

COMMENTS

RESPONSES

Ehsan, Beth

From: Andy Laderman <aladerman@cox.net>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2015 9:21 AM
To: Sibbet, David; Ehsan, Beth; Loy, Maggie A; Wardlaw, Mark
Cc: Fitzpatrick, Lisa; Cox, Greg; Jacob, Dianne; Roberts, Dave; Ron-Roberts; Horn, Bill; douglas.dill@att.net; Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council; EdenValleyNews@aol.com
Subject: Valiano Draft Environmental Impact Report: 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

County Planning and Development Services:

BG-1 We live at 2710 Surrey Lane in Eden Valley. As residents of Eden Valley for over 30 years we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft EIR for the proposed Valiano project. We know you will be receiving detailed critiques of the draft EIR from several community groups. We concur with most of the community groups' findings of gross deficiencies and omissions in nearly every section of the draft EIR. We know that you will diligently review the input from these groups and hence do not feel it necessary to repeat their comments. Rather, we would like to use this opportunity to document the personal impacts that the project will have on our health, safety and quality of life if it is approved as proposed.

BG-2a Increased Traffic and Impact on Ability to Evacuate
As residents who have lived in the area for many years we can attest to the fact that we live in an area susceptible to wildfires and have had to evacuate several times. Due to the topography of the valley, Country Club Drive, a two lane road, is the only evacuation route out of the valley. The road is currently rated a LOS (level of service) "A" where it passes in front of our parcel (Draft EIR table 2.8.3). Even with this low traffic volume, it was still chaotic with several traffic delays when all of Eden Valley with our horse trailers were evacuating during the Cocos fire. The draft EIR predicts that the LOS for this stretch of Country Club Drive will deteriorate to a LOS of "F", basically gridlock (Draft EIR table 2.8.7). Evacuating the residents and horses of Eden Valley and Valiano onto Country Club Drive would be impossible to achieve in a timely manner. A fast moving fire such as the Cocos fire would cause a catastrophe with the potential for significant loss of life. We do not want to be statistics in such a scenario. We would ask that the following mitigation be required of the applicant:

- Reduce the number of residents needing to evacuate in a wildfire by reducing the number of homes to no more than the number allowed under the existing general plan and eliminating the 54 second dwelling units
• Requiring the applicant to provide evacuation routes that do not all empty eastbound onto Country Club Drive e.g. proving a northbound or westbound evacuation route by connecting to La Moree Road

BG-3a Noise
Table 2.6.3 on subsection 2.6 of the EIR (Noise) predicts that the exterior CNEL for receivers 12 and 13 (our specific parcel) will reach levels of 66.6 dBA due to increased traffic on Country Club Drive. For assessing noise impacts to sensitive residential land uses, the County standard is an exterior noise level (for usable outdoor space) of 60 CNEL or less for single-family homes. Therefore, if this project goes ahead our backyard, pool, outdoor kitchen and patio will not be useable according to County standards. The EIR does not propose any mitigation to alleviate this impact. We would ask that the following mitigation be required of the applicant:

BG-1 Thank you for your introductory comments. Regarding community groups, letters have been received from the Friends of Eden Valley and the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council; see Letters G, H, I, and J. The remainder of the responses below address your specific comments.

BG-2a The comment is related to fire evacuation which is fully addressed in Topical Response: Fire/Evacuations.

BG-2b Wildland hazards have been addressed by a detailed Fire Protection Plan (Appendix L) as analyzed in the EIR, Subsection 2.9.2.6. Impacts were identified as potentially significant but mitigated to less than significant with fuel management agreements with the San Marcos Fire Department and a service agreement with the Harmony Grove Fire Station.

BG-2c A road connection to La Moree was determined infeasible as discussed in Response I-63. However, Project improvements to Country Club Drive and the intersection of Country Club Drive and Auto Parkway would be expected to increase traffic flow and options for evacuation.

BG-3a Existing noise levels at receivers 12 and 13 would not be exposed to direct Project-related traffic noise impacts because the existing noise already exceeds the standard and traffic increases of less than 3 dB are not perceptible to humans. The Project's contribution to the cumulative impact is also less than significant because it would not exceed 1 dB CNEL significance threshold. See Response K-139 that addresses County threshold for off-site impacts.

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- BG-3b  • Reduce the additional daily trips and hence the traffic noise by reducing the number of homes to no more than the number allowed under the existing general plan and eliminating the 54 second dwelling units
- BG-3c  • Reducing the traffic on Country Club Drive by providing another access point to Valiano that does not come off Country Club Drive e.g. connecting the northwest corner of the site to La Moree Road
- BG-3d  • Building a sound barrier or wall to shield our outdoor space from the increased traffic noise on Country Club Drive

BG-3b As indicated in Response K-139, off-site traffic noise impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required. Options for a reduced Project size are addressed within Subchapter 4.0, Project Alternatives. Several alternatives for a reduced Project size are addressed within Subchapter 4.0, including the No Project/No Development Alternative, General Plan Density Alternative, Reduced Grading Alternative, and Septic Option Alternative. As discussed in that section, these alternatives would reduce off-site transportation noise levels; however impacts would remain less than significant.

**Air Quality**  
 The project would result in a significant decline in air quality in Eden Valley that would be harmful to us as well as all other residents of Eden Valley. The topography of Eden Valley results in frequent inversion layers. As stated in the Draft EIR (subchapter 2.2):  
*“Temperature inversions prevent air close to the ground from mixing with the air above it. As a result, air pollutants are trapped near the ground”.*  
 The construction and operation of the project as proposed, including the additional traffic, would result in a significant deterioration in air quality. This is acknowledged by the applicant in section 2.2 of the draft EIR:  
*“In addition, the Proposed Project would significantly contribute to cumulative construction and operational air quality impacts (Impacts AQ-2 and AQ-3, respectively). ..... short of reducing the Project size, there are no feasible mitigation measures to reduce the Project’s contribution to a less than considerable level. Accordingly, these impacts would remain significant and unmitigated.”*

BG-3c The infeasibility of connecting to La Moree Road is discussed in Response I-63. As discussed on page 38 of the Acoustical Site Assessment Report, an additional access option was analyzed that provides Project access in the northwest area of the site via Hill Valley Drive in addition to Eden Valley Lane, Mt. Whitney Road and the two future access driveways south or Mt. Whitney Road. In order for this roadway to meet private road standards set by the County, the entire road would need to be improved to a paved width of 24 feet with a corresponding speed limit of 30 miles per hour. Potential traffic noise levels along Hill Valley Drive were also separately modeled.

- We would ask that the following mitigation be required of the applicant:
- BG-4b  • Reduce the construction air quality impact by reducing the number of homes to no more than the number allowed under the existing general plan and eliminating the 54 second dwelling units
  - BG-4c  • Reduce the construction air quality impact by preserving the natural topography of the site. This would reduce the amount of grading and blasting required to produce level lots for lawns, parks, retaining walls, etc.
  - BG-4d  • Reduce the operational air quality impact by reducing the number of homes to no more than the number allowed under the existing general plan and eliminating the 54 second dwelling units

Noise levels at modeled receivers along Country Club Drive between Hill Valley Drive and Eden Valley Lane, and along Eden Valley Lane between the Project entrance and Country Club Drive would be lower with this scenario than they would be under the proposed Project (which does not include Project access at Hill Valley Drive). However, future noise levels would still exceed 60 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) at both structural façades and exterior use locations for many off-site residences along Country Club Drive. Although traffic noise may result in a cumulative levels over the 60 dBA CNEL, this Project would not have a “cumulatively considerable” project contribution (a greater than 1 dB increase due to Project-added noise to conditions that already exceed 60 CNEL) with the additional access option. Project-related cumulative impacts to off-site residences would be less than significant.

**Construction Blasting and Grading Noise Impact on Livestock**  
 Like many of the residents of Eden Valley we keep horses on our property. The noise and ground vibration associated with grading and blasting can be very harmful to horses. They are “flight” animals. However, they will not be able to flee from the noise. Not only will this be traumatic to the animals but could result in injury during their attempt to flee. Many of my neighbors who live closer to Harmony Grove Village experienced significant issues with their animals during the grading and blasting for this project. The applicant has proposed a 12 foot temporary sound barrier as mitigation. The equestrian community feels this would be woefully inadequate. We agree. We would ask that the following mitigation be required of the applicant:

- BG-5b  • Reduce the amount of grading and blasting required by reducing the number of homes to no more than allowed under the existing general plan
- BG-5c  • Reduce the amount of grading and blasting required by preserving the natural topography of the site rather than cutting and filing to produce level lots

BG-3d As noted earlier, Project-related traffic noise impacts to off-site residences are less than significant and do not require mitigation. See Response K-139 that addresses County threshold for off-site impacts.

BG-6  **Incompatibility with County’s Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2014-2019**

BG-4a The comment reiterates the conclusions in the DEIR. See Response AZ-19 with respect to inversion layers.

BG-4b See Response K-26b with respect to the General Plan Density alternative and its construction air quality impact.

BG-4c See Response K-26b with respect to the Reduced Grading alternative and its construction air quality impacts.

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- BG-4d See Response K-26b with respect to the General Plan Density alternative and its operational air quality impacts.
- BG-5a Since impacts to horses and livestock are not required analyses under CEQA, mitigation is not proposed. See Response K-149b with respect to potential impacts to livestock and a Project alternative that minimizes grading and blasting.
- BG-5b See Response K-149b with respect to potential impacts to livestock and a Project alternative that minimizes grading and blasting. Specific to the comment, a General Plan Density Alternative was evaluated is included in the EIR in Chapter 4.0.
- BG-5c See Response K-149b with respect to potential impacts to livestock and a Project alternative that minimizes grading and blasting. Please also note that the Project is fully compliant with County steep slope requirements in accordance with the Resource Protection Ordinance.
- BG-6 See Response AF-20.

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BG-6 cont. There has been a lot of discussion about how this project is incompatible with the County's general plan. The applicant's solution is to ask for a general plan amendment. We would like to address the project's incompatibility with the goals of the County's Strategic Plan for Fiscal years 2014-2019. If the project is allowed to proceed as proposed it will be in direct conflict with at least two of the initiatives contained within the County's Strategic Plan. Specifically:

- *Make neighborhoods healthy places to live, work and play*
  - The noise, air pollution and traffic associated with this project would make our neighborhood a markedly unhealthier place to live, work and play compared to today
- *Help communities prepare, respond and recover from public health threats, environmental hazards and other emergencies*
  - If this project was built as proposed, the inability to evacuate safely and in a timely manner during a wildfire would leave our community far less able to respond to such an emergency

BG-8 **Conclusion**  
 BG-9 In this email we have only touched on the most significant impacts of the project. There are a whole host of  
 BG-10 additional impacts including degraded visual aesthetics, loss of rural community character, increased light  
 BG-11 pollution, loss of habitat, etc.....the list could go on and on. The draft EIR confirms what we observed in our comments on the NOP for this project sent to the County on July 16, 2013 that this project would have a devastating impact on our environment and lifestyle. As we also stated in our NOP comments:  
 BG-12 *"Our community has worked diligently with the County over the last decade to evolve a General Plan that recognizes and preserves our rural lifestyle through well thought out land use planning and zoning. The intent was to avoid just the sort of environmental impacts that will occur if the applicant is granted a highly impactful General Plan Amendment to develop Valiano as proposed."*

BG-13 We feel that the draft EIR reinforces the concerns we expressed two years ago. Indeed, the health and safety impacts are potentially worse than we originally feared.

Sincerely,  
 Andrew & Phyllis Laderman  
 2710 Surrey Lane  
 Escondido, CA 92029

BG-7 See Response I-47 regarding fire evacuation.

BG-8 The visual effects of the Project have been objectively discussed and analyzed in conformance with the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance and Report Format and Content Requirements, Visual Analysis. These guidelines require evaluation of a project's visual impact from surrounding areas, and considering such varied elements as proposed structural massing, landform modification, removal of vegetation, overall visibility, impact to identified public viewpoints and scenic views, types of viewers and their respective sensitivity to change as well as duration of exposure to the changed view, etc. Project design elements such as consolidation of Project footprint into the lower elevations on site (with associated retention of open space), following underlying landform during grading of lots, setback of residential units from the primary road in the Project vicinity (County Club Drive), implementation of public park or open space areas next to a number of off-site viewers, retention of agricultural easement, and incorporation of substantial vegetative buffering elements were incorporated into the Project. The Project results in significant short-term impacts to the visual setting, but the visual mitigation and design features would reduce the long-term impacts to less than significant (see EIR section 2.1.2, and 2.1.4 through 2.1.6).

BG-9 See Responses U-2a and AZ-7c regarding issues of community character.

BG-10 See Response AG-1 regarding light pollution.

BG-11 See Response BC-8 regarding loss of habitat.

BG-12 See Responses AD-2 and AD-3 regarding the General Plan, GPA, and community involvement.

BG-13 Your position regarding the negative effects of the Project is hereby included as part of the record and made available to the decision makers prior to the final decision on the Project.