

SOUTH SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA  
RAMONA COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP  
15873 HWY 67, RAMONA, CA 92065  
RAMONA COMMUNITY CENTER  
434 AQUA LANE, RAMONA

FINAL Meeting Minutes for  
August 30, 2022

1. CALL TO ORDER – meeting called to order by Elio Noyas at 7:04pm
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – led by Elio Noyas
3. DETERMINATION OF MEMBERS PRESENT  
Consideration Will be given to Members Who Have Missed Consistently. They Will Be Removed and Will Need to Reapply for Membership.  
Attendees: Ken Brennecke, Deb Foster, Lynn Hopewell, Elio Noyes, and Mike Workman  
Excused Absence: George Eastwood  
Absent: Thomas Levin
4. Corrections/Approval to South Subcommittee Minutes 8-2-22 – motion to approve minutes as presented made by Elio Noyas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Deb Foster. Motion carried 5-0-0-2 (George Eastwood and Thomas Levin absent)
5. ANNOUNCEMENTS - None
6. PRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY - None

ACTION ITEM:

7. ZAP 22-006. The proposed project would be a request for a Minor Use Permit to construct 39 megawatts (MW) / 78 megawatt hours (MWH) of battery energy storage located on approximately 1.70 acres at the southwest corner of an 11-acre property on the north side of Creelman Ln between Ashley and Keyes. The property has a single-family residence. The proposed project would include 32.2-foot long, 5.6-foot wide, and 8.7-foot-tall battery storage containers on individual concrete equipment pads, approximately 5-feet apart, and would connect to the substation on the south side of Creelman Lane via underground lines. Carried over from 8-4-22 RCPG meeting

Elio Noyas shared that there was a new planner at last meeting, so we tabled this item. With new planner change don't have any new information. They are doing the environmental impact studies. Wants public to share their thoughts and if they want a change that needs to be told. They have a design and that's what they're going to push for. Scotty Ensign had asked about what if it looked like a barn, is it something the residents would like. Elio said we represent the residents we'll vote as the residents want. Thought maybe between last South Subcommittee meeting and Ramona Community Planning Group meeting (RCPG) that maybe you thought about what was said. But that the County can do what they want. The proponent is willing to work with us, the water district had offered property, but proponent said it's too far away. Maybe it's something proponent or county will consider. Currently the proponent is working on the design they presented. The proponent won't be attending tonight's meeting or at the RCPG meeting. Doing the environment study but don't know how that's going and if it'll impact the construction of the battery storage area.

Bob Romeo, resident near the project said design wise looked at the sketch and it's horrible, there's no fencing, no safety conditions, no cameras, no emergency notifications out of it. There's nothing specific. Are they going to put fencing around it. It's in a flood plain, he'd like to know what they're going to look at (environmental) we've had a drought but 20 years ago the rain washed out the road. He called for an environmental study in the report, including flood plain information. The detail on plan is inadequate. The gentleman last week had a good idea, be specific about the problems. Road access is a problem, the fire department needs to be involved if there's a melt-down, the safety issues are very concerning. It's not a simple thing. The proponents must think it's a slam dunk. At the end he doesn't want it. If noxious fumes are emitted that's not a good thing. They have to be changed out every 3-5 years so there's increased traffic. The fire department is a big one if they need to drive down there and have access. Also, paving the road vs. leaving like it is. Elio said they can push for the road to be paved. When SDGE put in their project didn't pave road past Ashley.

Jeff Lachind, area resident, is new to the area. Where is it, what's the APN number, how can he see the plan. Where is the power coming from and where is it going to. Who benefits from the stored power, do they sell it locally. Who's going to benefit locally. Are they partnering with SDGE or are they going to power with broker. He drove down Creelman Lane, maybe have some landscaping and mature oaks. Are they buying property/leasing. Paving Creelman Lane any fire department said if the access is more than 150' they need a way to turn around. They need to look at it as a series of barns. They need to take in consideration fire engines being able to turn around. Flooding can short out the batteries. Elio let the group know that the property is being leased for the battery storage, the person that benefits is the company that builds it. They buy the power at a lower rate and then sell it back at a higher rate. The power goes right back to the grid. It's not to power Ramona during a fire. It's to go back when it's off-peak hours. Jeff so they save SDGE money. Elio said they're buying power from them. They store power and then sell to SDGE through the power station.

Troy Henry, lives on Ashley Rd. and said Hayden Forward lives on the north side of this property and he sent a letter to Kristi Mansolf (Elio read Hayden's letter and Lynn Hopewell entered into minutes). Hayden lives directly north of the property where batteries will be. His major concern is the pipeline on Creelman Lane as it's a -dead end pipeline. There's only one hydrant on Creelman Lane and he doesn't believe it'll be adequate in the event of a fire at the battery storage location.

Sissy Paredes shared that her concern is how thick of a pad is going under the batteries as it borders up to her fence. If it leaks it goes into the ground and her well stores. Deb Foster asked are you talking about the flat pad. Sissy said yes, she'd talking about the flat pad under the batteries. Concerned about any leakage that seeps into the ground water and there well is only 30' from location. The county water commission came out 4 times 2 years ago and gave them a geological map and there's a river running right down the middle of where they want to put the battery storage. When it rains that area looks like a river. Unless they're going to divert it, which will ruin pasture and horse pens, where are they going to send that water. We all know that electricity and water don't mix. Creelman Lane is part of a resident's property.

Nora Moran and Manny, live in the last house before the substation, when they bought in 1988 the road wasn't supposed to be there where it connects to Keyes, it was to be an easement so that SDGE

could reach the substation. Another resident that lived past substation didn't want to go around so a graded road was put in. And then they just put the road in. Elio asked so if they're before the easement the idea is to make it possible so people can get to Keyes. Resident said someone took the chain down so people could drive thru the easement. Elio asked if those residents had access to their property another way. Residents said yes down Keyes. Elio asked what the County said. Nora said nothing. If you look at Creelman Lane, it's supposed to go straight to substation. Bob said if they went straight they'd hit an outcropping of rock, so they moved it. Nora said when the solar panels went in On Creelman Lane, they only paved part of it, the other side who cares. Deb asked so if that 150' is taken away what happens. A resident said the dead-end should be at the substation. Deb when she drove out there, she sees Creelman Lane and a long driveway. Sissy's husband said the people that own the property are at Keyes and Creelman. Norah there's a sign at Ashley and Creelman that it's a dead-end. And another resident removed that sign. She's asked that it be put back and SDGE said yeah, yeah, but it never happened. Elio said the County needs to take care of that. Manny said he put a sign up there since people walk there, he put a sign up not responsible if someone gets hurt. Thinks two times someone has crashed into their fence and one ran away.

Elio read Haydn's letter.

*Text of Haydn Forward's Letter:*

I'm writing to express an opinion on the proposed EnerSmart Battery Storage on Creelman Lane.

I ask these comments to be more heavily leveraged in your decision making as I own the neighboring property directly to the north (lot 283-081-04-00 and lot 284-081-07-00) directly to the north/east of the proposed storage site.

It is disappointing the proposed design leaves open to view the industrial inner structure of the storage units, facing both my properties. This design aspect, while easy to correct, clearing diminishes my property values with unnecessary visual unpleasantries. As the south and west side of the structure have sound dampening walls and camouflaged effects to offer improved public comforts. I request the north and east side of the structure offer the same esthetic correctness for all neighbors.

As you likely can determine I'm not against this potential battery storage project, just asking good neighbor practices to be implemented in the planning. With that said, I'm in the process of beginning the permit procedure to build a new primary residence on lot -04 that will be clearly exposed to both the sounds and the visuals of the open northernly side of the storage structure. Additionally, I will build an ADU on lot -07 which likewise will be exposed to the northeasterly open corner of the structure. You can imagine my concerns in visual comforts with the unnecessary opening exposure to the storage are primary and I ask the structure to be closed on all sides to accommodate all neighbors.

Regarding comments from others on battery fire hazard. I'm also considering the biological and environmental risks in water run off should a fire disaster occur. It has been noted by EnerSmart co-founder James Beach no fire history is present with their products. Mr. Beach has stated initiating safety shut down features will distinguish any potential blaze. We all must agree the same logic was true with vehicle battery fires until the first fire happened. In reaction and in case of fire, with the temporary issue of air born pollutants aside, the primary issue would be water run-off from fire crew

efforts to extinguish the blaze. That water run-off containing hazardous chemicals and materials will drain into the USGA listed Ephemeral stream located on my lot -04 adjacent to the proposed storage unit site. That stream would efficiently distribute these hazardous materials for miles. To resolve this, I would suggest a series of interconnected underground cisterns to capture the initial water used to combat the fire. As the cisterns fill the fire department can then pump from the storage in a recycling system.

As a Ramona property owner for 32 years, I appreciate the challenges our planning committee members are faced with and am confident you'll address my concerns in a fair and insightful manner. *Letter was signed, Respectively submitted by Haydn Forward, dated 8/20/22.*

Elio shared that there are four walls on the newest diagram as they want it secure. The walls will be between 9-12' high. They're trying to work with community so it's like what they want. Elio one point will they use firefighting foam? Deb said likely foam will be used and it takes a lot less water as it takes a percentage of foam being used. Hears about their concerns. She has concerns about hazardous materials. Anytime there's a foam release at airport it has to be picked up a certain way as it becomes a hazardous material, and you don't want it in a water way. You don't want to risk the well or natural waterway. People who are going to look at entire picture of environmental aspect she can't imagine them not addressing that. Even with a sub wall there's going to be an area where it won't be contained. Didn't see the distance between each container. Fire engines are big and can't lob things over walls. Not sure if distance is adequate between containers to accommodate fire engines. Sissy asked if there are other substations in Ramona. Elio said yes, but no battery substations. She went out to S2 and there's a large power station there. Deb doesn't know what the fire system is in each container. Bob said they use water to put out fire. Once they enlarge the substation will add more batteries. Elio said the 39 is the capacity for the solar field. If they're putting in more batteries, they will need to put in more solar. A resident shared that there's been studies going on near their home. Deb doesn't remember what's in the batteries. Oil storage tanks have a very concentrated skim. This project should have some kind of containment for the foam and firefighting water. Deb said it sounds like they're doing something like that. Elio said it's self-contained, in the storage container. Deb said they mentioned the wall 9 vs 12', 12' looks like a Costco. Resident said with trees 9' high would hide it. Deb once they put in landscaping will it be maintained. Resident mentioned the landscaping at the solar field and how about 1/3 of the landscaping is dead or dying. Elio encouraged them to contact Code Compliance regarding the degradation of the landscaping at the solar field on Creelman Lane and Ashley. One resident spoke to the president, but if this thing goes through would they put a row of trees in, so they don't have to see the plant. Elio said yes, they'd put in trees. We can't say we don't want it and then go back and ask for adequate landscaping after project is approved. His recommendation on Thursday at the RCPG meeting will be to table it again until we're provided with more information. There's a flood plain, there's a 6" pipeline and only one fire hydrant. Wants to see the biological study. Deb asked who has original plot map, it shows the flood plain. Sissy said they have it, her husband said there's actually 3 underground streams. Elio with building the storage area would that reroute the flood plain water. Resident said yes it would. The flood plain is designated as a US flood plain not County. Elio said he wants to see the studies before making any decisions. Did Scotty request a road base? Elio said they maybe they were going to grade, but not do any paving. Deb said there's nothing saying that the trees will cover the wall. Maybe some sort of

mural so it looks like there isn't a wall. Elio said someone mentioned that, but we don't want to attract more people due to the mural. Sissy said if you add something like that there's more traffic. Lynn Hopewell suggested painting the wall. Ken Brennecke mentioned that this is on A70 ag land. Elio said this project conforms to that designation. Ken it should be our obligation to keep our ag land safe. Bob said an A70 designation allows utilities. Four years ago, they didn't know how to spell lithium ion and didn't have anything to do with putting large batteries in. Sissy said they said it's a small use permit. If 39 batteries are a minor permit than what's the other kind of permit. Ken asked how far away is the land that the water district was willing to provide. Elio someone described it to him but it's not far. Ken the representative said that it's 2.1 miles in our meeting and at the RCPG meeting said 2.4 miles is the depth of their project. If the water district land is closer, it's only eroding their project. Elio said the proponent said no since the property they want to use is closer to the substation. It wouldn't be feasible for them to move to another property. Ken said firefighting foam is extremely carcinogenic. Elio said it may be an easier cleanup using foam. Deb said to clean up foam you have to call a specialized company for clean-up. It's a lot of money to clean up foam. Deb feels like they have true concerns about the battery storage going in. She has the same concerns. Ken said we need to know if the property the water district is offering is 2.1 miles from them. Elio shared that the water district caught wind of the project and said they had property they could use. Resident that worked for water district said the district bought property near chicken ranch near hill for a spray field and thinks that's the place that water district is offering.

Motion made by Elio Noyas to continue to table until we get additional information and environmental impact report, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lynn Hopewell. Motion carried 5-0-0-2 (George Eastwood and Thomas Levin absent).

8. Concerns from Members:  
That at 720 Creelman Lane is an easement being used as a roadway, 728 Creelman Lane is the other property that has an easement being used as a road. There's a dead-end sign at Creelman Lane and Ashley but the chain has been removed that prevented cars from driving down the road.
9. Agenda Item Requests  
None.
10. Adjournment – motion to adjourn made by Elio Noyas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Deb Foster. Motion carried 5-0-0-1 (George Eastwood and Thomas Levin absent). Meeting adjourned at 8:18pm.

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