
Goleta Valley Planning Advisory Committee

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

March 30, 2011 at 6:00PM

Santa Barbara County Planning Commission Hearing Room

Meeting Called to Order: By Chair Valerie Olson at 6:04PM

1. Roll Call

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

GVPAC Members Absent: Adams

County Staff Present:

Jeff Hunt, Director, Long Range Planning Division

June Pujo, Planner, Long Range Planning Division

Erika Leachman, Planner, Long Range Planning Division

Lucy Pendl, Planner, Long Range Planning Division

2. Public Comment:

Mary Whalen commented that she is concerned about the inclusion of references to a future Form-Based Code in the draft Plan, since it could mean a carte blanche for rezoning the community.

Patti Close commented that the draft language for agricultural conversion policies was released with only two days advance notice and that she would like Member Adams vote to count in spite of his absence.

Geoffrey Bard explained that he is concerned about the many large fallen trees recently, that there should be a study of hazardous trees, that planning for the EGV should involve bicycling components and advocates, and that the Diablo Canyon Power Plant should be addressed.

3. Minutes of March 22, 2011 GVPAC Meeting:

ACTION: Ezal moved, seconded by True, and carried by a vote of 6-0 to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2011 GVPAC Meeting.

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

Nay: None

Absent: Adams

4. Announcements:

Chair Olson stated that Member Adams is in the hospital and doing well considering his recent accident; she also stated that she and Vice Chair Ezal



met and drafted some changes to the agricultural conversion policies proposed by staff. Vice Chair Ezal concurred and stated that he also spoke with Member Adams who is opposed to the land use designation change of the MTD property from agricultural to residential.

Member Freeman announced that the current issue of Sunset Magazine features articles regarding Goleta Valley agriculture and farms, and that she attended the "Farm to Fork" seminar on March 23, which highlighted many of the existing problems facing agricultural operators, as well possible solutions.

Several letters to the PAC were received, including letters from: Kas Terhorst, Suzanne Elledge Planning & Permitting Services, Inc on behalf of the South Patterson Agricultural Area Flatlands landowners, James E. Marino, Mary Whalen, and Barbara Kloos.

5. Calendar:

Staff commended the GVPAC for the good progress made to date and announced that the next GVPAC meeting will be scheduled for approximately early/mid May.

6. GVPAC Discussion:

Staff provided a presentation of the purpose and contents of Section II: Community Development and Land Use as well as the proposed draft language for the agricultural conversion policies. The GVPAC then asked for public comment on items on the agenda.

Public Comment:

Edith Ogella commented that recent cold snaps and earthquakes have affected crop production and distribution worldwide and it is therefore important to keep local land available for food production.

Sherrie Fisher provided a synopsis of the history of MTD's ownership of the property along Calle Real and stated that any revenue resulting from development there would be reinvested in the community.

Stan Giorgi, representing the South Patterson Agricultural Area Flatlands landowners, expressed: his disappointment that their overlay idea was not included in the draft plan, his appreciation for the dialog about this subject and potential expanded uses, and his concern about the Specific Plan requirement being too onerous for the landowners.

Barbara Kloos expressed concern that the proposed maximum density of 12.3 units per acre for the MTD property does not account for density bonuses programs that could increase the total number of units; she also mentioned a recent article in the News-Press which discussed the negative impacts from Smart Growth principles.

Steve Fort commented that the Specific Plan requirement in the draft plan should be clarified so that the subareas are subject to the Specific Plan requirement only when a General Plan Amendment or Rezone is proposed, that the landowners are not required to bear the full cost of



preparing the Specific Plan, and that the conversion policies would not apply to expanded uses allowed by the proposed Urban Agriculture zoning designation.

Mark McClure commented that he would like the MTD property to remain designated for agriculture for food production.

Tom Patton, representing the Ramada Inn on Calle Real, commented that he is not opposed to residential uses on MTD, but any resulting project should be well-designed and compatible with the community, and that the GVPAC should use their judgment and knowledge of the community to advise staff accordingly.

Kas Terhorst expressed concern that redesignating the MTD property from agriculture to residential would attract vagrants and drug addicts to the area and suggested not changing its zoning.

Dick Kling commented that a conversion policy could allow the County to do whatever it wants and that high-density housing is inappropriate for the community.

Ann Crosby referenced a letter submitted by Christina McGinnis which stated that 'compatibility' language could encourage conversion of agricultural lands and reminded the committee that they had voted previously to retain the agricultural designation for the MTD property.

Patti Close stated that she agreed with Ms. Crosby, that 'public benefit' should be defined, and that a maximum density of 12.3 units per acre is not compatible with anything in the vicinity of the MTD property.

Craig Minus reminded the committee that the San Marcos Growers property used to be zoned residential, but was rezoned for agriculture with the caveat that it be reviewed periodically; some of the committee members previously recommended reinserting such language, and he would recommend that approach.

Geoffrey Bard commented that he was hearing a lot of rhetoric as well as some upsetting public comments and that he would like to see the MTD property in active cultivation but he also supports housing in the community.

Mary Whalen objected to the removal of the word "shall" from a policy which now only states "enhance and preserve;" she also commented that high-density housing could be construed as a public benefit.

Following the public comment period, the GVPAC completed a discussion of land use planning for the MTD site, a review of revised language addressing potential agricultural conversion proposals, and a continued review of the Transportation and Circulation section (Section III.F). In addition to comments on the Draft Plan, the GVPAC advised staff through the following action item:



ACTION: Elliott moved, seconded by Freeman, to recommend rezoning of the MTD property from agricultural to residential with a density equivalent to 7 upa maximum with clustering; Ezal moved, seconded by Elliott, to require such conversion to be consistent with all General Plan and Community Plan conversion policies. Motion carried, 5-1-1.

Yea: Elliott, Ezal, Freeman, True, Olson

Nay: Mineau

Absent: Adams

7. Adjournment

ACTION: Elliott moved, seconded by True, to adjourn. Motion carried, 6-0-1

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

Nay: None

Absent: Adams

Meeting Adjourned at 9:49PM

Signed _____

Valerie F. Olson

GVPAC Chair Olson

Date 12 July 2011

