

**County of San Diego
Descanso Community Planning Group
Minutes of Regular Meeting Agenda
February 20, 2025 @ 6:00PM
Descanso Town Hall, 24536 Viejas Grade, Descanso, CA 91916**

Archived Agendas & Minutes - <http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/pds/Groups/descanso.html>
County Planning & Sponsor Groups – <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/Communitygroups.html>

A. Roll Call

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|----------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| 1. Kerry Forrest | 4. John Elliott | 7. Aubrey Taft |
| 2. Jo Ellen Quinting | 5. Mark Gassert | |
| 3. Riley Burrell | 6. Camille O'Briant | |

B. Pledge of Allegiance 6 p.m.

C. Approval of the Minutes for the meeting of January 16, 2025 **Motion to approve: Gassert/Taft 6-0-1(Quinting)-0**

D. Public Communication: Opportunity for members of the public to speak to the Group on any subject matter within the Group's jurisdiction that is not on the posted agenda. Group action is not permitted on items not on the agenda in accordance with the Brown Act. **Juliet O'Toole wants community support surrounding her motorcycle accident (June 1, 2024) in which she became disabled. O'Toole has spent time tracking vehicles that come off the 8 East at Japatul Valley Rd: 190 vehicle avg within 30-60 min period. A number of vehicles run the stop sign. O'Toole wants to petition for a traffic light at the location to prevent further accidents.**

Community member John Thompson recently passed away.

E. Action Items

1. Input on prioritizing capital improvement and maintenance projects for county maintained assets. Camille and AubryReport **Report: first 7 pages are from Public Works dept presentation from previous DCPG meeting. Following are photos of road conditions in recent rain storm collected by O'Briant and Taft. Packet includes 6 road/drainage improvements needed on Manzanita/Oak Grove/Pilawee-wee where Jan '24 flooding occurred. Forrest says we will CC Supervisor Joel Anderson on this submission. Submission date is March 30th. Motion to pass submission of the CIP projects for county maintained assets: Mark/Elliott 6-0-0-0**

F. Group Business

1. Announcements and Correspondence Received **Forrest presents a receipt for printer ink for printing agendas and correspondence received: \$40.90. Motion to submit for reimbursement: Quinting/O'Briant 6-0-0-0**
2. Discussion Items
 - a. Caltrans, placement of "No Parking" Signs on Hwy 79 at Junction. Also DCPG requests for speed limits and Stop signs. Caltrans to attend meeting **Caltrans representative unable to make this meeting at the last minute. Requests phone call with Chair instead.**
Background: business owners on Hwy 79 Junction area notified by Caltrans of lack of parking encroachment fee payment, must pay or all parking banned. March 1st deadline.
Community member concerns: how would this affect ADA accessibility? If parking is even further away, elderly or disabled members will frequent the businesses less. Residents with horse trailers and/or large trucks concerned about not being able to park if right side of Hwy 79 parking is banned. No unanimous agreement on best approach to Caltrans (narrowing scope vs suggesting other solutions, e.g. reducing speed limit, inserting stop sign/light). No one has been

able to reach Drew George, resident with experience in negotiating with Caltrans.

Property owner concerns: express confusion over unclear/conflicting statements from agencies, including: original easement gave an 80 foot distance that goes into Descanso Junction building (owners unsure why this was allowed), parking encroachment permit payment option online does not exist (it is under a different name, unsure why), no answer on cost of permit, ineligible for business district label assignment (which would allow for speed limit decrease), concerns over loss of business from lack of parking/parking permit fees as well as loss of livelihood. Vendors and suppliers will be affected and less travelers passing by will stop.

DCPG plans to schedule a meeting at Assemblymember Carl DeMaio or Senator Brian Jones' office with Carl, Brian, rep from tonight's audience, rep from DCPG, decision maker from Caltrans, Supervisor Joel Anderson, & affected property owners. Volunteers from audience: Pat & Beth Landman. Forrest will contact higher ups in District 11. Community petitions will be sent to Caltrans, Carl DeMaio, Brian Jones.

b. Association of Planning Groups Items for Discussion Mark Gassert Reports

Group is working on Hwy 67 evacuation route

c. Air Burner/Burn Box Brush/Fire management report, Mark

USFS has just received 2 'Burn Boxes', a mobile chipper alternative that burns 2000 lbs of vegetation, creates valuable biochar. Sale of biochar is a business opportunity. USFS will demo once they receive training. Unsure of timeline and whether it can be rented out. Goal is to encourage state to use this product. Descanso Fire Safe Council may provide another demo of the product. Fix Our Forests Act - a federal bill that requires maintenance of forests on federal land to reduce wildfire risk - recently passed the House of Representatives. Congressman Darrell Issa and local politician Andrew Hayes interested in helping with similar legislation at the state level. Gassert was told mechanical removal of vegetation would not work in the state park, where ceanothus has reigned since after the 2003 Cedar Fire.

d. Crest CPG: Calling for increased fuel reduction, fire breaks, and controlled burns to mitigate wildfire risk in rural San Diego county **DCPG members to review document to see if we can adopt similar resolutions.**

e. Report on Descanso Fire Wise program, Riley **Descanso Fire Safe Council plans to do a spring chipping event in April/May. Trying to set a location, limited options in Descanso. Will report date/location at next DCPG meeting. Becoming Firewise certified is a future goal of the Fire Safe Council.**

f. Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) and draft ordinances for the proposed Socially Equitable Cannabis Program (Cannabis Program) are available for comment **Chair shared permit eligibility requirements and urged review of Draft EIR by interested persons.**

g. Board of Supervisors public hearing to consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-29 Consolidated Plan and FY 2025-26 Annual Plan. The Board will consider the proposed use of an estimated: \$4,283,065 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds; \$2,870,446 in HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) funds; \$371,576 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds; and \$6,369,845 in Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) funds that the County will receive from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

h. Training and form 700 reports

3. Request for Agenda Items on Upcoming Agendas

Caltrans meeting update, Crest CPG resolutions, Descanso Fire Safe Council, Wildfire

issues

4. Meeting Updates, next meeting: March 20, 2025 @ 6:00PM.

G. ADJOURNMENT 7:38 pm

Any Questions or Comments; Please contact Kerry Forrest, Chair: descansocpg@gmail.com

DCPG Statement *The Descanso Community Planning Group was formed for the purpose of advising and assisting the Director of Planning, the Zoning Administrator, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors in the preparation, amendment and implementation of community and sub-regional plans. The Descanso Community Planning Group is an advisory body only.*

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