

Asphalt plant appeal delayed until Oct. 8

By Nick Baptista/ The Valley Springs News / Wednesday, September 9, 2015

The latest appeal stemming from Ford Construction and CB Asphalt's desire to run an asphalt producing operation out of the Hogan Quarry will not go before the Calaveras County Planning Commission on Thursday as earlier scheduled.

The commission at its Aug. 13 meeting after several hours of public comments, testimony and discussion among staff and commissioners, decided to delay any decision on the matter for a month.

However, the agenda for the planning panel's meeting this week has the asphalt plant item continued to the Oct. 8 meeting.

The appeal, which was filed by Ford Construction and CB Asphalt, challenged a decision by former Environmental Management Agency Director Brian Moss that hazardous materials used in the hot plant's operation could affect the environment and a subsequent decision by county Planning Director Peter Maurer that the EMA director's determination triggered the need for the applicants to go through the conditional use process.

Ford Construction and CB Asphalt earlier this year sought county staff approval to begin operating the asphalt plant at the quarry located at 3650 Hogan Dam Road without any additional environmental review, claiming state and federal regulations provide plenty of safeguards to the public. An appeal to Maurer's initial decision the plant would be a permitted use on the property was challenged by nearby residents and MyValleySprings.com. In addition, Ford Construction and CB Asphalt filed appeals when Maurer and Moss, who in the meantime was promoted to assistant county administrative officer, determined the new operation was subject to further environmental review at the county level.

Some of the commissioners at the Aug. 13 meeting were questioning whether staff overstepped its authority in the matter and whether more information on the asphalt plant proposal provided by Ford Construction and CB Asphalt between August and September meetings would change staff's decisions.