
Goleta Valley Planning Advisory Committee

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

December 16, 2009 at 6:00PM

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors Conference Room

Meeting Called to Order: By Chair Valerie Olson at 6:02PM

1. Roll Call

GVPAC Members Present: Adams, Elliott, Ezal, Freeman, Olson, True

GVPAC Members Absent: Mineau

County Staff Present:

Derek Johnson, Director, Office of Long Range Planning

Peter Imhof, Supervising Planner, Office of Long Range Planning

Erika Leachman, Planner, Office of Long Range Planning

Lucy Pendl, Planner, Office of Long Range Planning

2. Public Comment:

Mary Whalen expressed concern that the level of noticing for the meeting and the location outside the Eastern Goleta Valley were inadequate, and that the timing of the meeting during the holidays was inconvenient. Ms. Whalen expressed concern that a GVPAC member had engaged local agricultural land owners, and that information provided by County staff regarding major developments built since 1993 and GVPAC discussion that indicated there is 1 acre of land per house in the planning area is misleading. Ms Whalen also commented that the updated Community Plan will have significant legal ramifications.

Ann Crosby commented that the language used in the Residential Land Use Goal Matrix could be legally misinterpreted in the future to imply high density housing on all available open land, including agricultural land, in the EGV. Ms. Crosby expressed concern that the draft goals may not achieve the intended goals for the community, specifically in regards to housing and density. Ms. Crosby suggested that legal council review how the goals can be interpreted.

Patti Close commented that it is difficult to view the goals as they are transcribed on the projector screen. Ms. Close expressed concern that goals to provide affordable housing for all residents are not desirable since the area may not have the infrastructure to support housing for everyone who would want to live in the Eastern Goleta Valley and commented that she does not support Transit-Oriented Development, Smart Growth or residential second units as methods to create affordable housing, get people out of their cars,



and increase density. Ms. Close also noted that the minutes from GVPAC #24 imprecisely represented her comments and the future minutes should be more specific.

3. Minutes of Dec. 3, 2009 GVPAC Meeting:

Amendments: Corrections will be made to the comments made by Patti Close.

Chair Olson postponed approval of the minutes pending receipt of a synopsis from Patti Close of comments she made, for inclusion in the minutes.

4. Long-Term Schedule:

Tom Elliott clarified that the Residential Land Use discussion and possibly the Agricultural Land Use discussion will be continued at the next GVPAC meeting in early January.

The next GVPAC meeting was discussed and scheduled for Thursday, January 7, 2010.

5. Announcements:

None

6. Agricultural Land Use Discussion:

GVPAC Members reviewed, modified and added to the draft Agricultural Land Use goals recorded by staff. A complete set of goals was not recommended due to time constraints. An additional meeting will be held on January 7, 2010 to complete and recommend Agricultural Land Use goals.

Public Comment:

Paul Nielsen, representing the Groen Rose Company, commented on the hardships of farming in the Eastern Goleta Valley as well as the many changes that have occurred since 1949; he suggested small area plans could be applied to small agricultural areas to implement an alternative land use but maintain the same open-space atmosphere.

Steve Halsey, president of the Groen Rose Company, commented on the difficulties the company has had being competitive in the flower business, until finally ceasing operations to lease land to others; he suggested that creative land use planning could preserve open space and prove viable in the long term.

Jeff Foltz, a South Patterson land owner, commented that his land does not benefit anyone currently, but there is an opportunity for public benefit since it is adjacent to the bikepath, near the hospital, near the university, and could possibly be used for workforce housing and parks.

Stan Giorgi, representing the Giorgi family, noted that 7 property owners proposed a small area plan for the Patterson Park Golf Community, which was not approved, at the time of the 1993 Goleta



Community Plan and expressed concern that land use planning will be piecemeal unless there is a coordinated effort.

Larry Saltzman, representing Transition Town, promoted creative agriculture and permaculture options, such as a food forest and community gardens, to provide local food, as well as maintaining lands available for intensive food agriculture for future conditions.

Bob Alm, representing Deigaard Nurseries, presented photos from the property and urged creativity in future opportunities for residential land uses in the area which could provide a public benefit, such as a coastal park and trails.

Dean Lowrey, owner of Deigaard Nurseries, stated that agricultural operations in the South Patterson Agricultural Area are not competitive, that change on the Mesa is inevitable in the near future, and a rethinking of the area is necessary.

Kim Miller and Marnie Leland, owners of 5030 Hollister Ave, expressed concern that if the Montessori school is built behind their property, existing agricultural operations will be impracticable due to conflicts between school and agricultural uses. Ms. Miller and Ms. Leland requested consideration of a rezone to allow for residential land uses.

George Tharakan commented that the Montessori school should be built to improve the neighborhood and create a buffer zone around the school, in which to provide education about agriculture.

Christina McGinnis, from the OPEN project, commented that agriculture often has to adapt to changing economic conditions by incorporating innovations and that agriculture is an important component of the community. Ms. McGinnis also commented that Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) should be considered to preserve agriculture to the extent possible.

Ron Caird, a farmer and property owner in both the South Patterson Agricultural Area and in Santa Maria, cited prohibitive costs of labor and water in the Eastern Goleta Valley and suggested that a comprehensive small-area plan be made for the South Patterson Agricultural Area.

Ann Crosby, a permaculture advocate and designer, commented that traditional agriculture is not the only option for agricultural land, that permaculture, small farms, and a self-sustaining food supply is possible for food security, especially in emergencies, as the best use of the land.

Patti Close commented that efforts should be made to assist farmers to save open space and farm operations. Ms Close expressed concern about problems resulting from the Montessori School for the San Marcos/Hollister neighborhood, including traffic. Ms. Close also



suggested that members of the GVPAC and staff should see the film "Fresh" to learn about highly productive rotational crops in urban areas.

Craig Minus, representing the Towbes Group and interests in the San Marcos Growers property, pointed out that maintaining agriculture for open space comes at the expense of land owners, and the County should buy the property for public open space. Mr. Minus also requested consideration of alternative land uses and the removal of the requirement for agriculture preservation.

ACTION: None taken, pending completion of a set of goals for Agricultural Land Use.

7. Adjournment

Next GVPAC Meeting (#26) will be held on Thursday, January 7th, 2010 at 6:00PM in the Planning Commission Hearing Room.

ACTION: Adams moved, seconded by Elliott, and carried by a vote of 6-0 to adjourn until GVPAC Meeting #26.

Yea: Adams, Elliott, Ezal, Freeman, Olson, True

Nay: None

Absent: Mineau

Meeting Adjourned at 9:02PM

Signed _____

Valerie F. Olson

Date 20 Jan 2010

GVPAC Chair Olson

