

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOULEVARD COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP (BCPG)
MEETING MINUTES FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2025**

BCPG meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

This meeting was shared on Zoom.

ROLL CALL

1. Manuel Casanova Jr.
2. Earl Goodnight
3. Carl Anderson III
4. Anthony Ralphs
5. Melanie Hayden
6. Michael Coyne (absent, unexcused)
7. Nancy Good

A quorum was present

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 2nd MEETING

Motion was made by Casanova to approve the October minutes with noted corrections. Second was made by Good

Vote: 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent Motion carried

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

No public comments were presented.

ACTION ITEMS

Member Hayden was recused from the Board's discussions and vote on the Starlight Solar Project because her property borders a project parcel.

1. "NO STARLIGHT SOLAR" PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Thomas Wall (Resident of Boulevard of 9 years) gave a proposal & presentation for suggested addendums and alternatives to the Starlight Solar Project.

- Began by thanking the BPG for being willing to remain engaged on the issue long enough to give the community additional time to propose enhancements and suggestions to the Starlight Solar Project.
- Dubbed the "Fire Safety Community First Alternative"
- He presented various suggestions read from an attached letter which was printed and distributed for all interested community members.
- The letter presented a variety of different ideas which were input by different community members, who took turns speaking about different subject matters of which they had expertise.
- Jacumba Hot Springs Resident & Hotel Owner Jeff Osborne spoke about the potential for everyone to see where their houses sit in relation to this project by checking Map Mode on the County's assessment parcel map.
- Jeff also mentioned an issue called "Curtailement," where California's grid infrastructure is insufficient, and cannot contain all the energy being produced from renewables.

Local Resident Michael Carroll presented a map of the Starlight Solar Project & Expressed concerns with Setbacks + Fire Safety:

- In relation to his nearby location, and the surrounding neighbors' locations.
- He mentioned that the unobstructed view of Boundary Peak was one of the biggest reasons why he wanted an increased setback.

- During his presentation, someone mentioned a purported 1000-foot setback was necessary to prevent heat capture generated from the panels to affect the surrounding area.
- Jeff asked if Nick Koutoufidis, County Project Planner, had any input or information about what he's seen proposed as general standards for setbacks.
- Nick maintained that he generally does not provide counsel on technical matters of issues, but shared he has seen setbacks ranging from approx. 100 - 350 feet.
- Community member Melanie Hayden mentioned that Cal-Fire recommends that houses retain at least 100 feet of defensible space away from flammables and questioned why there would not be setback requirements for potentially flammable battery storage units.
- Jeff wondered if the batteries could be distributed throughout the property with the idea of reducing concentration of potential flammables in one specific area.
- Within this map analysis someone mentioned that solar panels have reflective glares that can confuse birds by resembling lakes in the distance.
- Concerns expressed over the ground being unable to receive or absorb moisture due to the panels blocking rain from falling in certain areas.

Community Member: Leona Grunow, Ethnobiologist from Rose Acres Farms

- Introduced herself as a member of the Boulevard community, from the local Rose Acres Farm, described her qualification as a Ethnobiologist & an Ethnobotanist, as well as a permaculture student, as such she wished to share several suggestions, For her portion of the presentation she recommended:
1. Decomposing woodchips or other mulch to help cover the ground below the solar panels, so as to reduce the radial heat impact, by retaining moisture on the ground, collected environmentally, naturally, without irrigation, stored in this mulch, or woodchip, to both keep ground temperatures cool, and prevent potential ground fires from spreading in the event that one of the panels should catch fire
 2. Hydroseeding perennials without irrigation
 3. Woodchip fire-safety was discussed with regard to its flammability - Rototilling wood chips or covering them with dirt would mitigate this problem.
 4. Depressions in the ground could help prevent runoffs
 5. Many seeds which are naturally in the soil will grow groundcover - naturally if they're given some type of protective mulch-like (or woodchips) to retain the soil's natural moisture after rain, which will thus reduce wildfire risk.

General Community Member Inquiries About Starlight:

- Would it be possible to transplant plants which are by the panels that are transplantable?
 - How will these panels affect migration pathways?
 - How will this affect bird traffic along the pacific flyway?
 - Is there a deadline to when this project recommendation must be given?
 - How will "lake-effect" be mitigated to prevent harm to birds?
 - How does this project benefit any BPG members directly?
- Is there a way to include an updated Draft EIR that includes all the updated information?

1. **DRAFT EIR FOR THE STARLIGHT SOLAR PROJECT (PDS2022-MUP-22-010):** The Draft EIR was brought to a Board vote in the last meeting of the BCPG. The Board vote did not approve the Draft EIR as presented. Chair advised that any vote going forward will be on the project only.

Prior to BPG discussions, Chair Goodnight acknowledged and thanked Pam Wiseman, Leona Grunow, Weena Joshi, Ken Kramer, Rebecca Berggren and Mara Harris for their input and information supplied for the meeting.

After long deliberation, and presentations given from multiple members of the community, and after Nick Koutoufidis explained that the County needed a response from the Board, Vice Chair Nancy Good mentioned that these discussions had been ongoing with Starlight Solar for over 4 years and rejected the notion that the Community had not been considered in the planning and notification of these discussions.

She also noted that there had been significantly less participation on behalf of the community, during the meeting the month prior. These fluctuations in civic participation can demonstrate a lack of cohesive involvement, which makes it hard to build consensus.

A motion was made by Good to approve the Starlight Solar Project with the contingencies listed in the Fire-Safety and Community Buffer Alternate plan. Second was made by Casanova.

Vote: 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain (Ralphs), 1 Recused (Hayden), 1 Absent

Motion carried: Starlight Solar Project approved with alternate contingencies.

GROUP BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE PARK – STUDY AND SITE UPDATE**

Chair shared an update on the progress of the OHV Feasibility Study. To date, they have exchanged hundreds of emails with more than 2,000 individuals subscribed to the OHV mailing list. All this feedback and data is being consolidated into a clear, comprehensive report. They plan to finalize and release the report to the public this winter.

A copy of the OHV Team email containing contact information was included in the agenda packet.

- **CLIMATE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

The Planning & Development Services (PDS) held a virtual (Zoom) public meeting on October 28, this was the second public meeting on the Program and Code updates, offering an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed details that were developed based on input received from the first public meeting held on July 22, 2025.

- **REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 PARK LAND DEDICATION ORDINANCE (PLDO) PRIORITY LIST**

Chair reminded that requests be turned in at the December Planning meeting. Lists will be compiled and submitted to the PLDO.

Priority list must be completed and returned to the PLDO prior to January 1, 2026.

- **SANDAG UNINCORPORATED REPRESENTATION**

The Association of Planning Groups minutes for SANDAG's September meeting were provided in the agenda packet. Chair Goodnight drew attention to SANDAG's Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) program. This was a program the previous SANDAG CEO was pushing, with his departure hopes were high the VMT program would go away. Website links were provided at the end of the minutes for additional information.

- **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

San Diego County has added the thirteenth firefighting chopper to its fleet, a Sikorsky S70 Firehawk. It has a thousand gallons of water tank on board, a hoist for rescues and can fly faster than most. The Firehawk can also carry out firefighting flights at night,

- **REVITALIZATION & FIRE SAFE COUNCIL REPORTS**

Fire Safe: The next community cleanup is in Potrero on 11/15. Tires will be accepted (10 tires limit). The next chipping event is in Boulevard on 11/22. Flyers were made available.

Revitalization: During the month of November SDG&E is scheduled to refurbish the Resource Center restrooms to ADA compliances,

PROJECT UPDATES

1. **100 MW STARLIGHT SOLAR AND BATTERY STORAGE PROJECT**

Update on this project was covered in the Action Items of this agenda.

2. 74 MW RUGGED SOLAR PROJECT

Per Jim Whalen nothing new to report.

NO MOVEMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS 3 THROUGH 7 SINCE THE JUNE UPDATE.

ADJOURNMENT

The BCPG meeting was adjourned at 9:04 PM

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday December 4, 2025

BCPG November meeting minutes were approved, with correction of typo, by the group on December 4, 2025.

Signed: Earl Goodnight, Chair



For more information contact Earl Goodnight, email blvdgoodnight@gmail.com, Current and past meeting agendas and approved minutes are posted on the County website @ <http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/gpupdate/comm/blvd.html>.