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County of San Diego
BORREGO SPRINGS COMMUNITY SPONSOR GROUP
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, May 2, 2013
Borrego Springs High School Community Room
2281 Diegueño Road, Borrego Springs, CA 92004

Administrative Items

- A. Call to order: R. Caldwell called the meeting to order at 4:30PM
- B. Roll Call: *Present* - Beltran, R. Caldwell, Falk, Haldeman, King, Webb; *Absent* - Dr. S. Caldwell
- C. Approval of Agenda: King moved to approve the agenda for today's meeting, Haldeman seconded. The motion passed (6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained)
- D. Review of Maps and Material: No time was required to review printed materials.
- E. Approval of Minutes: Haldeman moved to approve the April 4 minutes of the study group workshop and the community sponsor group monthly meeting as presented. Webb seconded. The motion passed unanimously (5 in favor, 0 opposed, King abstained)
- F. Public Correspondence:
- R. Caldwell reported that he received a letter from the County notifying the sponsor group that Rebecca Falk had been approved as a member of the sponsor group. Rebecca Falk's sponsor group membership was approved by the board of supervisors at their April 4 monthly meeting. Falk will complete her initial online training and then she will be a full voting sponsor group member.
 - R. Caldwell also received a notice of availability of the final EIR for the San Diego County Wind Energy Ordinance and General Plan Amendment, including an amendment to the Borrego Springs Community Plan to allow flexibility for small wind turbine projects. R. Caldwell reported that he had queried the county planner who sent him a copy of King's letter from when she was the sponsor group chair registering the group's opinions on the amendment. R. Caldwell requested the language of the proposed change because it had not been sent. R. Caldwell had nothing in his files either. R. Caldwell is still waiting to see the proposed language.
 - R. Caldwell received notification that the zoning administrator had approved the minor use permit for the Alcatel/Sprint modification to the cell tower at the fire station. The modification was discussed at the Jan or Feb sponsor group meeting.
 - R. Caldwell attended the April 18 meeting of the Borrego Village Association meeting and earlier today attended the community plan development committee.
- G. Committee Reports:
- Community Plan Development Committee - Earlier this year, the sponsor group authorized R. Caldwell to reform the community plan development committee, the group responsible for drafting the community plan back in 2008 in order to consider proposed changes to the community plan that are being proposed by county staff. R. Caldwell introduced two county staff members are attending today's meeting. They are Bob Citrano, planning manager, and Kevin Johnston, environmental planner. Kevin is in charge of the

46 cleanup of the 2020 General and Community plans. There were three policies set forth in the
47 community plan, LU 3.5.1, LU 3.9.1, and N 2.2.1. The community plan development
48 committee agreed that they would work on LU 3.5.1 and N 2.2.1 with Kevin Johnston for
49 some refinement on some of the changes. The plan committee will meet again before the
50 next sponsor group meeting in order to bring to the sponsor group board a recommendation
51 for these issues.

52 • Community Park Committee - Haldeman reported that the community park committee
53 met last week. Bob Lowe and Betsy Knaack are going to discuss some issues with county
54 park staff in order for the committee to know exactly how to proceed. The committee
55 discussed the possibility of not moving forward on the 14 acre park site by the churches but
56 looking for a smaller site, possibly closer to Christmas Circle. The committee will meet
57 again soon and Haldeman will update the sponsor group at that time.

58 H. Public Comment:

59 • Joe Hopkins reported that this year's Hawk Watch had been completed. The current
60 count site is just south of the NRG Solar project site. Joe reported that the dust control
61 measures at the project are not adequate. At least three times this year the counters were
62 driven from the count site due to blowing dust that was blowing from the project. During the
63 day, when the wind wasn't blowing from the northwest, Borrego Valley Road looked like a
64 dirt road due to the accumulation of soil, silt, sand and dust on the road surface. Joe described
65 the promised dust control measures as a disaster. In addition, Joe reported that he had
66 brought up concerns about the Eurus solar project back when Joe was a sponsor group
67 member. On March 22, the three people who were at the hawk watch day site observed a
68 duck circle the solar site for in excess of ten minutes and tried to land on the solar panels.
69 The duck left the site uninjured. Also, April 12 or 13 in the Ellis Tree Farm just across from
70 the NRG Solar project, there were 30+ egrets roosting in the trees. According to "top
71 birders" in the Borrego Springs area who Joe talked to, most egret groups seen in the area
72 numbered about 8, with records of 11 and 19. All of them were seen near water sources on
73 area golf courses. Joe's point is that future solar projects should evaluate the impacts on
74 birds.

75 • Tom Beltran commented as a private citizen regarding the Mobilite site near Borrego
76 Springs Rd and Yaqui Pass Rd. Beltran felt that modification the justification of the MUP
77 modification didn't add up. The project proponents want the tower modification for two
78 reasons. Firstly, they want the tower to provide additional capacity. Second, they want the
79 tower in order to relay information out of the valley to Superstition Mountain, a major
80 network hub. The proponents claim that the effective range for the tower is between 0.5 and
81 1.0 miles. Beltran displayed an older style GSM mobile phone with an external antenna.
82 Maximum power output is 2 watts. The GSM phone broadcasts on the same frequency or
83 spectrum as the proposed tower, between 1.9 and 2.1 GHz. Beltran also showed a handheld
84 amateur radio transceiver (HT) that operates at 0.14 GHz. The HT operates at 5 watts and
85 has a longer antenna. However, the HT can reach Superstition Mountain from the Borrego
86 Springs High School (BSHS), a distance of over 30 miles. Coincidentally, the BSHS is
87 almost the same elevation, within 20 feet, as the proposed cell tower. For this reason, Beltran
88 does not believe the claim that the effective operating range of the proposed cell tower is
89 only 0.5 to 1.0 miles. Beltran understands the need for the microwave repeater on the cell
90 tower. He understands the point that the "copper wire" capacity out of the Borrego Valley is
91 maxed out. However, he feels that a better solution would be to modify the fire station tower

92 to relay traffic from the Borrego Valley to Superstition Mountain. The fire station is already
93 zoned commercial and it's at the correct elevation. That way, there would be no need to
94 extend the height of the proposed tower and there would be no need for a soon-to-be-
95 proposed tower at the Texas Dip. Both projects would significantly impact valuable scenic
96 vistas. Beltran feels that the fire station modification is a very reasonable alternative to
97 adding 20 feet to the height of the Yaqui Pass tower and also adding a second tower at the
98 Texas Dip, especially considering that the 2012 Community Plan listed scenic vistas as a
99 valued community resource that should be preserved. By design, the self described top-
100 heavy tower at Yaqui Pass will negatively impact these community resources, exactly what
101 the community plan seeks to avoid. In conclusion, Beltran cannot accept the justification
102 provided so far by the project proponents for the MUP modification.

103 • Linda Haddock, a private citizen, is a Ram's Hill resident and would like to have better
104 cell service there. Regarding the modifications to the community plan, Linda is in favor of
105 lessening some of the restrictions. For example, she feels that restrictions on planting a non
106 native palm tree are too restrictive.

107 **Action Items**

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- 110 A. Borrego Springs Community Plan – Kevin Johnston, from the planning and development
111 services advanced planning division, passed out a draft copy of the fall draft plan of the
112 general plan cleanup to all of the sponsor group members. The plan is also available online.
113 Google “2013 General Plan Cleanup” and it will be the first item on the list. Introduction, the
114 Board of Supervisors directed staff in 2011 to bring forward a general plan cleanup every
115 two years following adoption of the general plan. This is the first update. The cleanup is
116 intended as a mechanism for making changes to the general plan to allow for corrections
117 discovered during the plan's implementation or to reflect changing circumstances. This
118 particular plan cleanup includes changes to the land use map, the mobility element network,
119 to the policy documents that apply county wide and to community/regional plans. The
120 cleanup only deals with changes that are very minor to the general plan. The cleanup does
121 not deal with changes that would result in significant environmental impacts. It will be
122 handled as an addendum to the final EIR to the general plan update. Section 2 details
123 changes to the land use map changes in the cleanup. There are none proposed for Borrego
124 Springs. Section 3 contains maps and proposed general plan designations and proposed
125 zoning use regulations. Section 4.1 contains non land use map changes proposed in the
126 cleanup. Here is where there are some proposed county wide policy document changes,
127 including changes specific to the Borrego Springs Community Plan. Some examples, one is
128 to gross acreage and is how the county calculates density. Public roads and rights of way are
129 excluded from the calculation. Private roads are not excluded from the gross acreage
130 calculation. Another example is in the village core mixed use designation. The floor area
131 ratio is a ratio of the total square footage of the structure divided by the total square footage
132 of the lot. For example, a two story structure with two 5,000 sq ft floors on a 10,000 sq ft lot
133 would be a 1.0. The county has established a maximum ratio of .7 in the village core mixed
134 use areas. If off street parking is provided, then the ratio goes from .7 to 1.3. Underground
135 may also qualify the project for the 1.3 ratio maximum. Section 4.7 includes changes to the
136 mobility element. No changes are proposed to Borrego Springs. Section 4-19 is where some
137 proposed policy changes. Kevin has been working with R. Caldwell to see if improvements

138 can be made to the implementation process in order to capture the intent of some of the
139 community plan policies dealing with landscaping, two story limits outside the village core,
140 and noise trespass from mechanical equipment such as air conditioners and pool equipment.
141 Kevin has also provided the community plan sub-committee with information about how
142 county ordinances can be used to conserve water and try and steer people towards native
143 plant landscaping. With respect to the landscape ordinance, the county can influence
144 landscape plans with an ordinance that restricts the maximum water allowance per year.
145 Thresholds that require a landscape plan include single family home building permit. If there
146 is 5,000 sq ft or less of landscaping, no plan is required. A signed statement from the builder
147 is required that the annual water allowance will not be exceeded. No vote was taken. The
148 community plan subcommittee will continue to work on these issues and it should be an
149 action item at the June sponsor group meeting.

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Non Action Items

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- 153 A. Specific Plan Special Study areas – R. Caldwell reported that the second workshop of the
154 study groups was held today. The effort should lead to a collaborative recommendation for
155 the county to help fill in some of the blanks for the next update. The study groups will
156 continue to meet. Eventually, the individual groups will meet between workshops.
- 157 B. Burned-Out Structure at 511 Saddle Rd. – Judy Haldeman reported that the structure burned
158 7-9 years ago. The property ownership transferred in 2010 from the owners of the property
159 when it burned to a new owner. Haldeman was surprised that the transfer occurred
160 considering the condition of the property. Haldeman would like to report the problem to code
161 enforcement. Beltran suggested that it be reported as a safety issue if that in fact is the case.
162 Safety might prompt swift action from code enforcement. King said that she thought that it
163 had been reported as a safety issue three or four years after it burned down since it is/was on
164 the direct route to/from the schools and recreational facilities. Nothing ever happened. Bill
165 Haneline, a private citizen, commented that he had reported the problem to code enforcement
166 several times and the county said that the owners have been fined and that the fines are
167 growing larger. Haldeman will contact code enforcement again.
- 168 C. Unused Land on Eurys Solar Project – R. Caldwell mentioned that Beltran had requested
169 information regarding the status of the unused land at the former Eurys solar project site. R.
170 Caldwell will follow up with the county and see that the information is provide to the sponsor
171 group.
- 172 D. Summer Sponsor Group Meetings – R. Caldwell suggested that the sponsor group “go dark”
173 in July and August unless there are important items that can’t wait until September. If more
174 discussion on this item is necessary, then it can take place at the June meeting.

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176 King motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:16PM. Webb seconded. The motion passed
177 unanimously (6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained)