

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SUPERVISORS AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT OBSTRUCT RELIEF AND DUE PROCESS SINCE 1956

by A. Adams, Editor

August 12, 2008 - In 1956 the County of Santa Cruz adopted the Uniform Building Code for the first time. In that book, the Uniform Building Code is a section that requires a Building Appeals Board. See current [State Code 108.8](#) that must be abided by and cannot be reduced by local ordinance restrictions by the County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors or Planning Department. In 1970 the County of Santa Cruz adopted its first General Plan, although they had a temporary one for five years before that. A Building Appeals Board is required. The State of California again forced counties to establish Building and Housing Local Appeals Boards by January 1, 2008. Read more...

This County government by its actions on record since **1956**, believes they can usurp precedent State and Federal laws with their conflicting local ordinances. Not so. The Supervisors headed by Ellen Pirie and Tom Burns, Director, again today in their statements, are continuing to try to usurp property owners' right to due process. Through internal memos and recounts of conversations, Staff Planners and Code Compliance officers are guided to "go after" property owners, are not properly trained and are unlicensed in their fields. They have and are generating binding documents not based in law, but based on personal likes and especially dislikes for those who do not agree with them and most often are accurate. How long will Tom Burns be left to mismanage the Planning Department that is now vulnerable to return hundreds of millions of dollars when the appeals board(s) begin their hearing audits and findings?

Will it take the courts, currently handling multiple large lawsuits against this County government, to teach them how to run this government by proper laws above them? Straight Talk News thinks so.

None of the Board of Supervisors or Tom Burns today gave an apology to the citizens and property owners of Santa Cruz County. They had to be continually redirected to follow the State Code that supersedes any of their personal agendas to restrict the appeal boards. They settled to advertise the open five seats for applications for the Building Board of Appeals Commission. No statement was made to recognize a needed and missing Housing Board of Appeals Commission or a declaration that one board will manage Building and Housing appeals. It looks like the Supervisors do not know what the laws are that they must follow and certainly there is a big mess to clean up by not managing the Planning Department and its Code Compliance section. How long will Tom Burns be left to mismanage the Planning Department that is now vulnerable to return hundreds of millions when the appeals board(s) begins their hearing audits and findings?

Why have the County civil servants, especially Susan Mauriello, Ellen Pirie, Jan Beautz, Mark Stone, [Tom Burns](#), David Lee, Mark Deming, Ken Hart, Jennifer Hutchinson, Kevin Fitzpatrick, staff planners and many others, **never** disclosed the citizen appeal boards required by law? The County is not allowed by law to be Judge and Jury in an insulated vacuum. They are not insulated from liability either. The public is very dissatisfied with these civil servants and perhaps through their outcries, restitution will be made to those who have experienced violations of their civil rights and abuses of actions in conflict with State and Federal laws. Should they all be replaced for such severe actions against the citizens of Santa Cruz?

Today we checked throughout the 4th floor Planning Department lobby and could not find any flyer or brochure regarding any kind of appeals board for public relief and due process. The Planning Department receptionist was unaware of any information piece.

The Alliance for Change has been protesting at almost every Board of Supervisors meeting and has mailed in [requests for appeal hearings](#) for many years and has not been given proper respect and response. We will be posting some of the larger lawsuits challenging a mismanaged local government and their often proven and alleged illegal practices. Due process and an avenue for independent relief have not been given to the public since 1956. Those just finding out, that their civil rights have been violated by the County of Santa Cruz, now have at least two years for recourse no matter how old their matter is. Stay tuned.