

LODE DEVELOPMENT NO MORE

253 HOMES WERE PROPOSED FOR SHORE OF TULLOCH

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SAN ANDREAS - Thursday's meeting of the Calaveras County Planning Commission was over in eight minutes.

And that included a unanimous vote to deny a developer's application to build 253 homes on the shore of Tulloch Reservoir near Copperopolis.

Call it a sign of the times.

Sanguinetti Estates, a 59-acre development proposed in an application filed in 2005, is just the largest of a number of dormant real estate projects the commission has been clearing from the county's pending application file in recent months, said Calaveras County Planning Director George White.

"We'll be seeing agendas like this probably more than not," White said of the short meeting Thursday.

That's a big change from just four years ago. Back then, crowds showed up at public meetings when developments involving hundreds of homes were on the agenda. Tulloch residents, for example, turned out to object in 2006 when they realized the Sanguinetti Estates project might remove most of the site's native oaks.

Thursday, when Planning Commission Chairwoman Suzanne Kuehl asked for public comment on Sanguinetti Estates, no one spoke.

County planning officials said that they've been reviewing files involving projects with no activity. They checked on Sanguinetti Estates and found that John Lemke, who proposed the development, no longer owns the property. And Delta Bank of Manteca, which now owns it, did not respond to a letter asking if the bank wanted to proceed with the development.

White said the bank could file paperwork if it wished to continue with the Sanguinetti Estates plan. "They have not done so," White said.

Delta Bank President and Chief Executive Officer Warren Wegge, reached by phone, said the bank will most likely simply hold on to the property until market conditions improve.

"Odds are we won't be doing any development or anything," Wegge said. "We will probably hold that property for a time, assess the market and liquidate it in the future."

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