
Goleta Valley Planning Advisory Committee

APPROVED WORKSHOP MINUTES

**Goleta Valley Van Tour
January 24, 2009 at 9:00AM
Goleta Coffee Company
177 S. Turnpike Rd. Goleta, CA**

Please note that due to the nature of the Goleta Valley Van Tour, which consisted of open discussion between County staff, the GVPAC members, and all public attendees at each agendized stop, the following minutes record the general items and points discussed without attribution to each particular contributor, unless noted.

Meeting Called to Order: By Chair Valerie Olson at 9:25AM

1. Roll Call

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

GVPAC Members Absent: None

County Staff Present:

Derek Johnson, Deputy Director, Office of Long Range Planning

David Lackie, Supervising Planner, Office of Long Range Planning

Erika Leachman, Planner, Office of Long Range Planning

Lucy Pendl, Planner, Office of Long Range Planning

Justin Feek, Planner, Office of Long Range Planning

2. Public Comment

No comment on items not on the van tour agenda

3. Van Tour Discussions:

Stop #1: Turnpike Shopping Center: 9:25AM – 10:00AM

Comparison of Turnpike Shopping Center to Magnolia Shopping Center identified parking lot circulation problems for shoppers at Magnolia that do not occur as commonly at Turnpike due to large paved parking lot, few impediments different customer demands and usage. GVPAC member Ken Mineau suggested that drivers need to slow down and not expect to be able to quickly move through a parking lot particularly in developments that are designed for pedestrians.

Turnpike Shopping Center, specifically Goleta Coffee Company, was described as an unofficial meeting place and community center for



Eastern Goleta Valley residents and it was suggested that space in the shopping center could be rented to provide this amenity to the public if development of such a facility is not feasible

Turnpike Center serves students from San Marcos High School during school hours, during special events, and as a meeting/studying place. This creates traffic congestion and pedestrian/bicycle/automobile friction that could be addressed through improved connectivity.

Stop #2: Upper State St./Hollister Commercial Area: 10:15 – 10:30AM

It was noted that the Painted Cave Fire moved across this stop due to the Goleta Valley's topography.

As a gateway area to Hope Ranch, it was noted that Hope Ranch provides equestrian facilities for the region and attention should be given to the provision of additional equestrian trails and facilities to alleviate some of this demand in Hope Ranch.

Discussion of signage along the corridor addressed likes and dislikes of existing business frontages.

Severe auto traffic backups from San Marcos High School to Hwy 154 and automobile access problems for newer developments on north side of Hollister were identified as primary Traffic and Parking issues to address in the community plan update.

Stop #3: San Marcos Preserve/Foothills: 10:45AM – 11:00AM

Discussion included the importance of roadway connectivity through multiple routes of ingress and egress to ensure both emergency evacuation and access and noted that the pending development has limited access to nearby surface streets and major transportation corridors.

St. Vincent's property, a key site in the 1993 Goleta Community Plan, was discussed from this stop as an area still awaiting a development proposal consistent with development standards adopted in the community plan.

Opportunities for future active and passive park development in the San Marcos Foothills were discussed in relation to the Goleta Community Plan Park, Recreation and Trails map. Specifically, opportunities were identified to connect the County-owned open space to existing trails in Tucker's Grove County Park and to develop a master plan for improved park facilities on eastern side of County-owned area.

Stop #4: San Antonio Creek/Pozzato Grassland: 11:12 – 11:37AM

Observations included wide streets and medians to satisfy fire standards in lieu of more than one site of ingress and egress. This observation was noted in relation to the importance of fire preparedness for neighborhoods in the foothills, specifically in relation



to evacuation in case of wildfire where connectivity of roadways is important.

This neighborhood was identified as a low density development. It was suggested that high density development be integrated into these types of low density areas to distribute the housing types across the Goleta Valley. In response, it was discussed that due to limitations on fire and law enforcement access and response times, as well as limitations to transportation corridors, public services, and job centers, residential developments in the foothills would not be preferable to those closer to the urban areas and the cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta.

It was noted that in its natural state, the plant biology of Goleta Valley foothills is primarily chaparral. Residential development has brought more vegetation and structures to the foothills which provide higher levels of fuel for wildfires. Building standards now exist to require larger houses in the foothills to have sprinkler systems and all properties to maintain at least 100 ft (or to the property line depending on which measure is closer) of defensible space around the residence.

Stop #5: Park Hill Estates: 11:45AM – 11:55AM

Discussion included the historical use of the property as farmland owned and operated by the Pannell sisters until high tax required the sale of the property.

This stop provided a clear view of the Gap Fire range. Hence, discussion included the success of the Windermere fire break clearing near the Trout Club neighborhood and the agriculture land throughout the foothills as fire breaks that protected life and property in the Goleta Valley.

It was clarified that the 12 parcels available in Park Hill estates can be sold individually or as a whole to a single developer.

Stop #6: Tucker's Grove County Park: 12:03PM – 12:19PM

Observations included a shortage of parks and recreation opportunities in the Goleta Valley, particularly smaller pocket parks within walking or biking distance from residential areas. Also, it was discussed that existing parks often have limitations to accessibility due to a lack of connectivity of paths, trails, and sidewalks for walking and biking.

It was recommended that the GVPAC make recommendations for new parks to serve underserved neighborhoods, particularly those situated in the areas south of Hollister Ave.

Girsch Park and the Camino Real Shopping Center were discussed as an example of park land being conditioned and built as part of a development plan to serve the community at-large, not only private owners.



LUNCH BREAK @ Tucker's Grove County Park: 12:19PM – 1:07PM

Stop #7: Turnpike/Calle Real Commercial Area: 1:07PM – 1:29PM

The area's close proximity to local residential neighborhoods was observed as reason for commercial areas to be neighborhood-serving instead of highway traffic-serving. As such, the area's current designation of Highway Commercial was called into question and options for C-2 commercial or C-1 commercial were discussed to encourage commercial development other than drive-thrus, gas stations, motels, etc., which are typical developments for highway commercial land use designations.

Traffic congestion at the Calle Real/Turnpike Rd. intersection was identified as a problem even though recent traffic studies have categorized the intersection as adequate. Discussion identified the limitation of Level of Service (LOS) standards in addressing traffic problems at non-peak traffic times during the day and for determining safety of intersections and roadways for bicycles and pedestrians. Staff explained that new traffic impact thresholds are moving away from LOS as the primary measure of adequacy and beginning to look to reductions to total vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) and average daily trips (ADTs) as solutions for traffic problems to retain the capacity of smaller intersections without expanding or widening the roadways and intersections.

The Goleta Transportation Improvement Plan (GTIP) was discussed as the catalyst plan for improvements to roadways and bikepaths. It will be updated to reflect needed improvements in the Goleta Valley consistent with the Goleta Community Plan update.

Stop #8: Forte Ranch Residential: 1:36PM – 1:57PM

GVPAC member Tom Elliott noted that Forte Ranch is approximately the same size as the adjacent MTD property. The Forte Ranch development was noted to be an example of a relatively outdated affordable housing program where the deeds are restricted, and that the County is moving away from these types of programs to allow instead for rental units and for non-profits to step in to develop and manage affordable houses.

GVPAC members also noted that the units in Forte Ranch have similar total square footage to low density tract homes to provide both adequate indoor living space and community open space and recreation facilities. This style and theory for development is the result of planned unit development zoning and was identified as consistent with the GVC 20/20 Visioning document, which prioritizes clustered developments to maintain open space instead of sprawl.



The limited improved ingress and egress were noted on site, but GVPAC member Tom Elliott explained that an unimproved access road would remain on the west side of the property for residents to reach Dexter Place in case of an emergency evacuation as a solution to this access issue. It was also mentioned that this has become an unplanned route for pedestrians from County Administration and northern neighborhoods to reach the Turnpike/Calle Real area. Future development of intentional connectivity for pedestrians and cyclist was discussed relational to the development of other properties in the surrounding area, such as MTD.

Stop #9: MTD: 1:57PM – 2:12PM

The historical land use of the MTD property was disclosed as leased for productive agriculture. The 1993 Community Plan intended to develop the area as a transit and commercial center.

Flooding hazards and prime soils on the western side of the property were identified as potential constraints to development.

Discussion included the viability of the property as productive agricultural land in the future, as well as the opportunity for other land use designations, such as commercial and residential. It was suggested that housing development would be more supportable if it is guaranteed to critical workforce and if it avoids the prime agricultural soils on site to allow for future farm productions.

Stop #10: Tatum/Santa Barbara School District:

Stop #11: San Marcos Growers:

2:24PM – 2:46PM

Stop #12: Lane Farms @ San Simeon Rd:

Discussion of these three areas included issues of limited access for transportation should any up-zoning or developments occur, particularly for the Lane Farms property, which has been conceptualized recently for a Montessori School by its owners. Other issues were discussed regarding development of the Tatum property for teacher/workforce housing under a land lease with the Santa Barbara School District and conversion of the San Marcos Growers property to residential use. Concerns for impacts to traffic included the potential for a significant addition of peak hour trips (estimated by the community at approximately 17,000 additional auto trips at a maximum) which would overburden the existing roadway infrastructure without improvements. Other concerns for future development on agriculture land included potential impacts to water supply, changes in water rates, loss of prime agricultural soils, and loss of historic structures.

It was suggested that the GVPAC could make decisions to promote Transit Oriented Design (TOD) in any future project or public facility improvement.



Stop #13: South Patterson Agricultural Area: 2:56PM – 3:20PM

Discussion topics included the implications of the City of Goleta's proposed Sphere of Influence (SOI) for Area A, a portion of the South Patterson Agricultural Area, which would create the opportunity for future annexation of the area to the City following a vote of the land owners.

GVPAC member Bonnie Freeman explained the intent of Por La Mar Nursery owners to pursue a rezone of 3 of their existing 80 acres for commercial development adjacent to existing commercial activity and a rezone of 5 acres along Maria Ygnacia Creek for residential development. Ms. Freeman conveyed the owners' interest in being involved with the Goleta Community Plan update and provided a map of the area on behalf of the owners detailing elements of the proposal.

Other discussion topics included the desire to preserve the South Patterson Agricultural Area for the long term and the need to create flexibility for urban agriculture owners to maintain an economically viable operation on smaller parcels with edge effects of urban development to preserve agricultural land use.

Stop #14: More Mesa: 3:28PM – 3:50PM

The status and implications of the biological resources study currently being conducted were discussed, specifically with attention to the study's ability to modify the number of units allowed under the planned development zoning of the property depending on the scope of the biologic resources identified.

Staff explained that under the existing community plan, up to 70 units could be built without modification of the zoning. The impacts of this development to access roads such as Puente Dr were discussed with regard to emergency evacuation of the More Mesa area and emergency access for public safety services as issues that should be considered in light of any additional development in this neighborhood.

Discussion included the importance of the open space use as a passive recreation opportunity for hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians, even though the property is privately owned.

Stop #15: Goleta Beach and Slough Cancelled

Stop #16: UCSB/Isla Vista Cancelled

Stop #17: Old Town Goleta Cancelled

4. Adjournment

Next GVPAC Meeting (#8) will be held on Tuesday, February 3rd, 2009 at 6:00 in the Planning Commission Hearing Room

ACTION: Elliott moved, seconded by Freeman, and carried by a vote of 7-0 to adjourn until GVPAC Meeting #8.



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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Meeting Adjourned at 4:08PM

Signed Valerie F. Olson Date 2/18/09

GVPAC Chair Olson

