

From: [Cherry Diefenbach](#)
To: [Turner, Jessica](#); [Jeffrey Osborne](#); [GREG CURRAN](#); [jacari cousins](#); [Katrina](#); [Koutoufidis, Nicholas](#); [Geoff Fallon](#)
Cc: [Bonnie Hafdel](#); [Mark Ostrander](#); [Donna Tisdale](#); [Paula Whisenant](#); [Beatrice Bachmeier](#); [myra price](#); [Scaught Simpson](#); [Celia Sigmon](#); [Alasdar Mullarney](#); [Joe Marshall](#); [Griffin Anita](#); [Tobey - COMM Halstead](#); [D. N.](#); [linda churchill](#); [debrayu@outlook.com](#); [breckschoch@hotmail.com](#); [charbarneausf@gmail.com](#); [sherwooddiana4@gmail.com](#); [frank.davoli@gmail.com](#); [Susan Graham](#); [moose19760@gmail.com](#); [donandreeny@yahoo.com](#); [gluna0114@gmail.com](#); [constantineavignone@gmail.com](#); [johnschultzggg@gmail.com](#); [wildhorsesrunningwild5@gmail.com](#); [Tracy McPherson](#); [laurabuehning@gmail.com](#); [swancynthia1@gmail.com](#)
Subject: Jacumba Sponsor Group agenda for May 18, 2021 meeting
Date: Friday, May 14, 2021 1:17:29 PM
Attachments: [draft minutes of April 20, 2021 Jacumba Sponsor Group mtg.docx](#)
[May 18, 2021 Agenda Jacumba Sponsor Group.docx](#)

Hi all,

Attached is the agenda for our upcoming Jacumba sponsor group meeting that will be held at 5:30 pm on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 via Zoom. **See top of the agenda for info on how to join the meeting.**

Also attached are the draft minutes from our April 20, 2021 Jacumba sponsor group meeting.

For Jacumba residents, please circulate the agenda so that your friends and neighbors can participate at this very important meeting where we will be discussing/voting on the proposed 623 acre JVR solar project.

Jessica Turner, thanks in advance for posting the meeting agenda on the county's website.

Cherry Diefenbach
Chair, Jacumba Sponsor Group
619-743-5224

County of San Diego
Jacumba Hot Springs Community Sponsor Group
FINAL Minutes of the Zoom meeting held on April 20, 2021
Jacumba Hot Springs, CA 91934

The April 20, 2021 Jacumba Community Sponsor Group (JCSG) regular meeting (via Zoom) was called to order at 5:30 pm.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89254658551?pwd=VWtFM3VUQWpPWEO2UUy3S2ZkQnpTUT09>

Meeting ID: 892 5465 8551; Passcode: 090930. Dial-in: (669) 900-6833

A. Members Present: Seat 1. Jacari Cousins; Seat 2. Greg Curran; Seat 3. Cherry Diefenbach; Seat 4. Jeffery Osborne; Seat 5. VACANT. Public present: 9.

B. Pledge of Allegiance. (waived-due to virtual meeting format)

C. Motion to approve minutes of the regular JCSG meeting held on March 16, 2021. *M/S: Curran/Cousins.* Passed: 4-0-0.

D. Public Communication: The public may comment on any subject within the JSG's jurisdiction that is not on the posted agenda. (Speakers are limited to 2 minutes and no action can be taken on non-agenda items.)

We had two speakers who expressed their concerns about the scope of San Diego's proposed Cannabis and Social Equity Ordinance. These speakers explained that there is still time to provide feedback on the ordinance which will streamline the opening of legal marijuana storefronts in our rural communities. Some concerns regarding the proliferation of legal pot shops in the backcountry is their proximity to schools, parks, county libraries, and churches (places where children congregate), whether law enforcement has the necessary resources to ensure pot shops do not sell their wares to underage buyers, and the inherent dangers of putting more impaired drivers onto our rural roads.

E. Action items: (Agenda items may be taken out of order upon request)

1. Motion to approve Katrina Westley's ROV certified application for Seat #5 (currently vacant). *M/S Diefenbach/Curran.* Passed 4-0-0.

2. Sponsor group has been asked to review/update our annual road resurfacing prioritization list for the County Department of Public Works (DPW). Our existing road resurfacing list includes: Railroad St. to Seeley Ave, (.11 miles) and Old Highway 80, MKR 33 to In-Ko-Pah Road, (7.05 miles). Tobey Halstead, a Jacumba business owner, requested the feasibility of the County paving an unpaved section of Carriso Gorge Road west of the Subway by I-8 exit 73. Since his request did not fall under the road resurfacing program, he was referred to the DPW for more information. Our group has identified Carriso Gorge Road from Old Highway 80 to the westbound I-8 exchange (1.0 miles) as a road in need of resurfacing; it will be added to our resurfacing list. **Motion to have the Chair submit our updated road resurfacing list to the DPW: *M/S Cousins/Curran.* Passed 4-0-0.**

The sponsor group also discussed the need for an additional crosswalk or radar sign that would slow down traffic on Old Highway 80 at the eastern end of Jacumba near Heber Street and the county library/community park area. This item will be carried over for further discussion/action at our next sponsor group meeting.

3. Discuss status of proposed Jacumba Valley Ranch Energy Park project and a tentative timeline for the solar project. At our last sponsor group meeting on March 16, 2021, our group voted to support a much smaller solar facility (200 acres), without a switchyard that would be located well north of the town with 1,500 foot setbacks from residences, and all public roads. This smaller solar facility could send its generated power via an underground transmission line to SDG&E's ECO substation.

On April 12, 2021, Planning & Development Services (PDS) project manager Nicholas Koutoufidis (nicholas.koutoufidis@sdcounty.ca.gov or 858-495-5329) provided our sponsor group with an electronic copy of the 20-page revised JVR project plan and a summary of the very minor changes it makes to the original 643 acre solar project previously described in the DEIR. Those changes include a footprint reduction of 20 acres and a water main re-alignment. According to Nick Koutoufidis, setbacks from the project fence line along the north side of Old Highway 80 will be 110 feet from the edge of the roadway; setbacks from the edge of the roadway on the south side of Old Highway 80 will be 175-180 feet; and the fence line setback from the Jacumba Community Park/Highland Center property boundary has been increased to 300 feet. The revised project plan does not widen setbacks next to Jacumba residences on the east side of town, or eliminate the placement of solar arrays on the knoll where the abandoned farm buildings are currently located. Nor does it eliminate the 3.2-acre switchyard. The revised JVR solar project plan can be viewed at: [https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/JVR/DEIR/AdditionalDocs/JVR0Plot%20Plans%20\(Optimized\).pdf](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/JVR/DEIR/AdditionalDocs/JVR0Plot%20Plans%20(Optimized).pdf). (Although the Chair requested PDS provide a hard copy of the revised plans for our group to review on April 12th, eight days before our sponsor group meeting, they were not received until after our meeting.)

Additionally, the PDS Planner provided the following tentative timeline for the JVR solar project:

Week of June 22, 2021---Final EIR is released

July 9th, 2021---Planning Commission Hearing (vote on whether to recommend the project)

August 18th, 2021---Board of Supervisors Hearing (vote on whether to approve the project)

Given the County's COVID meeting restrictions in place throughout the JVR DEIR review process and which are still firmly in place, the Jacumba Sponsor Group believes that our residents are being kept in the dark about this massive green energy facility that is six times the physical size of our existing community. **There is NO SOCIAL EQUITY in jamming through 600 acres of solar arrays that will consume the best vacant farm or residential land immediately adjacent to our tiny village/Colonia.** Given the social-economic disadvantages experienced by many of our residents, an in-person meeting is absolutely critical to answer residents' questions and concerns about this "interim" 35-37 year project that has very real impacts to the future existence of Jacumba. **Zoom meetings simply do not work in a community where many residents do not own computers and/or smart phones. With the County's continued reliance on remote meetings, Jacumbians will effectively be shut out of any meaningful participation in the project review process.**

Before our Sponsor Group can make an informed decision on whether to approve, conditionally approve, or deny the revised JVR project plan, our residents must be made aware of the scope of the project and its significantly negative effects on Jacumba's community character, scenic vistas, biological resources, property values, tourism, and other quality of life issues. To that end, a socially-distanced community gathering to discuss this project is currently being organized by some residents for May 7, 2021 at 6 pm. It is only after receiving feedback on the project, from our neighbors and local business owners, that the Sponsor Group can faithfully represent the community's views regarding this project plan.

Motion to invite the project planner and project applicant to attend our next JCSG meeting on May 18, 2021 at 5:30 pm where we will vote on the revised JVR project plan. M/S: Diefenbach/Osborne. Passed: 4-0-0.

F. Group business and Announcements-discussion only.

1. Announcements:

a. On April 1, 2021, the Chair submitted a code compliance complaint for the continued presence of derelict appliances and mattresses dumped at the former Miller recycling place on Old Hwy 80. According to county code enforcement, the property has received multiple complaints and it is currently under investigation.

2. Community Interface Reports:

a. **Fire Safe Council Revitalization.** Mark Ostrander identified that the Fire Safe Council will be holding chipping events from 10m to 2pm on May 15, June 19, and July 17, 2021. Chipping sites for all the dates are the Resource Center (the former Boulevard Fire Station) and the Jacumba Community Park.

b. The Jacumba Boulevard Revitalization Association (JBRA), a CA non-profit 501c3 organization, will host a variety of community clean-up events as follows: Boulevard—Aug. 21; Campo—Sep. 18; Jacumba—Oct. 16; and Potrero—Nov. 20. Over the past year, the Resource Center operated by JBRA volunteers, has essentially been shut down for community activities due to COVID restrictions. The former fire station

apparatus bay was recently converted into a theater that can also be used as a large community meeting place.

Lorrie Ostrander announced that there will be a yard sale from 8am to 2pm on Friday, April 30; Saturday, May 1; and Sunday, May 2, 2021 at the Resource Center in Boulevard. The proceeds from the yard sale will benefit the JBRA and the Fire Safe Council.

G. Meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm. The next regular JCSG meeting is Tuesday, May 18, 5:30pm. (Place to be determined.)

Approved May 18, 2021

County of San Diego
Jacumba Hot Springs Sponsor Group
Final Agenda for Regular Meeting 5:30pm on May 18, 2021
Jacumba Hot Springs, CA 91934

To attend Zoom meeting via computer or smart phone:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81181825014?pwd=dENnUmxGZGFhWlVXc1lnb1JSNHJsUT09>

Join by Phone

+1 (669) 900-6833 or (253) 215-8782

Meeting ID: 811 8182 5014

Passcode: 281588

A. Roll call (Determination of quorum): Seat 1. Jacari Cousins; Seat 2. Greg Curran; Seat 3. Cherry Diefenbach; Seat 4. Jeffery Osborne; Seat 5. (Katrina Westley's application is awaiting BOS approval)

B. Pledge of Allegiance. (waived-due to virtual meeting format)

C. Approval of draft minutes for Jacumba Sponsor Group (JSG) virtual meeting held on April 20, 2021.

D. Public Communication: The public may comment on any subject within the JSG's jurisdiction that is not on the posted agenda. (Speakers are limited to 2 minutes and no action can be taken on non-agenda items.)

E. Action items: (Agenda items may be taken out of order upon request)

1. Discuss/vote on the revised Jacumba Valley Ranch Energy Park (PDS2018-MUP-18-022) project.

- a. **On March 16, 2021, the Jacumba Sponsor Group voted to support a much smaller solar facility (up to 200 acres) located well north of the town with 1,500-foot setbacks from residences and all public roads.** This smaller facility would utilize underground transmission lines to send its generated green energy directly into the power grid via SDG&E's ECO substation, thereby eliminating the need for a switchyard.
- b. **On April 12, 2021, our sponsor group received an electronic copy of the revised JVR solar project map (4th submittal) dated 04/08/2021.**

The revised project involves the construction and operation of an enormous 90 megawatt (MW) solar energy facility on ~623 acres located within Jacumba's Rural Village on a 1,356 acre property formerly known as Ketchum Ranch. As currently configured, the project footprint stretches from the International border to an area just south of the Subway station along I-8. It would place solar modules and associated equipment (battery storage containers, inverters, transformers, a collector substation, and a large switchyard) within 547 fenced acres immediately east, north, and south of the community of Jacumba Hot Springs; north, south, and west of the Jacumba Airport, for about a mile along both sides of scenic Highway 80; and south of the I-8 corridor near the Jacumba exit/Carriso Gorge Road. **While the revised project map provides slightly larger setbacks than the original project delineated in the DEIR, it is still six times the physical size of the existing village of Jacumba.** The project includes the following:

--approximately 300,000 photovoltaic modules (12-feet high and up to 300 feet in length) mounted on single axis mechanical trackers that follow the movement of the sun from east to west. (The stowed panel position is parallel to the ground; at full tilt, the panel bottom is 38 degrees from perpendicular.)

--75 battery storage containers-three containers at each of the 25 sites (containers are 55-feet long, 19-feet wide and 10-feet high).

--25 inverter/transformer metal platforms on skids (8-feet wide and 20-feet long) adjacent to battery containers.

--5,000-feet of underground electrical collection system.

--an on-site collector substation (152-feet by 180-feet) and a 200-foot-long 65-foot-high overhead slack span transmission line that connects the collector substation to the switchyard.

--a 138kV switchyard (3.2-acres) adjacent to the collector substation with 1,860-feet of overhead transmission lines strung on (five) 70-115 feet high steel poles which will loop the switchyard into the existing SDG&E Boulevard-East County Transmission Line. This project is described as an “interim” land use with the project life projected as 35-37 years. Given that the switchyard will be turned over to SDG&E at the decommissioning of the solar project, it is likely to be followed by another industrial scale energy project. This essentially eliminates any expansion of the town and the possibility of a future international border crossing at Jacumba. (Below is photo of a solar project switchyard.)



--The MUP project area will be enclosed with a 6-foot high slatted chain-link fence with three strands of barbed wire on top, and high voltage signage. Because the MUP area south of Old Hwy 80 has historically been prone to flooding, solar panels within that area may be raised as much as five feet above grade and flood fencing will be used. (Below is a photo of a non-tracking or fixed solar project currently under construction. A slatted fence does not adequately screen even these modules which have not been elevated five feet above grade.)



--All former farm buildings and all existing trees within the project area will be removed. (Many of the old buildings and the trees near the farm are routinely used as perches and scouting posts by a variety of large raptors.)

--A landscaping plan will be implemented 15 feet from the project fencing on both sides of Old Hwy 80, next to the town, and along some portions of Carrizo Gorge Road. Developer to maintain it for the lifetime of the project.

--During the estimated 13-month construction period, up to 500 construction workers will arrive at the site per day. Construction hours are projected as 7 am to 4pm Monday through Saturday. **(The DEIR did not identify any additional first responder staffing** even though the construction project will essentially double the population of the town. Jacumba's current firefighter staffing is just 2 people.) This solar site will be unmanned when completed.

- c. **An informal community forum was held in Jacumba on May 7, 2021, and a variety of local issues were discussed, including the revised JVR project.** Community members were given an opportunity to look at the revised JVR project maps and they were asked to state their opinions as whether they thought the JVR Solar park would benefit Jacumba or whether they thought it would negatively impact the town. Their nearly unanimous responses were that the solar project would provide no benefit to local residents, and that it would do irreparable harm to community character, property values, future tourism, scenic vistas, and flight operations at the Jacumba glider port, etc.
- d. **Following a JVR project presentation made by Geoff Fallon, the sponsor group will further discuss/vote on whether to approve, conditionally approve, or deny the 623-acre JVR project plan.** (Fallon represents the solar project developer, BayWa r.e. Solar Project LLC.)

The Planning & Development Services (PDS) project manager for the JVR project is Nicholas Koutoufidis (nicholas.koutoufidis@sdcounty.ca.gov or 858-495-5329). The revised 20-page JVR project plan can be viewed at: [https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/JVR/DEIR/AdditionalDocs/JVR0Plot%20Plans%20\(Optimized\).pdf](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/JVR/DEIR/AdditionalDocs/JVR0Plot%20Plans%20(Optimized).pdf).

- 2. **Discuss/vote on the need for a crosswalk across Old Highway 80 at Carriso St. near the Highland Community center and the Jacumba library.**
- 3. **Discuss the status of the trash/appliance/mattress dumping that has been occurring for more than six months at the former recycling business located on scenic Hwy 80 west of Jacumba.** Should the sponsor group chair formally ask Supervisor Joel Anderson's office to get involved in finding a solution?

F. Group business and Project Updates-discussion only:

- 1. Announcements and correspondence.
- 2. Community interface and other reports.
 - a. Fire Safe Council
 - b. Revitalization

G. Adjournment:

The next regular Jacumba Sponsor group meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 15, 2021 at 5:30pm.

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.