

Ordinance amending Chapter 10 of the County Code related to Building Permits

Office of 4th District Supervisor Peter Adam
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
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Background

- Spring of 2015 – discovered hoop structures potentially prohibited
- Article I, Chapter 10 of County Building Code
 - Does not currently reflect the nature of modern plant protection technology (12' height limit)
- Land Use Development Code
 - “Hoop structures” are defined in LUDC
 - LUDC 35.110: “**Hoop Structure.** A structure consisting of a light-weight frame with no permanent structural elements (e.g. footings, foundations, plumbing, electrical wiring) and an impermeable, removable covering used to protect plants grown in the soil or in containers upon the soil. Includes structures commonly known as berry hoops or hoop houses.”
 - Neither prohibited nor allowed in agriculturally zoned property

Advantages of hoop structures

- Growing bush berries is impossible without hoop structures due to wind
- Stronger plant growth, greater fruit yields
- Plastic protects fruit from sun damage and uneven coloring
- More efficient water use; less pesticide use
- Healthier and safer working environment for farm workers
 - Farm workers prefer to work in and around hoop structures











Process

- 4th District Staff reached out to multiple growers for input
- Sought advice from County staff on the issue
- Presented proposed fixes to Agriculture Advisory Committee (AAC) in May of 2015
 - Unanimous support for the amendment being considered

Proposed fix

The ordinance under consideration would:

- 1) Remove the existing exemption for hoop structures under twelve feet in height from Building Permits from Article I, Chapter 10 of the County Building Code
- 2) Modify existing exemption for shade structures by adding plastic-covered hoop structures as exempt from Building Permits
- 3) Direct staff to define hoop structures as an allowed use in the LUDC on agriculturally zoned land

Recommended actions:

- Receive and file presentation
- Approve first reading of the ordinance
- Read the title of the ordinance and waive full reading
- Direct staff to initiate and process amendments to the LUDC as part of the 2015 General Package Ordinance Amendments to recognize hoop structures and shade structures as allowed uses in agriculturally zoned property
- Set a hearing on October 20, 2015, for second reading of this ordinance and determine that these changes are exempt from CEQA

