

LETTER

RESPONSE

Letter I78

July 14, 2014

Mark Slovick
County of San Diego, Planning and Development Services
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123

re: Accretive Group's Lilac Hills Ranch Development

I must begin by saying that I find it unfathomable that we are even continuing to discuss the Accretive Group's development - now politically renamed "Lilac Hills Ranch". I expected it to be killed when first presented. My family and I have lived in this area for over 25 years. When we outgrew our first area home on Covey Lane, off West Lilac, and searched for a replacement, we considered moving into Valley Center for the "conveniences" of a short trip to schools, churches, ball fields, libraries, gas stations, and markets. We researched the growth plans and ultimately decided that the convenience of living in town was outweighed by the solitude of remaining in our agricultural area where the county had dedicated itself to maintaining increasingly large parcels and limited growth - in writing, no less. We bought a flower farm on West Lilac Road and continue to endure the hardship of having to plan ahead to secure fuel or necessities in neighboring cities before heading home or having our children ride the bus for an hour to get to and from school. It is a sacrifice but it's worth it. The choice was a conscious one. People live in VC proper because they choose NOT to live "without". They want the market, dry cleaner, library, gas station. We do not.

Now we are told that our long range planning for our future was futile because it has been trumped by a Developer's short term plan to turn a profit. After the county spent many years and million of dollars to create the "General Plan", they are now willing to scrap it in favor of the monies that will be generated by allowing Accretive corporation to profit from their ill conceived purchase of tracts of unincorporated land. But, first, the Developer must convince the San Diego County "planners" to make extensive zoning changes. Their operating plan reads like a military mission:

1. Buy up agriculturally zoned land from individuals who accept the unsolicited offer to purchase their property during an economic down turn.
2. Attempt to convince the neighbors and the Valley Center Community Planning group that they will not be impacted by the destruction of hundreds of acres of relatively open land. Failing this...
3. Move on to the residents of Valley Center Proper (who reconsider the growth that has been planned for their town center) and slant the story to become one of knights in armor swooping down to save the residents from the approved growth plan by magically relocating it in someone else's backyard. Ignore the fact that this was not Accretive's actual intent nor will it make a difference in whether Valley Center expands or not. If Accretive had been able to acquire acreage in the middle of Valley Center proper, it would be using these same sales tactics to convince your board to let them put their huge development off Cole Grade Road instead of along small winding West Lilac Road.
4. Convince the county that the local planning group is negligent in some regard and should be overruled.
5. Now include politicians eager for an expanded tax and voter base and - voilà - somehow putting the cart before the horse seems like a coup rather than a critical blunder in investment strategy.

I78-1

I78-1 The comment expresses the opinions of the commentator and raises issues that do not relate to any physical effect on the environment or the adequacy of the environmental document. The comment will be included as part of the record and made available to the decision makers prior to a final decision on the proposed project.

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On a very personal note, our lifestyle will change drastically. We had planned to retire on this farm, but now are making alternate arrangements if construction on this monstrosity progresses. We can't and won't live with the noise, the horrific traffic, the loss of horse trails, or the increased danger to our property and person that will come with Lilac Hills. We envision roads congested to the point that every trip will resemble the ones when we get stuck behind a school bus, a trash truck, or a flock of bicyclists or are met head-on by a vehicle attempting to pass on a narrow two-lane road. The I-15 backup will be like Temecula's. While I'm sure we'll have a grocery store nearby, we won't have the peaceful quiet, the wildlife, the endless view of groves, or the dark night sky. We'll have to live with the increase in fire danger and regulations that will make it almost impossible to continue to farm in this area (think burn permits, aerial pest control, and water availability). We will be forced off of our land to find a new place for our children and grandchildren to visit even after having done everything right in terms of decision making. This nightmare has shattered my confidence in San Diego county governments' willingness to protect its constituents from big business.

178-2

On a more positive note, looking toward the immediate future, if this Development does move ahead, there will be nothing to stop us and our neighbors from splitting our land into much smaller parcels and selling them off to the highest bidder because the county will have, effectively, thrown all of their careful planning out of the window and opened the door to unrestricted growth. This fact should always be in the back of your mind when listening to area land owners who support Lilac Hills Ranch. Or better yet, we could sell to the next Big Developer -and there will be a next- who will put in another planned community, shopping mall, warehouse, manufacturer, or other nuisance. But next time it will be in Your backyard because ours will be gone. You can anticipate that the legal challenges to anything that remains of the General Plan will begin almost immediately.

178-3

Make no mistake - Lilac Hills is not pitching anything that will reduce growth in VC, but only trying to turn a huge profit. Even with LHR, the town of Valley Center's fate is sealed. It will still see growth (after all it's surrounded by huge Las Vegas style casinos and THAT part of the plan hasn't changed), but now there will be a whole city next door! An oasis-type tribute to Developers. It doesn't matter what they call this Development - it's wrong to reward them with a profit for making assumptive business decisions and then expecting San Diego county officials to roll over, play dead, and accept the fact that big business/government and greed trumps individual property owners. Do the only acceptable thing. Do what should have been done when first presented with Accretive's proposal. Support county planning and zoning. Prove that you cannot be cajoled, intimidated, and bribed into trashing years of research and long range planning. Show that you take seriously the responsibility to protect OUR rights. Say NO to this development and YES to those who trusted you.

178-4

Please listen to us. Help us. Retain the character of San Diego County's agricultural communities.

Carole and Ed Sullivan and Family
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cc: Valley Center Community Planning Group

178-2 The comment addresses general subject areas of noise, traffic, biological resources, visual resources, dark skies, and fire danger. All of these issues were analyzed in the FEIR. The comment does not raise any specific issue regarding the adequacy of the environmental document. The comment will be included as part of the record and made available to the decision makers prior to a final decision on the proposed project.

178-3 The comment expresses the opinions of the commentator and raises issues that do not relate to any physical effect on the environment or the adequacy of the environmental document. See response to comment 14-1 for General Plan consistency. The comment will be included as part of the record and made available to the decision makers prior to a final decision on the proposed project.

178-4 The comment does not raise any specific issue regarding the adequacy of the environmental document. The comment will be included as part of the record and made available to the decision makers prior to a final decision on the proposed project.