

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOULEVARD PLANNING GROUP
APPROVED MINUTES /SUMMARY FOR JANUARY 3, 2012 **

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:05 PM at the Boulevard Fire Training / Community Room, 39919 Ribbonwood Road, Boulevard CA 91905

A. ROLL CALL: Members present: 1) Melody Ponchot; 3) Chris Noland; 4) Donna Tisdale; 5) Robert Maupin; 7) Jeffrey McKernan: (Seats 1& 6 vacant)

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETINGS OF NOVEMBER 1, AND DECEMBER 13, 2012

- M/S: Noland/Maupin: Approve minutes for Nov 1, 2012: Passed 5-0-0
- M/S: Noland/Ponchot: Approve minutes for Dec 13, 2012: Passed: 5-0-0

D. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION:

- Complaints were registered from residents in the Boulevard, Tierra Heights, and McCain Valley area on the nuisance and distraction created by the bright red pulsing night light recently installed on the new Border Patrol facility's communications tower.
- Agent Marzec acknowledged that complaints had been received. Lights are in compliance with FAA requirements and complaints have gone up the chain of command for response.

E. ACTION ITEMS:

1. SOL ORCHARD BOULEVARD SOLAR MAJOR USE PERMIT APPLICATION (P12-025) FOR 108 ACRES SOUTH OF OLD 80 AND EAST OF TULE JIM ROAD:

- Project includes 21,736 axis tracking solar panels (7-10' in height), proposed for 70 of 108 acres : APN: 612-090-17,-19 and 59; 205,000 cubic yards of grading;
- Sol Orchard was represented by Will Pritchard and by Chris Brown Steven and Steve Wragg with RBF Consulting.
- Plot plans /aerial photo were displayed, showing proximity of adjacent non-participating residents to the north, east, west and south.
- Applicant stated they are focusing on smaller projects that do not need new transmission.
- This is a 5 MW project with SDG&E Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) in hand.
- The plot plan shows the largest possible foot print.
- This is the only Sol Orchard Boulevard project. The 108 acres has been purchased. It was previously the Elder Subdivision project east of Tule Jim Road and abutting SDG&E's site for the new expanded Boulevard Substation.
- The other 4 Boulevard/Crestwood projects included in the PPA have been dropped.
- Draft studies are with the County for review and cannot be released to group.
- They will use single-axis tracking PV units with maximum height of 7-10'.
- They claimed no errant reflections from tracking units that are easier to screen.
- 19 acre feet of water for construction with .8 acre feet per year for panel washing.
- Off-site mitigation lands, portion of property could be put into conservation
- There is a well on-site but no-on-site water or other groundwater will be used.
- Applicant claims that there will be no adverse impacts or errand glare / reflection and no groundwater use were challenged based on common sense, photographs of other

installations and the fact that all local water districts also rely on groundwater with no access to imported water.

- Chair commented that onsite well should be destroyed to ensure it is not used for construction, as claimed.
- Planner Maupin commented that the estimated amount of water needed equals 6,904,000 gallons which is equal to 21 homes (2 bedroom 2 bath) according to information from the Pine Valley Water District that is also groundwater dependent.
- The Chair expressed concern with electrical and noise pollution from the project's components and 10 large solar inverters that can generate low frequency noise, vibrations, and an annoying humming sound, in addition to noise from the project switchyard, transformers, and new Boulevard Substation equipment, and other adverse project impacts and proximity to adjacent homes, including the historic Ruby Store building that is now a private residence, Historic Rt. 80, fire, loss of chaparral and its ability to sequester carbon above and below ground and to serve as habitat and prevent soil erosions; road bed damage and traffic impacts compounded by cumulative projects.
- Vice-Chair Noland noted the 205,000 cubic yards of soil moved and impacts to groundwater resources from project construction, blasting, storm runoff, and more.
- Applicant responded that there will be no fill, no blasting, just mechanical removal.
- Questions were raised on the water de-ionizing unit needed for solar panel wash water.
- Applicant responded that they are still working on project details.
- Planner Maupin asked about the project's heat radius, noting 170-180 degrees / heat radiation from solar panels.
- Applicant (Pritchard) did not seem to understand the heat island / radiation concerns, claiming that the panels only absorb the sun's energy.
- Planner Ponchot stated concerns with large number and size of cumulative renewable energy / transmission projects, historic and cultural resources, basically raping the area.
- Local resident H. Hernandez expressed concerns with so many projects creating such major adverse impacts on groundwater resources; impacts to local residents; views; glare from solar panels; property values; livestock; pets. Lots of local wildlife, resident and migratory, that will be impacted, and a delicate balance destroyed. These projects kill and displace wildlife.
- Hernandez pointed out the scenic photographs of local landscapes, unique boulder displays, and the historic McCain Ranch house (McCain Valley Road) on the walls of the meeting room as an example of the valued resources that may be lost. She rides horses around the area for pleasure and uses her 1 hour commute home from work to decompress knowing she has a beautiful place to come home to. She will no longer be able to decompress or enjoy coming home once all the industrial solar, wind and transmission projects are installed and operating.
- Resident L. Shannon expressed concerns with loss of recreation access and adverse impacts on groundwater resources, wildlife, habitat (hawks nesting in Oaks), livestock
- Resident T. DeGroot complained that project night lighting is destroying views, star gazing, and dark skies, things she values after working long hours in town.
- Chris Brown stated Sol Orchard will be complying with Dark Sky policies with shielding and directing lights downward.
- Retired Cal Fire Battalion Chief, M. Ostrander stated concerns with lack of public services and agencies issuing 'will serve letters' despite that lack of resources, staffing and funding. Volunteer Fire Departments in Jacumba and Boulevard have 'dark days' with no volunteers on duty. A valid Fire Protection Plan is needed.

- Ostrander also stated that while the inverters can be de-energized, the solar panels cannot be de-energized while the sun is shining and even under certain moonlight conditions. Lines still have high voltage until de-energized which can take time. Water cannot generally be used on electrical fires unless in aerosol form. Foam will be needed along with specialized training for local service agencies. High volunteer turn-over rate creates problems with retaining fully trained staff.
- A young lady expressed concerns with adverse impacts family's historic home; the health and safety of her family and local wildlife; voltage dumping and electricity going into the ground and migrating into homes and habitat; blinding glare from multiple tracking solar projects planned on virtually all sides of their home (family history of light sensitivity and cataracts. They moved here to escape the city. Their home and surrounding open space is their retreat with lots of wildlife, trees, with high groundwater levels and adjacent riparian areas.
- M. Ostrander stated that variable frequency drives / inverters are grounded and do generate increased ground currents and radio frequency radiation.
- Planner Ponchot asked if Sol Orchard is insured to cover the costs of a major fire ignited by their equipment, mentioning the Shockey Fire that burned over 2,500 acres in the Tierra Del Sol area, and comments from fire fighters about not needed any new ignition sources.
- In response to questions, Agent Marzec confirmed that the new Border Patrol facility includes solar on their parking shades structures, their security lighting is Dark Sky compliant, and remarked that the Border Patrol (BP) does provide service to our community.
- L. Ostrander commented that wildfires put BP agents at even greater risk than they already face in their dangerous jobs.
- C. Lenz asked about clearing vegetation from property and impacts on flood control.
- Mr. Renard asked how they will control erosion since he lives in the drainage / flood path of the project site and has witnessed flash flood type events.
- Chris Brown responded that they follow a hydro modification program and they may use gravel, vegetation, or soil binders to reduce run-off.
- Planner Maupin commented that soil binders can contaminate groundwater and asked what those effects would be. He also stated that when SDG&E's 500kV Southwest Powerlink was forced on his property his wife was diagnosed, not long after energy started flowing, with a bone marrow cancer. Concerns with cumulative impacts from multiple projects.
- R. Lawrence said 'thanks for coming but this project will cost a fortune'.
- A. DeGroot asked for the project price and mentioned lucrative incentives.
- Will Pritchard responded that it will cost \$2.25 per watt and agreed they were here for the incentives.
- Mr. Renard complained that their home will be surrounded 360 degrees with Sol Orchard, Soitec's LanWest and LanEast. There will be no escape for his family. He asked what R&D had been conducted for these projects.
- Will Pritchard said they have two projects in operation: 1 MW in Victorville and one at 1 MW Nichols Pistachio Farm in Hanford, CA

M/S: Noland/McKernan: Deny Sol Orchard's application for concerns stated above(adverse impacts to public health and safety, fire risk, socioeconomics, property values, groundwater, visual, cultural, historic & biological resources); submit comments including project's failure to comply with Boulevard Community Plan and General Plan Update; request a full EIR:

Passed: 5-0-0

2. SDG&E's NOTICE OF APPLICATION PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT TRANSMISSION LINE 6931: FIRE HARDENING /SHU'LUUK WIND INTERCONNECTION PROJECT: CPUC APPLICATION NO. 12-12-007:

(Application documents posted here: <http://www.sdge.com/regulatory-filing/3968/sdge%E2%80%99s-application-permit-construct-tl-6931-fire-hardeningwind-interconnect>).

- Don Parent was present for SDG&E but said he was not prepared to answer any questions about the project.
- The Chair reported that the application states that 49 existing wood poles will be replaced with 53 double circuit galvanized steel poles along 5.2 miles of existing 69kV line (TL 6931) starting at the eastern boundary of the Campo Reservation, south of Historic Rt. 80, west of Live Oak Springs, to the expanded Boulevard Substation near Tule Jim Road for fire hardening.
- A new second circuit would serve as the 138kV interconnection line for Shu'luuk Wind (if wind project is constructed) or left vacant for a second circuit to be installed as needed for future projects.
- Chair reported that SDG&E has requested an expedited ex-parte CPUC approval with no Permit to Construction, no EIR, and no public hearings.
- Shu'luuk Wind is a Connected Action Project so is the Gen-tie is a commercial line that does not qualify for eminent domain condemnation. Private property owners are not required to provide SDG&E with the new 100' Right of Way (ROW) easement across 29 private properties. SDG&E needs to negotiate ROW and payment with willing owners
- SDG&E's 50-100MW Manzanita Wind, reportedly under current negotiations tribal leadership, could be the future project using the new 138kV line and easement, subjecting those owners /residents to increased electrical pollution and reduced fire defensibility.
- Maps also show 5 project staging / construction areas planned for about 63 acres of private property with 3 helicopter landing zones.
- The Chair stated that one site appears to be the same footprint as the LanWest Solar project which the LanWest consultant, J. Whalen, confirmed after reviewing map.
- Planner McKernan remarked that this project could be like Sunrise Powerlink that got multiple variances to work 7 days a week, speculating this project could get a similar deal creating an ongoing nuisance and disruption for impacted residents.
- Mr. Renard asked if a bond can be required for damages.
- Public Comments are due by January 13. Contact CPUC Public Advisor at public.advisor.la@cpuc.ca.gov or 866-849-8390.
- New commenting restrictions / directions were discussed.

M/S: Noland/Maupin: Authorize Chair to send comment letter raising issues and concerns to County with copies to CPUC, Board of Supervisors and PDS; request a full EIR and Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity; request local hearings in Boulevard; stress cumulative impact projects:

Passed: 5-0-0

3. HISTORIC DESIGNATION FOR OLD RUBY STORE BUILDING LOCATED AT 41148 HISTORIC RT 80:

- The Renard family, current owners, were present.
- Group support was requested for their efforts to secure historic designation for their historic building that serves as their residence.
- The building, formerly known as the Ruby Store or Ruby's Place, is located on just under ½ acre adjacent to Historic Rt. 80, a former stage coach route.
- The Ruby and McCain families were some of the first non-native families to settle here in the late 1880's making the area the heart of the early Boulevard/Manzanita

settlements.

- Planner Maupin recalled going to Ruby's store with his father in the 40's /50's and visiting with Don Ruby.
- The Chair reported that Ella McCain's diary (available at the Stone Store Museum in Campo) confirms that the original school house was built in the immediate area using lean-to shelters and outside restrooms.
- Old maps show locations of parts of the 1865/Walker Express Route and facilities were destroyed when I-8 was built through the McCain Valley area north of Historic Rt. 80.
- The Express Route ran through the top of McCain Valley and down through Walker Canyon that runs along I-8 down to Carrizo Gorge and Jacumba.
- Community support of those present was unanimous.

M/S: Send letters of support to appropriate agencies supporting historic designation for the Renard's Ruby Store building; add to revitalization matrix: Passed: 5-0-0.

4. SHU'LUUK WIND DRAFT EIS (DEIS) RELEASED FOR 45-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Chair reported that the BIA had informed her that the Draft EIS was posted prematurely at www.shuluukwind.com in error with incorrect hearing dates.
- The DEIS will be reportedly be published in the Fed Register on January 11th starting a 45 day comment period.
- Two public hearings will be held in January at Alpine Community Center and Campo Tribal Hall.
- The proposed project would generate between 160MW and 250MW, with 54 and 85 turbines depending on the alternative selected.
- A new 300 acre – 40 MW solar project is now proposed as part of one project alternative.
- The study area covers 4,739 acres, about 1/3 of the 16,000 acre Campo Reservation.
- 2-3 MW Turbines will have a tower hub height up to approximately 308 feet, a rotor diameter up to approximately 414 feet, and a total height up to approximately 515 feet.
- New project summary information and map is included in agenda packet;
- Maps make it difficult to determine where Shu'luuk Wind substation will be located.
- Planner Noland stated that his public comments made at the 2011 DEIS Scoping hearing were not included in the transcripts, and it looked like others were missing, too, based on the number of people in line with him, and just a few comments in the transcript.
- Comments were made that another non-planning group community meeting should be held to provide information and outreach.
- Thursday, January 17th was selected as the target date for such a meeting.
- Need to contact Chief Francois for permission to use the fire station bay to accommodate a large crowd.
- No action taken. Project will be placed on February 7th agenda for action with an invitation to Campo Chairman Goff and Invenergy to participate and answer questions.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2013:

- Chair reported that on Dec 5th the Board of Supervisors voted to allow the status quo on chair rotation / limits leaving that decision up to individual groups
- **M/S: Noland/McKernan: Nominate Donna Tisdale as Chair: Passed: 5-0-0**
- **M/S: Tisdale/Ponchot: Nominate Chris Noland as Vice-Chair: Passed: 5-0-0**
- **M/S: Tisdale/Noland: Nominate Melody Ponchot as Secretary: Passed: 5-0-0**

F. GROUP BUSINESS: Announcements; Correspondence Received; discussion items; project updates

1. Border Patrol: issues covered above. New facility expected to open in March
2. Revitalization: Tammy Daubach gave report. Jan. 14th Revitalization Meeting with Supervisor Dianne Jacob at Campo Community Center at either 9:30 AM or 2:30 PM. Need to confirm
3. Fire Safe Council: Fire Station/Community Center is on the Revitalization Matrix. There was a discussion with Chief Francois who will raise issue with Supervisor Jacob that over \$100, 000 was spent on Fire Training / community modular after fire department took over former community room and kitchen for volunteer fire fighter quarters, and he believes that the Sheriff Department can and should accommodate continued community use. Next meeting is Jan. 26th at Boulevard Fire Training Room. Fire fee has been reduced by \$35 based on existing fees/contracts.
4. Other: N/A
5. **WIND ENERGY ORDINANCE & PLAN AMENDMENT HEARING EXPECTED IN MARCH 2013:**
 - The Wind Energy Ordinance & Plan Amendment will change the Boulevard Community Plan and required MUP Findings to allow industrial scale wind industrial scale solar projects where they are not currently allowed.
 - March 13 is tentative Board of Supervisors hearing / decision.
 - Documents are posted here: <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/ordamend.html>.
6. **NOTICE OF PROGRAMMATIC EIR FOR 4 SOITEC SOLAR PROJECTS TOTALING 1,473 ACRES AND 168.5 MW OF CONCENTRATING PV SOLAR:**
 - 60 MW Tierra Del Sol Solar and 80 MW Rugged Solar to be evaluated at a project-specific level.
 - 6.5 MW LanWest and 22 MW LanEast will be evaluated at a program level.
 - General Plan Amendment, Rezone, Major Use Permits and the Disestablishment of an Agricultural Preserve.
 - Soitec's projects are not currently allowed under Boulevard Community Plan.
 - Comments due no later than **January 7, 2013 at 4:00 p.m.** County contact: Robert Hingtgen: (858) 694-3712 or Robert.Hingtgen@sdcounty.ca.gov ; <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/ceqa/GPA12-010.html>.
 - No new information
7. **SHU'LUUK WIND DEIS SCOPING REPORT:**
 - Duplicative with release of Shu'luuk Wind DEIS (Item E-4 above)
8. **ROUGH ACRES RANCH CAMPGROUND/CONFERENCE CENTER/ROCKCRUSHING: MUP #11-002; 3300-12-020(P12-020),3300-12-021(P-12-021);**
 - 2750 MCCAIN VALLEY ROAD: 753 ACRES ZONED RL80/A72: APN #'S 611-060-03; 611-070-01; 611-070-03 &611-030-01.
 - Owner Rough Acres Foundation / Jeff Hamann.
 - Major Use Permit for Conference /Corporate Retreat Center; Skeet Shooting range; 2 Campgrounds with 168 sites; 200 seat amphitheater; 3 private residences with barns ; agricultural barns; rock crushing.
 - Access via Ribbonwood and McCain Valley Road.
 - County Project Mgr.Larry Hofreiter: Larry.Hofreiter@sdcounty.ca.gov ; (858) 694-8846. *No new information*
9. **ENEL'S 158 MW JEWEL VALLEY WIND & 10 MW SOLAR:**
 - MET towers installed for proposed industrial wind project both north and south of I-8 in the Jewel Valley and McCain Valley neighborhoods: Enel's documents posted at: <http://www.jewelvalleyproject.com/> , *No new information*
10. **IBERDROLA'S 200 MW TULE WIND:**

- Approved by BLM and County. Permits from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and State Lands Commission are still pending.
- Notice to Proceed for Right of Way and Geotechnical work have been issued:
<http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/info/newsroom/2012/september/pre-cnstructiontesting.html>
<http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/ca/pdf/elcentro/nepa/tule.Par.13714.File.dat/Tule%20NTP.pdf> ;
- Chair reported that several non-profits expect to file suit against federal approvals.

11. SDG&E's new ECO Substation, transmission line, and Boulevard Substation expansion:

- Approved by the CPUC and BLM: http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/FINAL_DECISION/169646-07.htm.
- SDG&E has announced commencement of construction.
- Trucks have been seen in the area.

12. SEMPRA'S CROSS-BORDER TRANSMISSION LINE WILL CONNECT THEIR ENERGIA SIERRA JUAREZ WIND PROJECT WITH SDG&E'S ECO-SUBSTATION:

- Approved by CPUC, BLM and Dept of Energy: <http://esjprojecteis.org/>
- The Chair reported that two non-profits filed suit against Dept of Energy approval on December 26th and the Mexican lawsuit is still in court.
- It was alleged that new Boulevard hotel (Lux Inn) ownership was secured in part through SDG&E contract and commitment for guaranteed occupancy during local construction projects.

G. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:30 PM. NEXT MEETING SET FOR FEBRUARY 7, 2012

Approved by Group on: 2-7-13 (5-0-0)

Melody Ponchot, Secretary_____

For more information contact: Donna Tisdale, Chair at 619-766-4170 or tisdale.donna@gmail.com