

GVC 10/18/06 Meeting Statement Eva Inbar and Michael S. Brown

I am speaking on behalf of both Eva and me. We want these comments on the record and are providing a written version with our formal request that these comments be included verbatim with any staff report or minutes of this meeting in writing, emails or on any websites.

We want to thank Supervisor Rose for the opportunity to serve on the Vision Committee, the staff and facilitator, the members of the committee, and the public for their participation.

We are disappointed that the rest of the committee chose to meet last Friday. This additional Friday night October 13th meeting was scheduled at the last minute, late on Tuesday, the 10th. Eva and I immediately responded to all committee members that we had prior commitments and could not attend the meeting and we specifically requested that discussion of the minority statement be delayed until tonight's scheduled meeting when we could participate. No effort was made to arrange an alternative meeting time, as has been done in the past. At a minimum, we expected the committee to follow the long agreed upon rules and, even if it met, continue its deliberations about the minority statement to this meeting which we said we could attend.

It is unfortunate and dismaying that:

- the committee decided not to abide by its practice of either accommodating members' schedules or continuing the discussion to a meeting when we could participate in an issue that specifically involved Eva and me;
- that the committee single-handedly changed the definition of consensus, one which we had explicitly established and abided by;
- that a committee majority, without our participation, decided last Friday to go ahead and discuss our minority statement, which we had revised at the request of committee members;
- that the committee rewrote our minority statement for us in our absence;
- that our absence was considered by the committee to be an acceptance of the committee's conclusions; and
- that we were given the committee's revision with an ultimatum that we either accept it within 48 hours without further discussion or have it excluded entirely.

We rejected the majority's revisions of our statement because it is the result of an illegitimate and unfair process, it was presented in a coercive manner, and, while purporting to express our views, it actually misrepresented them.

The majority's actions in effect have stifled our freedom of speech by deleting specific areas of disagreement and have corrupted the process to which we all agreed. The Ground Rules that we all signed our names to on February 15 state that in case a consensus cannot be reached, each member has the right to expect a full articulation of agreement and areas of disagreement. Regardless of our disagreements with the majority, we in the minority have pursued the development of the Vision Document adhering to the ground rules at all times. However, the rules have now been breached by the majority.

In response to a specific request from some committee members, we limited our minority statement to one page. When asked to characterize our observations as only our opinion, we modified our statement accordingly. We were then told not only that our statement was unacceptable, and that we had to accept the committee's insufficient and inaccurate rewrite of our statement or have no statement at all. And we were allowed no further discussion of our disagreement in the Vision Document. We know of no legislative, committee or advisory body in which the majority has insisted that it has the right to dictate the exact words of the minority statement or face its total exclusion. We will not allow our views and the views of our constituencies to become so muddled and trampled. Consequently, we object to and request the removal of Appendix B in the Vision Document because it is misleading and inaccurate.

While we agree with many of the goals in the Document, our main point of disagreement, which we want to state clearly, as we have numerous times in meetings and in writing, is as follows:

Although the Vision Document says it wants to provide opportunities for a wide range of households to live in the eastern Goleta Valley, its land use restrictions do not provide any realistic opportunities for development of anything but a minor amount of affordable housing. Asserting that it provides a balance does not actually mean that the balance exists. Had we been allowed more than a one-page minority statement, we would have been readily able to provide factual, substantive evidence supporting our views.

We have prepared a brief summary of the facts that support our minority opinion, which we attach to this statement. This summary illustrates why very little housing affordable to any but the upper income strata would result if the land use restrictions in the Vision Document were to become embedded in the Community Plan. We offered in our minority opinion strategies that would provide significantly more opportunities for the development of affordable housing, while maintaining sustainable, environmentally sound communities and the kind of neighborhoods unique to the Goleta Valley.

Finally, we believe that the committee's action last Friday was an attempt to shut off the debate and deny alternative voices the opportunity to be heard. For this reason alone we cannot sign the document. That is the antithesis of what the Vision process should be about as we head into the next step for involving the public in creating a new Community Plan for the Goleta Valley. There are a variety of voices throughout the Eastern Goleta Valley. We are just 12 people and do not necessarily reflect all the views in the planning area. A Vision Document that does not reflect even the diversity of views within the committee is not a document that best serves the community in going forward with the process.

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Appendix A

Limitations on Affordable Housing in the Goleta Vision Document

- Most experts agree that an affordable project requires a minimum of 20 units to the acre to be cost effective, particularly in a high land cost area.
- No rezones are allowed from current zoning of all residential, agricultural, and recreation (e.g., County Campus) zoned parcels. There are virtually no significant residentially zoned open parcels that are zoned at a density that is sufficient to build an all-affordable project.
- The exception for agricultural rezoning—for non-economically viable parcels to be rezoned would require providing equivalent value of the rezone (perhaps \$1 million or more per acre) in open space or public amenities within the community—is so expensive that no agricultural parcels could be rezoned for an all-affordable housing project.
- The document calls for a maximum land density of 7 per acre on rezones of nonresidential and nonagricultural parcels, while allowing cluster development at up to 14 per acre on half the parcel. This is not a density that is sufficient for an all-affordable project without an enormous level of subsidies, nor is it necessarily an efficient use of land.
- Requiring on-site day care facilities for affordable housing projects is a potentially significant cost that will act as a disincentive to all but the largest affordable housing projects.
- While the Document calls for rental housing on undeveloped or underdeveloped parcels (e.g., property owned by religious institutions), much of that property is zoned residential, which is barred from rezones and therefore unavailable for a typical rental project such as apartments.
- If rezones of public land for housing are limited to all affordable units at densities (maximum of 7 per acre) that would be allowed on non-public land, again it would be difficult to develop an economically viable project.
- Requiring a visual impact analysis for any project with potential neighborhood incompatibility issues will become a mandate for such an analysis for any affordable housing project.
- Modest redevelopment of commercial centers, the only nonresidential/nonagricultural zoned land in the Eastern Goleta Valley, will mean only a modest amount of housing, little of which is likely to be developed as all affordable projects.
- The document calls for the provision of adequate housing and services for farmworkers but does not indicate where that housing should be; if it is to be on agricultural land, rezoning of that land or a redefinition of agricultural zones to allow housing at a sufficient density to be economically viable, would have to occur.
- The document limits market rate development to 50 units per year with no rollover provision. A highly likely outcome is that developers will continue the pattern that has been established in the last decade of developing available parcels for the high end of the market (at densities of 4 to the acre or less) with large-size units (e.g., over 4,000 sq ft) to maximize their return on investment. It may even make economic sense to avoid projects that trigger inclusionary housing requirements (projects with five or more units) and build bigger houses on bigger lots.

We believe that the structure of the Vision Document will not provide any significant amount of affordable housing; that such housing will likely be built very small numbers and that the vast majority of housing that will be built, will be market rate unaffordable to the households that the Vision Document purports to address. The end result is that the trends towards a wealthier, older, childless population will accelerate.

Appendix B
Minority Viewpoint
Eva Inbar and Michael S. Brown

We support much of the Vision Document—the need for safeguarding open space, improving transportation, and protecting significant urban agriculture in the Eastern Goleta Valley. However, we cannot support the “Management of Growth” section and related portions of other sections. We support an alternative approach that makes more efficient use of existing services and available land using the following guiding principles in the Vision Document:

- Encourage compact mixed use development along transportation corridors and in proximity to jobs, schools, and other urban services, especially along Hollister.
- Substantially strengthen the Urban Limit Line (ULL) to limit conversions of rural agricultural land and open space outside it.
- Integrate planning for land use, transportation, and open space preservation.
- Use a portion of agriculturally zoned parcels for housing workers in agricultural jobs.
- Strategically rezone key areas adjacent to transportation corridors at densities that enhance the use and effectiveness of public transportation.
- Allow on a case-by-case basis higher densities for rental and affordable housing projects as well as employer-provided housing.
- Create a specific plan for permanently preserving agriculturally zoned properties within the ULL that are away from transportation corridors and consider some affordable residential development on agriculturally zoned parcels along major roads.

We believe that implementing the Management of Growth Section in the Vision Document would:

- favor existing neighborhoods over genuine improvements in housing opportunities for middle and lower income households;
- ignore trends identified by UCSB’s Economic Forecast Project and the Regional Impacts of Growth Study that our community is evolving toward an older, wealthier, and mostly child-free community, one that is leading to ever increasing traffic from commuters living outside the South Coast and increased crowding among the remaining middle and lower-income households in the Eastern Goleta Valley;
- promote sprawl elsewhere which consigns a growing legion of commuters to time on the road that would otherwise be spent with family and community;
- require tax revenues generated outside the Eastern Goleta Valley to fund services within the Valley;
- reinforce declining enrollment trends at local schools;
- ignore civic benefits that come from committed middle income volunteers; and
- contain provisions under Goal #1 that make it nearly impossible to provide *realistic* opportunities for additional affordable housing.

We believe our approach provides a better balance for pursuing the goals of the Eastern Goleta Valley community. It will increase housing opportunities for a socio-economically diverse population, while allowing existing neighborhoods to thrive alongside newer, more compact ones. Transportation corridors will be able to support increased transit opportunities. Schools will continue their standard of excellence and the community will enjoy strong participation in civic life. Our rural areas will be protected from development. And we will become and remain a more sustainable community where the

natural beauty of the Eastern Goleta Valley will be enjoyed by young families and old and the well-off and those getting by.

Appendix C Management of Growth

Background

Santa Barbara's South Coast and the Eastern Goleta Valley is a wonderful place to live, work and enjoy the company of family and friends in the midst of natural beauty, temperate weather, and a diverse economy. At the same time, the Eastern Goleta Valley— indeed all of the South Coast and much of Coastal California between Marin County in the north and San Diego County in the south—is in crisis. Housing affordability is at an all-time low, while the number of people commuting from the north and south to jobs in our community and the surrounding South Coast is at an all-time high and continues to grow. We debate the need for commuter rail and the merits of widening our freeways, while hoping to preserve as much as possible of our unspoiled natural environment. Pressure is building to convert more and more agricultural land to homes. Our present course does not appear to be on a path towards a healthy, sustainable community. We must do something or we risk losing that which makes the Eastern Goleta Valley a treasure we value.

Throughout Coastal California, and especially in the Santa Barbara region, housing prices have risen so much as to put home ownership out of the reach of nearly all first time buyers. The result is that local businesses, nonprofits including our hospitals and clinics, and government agencies are experiencing great difficulty recruiting and retaining workers. Over 25,000 people commute into the South Coast each work day from outlying areas with more affordable housing. The environmental, social, and economic costs of such commuting are paid in increasing sprawl and air pollution, time on the road that would otherwise be spent with family and local community, and tax dollars spent elsewhere. As a community, we suffer when young families move away. South Coast schools are losing enrollment and civic organizations are losing volunteers. Our adult children cannot afford to live here any more. The eastern Goleta Valley was traditionally home to a solid middle class consisting of young families, but now we are becoming increasingly older and wealthier homeowners and younger, poorer working class families and individuals who provide services to the wealthier segments of the community. For the lowest income residents, increasing rents and mortgages are either reducing the size of the house they can afford or increasing the number of families per dwelling unit. Spillover effects of crowding range from increased parking congestion, lack of recreational opportunities, and high levels of stress among families and single individuals sharing cramped living spaces.

We believe we can and must do more to address this situation. We would like to see the amount of additional market rate housing reduced, as it is likely to result in housing for higher income households. To produce housing that meets the needs of lower and middle income households, some increase in densities along with zoning that provides for mixed use projects in appropriate locations will be needed. It is critical that we get high quality design and a mix of housing types that are suitable for the natural setting of the Eastern Goleta Valley and existing neighborhoods. To fulfill a vision of providing more affordable housing, we need to pursue innovative strategies that place greater emphasis on employer-provided housing. In particular, the single largest employer in our planning area, County government, should establish a housing program on County-owned land for employees. We also support the development of appropriately scaled housing on agricultural land specifically for farm workers.

Mixed-use projects along our transportation corridors that combine housing with compatible commercial uses can provide multiple benefits. They can make housing more affordable; the

nonresidential uses, particularly retail, increase our tax base; the residents can walk to shops and transit. Some of our aging strip malls can be redeveloped this way; new development can be designed as mixed use from the outset. Efficient, compact land use patterns, with different uses, in close proximity will allow us to manage growth in a responsible way and to be good stewards of the environment.

The following principles should guide our approach to addressing future growth:

1. Planning for housing needs to go hand in hand with planning for transportation and open space.
2. Newly developed housing must offer some type of community amenity, either on site or by establishing a Community Services District.
3. We need to protect our current stock of affordable housing, including rental units.
4. All restricted/subsidized affordable housing should stay affordable, in virtual perpetuity.
5. We do not seek much development of market-rate units. Where such units are built, we strongly encourage that substantial in-lieu fees be deposited in the county's Housing Fund and then applied to the development of a mix of affordable housing types within the planning area.
6. The Hollister Corridor between 154 and Walnut offers opportunities to increase business opportunities through a broader range of commercial activities than currently available. To be effective as a transportation corridor, we support the development of mixed uses along the corridor and building heights up to 40 feet with appropriate design standards that include lot line setbacks, and second and third story setbacks to preserve views and an appropriate human scale.
7. Some other areas of the Eastern Goleta Valley might be appropriate to designate for redevelopment to accomplish our vision, e.g., Calle Real from Turnpike to 154.

The Future

In the future, we want to house a larger share of our essential work force here, including policemen, firemen, nurses, and teachers, many of whom would be in employer provided housing and publicly-owned lands. We hope to maintain a diverse population of all incomes, ethnic groups, and ages. We will have stopped the out migration of our middle class. Our single family neighborhoods will be thriving alongside some newer, more compact ones. Hollister Avenue will be an attractive mixed-use corridor with retail, restaurants, office space, and rental apartments all built to present an inviting front to the street. Reasonable production of housing has reduced pressures to build outside the urban limit line (ULL) and has provided alternatives to commuting. Increased densities along the primary transportation corridors have increased the efficiency of transit. The natural beauty of our valley is enhanced by an equally beautiful as well as functional man-made environment.

Vision Statement

Our community will pursue measured development that will increase housing and commercial opportunities for a socio-economically diverse population. We will plan for growth that enhances our neighborhoods, minimizes the need to encroach on agricultural and open space land, conserves resources and contributes to mobility for all.

Goal #1

Encourage compact development along transportation corridors and in proximity to jobs, schools, and other urban services.

Steps to achieve Goal:

- Strengthen the urban limit line (ULL) to make it substantially more difficult to change the boundary and concentrate development within the ULL.
- Provide for Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) from sites outside the ULL to sites inside it.
- Encourage new development along the Calle Real and Hollister Ave transportation corridors. Develop a specific plan for all adjacent ag-zoned properties on Hollister near Turnpike and at the western end of Hollister allow development only on the ag parcel adjacent to Hollister Ave while permanently preserving the remainder of the South Patterson Ag Block.
- Identify appropriate sites according to the criteria in the above goal and rezone to residential uses at higher densities.
- Use attached housing and clustered development to provide for open space and view corridors.
- Stimulate production of affordable housing by providing density bonuses, fee waivers etc. and using the best available financing techniques.
- Encourage production of workforce housing.
- Encourage a mix of housing within projects.
- Integrate land use and transportation planning to reduce auto dependency, as described in our Transportation/Mobility chapter.

Goal #2:

Develop Hollister Avenue into an attractive mixed-use corridor.

Steps to achieve Goal:

- Create a specific plan for Hollister Ave. and Calle Real that would combine land use with transportation planning.
- Consider raising the height limit to 40 ft to accommodate 3-story mixed use projects while giving special consideration to the preservation of viewsheds, neighborhood compatibility, and human scale proportions.
- Encourage the building of rental apartments in the mixed use zones by streamlining permit procedures
- Consider form-based zoning in any specific plan that might be developed for the area.
- Dedicate some office space to start-ups and incubators.
- Modify parking requirements to provide for conjunctive-use parking as appropriate for mixed-use projects.

Goal #3:

Provide more housing opportunity in existing neighborhoods while preserving their unique character.

Steps to achieve Goal:

- Encourage residential secondary units. These could be rentals or they could be living space for extended family members

- Streamline permit processing for residential secondary units and for small affordable projects (5 units or less) that adhere to residential design guidelines.
- Preserve our existing stock of affordable housing.
- Establish a County program to develop housing on County sites for public employees
- Require all private employers over a certain size (e.g., 50 employees) to contribute to the Housing Trust fund (or build housing) and designate a portion of the Trust funds to building housing specifically for employees of contributing employers
- Use the Housing Trust fund to build more rental units

We will know we were successful in these three goals when we have reached our vision above:

We are housing a larger share of our local work force here, including policemen, firemen, nurses, and teachers, and that a substantial portion are of this critical workforce are housed in employer supported housing. We are providing a home here to a population that is diverse in terms of income, ethnic groups, and age. We are again a place with a flourishing middle class. Our single family neighborhoods are thriving alongside some newer, more compact ones. Hollister Avenue is an attractive mixed-use corridor with retail, restaurants, office space, and rental apartments all built to present an inviting front to the street. The natural beauty of our valley is enhanced by an equally beautiful as well as functional man made environment.

Some steps to add to other sections:

Open Space

8. *To protect open space and the ecosystems in the semi-rural and rural portions of the Eastern Goleta Valley that are outside the ULL, the ULL should be strengthened in a manner that makes it substantially more difficult to change the boundary line.*
9. *To protect open space and the ecosystems in the urbanized area of the Eastern Goleta Valley within the ULL, a conservation district should be established to fund acquisitions and provide for conservation easements.*

Transportation/Mobility

10. *The critical transportation problems in the Eastern Goleta Valley must be addressed in conjunction with protecting open space and providing a wider range of housing opportunities. Selected streets should be improved to be safe and functional for all users and to accommodate increased opportunities for transit.*
 - a. *Calle Real between 154 and Turnpike*
 - b. *Hollister between 154 and Puente and between Turnpike and Walnut*
 - c. *Turnpike between Calle Real and Hollister.*