

## Valley Center Community Planning Group

**Approved Minutes** for a Virtual Zoom meeting held on **July 13, 2020** at 7:00 p.m.

Delores Chavez Harmes, **Chair**; Kevin Smith, **Vice-Chair**; James Garritson, **Secretary**

**A**=Absent; **Ab**=Abstention; **DRB**=Valley Center Design Review Board; **N**=Nay; **P**=Present; **R**=Recused; **VCCPG**=Valley Center Community Planning Group; **VCPRD**=Valley Center Parks & Recreation District; **Y**=Yea

**A. Join Zoom Meeting:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89896528075?>, **Meeting ID:** 898 9652 8075  
**Password:** VCCPG-July

### B. Roll Call

- Meeting was called to order at **7:08 p.m.** and a Quorum was established with **15 members present**. Dr. Matthews joined the meeting at 7:26 p.m. Four members arrived at the virtual meeting after 7:30 p.m.
- Lisa Adams - **P**
- Jeana Boulos - **P\***
- William Del Pilar - **P\***
- Susan Fajardo - **P\***
- Julia Feliciano - **P**
- James Garritson - **P**
- Delores ChavezHarmes-**P**
- Steve Hutchison - **P**
- Joey Martinez - **P\***
- Matt Matthews - **P\***
- Kathleen McCabe - **P**
- LaVonne Norwood - **P**
- James Radden - **P**
- Kevin Smith - **P**
- Renee Wolf - **P**

### Guests

- David Ross - Valley RoadRunner
- Sean Oberbauer
- Amy Fuller
- Ashley Smith
- Cathy Baur
- Chris Brown
- Corinne Lytle Bonine
- Dori Rattray
- Fredrick Wollman
- Gary
- iPhone
- John
- Laury Flora
- Mark Turner
- Neil Kadakia
- Pankaj B.
- Pankaj Kadakia
- Regina Ochoa
- Sahil Desai
- Touchstone Communities
- Will Rogers
- AFuller
- MTurner iPhone 8x

### C. Pledge of Allegiance - Chair Harmes

### D. Approval of Minutes

1. **Motion: To approve the June 8, 2020 Minutes.**
  - a. **Maker/Second: Smith/Boulos**
  - b. **Motion Carries 10-0-0 (Y-N-Ab).**

### E. Public Comments Members of the public may address the Planning Group on any topic not on the agenda.

- Cathy Baur asked to speak about the Valley Center Storage project during Action Item 4.

### F. Action items (VCCPG advisory vote may be taken on the following items)

**1) Lilac Hills Ranch (Hutchison): Update – Board of Supervisors voted down the project on June 24. Project can only move forward with only the originally approved 110 homes.**

- Mr. Hutchison shared that the Supervisors voted down the project in a 4-1 vote based on the County Fire Authority recommendations. The applicant has worked ten years for project approval, but now must restart the entire project.

**2) Arco (Harmes): Informational – PDS2015-STP-15-012 – New iterations received on proposed Arco signage.**

- Chair Harmes is trying to prevent project delays by sharing detailed information with all developers. Sean Oberbauer (County) shared that the developer is now working closely with the CPG.

**3) Valley Center Storage (initially presented as Terra Gen Battery Storage) (Matthews): Discussion – PDS2020-STP-20-011 Application submitted to County April 30 th . Valley Center ESS, LLC (Developer) plans to construct, own and operate the Valley Center Storage Project, a lithium-ion based battery energy storage facility capable of delivering up to 140 megawatts (MW) for approximately 4 hours on an 8.93-acre parcel and associated utility and access easement in Valley Center, San Diego County (the Project). The Project will interconnect to the existing, adjacent San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) 69kV Valley Center Substation via an approximately 0.3-mile underground generation tie line (gen-tie line). The Project will be comprised of sets of four battery enclosures (each enclosure approximately 31.6 feet long by 5.7 feet wide by 8.6 feet high) that will house the integrated Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) including battery cells, modules, racks, a fully integrated fire and safety systems, HVAC systems, and other electrical systems. The batteries will be charged from the CAISO (California Independent System Operator) grid via the Project’s interconnection to the SDG&E Valley Center Substation. Energy stored in the Project will then be discharged back into the grid when the energy is needed, providing essential electricity reliability services to the local area. This project has been presented to Valley Center DRB. (Vote)**

- Mark Turner provided an update about the project and shared information that was requested by Dr. Matthews and Mr. Del Pilar. The DRB voted unanimously in favor of the project.
- Mark shared that this region of the County is in need of this type of project to prevent power outages due to fire and Santa Ana wind risks. From an environmental perspective, battery storage is necessary to create a zero-carbon future in California.
- Cathy Baur (participant) asked the Planning Group to vote against this project because of her concerns about a possible thermal runaway at the facility. Arizona and Hawaii are states that have had two fires occur at similar battery storage projects. Cathy said that a lithium-ion fire is very difficult to extinguish. She does not want the Valley Center community to risk a catastrophic fire occurring if this project is approved. She also said that South Korea has had numerous problems with preventing fires at lithium-ion battery storage plants.

- Dr. Matthews shared that a smaller private battery project was proposed on an adjacent property next to the SDG&E site. He believes that the scope of this project goes far above the needs of the Valley Center community.
- Mr. Del Pilar appreciated the information that Cathy Baur shared with the Planning Group. He believes we need to wait on voting for this project until we get further information from the fire department.
- Mr. Hutchison believes that the lithium-ion technology is not safe enough.
- John Corley (participant) wanted to know if this project will be voted upon tonight. He owns property adjacent to the SDG&E site and hopes this project is rejected. He now lives in Yuma, Arizona, but was born and raised in Valley Center. John does not believe this Valley Center Storage project will provide the same benefits for the community like the one that was proposed for his property. The proposed lease was for ten years with three additional 5 year lease renewals.
- Mark Turner shared that Terra Gen is based in Del Mar and although he lives in Northern California, the company is very close to Valley Center. Chief Davidson has frequent conversations with Mark Turner. Mark said that the risk of fire for this project is rated very low. The project will also provide regional benefits.
- Dr. Matthews shared that people in Fallbrook are complaining about the noise of their battery storage facility. Mr. Turner shared that Terra Gen will meet or beat any County noise guidelines. He also shared that the Fallbrook community would not know what their battery facility sounds like because it is not yet built.
- Amy Fuller (participant) shared that Chief Davidson has approved the fire district plan provided by Terra Gen. She shared that this documentation was already made public. Chair Harmes asked Mark Turner to explain why the Planning Group did not receive this important information before tonight's meeting.
- According to Mark, the battery storage facility will store 140 megawatts and a project of this size should provide a regional benefit.
- Mr. Del Pilar would like the Planning Group to wait another month to receive more information about potential fire risks from the fire district.
- Ms. Adams asked Ashley Smith about the official County position of the project. She shared that the project was approved by the fire protection district. The County is accepting public comments until August 10, 2020.
- Mr. Radden wanted to know further details about how to prevent a fire at this battery storage facility. Mark Turner said that there is a revised fire code that should prevent potential fires. Mr. Radden also would like a representative from SDG&E to share how this type of battery storage could benefit the Valley Center community.
- Mark Turned said that there are more potential customers than only SDG&E.
- **Motion: To approve the Valley Center Storage project.**
- **Maker/Second:** Smith/Adams
- **Motion Fails 3-11-1 (Y-N-Ab). Ms. Boulos abstained from the vote.**

- Lisa Adams - Y
- Jeana Boulos - Ab
- William Del Pilar - N
- Susan Fajardo - N
- Julia Feliciano - N
- James Garritson - Y
- Delores ChavezHarmes-N
- Steve Hutchison - N
- Joey Martinez - N
- Matt Matthews - N
- Kathleen McCabe - N
- LaVonne Norwood - N
- James Radden - N
- Kevin Smith - N
- Renee Wolf - N

#### 4) Green Storage (Radden/Kadakia): Discussion -

##### PDS2020-STP-03-026WI/PDS2020ER-03-08- 029A Discretionary Permit

##### Application/Environmental Review CEQA. Lot merger and Greens Storage building expansion of adjacent business on south parcel. (Vote)

- Mr. Smith introduced Neil Kadakia and the Green Storage project. Neil shared details about the project. The project is solar powered. It is a modern project and will have no wood. It is built out of steel and concrete . It will have gooseneck signage. Additional project services include a dump station and propane filling station. Chair Harmes asked
- Mr. Smith shared information about a large retaining wall in the northwest corner near building #2. He wanted to know more information about the vines and landscaping that will hide much of the retaining wall. The vines will drape the entire retaining wall.
- Mr. Kadakia shared that the project cannot have much of a slope. It will sit on a 2 percent slope. Mr. Smith wanted further information about what a person will see on the backside of the building.
- Ms. McCabe asked about the maturity of the trees that the project will use. Mr. Kadakia said that the trees are in ten gallon containers at another project site and will take a few years to match more of the design shown on the project plans.
- All 5 members voted unanimously in favor of the project, but did want more detailed information about the retaining wall.
- Will Rogers (participant) shared his concerns about stormwater. Ms. Norwood asked about the traffic study. Neil explained that the project addresses any stormwater issues and a traffic study was completed.
- David Ross asked a question about the existing storage property and Neil shared that this is an extension of the project because people in Valley Center requested it.
- **Motion: To approve the Green Storage Project.**
- **Maker/Second:** Radden/Garritson
- **Motion Carries 15-0-0 (Y-N-Ab)**

- Lisa Adams - Y
- Jeana Boulos - Y
- William Del Pilar - Y
- Susan Fajardo - Y
- Julia Feliciano - Y
- James Garritson - Y
- Delores ChavezHarmes-Y
- Steve Hutchison - Y
- Joey Martinez - Y
- Matt Matthews - Y
- Kathleen McCabe - Y
- LaVonne Norwood - Y
- James Radden - Y
- Kevin Smith - Y
- Renee Wolf - Y

**5) Easement Vacation (Norwood): Discussion – VAC2019-0014-A-B-C – County submits to vacate pedestrian & equestrian easements for maintenance; drainage and access easements to flood control district and flowage easement. Vote to bi-furcate County Flood Control District and drainage and access easements as well as flowage easement was voted on and passed unanimously at VCCPG June 8 th meeting. Remaining trails easement is less than a mile and connects to nothing. Remaining easement was not intended as an equestrian trail, per San Diego County Parks & Rec official. (Vote)**

- Emmet Aquino (County) shared that his department supports vacating these easements based on the plans that were approved. Ms. Norwood asked if the trails were ever open to the public. Emmet said that based on his review, the trails were always private. He said that the private loop is probably about a mile of trails.
- Kerry Garza (Touchstone Communities) shared that he is ready to move forward on the project.
- Chair Harmes said that the mile loop was never intended as an equestrian trail. The County was offered the easement, but rejected it. This section of trails was never intended for public usage.
- Mr. Hutchison asked why the County is requesting to vacate this easement if it never was intended for public use. Kerry Garza said that the easement was offered to the County a long time ago, but it was rejected.
- Chair Harmes read an email letter sent by Emmet Aquino (County). Based on documentation, the DPR recommends vacating the easements.
- There was discussion about the vacation between Ms. Norwood and Mr. Smith.
- Frederick Wollman (participant) shared that the County owns Keys Creek Preserve and he really would like the trails in Valley Center to connect. He would like all developments to include public trails that will connect to a master trail plan.
- Ms. Boulos said that the County does not want to maintain this easement.
- Laury Flora (participant) wanted to know if the HOA could allow public usage of the trails.
- **Motion: To vacate the easement VAC2019-0014-A-B-C.**
- **Maker/Second:** Norwood/Boulos
- **Motion Carries 12-3-0 (Y-N-Ab)**
- Lisa Adams - Y
- Jeana Boulos - Y
- William Del Pilar - Y
- Susan Fajardo - Y
- Julia Feliciano - Y
- James Garritson - Y
- Delores ChavezHarmes-Y
- Steve Hutchison - N
- Joey Martinez - Y
- Matt Matthews - N
- Kathleen McCabe - Y
- LaVonne Norwood - Y
- James Radden - Y
- Kevin Smith - Y
- Renee Wolf - N

## **G. Subcommittee Reports**

### **1) Community Plan Update (Steve Hutchinson, Chair)**

- Mr. Hutchinson shared that the subcommittee will probably not meet until September.

### **2) Emergency Evacuation (Delores Chavez Harmes, Chair)**

- Red Cross is working in coordination with County Fire officials.

### **3) Mobility (Lisa Adams, Chair): Ridge Ranch Light - approved**

- The Board of Supervisors voted to approve a traffic signal to be built where Valley Center Road and Ridge Ranch Road intersect.

4) Villages (William Del Pilar, Chair)

5) Parks & Rec (LaVonne Norwood, Chair)

6) Tribal Liaison (Jeana Boulos, Chair)

7) Nominations (Susan Fajardo, Chair)

8) Member Training (Delores Chavez Harmes, Chair)

a. Candidates must complete the candidacy documents. Documents will be available during the filing period – July 13 through August 7. You may request they be sent to you via email or mail or you may make an appt to pick them up. Documents cannot be sent to you by PDS. Completed candidacy documents need to be filed with the ROV. (They can be filed in-person by appt or by mail with a notarized declaration). Someone can pick up the candidacy documents for you if they have an appt and you complete the Authorization Form for Pick Up. Someone can file your candidacy documents for you if they have an appt and a notarized declaration. On the website provided in the email below, you can find a link to request your candidacy documents (it will be available soon) as well as the Authorization Form for Pick Up. You can contact the ROV with any questions or if you need clarification, by calling 858-505-7260 or emailing [CandidateFiling@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:CandidateFiling@sdcounty.ca.gov).

b. Per County advisory - no physical meetings until further notice. c. 2021 Annual Training Update d. Hearing for Pauma Valley Potential Resident July 31. Public comments before July 14.

- Supervisor Desmond's office encouraged all concerned citizens in our area to send an email to Supervisor Desmond on or before July 27th in opposition of placing Bocklett in Pauma Valley, Valley Center area.

9) Website (Renee Wolf, Chair)

### **I. Adjournment**

- Next regular meeting of VCCPG: **August 10, 2020 at 7 p.m.**
- **The meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m.**
- **Minutes were approved on August 10, 2020.**

**James Garritson, Secretary**