

# Latest commercial cannabis proposal nears consideration

**By Nick Baptista / The Valley Springs News / Friday, August 9, 2019**

A proposed ordinance to once again regulate the commercial cultivation of cannabis in Calaveras County is scheduled to be considered by the County Planning Commission as soon as Aug. 22.

Regulations allowing the commercial production of cannabis have been a hot topic in the county for the past three years.

The Board of Supervisors on May 10, 2016, adopted an urgency ordinance regulating commercial cannabis cultivation and that started what was called a “Green Rush,” reminiscent of the 1849 Gold Rush, with hundreds and hundreds of people lining up at the County Government Center for days to register to farm marijuana in the open.

Efforts were launched to rescind the urgency ordinance and it became a hot topic in the 2016 elections. District 5 Supervisor Steve Kearney, who had voted in favor of the urgency ordinance, lost a recall election that year and was replaced by ban proponent Clyde Clapp. In addition, incumbent District 1 Supervisor Cliff Edson, who also voted for the urgency ordinance, lost in his 2016 re-election bid to former District 1 Supervisor Gary Tofanelli, while Dennis Mills won a three-person race to represent District 4.

Clapp, Mills and Tofanelli on Jan. 10, voted in favor of a new ordinance to ban commercial cultivation, but the issue was far from over. Pro-cannabis recall efforts against Mills and Tofanelli proved unsuccessful, but Clapp was defeated in the District 5 supervisor election by Benjamin Stopper.

Stopper, along with District 2 Supervisor Jack Garamendi and District 3 Supervisor Merita Callaway, formed a new majority on the board pushing for reintroducing commercial cannabis cultivation in the county.

A public hearing on the proposed cannabis cultivation ordinance is scheduled for 9 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 22, before the County Planning Commission in the board chambers at 891 Mountain Ranch Road in San Andreas.

Final consideration of the proposal rests with the Board of Supervisors.