

COMMENTS

RESPONSES

Ehsan, Beth

From: Betty Anderson <bettypageanderson@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2015 3:01 PM
To: Ehsan, Beth; Sibbet, David; Loy, Maggie A; Blackson, Kristin; Wardlaw, Mark
Cc: Betty Anderson; Fitzpatrick, Lisa
Subject: Valiano Draft EIR - Please keep it rural!

To: County Planning and Development Services (PDS) Staff:

U-1 . My name is Betty Anderson and up until the time of the Coco's Fire last year, I have lived in Harmony Grove since 2008. Unfortunately, I lost my home and all its belongings due to the fire on May 15, 2014. I currently live in a rental home in Escondido and plan on rebuilding my home in Harmony Grove at 2925 Grandview, Escondido, CA, 92029.
I am writing to you today regarding the Draft EIR for the Valiano project and ask you to not allow the proposed increased density.

U-2a Our community plan calls for a rural community with rural zoning and a rural environment. The applicant claims it is a semi-rural development with rural themes. Their vision includes houses tightly clustered together, small lots, a sewage plant, 20-50 foot retaining walls, street lights and cul-de-sacs. This does not come close to rural, in my opinion. My definition of rural is wide open spaces (acreage, not square footage) and a horse friendly environment. Our community plan calls for septic, not sewage treatment plants (again, not rural).
U-2b

U-3 I am very concerned about the impacts that this project will have on my safety and those of my community.
This area is only zoned for 118 houses. Valiano is proposing 326 houses with a possible increase to 350 houses if "secondary dwelling" houses are allowed. This will make evacuation a very difficult proposition. I am concerned about any future fires and the plans for evacuation of people and horse trailers. Country Club Rd, Harmony Grove Rd and Elfin Forest Rd are only two lane roads, which is way too narrow to accommodate all these cars during an evacuation, not to mention fire prevention vehicles. Traffic bottlenecks at Kuauna Loa and Country Club Rd and also at San Elijo Hills Rd and Elfin Forest Rd. The Sprinter closes off Auto Parkway when it goes by. Citracado Parkway does not go all the way through to the 15 freeway.

U-4 The new proposed construction calls for a large amount of blasting and grading for a period of at least 2 years. My community was negatively affected by the blasting that was done for the Harmony Grove Village development. The blasting caused my home to rattle, my pets were anxious and Harmony Grove Rd traffic was stopped for periods of time. It was quite disturbing to hear the blasting.
I thank you for your time and consideration of not allowing increased housing for the Valiano project. Please, keep it rural.

U-1 The comment is introductory in nature. Your request for denial of the proposed increased density is hereby included as part of the record and made available to the decision makers prior to the final decision on the Project.

U-2a As the comment states, the Community Plan includes goals for maintaining a rural community. The Project maintains rural character while implementing semi-rural zoning through implementation of the Specific Plan which is based on the noted rural themes as well as the proposed land use designation. The "SR" portion of the SR-0.5 land use designation in the County is an abbreviation for "Semi-rural." The existing land use designation is also semi-rural (SR-1 and SR-2). The rural themes relate to incorporation of horse properties in Neighborhoods 3 and 5, facilities conducive to riding and use of the horse trails in the southeastern portion of the Project in Neighborhood 5, incorporation of bridle trails along Project roads, including three-rail equestrian fencing, use of decomposed granite trails with only limited sidewalks, retention of open space elements/easement on Project parcels, etc.

The following paragraphs respond to the specific (non-rural) elements the commenter mentions. The clustered, or smaller, footprint upon which Project development is proposed would in large part retain more open views to undeveloped area than spacing homes on larger lots within the Project parcels. This is because large-lot properties often convert square footage to hardscape areas (e.g., tennis courts, pools, large vehicle parking, etc.) and also often convert potential habitat areas to landscaping. As a result, although large lot homes provide for facilities such as barns and residentially related grove trees, walls and fences, they also create a patchwork of varied development that does not result in the same managed open space that a development such as Valiano is proposing. The housing density is characterized by the County as semi-rural (SR-0.5) and is therefore not considered high density. The consolidation of the development footprint additionally contributes to preservation of open space, enhancing visual relief from the built environment, as well as retained wildlife and biological habitat.

U-2a  
cont.

If the Project is approved, and the sewage treatment scenario chosen is the full on-site wastewater treatment and water reclamation facility (WTWRF), the entire footprint of the WTWRF would be smaller than 0.4 acre, which would include ponds and the small structure. As described in Subsection 1.2.1.1 of the EIR in the discussion of “Wastewater Treatment and Water Reclamation Facility, architectural design would include a building not to exceed 20 feet in height and which would be designed to mimic rural ranch styling. As further described in Subchapter 2.1, Subsection 2.1.2.1 under the discussion of “Massing and Scale”:

*...the WTWRF would be setback from Country Club Drive by approximately 20 feet and would be sited at an elevation of 626 amsl, while the abutting portion of Country Club Drive is at approximately 634 feet amsl. The buildings would be one story, ranging from 15 to no higher than 20 feet... and design would reference barn structures.... All mechanical equipment would be housed within buildings or noise-attenuating covers and the basins would be between four and eight feet in height, which would keep their highest features level with or below the road bed. Incorporation of the above-noted architectural design features would create a facility resembling an out-building cluster of barn structures, which would not be visually dominant. Furthermore, the WTWRF would be partially shielded by Proposed Project landscaping between the facility and Country Club Drive, as shown on Figures 1-24 and 1-25.*

The retaining walls proposed for the Project would range in height from 2 to 20 feet. No walls would exceed 20 feet in height. One wall, 523 feet in length would be primarily located at the back of lots 158, 159 and 160. A portion of that wall would extend northeasterly along the western boundary of the detention basin lot north of Lot 158. All other walls would be lower, and most such walls would be located behind residences or vegetation, which would obscure them from off-site viewers.

Street lights have been minimized to the extent possible while still considering safety concerns in this rural and semi-rural portion of the County where people walk, bike and ride horses along roads that also support motorized vehicles. As stated in the EIR, such lighting also must comply with the County Light Pollution Code (commonly referred to as the “Dark Sky Ordinance”). Lights must be shielded so that light is focused downward, and light “spill,” or the extent to which light can fall onto abutting properties, is also tightly controlled. As described in EIR Subsection 2.1.2.7 in a more lengthy discussion, “There would not be any potential for light spill onto adjacent properties.”

Generally, repetitive grid patterns would be considered urban in nature, while shorter streets with cul-de-sacs (required for emergency vehicles such as fire trucks turn-around) are required on narrower, more rural roadways. Regardless, cul-de-sacs, as ground level street elements, are not expected to be visible from most off-site locations; and are not expected to draw the eye as a primary view element in any case. They would therefore not be expected to affect the overall impression of

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U-2a cont.	<p>development nature.</p> <p>According to the County's General Plan Table LU-1, Land Use Designations and Compatible Regional Categories, the definition of "rural" is one home per 20, 40, or 80 acres. The existing area neighborhoods, therefore, are not rural by definition. The Project does contain horse-friendly elements contributing to a "horse friendly environment." Equestrian uses in the southeast corner of the Project would be continued. The Project also would promote equestrian use through the provision of an equestrian trail head area, and multi-use trail network. Neighborhoods 3 and 5 would provide lots that would accommodate horses within the County's animal keeping guidelines. Views into these portions of the site would include horse paddocks, and horses using the proposed workout ring schematically represented in EIR Figure 1-12.</p>
U-2b	<p>Please see Topical Responses: Septic, and General Plan Amendment and Subarea Boundary Adjustment CEQA Analysis, as well as Response G-7 for discussion of the EFHGCP policy dealing with septic systems.</p>
U-3	<p>The comment raises fire safety issues with evacuation. This issue is discussed in Topical Response: Fire/Evacuations. With regard to the concern of the SPRINTER's impacts on evacuation through Auto Parkway, LLG has reviewed the intersection for delay with operation of the SPRINTER to determine headways, cycle lengths, and intersection operations. According to LLG's review, the SPRINTER headways are currently 30 minutes on weekdays between 4:06 AM and 9:21 PM. The current headways mean the SPRINTER services affect the intersection operations every 15 minutes or 4 times every hour (2 trains eastbound and 2 trains westbound per hour). There are 36 signal cycles during a typical hour at the Nordahl Road / Auto Park Way / Mission Road intersection based on the average peak hour cycle length of 100 seconds. Therefore, the SPRINTER only affects the signal operations in 4 of the 36 cycles during a typical hour (4 times per hour). This SPRINTER effect frequency represents 11 percent of the signal cycles for which LLG determined a separate analysis assuming the SPRINTER is present was not warranted. All routes identified for evacuation and alternate traffic control are subject to actual live conditions during a wildfire in the area and are subject to override and on-the-ground assessments of the conditions and safety measures at the time of an emergency. Delays are inherent in the state of emergency and the safety personnel have taken such delays into account as well as alternate traffic control decisions (e.g., the SPRINTER line) when the evacuation notices are delivered to specific areas and residents within each area.</p> <p>In addition, note that the existing General Plan designation would allow 137 homes, not 118.</p>
U-4	<p>The comment refers to the impacts of blasting. Blasting would be a small part of the two year grading operation. This issue is discussed in Response K-149a.</p>

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Sincerely,  
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760-315-2216

cc: County Planning Commission  
County Board of Supervisors  
San Dieguito Planning Group  
Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council