

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO SPRING VALLEY COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, July 22, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.  
San Miguel Fire District headquarters, 2850 Via Orange Way, Spring Valley, California

**A. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**

PRESENT (10) - LOWES, ROBLES, PIERCE, WALLACE, LAWSON, GIBBONS, PEARSON, GETTMANN, WOODRUFF, CHRISTIE

ABSENT (1) – GONZALEZ

VACANT (4) – SEAT 6, SEAT 8, SEAT 11, SEAT 15

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**C. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION** – Opportunity for the public to speak to the Planning Group on any subject matter within our jurisdiction that is not on the posted agenda. A two (2) minute period shall be allotted to each person addressing the Group to facilitate business proceedings.

Angelica Camargo spoke about the community needing community centers for the youth and senior centers for senior citizens in the community.

A representative from the Assembly district 79 was present but had no updates to give to the community.

**D. ACTION ITEMS**

**1. Approval of Minutes:** 7/8/2025. **Approved** motion and results follow.

Motion to approve by PEARSON, second by LAWSON.

YES Votes (9) – LOWES, ROBLES, PIERCE, LAWSON, GIBBONS, PEARSON, GETTMANN, WOODRUFF, CHRISTIE

NO Votes (0) –

ABSTAINING Votes (1) – WALLACE

ABSENT (1) – GONZALEZ

VACANT (4) - SEAT 6, SEAT 8, SEAT 11, SEAT 15

**2. Discretionary Permit for Major Use Permit Paradise Valley Rd AT&T Cell Tower.** PDS2022-MUP-22-012, APN: 586-170-15-00, 8535 Paradise Valley Rd. CAL02872 I Construction of a 35' High mono eucalyptus tower. **Denied**

A presentation by representatives of AT&T occurred. From the original placement of the tower, the new placement was moved further away from the housing next to the property.

Maggie Winterton lives at Sweetwater Hills townhomes on Paradise Valley Rd. Maggie spoke and asked that her comment be added to the meeting minutes.

" Hi. My name is Maggie Winterton, and I live at Sweetwater Hills townhomes on Paradise Valley Road the address of the project is 8555 Paradise Valley Rd. and our address is 8535 - just 67 feet according to AT&T, from the proposed location of this cell phone Tower.

I'm here today as a neighbor, a mother, and someone who never imagined she'd have to learn this much about land use law and cell phone towers just to protect my home.

I have been opposing it vocally with my community since your board First took up this project 2.5 years ago. Your group did not approve it then, and I urge you to flatly deny it today. We are all residents of Spring Valley and while we could benefit from more connectivity, we are also the ones that would be directly harmed by projects like this that are not properly vetted by the County. County staff have been friendly and helpful to us, but we are repeatedly brushed off in our concerns and requests for more review examining the community impact, fire safety proximity to the aquaduct, aesthetics, and property values. We are told, "just trust us it's fine" We're being told to accept a big 35-foot faux eucalyptus tower — with a diesel generator and electrical equipment — directly across from homes and a daycare. Let's be honest that no amount of camouflage will hide that this is a giant fake tree and it will block our view of San Miguel and the Sweetwater Reservoir. We are being told to accept the COUNTY approving a project placed on San Diego COUNTY water Authority land with an undisclosed lease agreement. We are being told to accept that this project is getting a CEQA exemption and that is the end of it. CEQA - California's Environmental protection law for those listening- specifically says exemptions don't apply when "unusual circumstances" could cause serious impact. That's exactly what we're looking at here. I hope that you guys realize this today. I hope that the board of supervisors realizes this when our appeal goes to them in September. Because Little Starz Daycare is just across the street. Under CEQA, SCHOOLS AND DAYCARES ARE AN important factor in determining environmental impact. And, According to the current San Diego County regulations - If this were a small cell tower, the County would require a 300-foot setback which little starz

daycare IS under — but because this is a larger macro tower, the setback disappears? That's inconsistent, and unfair. And doesn't make ANY sense. It IS more obtrusive to US. And that is why a small tower won't work, to answer your question. Because there are actual setback regulations in San Diego county. Macro has no actual zoning regulations. (I realize that zoning regulations are probably not your purview, but it's necessary to know to understand how we got in this situation.) We are being told to just accept that this is the only feasible option. We disagree. I ask you to think about this area. The corner of Elkton and Paradise Valley Road. Now while you're thinking of this, do you believe that the only place a 35 foot cell phone tower could possibly go is 62 feet from homes? Despite what the county planners want us to do, Spring Valley, we can stand up and say no. La Jolla residents raised concerns about a similar proposed cell tower near their bike path - and after community opposition- the project was withdrawn. That's a bike path, not even homes. Did AT&T eventually back down on that project because it was an affluent community and not a large, diverse unincorporated area of San Diego county such as ours? Maybe it just actually had another feasible location after all. Is this an effort towards digital inequity, as AT&T mentioned, at the cost of actual inequity of residents? AT&T has never given us evidence that this is safe, though I have not cited health concerns in my appeal. I know the law. And the science was not cited. In fact, what I've read is that Scientists agree more research is needed because this technology is NEW. In fact, CEQA states that daycares are a consideration because of children's sensitive receptors Another issue and question I have for AT&T is the mention of drive tests - based on your representation Of signal in a car. Why can't we see them? I've asked for them. Also- we are an HOA. And you've never approached us about compensation, so I found your comments regarding an HOA opportunity interesting. In regards to co location, AT&T suggests that there is an opportunity for other towers. That is in their report submitted to the county. So that would be more equipment for us to handle, if that ever happens. If Sweetwater Hills townhomes did not crowdfund the thousand dollars for the appeal, the tower would be under construction now. At this point, we need someone to stand with us and help us fight this corporation. Help us fight for responsible infrastructure progress in San Diego county. Because if we don't do this now, this will set a dangerous precedent for the entire county. This is why I urge you as an advisory group. Vote no. It makes common sense that this project would not even work under regulations if it was smaller. We are just an unincorporated area and we have no one else to help us. Please stand with us to send a message to the board of supervisors that Spring Valley residents don't want a new cell phone tower like this if the only possible location undoubtedly would cause harm."

Motion to deny the permit by LAWSON, second by WALLACE.

YES Votes (8) - LOWES, ROBLES, PIERCE, WALLACE, LAWSON, GIBBONS, WOODRUFF, CHRISTIE

NO Votes (1) - PEARSON

ABSTAINING Votes (1) - GETTMANN

ABSENT(1) - GONZALEZ

VACANT(4) - SEAT 6, SEAT 8, SEAT 11, SEAT 15

### **3. Request for Exemption from Site Plan Permit Processing Requirement for "B" Special Area Regulation: Spring Valley Environmental Services 3270 Bancroft, Spring Valley. APN: 503-192-24-00. Vote on this item.**

This item was Tabled. A discussion about the design of the property and some concerns relating to the use of the property and the parking took place.

### **4. Nomination from SVCPG to the County Board of Supervisors to fill Vacant Seats 6 & 11. Vote on this item.**

- Of the two candidates that were present for this meeting, Chris Hardy and Cathy Smith were asked to introduce themselves to the group.

#### For SEAT 11

Ashish Bakshi was nominated by LOWES and seconded by GETTMAN. Bakshi only received 5 votes from the members on the SVCPG. Bakshi will not be recommended to the County Board of Supervisors for SEAT 11

Chris Hardy was nominated by LOWES and seconded by LAWSON. Hardy received 7 votes from the members on the SVCPG.

Cathy Smith was nominated by WALLACE and seconded by ROBLES. Smith received 7 votes from the members on the SVCPG. A runoff election will occur.

During the runoff, Hardy received 5 votes and Smith Received 6 votes. Smith will be recommended to the County Board of Supervisors for SEAT 11.

#### For SEAT 6

Ashish Bakshi was nominated by LOWES and Seconded by GETTMAN. Bakshi only received 3 votes. Bakshi will not be recommend to the County Board of Supervisors for SEAT 6.

Chris Hardy was nominated by ROBLES and seconded by WALLACE. Hardy received 9 votes from the members on the board. Hardy

will be recommended to the County Board of Supervisors for SEAT 6.

**5. Standing Rules Updates:** Review proposed changes the subcommittee has made to date, and provide suggestions/feedback. No Vote on this item.

A meeting was scheduled during this time for Sunday July 27, 2025 at 11AM at the Cali BBQ restaurant in Spring Valley.

## **E. GROUP BUSINESS**

### **1. Announcements:**

2. Reports: ☐ Chair ☐ CSA 128 ☐ TAC ☐ Highway cleanup ☐ APG ☐ Other 3. Next scheduled SVCPG meeting: August 12, 2025

## **F. ADJOURNMENT**

### **PUBLIC DISCLOSURE**

We strive to protect personally identifiable information, by collecting only information necessary to deliver our services. All information collected becomes public record, subject to inspection and copying by the public, unless an exemption in law exists. In the event of conflict, governing the County's disclosure of records, the County ordinance or other law will control. You can review any personal information collected about you. You may recommend changes to your personal information, which you believe is in error, by submitting a written request that shows, credibly, the error. If you believe your personal information is being used for purposes other than those intended, you may contact us. In all cases, we will take reasonable steps to verify your identity, before granting access or making corrections. **Purpose of**

### **Planning and Sponsor Groups**

Advise the County on Discretionary projects as well as on planning and land use matters that are proposed within their respective community planning or sponsor group area.