

West Park wins enough votes to keep project alive **Supervisors OK smaller vision for plan**

By Garth Stapley, staff writer

Modesto Bee, Tuesday, March 8, 2010

West Park developer Gerry Kamilos mustered just enough votes Tuesday to continue with a downsized vision of bringing 17,000 jobs to a future industrial park near Crows Landing on Stanislaus County's West Side.

After a hearing stretching nearly 3½ hours, county Supervisors Dick Monteith, Bill O'Brien and Vito Chiesa approved giving Kamilos an extra 15 months for studies, including a feasibility analysis. Supervisors Jim DeMartini and Terry Withrow cast "no" votes, saying the county should call for new bids from other developers.

Kamilos hopes to give valley growers more Pacific Rim export opportunities by running local produce on short-haul trains to the Port of Oakland. Asian imports could come the other way, unloading onto trucks at an inland port on the former naval air base near Crows Landing.

Many in Tuesday's audience suggested Kamilos is tone deaf to West Side residents, while supporters pointed to \$5 million already invested as proof of Kamilos' good faith.

"Today is not a vote for approval; it's for research to find out if this is going to fly," O'Brien said. "I'm willing to take 15 months because that is the fastest way to jobs. If we start over, it's just more delay."

Four years ago, West Park planned to sprawl across 4,800 acres. Kamilos recently scaled down to 2,800 acres, reduced anticipated train traffic and added a huge solar farm component to generate cash required for industrial infrastructure.

He also won commitments from the Turlock Irrigation District, which would sell power from solar panels, and from Union Pacific Railroad and the Port of Oakland. Additionally, he found new financing and signed a respected firm to market West Park.

Last-minute revisions may have gained Kamilos some support, but they came too late for meaningful analysis by county staff — and did nothing to win over many West Side residents and officeholders.

"We believe this is the wrong time to move forward with a speculative project based on too many uncertainties," said Patterson's Claude Delphia, vice president of opposition group WS-PACE.org.

Newman City Manager Michael Holland said, "What we're still seeing is smoke and mirrors hidden under a shroud of job creation." He and Newman Mayor Ed Katen said Kamilos did not reach out to them in four years — until Monday.

"We want to be taken seriously," said Patterson Councilwoman Annette Smith, charging that Kamilos had briefed Modesto and Turlock business leaders while ignoring West Side groups.

"I believe there are going to be other developers out there who are going to be interested," Katen said. "Let's start over with a new project."

Funds earmarked for diesel truck rebuilds

Visalia Times-Delta and Tulare Advance-Register, Tuesday, March 8, 2011

A new round of incentive funding to replace, repower and retrofit heavy-duty, diesel-powered trucks, reducing air pollution from freight movement through the Valley, is now available.

More owners are eligible for \$60 million in additional Proposition 1B funding.

The San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District is holding free, regional workshops to assist owners in completing their applications. Spanish-language translators are available.

Applications are available at www.valleyair.org or by calling the district's strategies and incentives department at 230-5800. District staff is also available at that number to assist applicants.

Worth noting in the community: truck funding and more

Bakersfield Californian, Tuesday, March 8, 2011

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District will distribute another \$60 million in grants to truck owners in an effort to reduce harmful emissions, according to a news release.

The Proposition 1B funds will be used to replace or retrofit heavy-duty diesel trucks, the release said. Class 7 and Class 8 truckers are now eligible to receive money in the expanded program.

A free workshop for interested applicants will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 6 at 34946 Flyover Court, near the intersection of Highway 65 and Imperial Street. The application deadline is April 29.

Applications are available online at www.valleyair.org. For assistance or additional information, call the air district at 559-230-5800