION

The OWMP went to the Agriculture Commission on November 14, 2007 to receive public comments. The Agriculture Commission subsequently requested a special workshop at which time they intend to more thoroughly discuss the draft OWMP. Formal comments will be approved at their December 12, 2007 regularly scheduled meeting, which will be provided to you the day of the Planning Commission meeting.

The purpose of this comment period is to receive feedback from the public and various commissions on the draft plan prior to preparing the environmental document and final draft of the plan. As noted above, there are several policy questions that are outstanding, and feedback on these issues will be critical in determining staff's final recommendation. Public comments on the revised Draft OWMP will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. December 13, 2007.

Following the close of the comment period, staff will begin the preparation of the environmental document (anticipated to be a negative declaration) and make any changes to the draft plan. Following the required review period after the release of the negative declaration, a final hearing before your commission will be scheduled for a recommendation to the Board. Public comment can also be made during this time. The Planning Commission hearing is expected to be in February, 2008, with final action by the Board in late February or early March.

