
Gaviota Coast Planning Advisory Committee

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES MEETING No. 28

***Wednesday February 23, 2011
Vista de Las Cruces School Auditorium***

Meeting No. 28 Called to Order: By Chair Kimbell at 6:31 p.m.

1. Roll Call

GavPAC Members Present: Baer, Boise-Cossart, Bowman, Feeney, Kimbell, McGinnis McKenna, Tautrim, Van Leer

GavPAC Members Absent: Lloyd, McNabb

County Staff Present:

David Lackie, Long Range Planning Division Supervising Planner

Kevin Drude, Energy Division Energy Specialist

Brian A. Tetley, Long Range Planning Division Senior Planner

Katie Haldeman, Long Range Planning Division Associate Planner

2. Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda:

Mike Lunsford: Is concerned about the lack of a coordinated planning effort, between discrete projects on the Gaviota Coast, for the California Coastal Trail. Suggested a joint committee be formed with the County Riding and Hiking Trails Advisory (CRAHTAC). Requested a County Council opinion in regards to Government Code Section 1125 et. seq. regarding conflict of interest disclosures and when Committee members should recuse themselves from a vote.

Deliberations: Feeney responded to Lunsford's comment by suggesting that the term "consultant" can have a broad definition. Staff informed Lunsford and the Committee that CRAHTAC will be attending a GavPAC meeting to discuss trails issues when the GavPAC deliberates on the Recreation issue. Staff also reminded the Committee that they have the ability to formally comment on current projects within the planning area, if they would like, and referred them to the County's website for a cumulative list of projects on the Gaviota Coast. Chair Kimbell does not want to be diverted from the task of doing long term planning for the Gaviota Coast.

3. Administrative Briefings

Deliberations: None.

4. Meeting Minutes from February 9, 2011

Deliberations: McKenna requested the minutes be amended to reflect a more accurate describe of the Committee's direction to Staff on the Tajiguas Landfill. Lunsford's public comment was amended to state that the new Santa Maria landfill will be able to except other waste, rather than specifically stating that it is planning to take waste from Tajiguas in 2022.

Public Comment: None



ACTION: Baer moved, seconded by Boise-Cossart and carried by a vote of 9-0, to approve the minutes with modifications.

4. Guest Speaker, Mr. Kevin Drude, County Energy Facilities

Mr. Drude explained the current status of oil and gas development and cleanup activities in the Gaviota Coast area, including the ongoing operations at the Plains Exploration & Production Company (XP) heating & pumping facility, north of the Highway at Mariposa Reina. Drude also discussed the status of alternative energy projects in the County.

Las Flores Canyon is the sole remaining oil and gas processing facility on the South Coast, and because it is the only designated "consolidated facility", any future production would have to be processed at that location.

Oil and gas operations at Ellwood have proposed tying into the All-American Pipeline at Las Flores Canyon (Line 96 project). The Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) with a 45-Day public review period is scheduled to be released next week. The State Lands Commission has renewed the lease at Ellwood until 2013.

Prohibitions in State law generally prohibit new off-shore oil and gas exploration, however the previous proposed Tranquillon Ridge exploration project may be reconsidered to help address the State's tax revenue needs according to a recent California Legislative Analyst's Office report.

The county does not have an enabling ordinance in the Coastal Zone for commercial scale wind or solar projects, and it does not have an enabling ordinance for solar projects in the inland area. A draft enabling ordinance for inland commercial scale solar energy facilities is currently being developed in conjunction with the proposed 320 acre, 40mW Cuyama Photovoltaic (PV) project. The Cuyama project EIR has helped inform the draft ordinance language for commercial scale PV facilities in inland areas. This project would require a partial Williamson Act contract cancellation.

The EIR for the Miguelito Canyon wind energy project is currently under litigation. The CEQA process provides comprehensive environmental review and goes a long way towards addressing environmental concerns of a project. However, commercial scale alternative energy projects invariably have Class I impacts, which can be adopted with a statement of overriding considerations by the decision making body, as reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a State mandate.

Drude explained that the Energy Division monitors legislative activities at the state and federal level, and that there are no emerging energy-related regulations that would affect the Gaviota Coast.

Deliberation: Tautrim inquired about the status of the Gaviota Oil Terminal (GTC) property south of the Highway at Mariposa Reina. Drude responded that tank farms have been removed from that site and the soil has undergone testing, the results of which have yet to be released, but will help inform the decision on future use of this site. The Board of Supervisors recommended the GTC site be re-zoned from Coastal Dependent Industry to Recreation, however that recommendation is not binding and has not been formally initiated.

A co-generation facility has never been proposed at the XP facility. The County does not have an enabling ordinance for commercial scale wind projects in the Coastal Zone, or commercial scale solar projects in the Coastal and Inland areas. A draft enabling ordinance is being coupled with the proposed 40mW Cuyama solar energy project, however if that project does not proceed, the ordinance be enacted on its own. Some of the ordinance language is based on the impacts identified in the project EIR.

6. Guest Speaker, Mr. Tam Hunt, Renewable Energy:



Mr. Hunt described Santa Barbara County's potential for harnessing wind energy. A joint study by the California Energy Commission (CEC) and Public Utilities Commission (PUC) showed that the county has approximately 400mW of potential capacity. The combination of relatively easy transmission line access and decent wind makes the County a desirable location for wind energy.

Deliberation: The Committee inquired about future wave energy, the feasibility of requiring the burying of new transmission lines, and transmission line location in relation to the Cojo/Jalama Ranches. Hunt responded that only 1 or 2 wave energy projects exist around the world, and that the implementation of a wave energy project offshore of the County would be in the distant future. Undergrounding transmission lines can cost 10 times more than aboveground installation. Significant wind energy potential exists on the Cojo/Jalama Ranches, however additional transmission lines would need to service any potential new wind farm in that area. Hollister Ranch CCNR's currently do not allow for wind energy projects. McGinnis inquired about potential growth inducing impacts from commercial scale energy projects. Hunt responded that growth inducement would not occur, except in relation to jobs associated with the energy project construction and operations.

McKenna reminded the GavPAC that permitting of commercial scale alternative energy projects could move away from protecting rural character. He also requested Staff inquire with County Council as to the legality of prohibiting oil and gas development on the Gaviota Coast. Bowman believes the potential for exploitation of mineral and other resources is great, and that the GavPAC should determine what their purview is in regards to this matter. McGinnis mentioned that wind turbines can impact birds in the Pacific Flyway. Drude responded that the County coordinated with U.S. Fish & Wildlife and the Department of Fish & Game to site turbines out of the flyway and minimize bird collisions.

Public Comment:

Carl Steinberg: Supports the development of an enabling ordinance and legislation that would promote wind energy in the Coastal Zone and on Gaviota Coast.

Chris Shaeffer representing Caltrans: In the last 1.5 years Caltrans has seen 3 proposals across San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara County for oil and gas activities. The production component of oil and gas development generates additional truck traffic, which can occur at unimproved locations with at-grade crossings.

ACTION: Baer moved, seconded by Van Leer and carried by a vote of 8-0, with Boise-Cossart abstaining, to give the following policy direction to Staff:

1. Extend the enabling ordinance for commercial scale wind energy into the Coastal Zone, west of the Gaviota Pass viewshed.

7-9. Consideration of Transportation, Energy, and Infrastructure Preferences for the Gaviota Coast

See Item # 6.

10. Long-Term Meeting Schedule

The next GavPAC meeting will include a report back from the Visual Resources Subcommittee and finishing up Transportation, Energy, and Infrastructure discussions.

Meeting Adjournment – 9:36 p.m.

