

Bodhi Farm Meeting  
June 95

This is what a few of us who got together thought about the working paper on M.O. s that the Lismore council prepared. It is a very preliminary draft which we would like you to look at and comment on. Of course, that requires looking at the Council document and we suggest you look at Appendix 1 in the blue pages at the back, which are the existing rules for M.O.s. There are a number on the farm you can look at.

Basically we recommend DOING NOTHING, with a very few exceptions.

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Dear Alderpersons,

A committee of residents of Bodhi Farm have gotten together to look at your Discussion Paper On Multiple Occupancy and to organize our collective response to it. We appreciate the apparent respect expressed in it for our choice of lifestyle. We do believe that the small form of social organization we have been developing over the years is of value not only for ourselves, but is of value to the larger community. We think that there are numerous aspects of society in general that lead to poor quality of life for many people and that society needs experimentation with alternatives to shed light on what may be better ways of functioning.

Basically, our position is to do nothing in the way of changing the rules for multiple occupancy with a very few minor exceptions. We will comment point by point to the issues.

1. SUBDIVISION We endorse the existing M.O. policy. Yes, the "community title" could destroy the culture and philosophy of M.O.s The form of ownership is a legal matter and not the business of council. We think such a restriction to be an unnecessary imposition of freedom of choice.

2. MINIMUM AREA No. change. The current formula allows for a satisfactory sense of community and to maintain a buffer zone, allows for sufficient acreage to maintain rural integrity and for a resources infrastructure.



3.        AGRICULTURAL LAND   It is often the case and is always a potential, that on M.O.s the amount of food produced per hectare utilized for such purposes is high -- the selling of it should not be the definition of productivity. Also, some land that was used for grazing or bananas should never have been, and therefore became terribly degraded, so in this case return to forest is desirable. Many M.O.s are marginal land and in most cases this was the only land people wanting to form M.O.s could afford.

We think the percentage of prime land should be reconsidered and raised up to 100%. Potential M.O.s have a right to be "producers" if they wish.

No noxious weed control program.

4.        NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT   We agree with the comments.

5.        SITING OF DWELLINGS   These should be clustered or dispersed, depending <sup>ON</sup> of the lie of the land and the desires of the people

6.        PUBLIC ACCESS   Our position is that flood free access is not necessary--this is not a requirement more anyone else. Road standards are not adequate and the state government should accept more responsibility.

7.        ???

8.        WATER SUPPLY   Water needs may <sup>VARY</sup> ~~very~~ greatly. In our case we believe we have little or no impact on our own catchment and unlike city dwellers we make no demands on community resources. We manage this entirely ourselves.

9        WASTE DISPOSAL   Systems should be identified. Standards are adequate. We recommend dry composting toilets. Incentives and support for the use of the most environmentally sound systems.

10.       ENVIRONMENTAL RISK/HAZARD

10.1.   FIRE PROTECTION   The proposal is unenforceable and a double standard. New standards could be emphasised that are more manageable



and rational, for example, control of the ratio of ground litter. Council could provide specialized information. We have fire trail systems that we maintain ourselves and we also maintain our own fire fighting equipment. be appropriate but we are concerned that this is a financially prohibitive process for poor people.

#### 10.2. FLOODING Agreed

10.3. SLIP/SUBSIDENCE In vulnerable areas geotech assessments may be appropriate, but we are concerned that this is a financially prohibitive process for poor people. The requirement should not be used as a means of preventing M.O.s

11. VISUAL IMPACT We believe landscaping plans are not necessary but a commitment to aesthetic environmental beauty and integrity is. Most M.O.s are low impact developments which capitalize on natural landscaping.

12. IMPACT ON ADJOINING LAND USES From the point of view of M.O. occupants it is often other rural developments which they find offensive. M.O.s are usually more concerned with low impact.

13. FAUNA IMPACT We agree with the policy

14. SPECULATION We oppose M.O. legislation being used for speculation. We are curious to know if there really are examples of this. It seems to us the the policy is very discouraging to speculation.

15. COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF CONSENT We favour acting only where complaints are received.

16. ILLEGAL DEVELOPMENTS Indeed, what about illegal residential development in town? Concerns are raised about the standard of facilities--are there real grounds for concern.

17. RATING The rating structure should be looked at--and at the same time, the facilities used by M.O.s. For instance, we use Wallace Road a great deal, but its regular and extreme degradation is mainly from rain. We do not receive any other services

18. PAYMENT OF S94 LEVIES We agree that levies from M.O.s are appropriate, especially if the specific area receives benefit directly. However, we would like to see flexibility in the "payment" of levies, i.e. such things as work contributions as an option.

19. APPLICATIONS Basically agreed. However, in section 2 the requirement of a geotechnical report might be prohibitive, as previously mentioned. The same may be true of fauna assessments. Referrals to other departments seems reasonable as long as such actions are not used unnecessarily or as a means of frustrating M.O. development.

Thanks,  
Bri