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TO:	Planning Commission	Agenda of:	September 23, 2010
FROM:	Peter N. Maurer, Principal Planner	Item No.:	8
DATE:	September 13, 2010		
RE:	OR10-0002/Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS) – Revisions		

Recommendation:

Development Services Department, Planning Services, recommends the Planning Commission forward a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to take the following action:

1. Adopt the Negative Declaration based on the Initial Study prepared by staff; and

2. Approve OR10-0002 amending Chapter 17.14 (Miscellaneous Development Requirements) to add the Wind Energy Conversion Systems Ordinance as Section 17.14.240 of the Zoning Ordinance, as shown in Exhibit A, based on the Findings listed in Attachment 1.

Background:

On September 9, 2010, the Planning Commission reviewed the draft ordinance and raised a concern regarding the installation of microturbines. The item was continued for two weeks to clarify the intent of the ordinance. The language has been modified so that only those provisions applicable to microturbines will be applied, which allows the installation of small, residential-scale WECS to be installed with minimal restrictions relating only to safety and visual impacts.

Several changes discussed at the September 9, 2010 hearing have been incorporated into the revised Draft Ordinance (Exhibit A). The changes made subsequent to the hearing are shown in underline/strikeout format. Two other changes were also made. Subsection G was revised to clarify its intent, which was to identify the number of small WECS permitted on a site based on lot size. Table 17.14.240.2 was revised so that the lot size standard for utility scale WECS (greater than 100 kw generating capacity) did not differentiate between hilly and flat terrain. Since this requires a special use permit, that issue can be addressed on a case-by-case basis based on topography and manufacturer's specifications for the types of units proposed to be installed.