

SAN DIEGUITO PLANNING GROUP

P.O. Box 2789, Rancho Santa Fe, CA, 92067

Minutes of Meeting

February 8th, 2018

1. CALL TO ORDER: 7:04 P.M. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Present: D. Dill, T. Parillo, S. Biszantz (left at 10:40 pm), M. Hoppenrath, J. Zagara, P. Fisch, N. Christenfeld, S. Williams, J. Arsivaud-Benjamin, D. Willis, S. Thomas (arrived at 7:30 pm)
Absent: L. Lemarie
2. AGENDA REVIEW
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES [Circulated to members during meeting for initials/comments]
4. OPEN FORUM: no comments.
5. GENERAL PLANNING ITEMS:
 - A. **2018 DPW San Dieguito Planning Area Road Improvement and Repair List.** Discuss suggestions for new items to add to list for 2018. Group members provided descriptions of candidate road segments in need of improvements/repair.

Motion: By D. Dill, **second** by J. Zagara, to approve list with additions suggested by group.
Vote: ayes = 10 nos = 0 abstain = 0 absent/vacant = 3
 - B. **Minor Deviation Sign Permit;** two new illuminate wall signs for Rubicon Deli at 4S Commons Town Center, 10550 Craftsman Way, Suite 8-F, San Diego, CA; APN: [678-670-0100](#). Applicant: Regency Centers, Karl Henning, [760.224.7700](#); PDS Planner: Jenna Rody, [858-495-5201](#); SDPG Member: Phil Fisch, [858-592-6758](#).

Motion: By P. Fisch, **second** by S. Thomas, to approve as presented.
Vote: ayes = 10 nos = 0 abstain = 0 absent/vacant = 3
6. MAJOR PROJECTS AND LAND USE ITEMS:
 - A. **VALIANO Final EIR. PDS2013-SP-13-001, PDS2013-GPA-13-001, PDS2013-REZ-13- 001, PDS2013- TM-5575, PDS2014-MUP-14-019, PDS2013-STP-13-003, PDS2013-ER-13-08- 002.** The proposed project is a residential development of 326 homes and up to 54 Secondary Dwelling Units (SDUs) on 239 acres. The property is currently zoned SR and A70 with minimum lots sizes of 1 and 2 acres, with 118 units allowed. The current General Plan designations are SR-1 and SR-2, and the Regional Category is Semi Rural. The project would require a General Plan Amendment to change the designations to SR-0.5 and to remove Neighborhood 5 from the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove subarea. A Rezone would be required to reduce the minimum lot size and change the A70 areas to SR. A Major Use Permit is required for the on-site wastewater treatment plant. A Habitat Loss Permit is required because the project would impact Diegan coastal sage scrub. Proposed grading is 928,000 cubic yards of balanced cut and fill. The project also includes 36.5 acres of agricultural easement and 28.2 acres of biological open space, as well as fire clearing zones. The project would take access from Eden Valley Lane, Mount Whitney Road, and Country Club Drive, with emergency access to Hill Valley Drive. The project would also include public multi-use trails, private trails, public and private parks, and an equestrian center. Project contact: Michelle Chan, Michelle.Chan@sdcounty.ca.gov (858) 495-5428, SDPG member: Jacqueline Arsivaud-Benjamin (760) 855-0444.

David Sibbet, Manager, and Michelle Chan, Planner, of the County department of Planning and Land Use were

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present to answer questions.

Lance Waite, representing applicant Integral, gave an overview of the project. *J. Arsivaud-Benjamin* questioned Mr. Waite's statement that the Project would provide "extended evacuation time". He answered that the new homes, being less flammable than grasslands, would buffer existing residents from fire and thus provide more time for safe evacuation. She noted that while the homes may not be as flammable, adding hundreds more residents and vehicles clogging already congested evacuation routes would negate any net benefit and likely be an adverse effect. There was some discussion of homes burning while sprinklers were running in urban areas of Santa Rosa causing fatalities in the recent Tubbs fire. *J. Arsivaud-Benjamin* was concerned that widening private roads within the easement footprint could possibly create hardships for existing residents. *Mr. Waite* suggested the applicant would try to work with any affected residents who might have encroachments in the easements. *M. Hoppenrath* noted that the San Marcos Fire department had issued a waiver for Hill Valley Road to remain at a substandard width and asked how the applicant would prevent parked cars from creating an unsafe obstruction. *Mr. Waite* said there would be signage. He was not certain whether Hill Valley Road, which the project lists as an emergency access route, would be gated or open and how any closure would be maintained or operated. *S. Williams* noted that Country Club Drive is already congested during rush hour and was worried about traffic impacts of such increased density. *Mr. Waite* said they would work with the City of Escondido to investigate improving traffic light signaling. *J. Arsivaud-Benjamin* asked whether applicant was representing sewer lines could be extended to residents outside the project. She commented that although sewer lines from the Valiano project might run near existing residents' homes, LAFCO would have to hold public hearings and decide whether to create and extend a sewer district. She read a memo from LAFCO stating "any proposal to annex unserved territory to a sanitation district would have to provide a documented need for services to justify the request, such as a failed/failing septic system". In addition potential sewer service providers would have to agree to include these homes with appropriate charges and fees, and residents would have to pay to hook up to these lines, before they could have sewer service, so no guarantee. She mentioned that the revised Rincon Master Plan after community input specifically limited the size of the sewer district served by the Harmony Grove Village Water treatment facility to the Harmony Grove Village footprint,

Several residents from Harmony Grove, Elfin Forest, and Eden Valley gave a group presentation. *JP Theberge* of the EFHG Town Council, gave a brief history of the area and the concept of the Community Development Model (CDM) that featured in the consensus reached by the County and community as a way to accommodate the area's fair share of predicted population increase while preserving the historic rural community. He stressed how the density increase in Valiano destroyed the critical urban-rural balance that was achieved in the General Plan density map for the area. *Andy Laderman* spoke of the enduring rural community character, while *Janean Huston* believed that nearby high-density development defied the CDM and would make evacuating with large animals more difficult and dangerous, ultimately forcing out residents with horses and destroying the rural character the CDM was designed to preserve. *Bill Osborn*, a former firefighter, discussed the features that make the valley area susceptible to fast moving wildfires. He noted that all 6 access roads for Valiano lead to a single evacuation route, Country Club Drive, which would be downgraded from LOS A to LOS F by the project. He added that the proposed mitigation of 31 new fire hydrants would, because of the significant increase in density, actually provide only half as many hydrants for each home as currently exists. He said the new homes would not likely provide a fire buffer, as wildfires now routinely jump 8-lane highways and can cause spot fires as far away as one and half miles. *Bill Osborn* stated that the most recent and damaging area wildfire, the Cocos fire, was only mentioned once in the Valiano Fire Protection Plan (FPP) and was not studied or modeled in any analysis, instead the FPP is based on conditions in San Marcos, not Eden Valley. He felt this was a serious oversight, as the Cocos fire actually spread more quickly than anticipated downhill, and also in the Eden Valley/Harmony Grove area, was not driven by the usual Santa Ana winds. Further, the FPP incorrectly states there has been no major fire in the area in the last 50 years (there have been 12 wildfires). *Eric Anderson*, life-long farmer in the area, pointed out that nurseries can act as fire buffers and can help reduce greenhouse gases He was grateful that Valiano had saved some agricultural lands. *Scott Sutherland* of the EFHG Town Council said fire risk is so great that the number of new homes must be limited to a safe level taking into account the existing and proposed road infrastructure. He described the Valiano Vineyards, the community-developed suggested project alternative. This alternative does not exceed the GP-approved density, but features 80% of the number of affordable homes of Valiano while allowing neighborhood 5 to be fully compliant with the Harmony Grove Community Plan. There are also vineyards, trails, and community common areas. This alternative is superior to the Valiano preferred alternative in that it meets all the project objectives,, meets 6 of the project objectives better than Proposed Project , and lessens the impacts for 9 of 9 impact criteria.

Kevin Barnard is a retired police officer who stated that the evacuation plan described in the Harmony Grove

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Wildland Urban Interface Fire Emergency Response Plan (WUIFERP) was not realistic in apportioning police resources in the event of a wildfire. The WUI states that 100 officers are needed to guard local intersections during evacuations, but he notes that number exceeds the total number of officers on duty any given day in the city of San Diego. He believes it is unrealistic to think there will be enough officers to assist in a safe evacuation, as surrounding jurisdictions may realistically only be able to devote about 20 law enforcement personnel to the area in an emergency evacuation situation. He added that 70% of the people killed in wildfires lose their lives while evacuating in their vehicles.

Thirteen individual speakers told of their concerns with the project. *Jorge Gutierrez* felt that too many more homes and resulting traffic would endanger equestrians and pedestrians who must use the narrow rural roads as there are no sidewalks. *Mickey Cross* noted there was no mention of adverse impacts to Harmony Grove Road or Elfin Forest Road, but effects of significantly increased traffic would surely cause gridlock and endanger motorists, bicyclist and pedestrians, as can already be observed with added traffic on Elfin Forest road from Harmony Grove Village and cut-through traffic from Escondido avoiding clogged arteries.. *Wendy Said* increased traffic not only makes evacuation difficult and dangerous but also can make it impossible for emergency vehicles and residents to return back to help neighbors evacuate – she stated that even at current density she could not return to her home during the Coco’s evacuation. *Tony Alshauer* praised the firefighters and said Eden Valley was a great place to live with no traffic and no road rage. He felt with Country Club Drive becoming LOS F, the long waits would ruin the peaceful character. He also worried about dust and noise during construction. *Kevin K.* lived in Del Dios and felt the traffic model was flawed; he stressed the importance of getting details, how long would it take to evacuate all residents? He said the impacts should take the microclimate into account. He wanted smart development. *Suzette Amon* wondered where the project was getting the water, saying such excess to accommodate the increased density takes water away from the existing residents. *Phyllis Laderman* felt there was too much uncertainty in the applicant’s submission, for ex would Hill Valley Road be open or closed? She suggested applicant should only come to a vote when a stable project description was available for review, without any loose ends. She was concerned that the San Marcos Fire Dept. gave waivers in such a historic fire-threatened area that they themselves would not be responsible to respond to due to response time and wondered if there was “blood money” from Integral involved. *Richard Foster*, a former RSFFD firefighter, said sewer lines are growth inducing and can bring many more homes. He said quiet rural areas are necessary for residents’ mental health. *Stacy McCline* felt the community plan should take precedence over the developers’ plan. She said the residents placed their trust in the County and urged the County to hold to their General Plan. *Evon Flaig* thought Eden Valley was a beautiful place to live and wanted to maintain current zoning with 2-acre lots. *Richard Murphy* shared the fire evacuation concerns and thought the County did not need to bail out the developers’ project to make up for the infrastructure improvement deficit. He also felt the GHG calculations were done incorrectly and should use “as is” conditions for baseline calculations. He reminded us that taxpayers pay for lawsuits against the County. *Wayne Veres* lives in Coronado Hills adjacent to the Valiano project. When he bought his home years ago, he never expected the County to consider adding urban densities in a rural area. He thought the project would ruin Eden Valley and Coronado Hills. *Barbara Isherwood* wanted to know how many trips the project would add to Eden Valley Lane per day? Mr Waite did not have the data on hand but directed her to the EIR on the County website. Others in the audience said it was 1600 from a current 240..

A further 22 attendees submitted slips in opposition to the project, but either did not wish to speak or felt their issues had already been mentioned: Marilyn Johnson-Kozlow, John Batchik, Janet Horvath, Stan Alstrum, Tim McLarney, Bill and Merlyn Porter, Al Said, Janice Veres, Hazel Gray-Fornasodoro, Diane McMillen, Michael Fornasodoro, Linda and David Hizar, Terry and David Hizar, Laurilyn Burson, Clark Mahadt, Ben Ayers, Gigi Theberge, Pam Searles, and Braden Clemeshaw.

SDPG members briefly discussed the project. *N. Christenfeld* stated the record should show he had never seen such unified community stance in his years on the Planning Group. He said the issue of the Valiano project seemed to be more about who would make money than who would have to live with it. *J. Arsivaud-Benjamin* briefly explained the EIR and the alternatives. *M. Hoppenrath* voiced her serious concerns with the attempt to remove part of an established community of Harmony Grove from the County-approved Community Plan, and believed if that were allowed, it would render worthless every community plan County wide. *D. Willis* stated it was “shocking” that the County would consider allowing a project that violated the promise it made to the residents, remembering the hard choices that were made during the Harmony Grove Village public testimony.

Motion: By J. Arsivaud-Benjamin, **second** by M. Hoppenrath, to deny project as detailed in attached motion (see appendix).

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Vote: ayes = 11 nos = 0 abstain = 0 absent/vacant = 2

B. **Hacienda Santa Fe Senior Facility.** Proposed project is located in the City of San Diego on the southeastern corner of Via de la Valle at El Camino Real. The developer will present an overview of the project with Q&A in preparation for the release of a draft EIR sometime in the first quarter of 2018. Project Developer: Milan Capital Management - Bret Bernard, AICP, Director of Planning & Development, [714-687-0000, ext119](tel:714-687-0000); SDPG member: Don Willis [\(858\) 481-6922](tel:858-481-6922). **Continued to March 8th**

C. **PDS2017-STP-17-042 RSF Village Gateway Center Site Plan.** Proposed retail, market, office project located at [6089 La Flecha](#) on the triangular island between the intersections of La Flecha, La Granada, and Via De Santa Fe; APN 266-291-02, 266-291-01. 27,017-gross sq. ft., 25,620-net rentable floor area, two-story building includes 65,000 sq. ft. subterranean 135-car parking garage. Applicant: Landrock Development, Enrique Landa, 858-756-3349; Applicant's Representative: Jim Simmons, 760-471-2365; PDS Planner: Marisa Smith at 858 694-2621; SDPG Member: Joe Zagara, 858-756-4211. *Jim Simmons* gave a brief overview of the project. Previous building was a gas station and applicant must remove buried gas tanks and any contaminated ground. The plume of possible contamination does not extend beyond the property. *J. Zagara* noted that residents felt a market is needed in the community. The design was well received by the group.

Motion: By J. Zagara, **second** by T. Parillo, to approve as presented.

Vote: ayes = 11 nos = 0 abstain = 0 absent/vacant = 2

D. **Property Specific Request (SD15) to General Plan Amendment & Rezone (GPA12-005; REZ14-006)** PDS Planner Kevin Johnston answered questions concerning the proposed change from SR-1 to a combination of General Commercial (C-1), VR-10.9, and SR-0.5 bringing an estimated total potential dwelling unit increase of 301 units. The parcel(s) are located adjacent to a densely developed City of San Marcos suburban area and adjacent to a regional open space preserve, in the MSCP PAMA (Pre Approved Mitigation Area). Because a new EIR was issued in December 2017, and caused members of the public to request to testify after being notified by the County, the group decided to reconsider their motion and hear public input. Additional information on the project can be found on the project web page at - <http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/advance/PSR/prelim-analysis-sd15.pdf> **Scheduled for April 12th agenda**

E. **PDS2018-AD-18-002 Kahatibi Open Space Encroachment Administrative Permit.** [16268 Via Cazadero, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067](#), APN 269-201-52-00. The project deviation is the installation of a boundary wall along the property lines. Applicant Representative: Kenneth Discenza, [619-540-7462](tel:619-540-7462); PDS Planner: Sean Oberbauer, [858-495-5747](tel:858-495-5747); SDPG Member: Steve Thomas, [858-232-8580](tel:858-232-8580). **Continued to March 8th**

7. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

- A. Community Reports
- B. Consideration and comments on circulation mail
- C. Future agenda items and planning
- D. Prospective & returning Planning Group members
- E. Supply orders and reimbursement of expenses

Adjourned at 10:47 pm.

NOTE: The San Dieguito Planning Group currently has one vacancy. If you wish to become a member of the SDPG, please provide the chair with your current resume and plan to attend 2 or 3 meetings in advance of processing your application for membership.

Future Meeting Dates: 3/8/18 4/12/18 5/10/18 6/14/18 7/12/18 8/9/18

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Doug Dill, Chair
Tim Parillo, Vice-Chair
Mid Hoppenrath, Secretary

760-736-4333 FAX 760-736-4333
415-238-6961
760-747-1145

e-mail: theddills@att.net
e-mail: tparillo@gmail.com
e-mail: midhop@gmail.com

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Appendix

Motion for Valiano GPA – February 8, 2018 SDPG meeting

Motion is made to recommend denial of the Project as presented for the following key reasons, in addition to our previous comments which are incorporated herein.

The overwhelming issue of concern for residents and neighboring communities is the impact of additional residential density on safe emergency evacuation, given the specific local road infrastructure and topography, the valley's designation as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Area around the Project, and the history of repeated mandatory mass evacuations in the area. Residents are concerned about this issue because at least 12 wildfires have burnt through the area since 1980, half of those larger than 1,000 acres. And in the last 20 years as a result of climate change and human activity the frequency and ferocity of the fires have been increasing at an alarming rate. The most recent event, the Coco's fire, was uncontrollable for days, despite the advances in aerial firefighting, inter-agency communications and structure protection made during that period. Fires in the valley over the last two decades have destroyed homes on multiple occasions and taken lives.

In this context, requests for density increases beyond those allowed under the General Plan should be evaluated with the greatest prudence, and balanced with a critical look at whether the existing infrastructure can safely accommodate the added dwelling units.

- 1) This property has already benefited from 1) a grant of additional density on 97 acres from SR2 to SR1 during the Property Specific Request (PSR) process, resulting in a grant of an additional 48 units. This represents approximately 136% increase in density, bringing it from a likely yield of less than 50 units under the old General Plan rules (maximum of 70) up to 118, without any analysis at the time of impact on emergency evacuation given the current road infrastructure;
- 2) The proposed increase beyond this density gift in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Area would severely constrain the ability of both future and existing residents to evacuate to safety - evacuation on a single 2-lane road operating at LOS F under non-emergency conditions without a secondary egress is likely to lead to loss of life;
- 3) The evacuation of the entire community was not modeled nor analyzed in the Fire Protection Plan or the DEIR, making it impossible for decision makers to fairly evaluate the added risk they may expose residents to in the next wildfire;
- 4) The Project EIR evaluates various density alternatives from 38 units for septic-only option (closest to yield prior to PSR) up to 380 (Project including SDUs). Clearly 380 is not supported by the existing road infrastructure for safe evacuation of existing residents, including horse trailers for the 150+ existing large animals in Eden Valley and Harmony Grove, along with evacuating residents of Harmony Grove Village, rest of Harmony Grove, and potentially also Elfin Forest if egress to the West is blocked as it was during Coco's

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fire.

- 5) The merits of the additional density request from the applicant should be evaluated based on the existing evacuation infrastructure. The County should not allow additional residential density beyond that allowed by right in the General Plan, without first ensuring that the impact of the change would not impede the safe evacuation of existing and future residents in areas like this prone to major fire events.
- 6) In this specific project case, the Wildland Urban Interface Fire Emergency Plan (WUIFERP) recently commissioned by Cal Fire for the nearby HGVS project states that the only safe evacuation route without caveats for the entire area is Country Club Drive. As such the ability of Country Club Drive to handle the projected evacuating traffic must be fully analyzed before granting any request for additional density beyond the GP, which would add vehicles to that road in an emergency evacuation scenario. Not to match additional density to infrastructure capability would constitute irresponsible project planning.
- 7) As such, we request additional analysis prior to staff formulating a recommendation on the project, in order to match a given recommended project density (number of dus) to the road infrastructure that can safely support it. This additional analysis is necessary because a) information crucial to evaluating public safety risk is missing from the data presented so far, namely, project impact on evacuation scenarios, b) the extreme 2017 wildfires in California and their consequences have demonstrated the need for sound planning to avoid loss of life, and c) new data from the HGVS WUIFERP point to "a historic fire corridor with a history of loss of life & extensive structural loss", with the entire area evacuating on Country Club Drive in an emergency.

Specifically, we request staff/applicant to analyze the following:

- a) Calculate the maximum current vehicle carrying capacity of Country Club Drive (CCD) and the Project access roads as built (Eden Valley Lane, Mt Whitney, Hill Drive) in a mass evacuation scenario, taking into account the number of existing large animals to be evacuated using the same road infrastructure;
- b) Conduct the same analysis adding a secondary Project egress through to La Moree, which would relieve congestion on CCD;
- c) From the vehicle capacity analysis in a) and b) above, derive the maximum number of evacuating dwelling units (dus) that can safely travel on CCD and access roads. For ex if each du is assumed 2 evacuating cars, maximum number of homes that can safely evacuate would be half the capacity that the infrastructure can carry;
- d) From the result of the analysis in c) (total number of dus evacuating safely), calculate how many additional residential units can safely be added to the area by deducting the existing and currently approved dus in Harmony Grove, Eden Valley and Elfin Forest.
- e) The remaining available density should be the maximum additional density from a planning perspective that can be approved outside the General Plan in order not to compromise safe evacuation.

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While the result of that analysis is not available to us as a Planning Group today to determine what project density to recommend, based on public testimony throughout the process we can only prudently recommend the lowest density onsite especially given the 136% increase in density already granted by the Board of Supervisors.

The Project alternative that best meet project objectives and preserves public safety while still granting applicant opportunity for economic rewards is the Valiano Vineyards alternative, which enjoys broad community support, as do the General Plan-conforming alternative and Septic-only alternative.

In addition,

- The waivers from California Fire Code granted by the San Marcos Fire District and the exception to road standards granted by PDS on Hill Drive should be re-examined in light of new fire behavior data from the recent fires throughout California, and the HGVS WUIFERP, data which was not available in March 2015 when the FPP was published;
- Because critical cumulative impact to emergency evacuation was not considered at all in original DEIR, consider recirculating the DEIR with the data requested so the public has the opportunity to review and comment on this vital analysis.

The following conditions of approval should be incorporated in order to preserve public safety for all area residents including Valiano's:

- Applicant should be required to perform a full analysis of evacuation risks and scenarios, which was not included in the 2015 FPP, prior to going to Planning Commission;
- Applicant should specifically commission a project-specific Wildland Urban Interface Fire Emergency Plan (WUIFERP) that analyzes ignition scenarios relevant to the specific Project area to fully disclose the most relevant wildfire evacuation scenarios, and which will be a key input for the analysis requested above;
- Applicant should be required to improve Country Club Drive to provide a left hand turn lane in Northbound direction towards Progress Place to provide another option for emergency evacuation traffic.
- Applicant should be required to provide a true secondary exit (not leading to Country Club Drive) such as through to La Moree in San Marcos.
- Applicant should indemnify the private road owners whose property may be negatively impacted by private road widening or improvement projects to serve the Project for any damage or modification to their existing fencing and landscaping.

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