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Animal Keeping 17.25.060, Draft Zoning Code Update
MVS.com Concerns and Comments

Planning Commissioners,

Thank you for your continued work on the draft Calaveras County Zoning Code Update. **When you review chapter 17.25.060 Animal Keeping**, please consider all public comments, and some revisions. MyValleySprings.com has a few concerns and comments about the draft Animal Keeping section, which only applies to RR zones.

1) **Rabbits and Fowl.** If the term “fowl” includes guinea fowl and peacocks, please eliminate and replace “fowl” with “hens” or “female chickens.” Guineas and peacocks are remarkably loud and disturbing—can be heard a long way away, and would surely cause noise problems in most residential neighborhoods if allowed—just like a rooster would! Eight guinea hens or peacocks allowed on a 4,000 square foot lot in the R-1 zone, or 40 guineas/peacocks allowed on one acre, would lead to serious Noise Complaints from neighbors! Please clarify “fowls,” and replace with chicken/hens, if that’s the intent.

2) **F. Domestic Animals on One Acre; 1. Minimum Lot Size: One acre.** The number of animals allowed in the draft is “One animal equivalent unit” per acre. This would allow 1 horse /cow, or 5 sheep/goats, or 40 rabbits/ fowl, on a one-acre RR residential, small lot subdivision lot, by right. Is this a good idea? There would be significant impacts. Please reconsider this section. We think this needs more thought. The impacts of this many animals on very small acreage may be too much, without considering potential impacts and further conditions.

Please consider these points and situations when considering “one animal unit per acre” in RR:

a) A one- or three-acre RR lot, such as Rancho Calaveras. Designated lot acreage is not all available to animals. The house and yard will take up much space, and the septic tank and leach field will take up more space. These necessary land uses could take ½ acre or more; which will reduce usable animal acreage. **Livestock cannot use an entire one-acre lot with residential usage.** They would damage septic fields, eat the yard. What will be the actual usable acreage for livestock on a one-acre parcel or three-acre parcel, after the house, yard, and leach field are removed from useable livestock area? Is one horse/cow per acre a sensible regulation? **We would suggest “conditioning” language to replace the blanket endorsement of one acre per animal unit, such as “animal units allowed are based on available acreage for livestock”** (with a Definition for “available acreage for livestock” that would

remove the residence, other buildings, yard, driveways, and septic/ leach field; e.g. any areas unusable for livestock).

b) Animal Impacts on small RR parcels. Without “good neighbor” conditions for animal keeping, negative animal impacts to neighbors on small 1-3 acre RR parcels could be significant. I live on an RR-3 parcel and my neighbor has three horses next door on a 3-acre parcel. This situation only works because they are very good neighbors, feed the horses twice a day to compensate for lack of adequate acreage to graze, and take extra steps to manage the horses, manure, dust, and odors to minimize impacts to me, their neighbor. If they weren’t so responsible, three horses next door would have a serious negative impact.

Please consider: **flies and odor impacts** from manure buildup from horses, cattle, or 40 rabbits; **dust impacts** from animals eating grass down to bare ground; **noise impacts** from 40 fowl, etc. **Animal impacts from keeping animals on RR parcels have not been addressed. or mitigated. Conditions and/or larger parcel sizes should be considered for Animal Keeping.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Colleen Platt
Secretary, MyValleySprings.com

Cc: Joyce Techel, President, MyValleySprings.com