

**Community Plan Update
Goleta Vision Committee
October 13, 2006
5:30 pm – 7:45 pm**

Location: Public Health Auditorium
300 North San Antonio Road

Final Meeting Notes

Vision Committee Members

Attending:

Ted Adams
Oscar Carmona
Gary Earle
Tish Gainey

Lauren Hanson
Valerie Olson
Tim Schmidt
Jim Richards
Susan Grgich

County Staff Support:
Derek Johnson

Facilitator: John Jostes

1. Welcome and Participant Introductions

The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:35 PM by facilitator John Jostes. John led the group introductions. After introductions, he noted that this meeting was largely focused on the issues raised by the Minority Report submitted by Eva Inbar and Michael Brown.

2. Administrative Items

The meeting notes from September 27th were briefly reviewed and adopted as written.

3. Initial Public Comment Period

John Jostes opened the public comment period and five members of the public addressed the Committee.

4. Committee Discussion of the Minority Report and Draft Vision Committee Recommendations.

John Jostes opened the discussion by indicating that he had been in contact with Mike Brown and Eva Inbar regarding their second draft of their Minority Report and conveyed to them the concerns that he had heard from committee members, and that they had offered up the current draft (third draft) as a way of seeking to reach a consensus of the group on a minority opinion. He noted that Mike, Eva and Hal Hill all had previous engagements which they were not able to reschedule to attend the meeting. John Jostes pointed out that discussion of the Minority Opinion was on the evening's agenda and that it was up to the committee to decide how they wanted to handle it. Tish Gainey pointed out that the committee's rules, agreed to by everyone at the outset of the visioning process, laid out steps to follow when there were disagreements among committee members. She pointed out rule #2 which called for a dissenting party to state the reason(s) for withholding consent and then to offer an alternative suggestion; she felt that the Minority Opinion offered by Mike and Eva accomplished those requirements. She then pointed out rule #9 that dealt with a failure to reach consensus on the Final Recommendation, which is the current situation being faced by the committee. Rule #9, calls for a summary of the areas of agreement and areas of disagreement being included in the document that is forwarded on to the Planning Commission. There was discussion whether to follow these rules precisely or to do something different such as follow the format used by the Valley Blueprint. Tish thought that the Minority Opinions included in the Appendices of the Valley Blueprint were the opinions solely of their authors and that a committee, such as the GVC, really wouldn't have any control over such statements if we chose follow that format. Lauren said she had spoken to those involved in drafting the Valley Blueprint and was told that the Minority Opinions contained in their document had to be approved by the entire committee through discussion. John then reminded the GVC that the committee had ground rules that called for consensus in decision making and that he had been consistent in advising the GVC that consensus meant unanimity, particularly in settings

where an agreement is sought. He also noted that there were provisions in the event that consensus could not be reached to allow for a statement of areas of agreement and disagreement as a way of articulating differences of opinion and still allowing all of the members to sign on to an agreement. Finally, he noted that while a minority opinion had not explicitly been recognized within the ground rules, that it serves as the functional equivalent of stating areas of agreement and disagreement. In dealing with the concept of consensus, someone asked how we should deal with those not in attendance. Tish Gainey referenced the portion of the ground rules that indicated that those not in attendance should communicate their views to other members prior to the meeting and that absence is interpreted as assent. Mike and Eva had communicated their views but we had not heard from Hal. The meeting then turned to the issue of the minority report. Jim Richards expressed his perspective that the minority report did not have sufficient facts to back up its stated conclusions and for this reason, he could not support its inclusion within the vision document. Valerie Olson stated that she felt that portions of the minority report were 180° out of phase with the main document and she could not accept its tone or content. Lauren Hanson suggested that because the minority report contained some restatements of topics already covered within the vision document, that inclusion of the minority report would leave readers with the impression that the overall vision document did not cover these issues sufficiently, which she believes is not the case. Gary Earle reiterated his belief that consensus did not mean unanimity, but rather a broad majority, and that the group could make decisions without everybody having to agree. He indicated he could not accept the minority report, in part because of its reference to the Vision Document as the majority's document and in part because the minority report was not subject to review and commentary from the public.

John Jostes then suggested to the group that there were four nested questions that the group may want to consider: 1) to determine whether consensus means unanimity or something less, 2) to determine whether to consider a minority report as a general concept that is acceptable, 3) if minority reports are an acceptable method of reflecting differences of opinion, whether the report submitted by Eva Inbar and Mike Brown was acceptable, and, 4) if not, should the group suggest further changes to it or make changes to the vision document to reflect the concerns voiced by those who could not support the draft as written. The group chose to continue its discussion of the minority report rather than to consider John's organizing questions. Ted Adams indicated that through his conversations with Eva Inbar, he felt that she was still open to making additional changes to the minority report and that the committee could suggest what needs to be changed in order to include their opinions in the overall document. Tish Gainey indicated that she favored a strict adherence to the ground rule section (#9) that required a statement of the areas of agreement and disagreement because it gave the committee more control over what was contained within the document. Jim Richards reiterated that the bullet points did not give any specifics, such as what densities are being referred to, and expressed a preference to go with 10 signatures rather than to allow a minority report. Susan Grgich indicated that she felt the committee should reject the minority report as well. At this point, Tim Schmidt suggested that the committee take a vote to determine if a consensus had been reached to reject the minority report. The committee continued its discussion of specific concerns over the actual wording of the minority report, as well as whether it was properly vetted with the committee.

The GVC then proceeded to address the interpretation of the meaning of consensus and unanimously determined that consensus should be interpreted to mean majority rule and that voting was a preferred method of decision making from this point forward. The committee then considered several other proposals. The next proposal had to do with whether the committee was amenable to accepting minority reports as an overall concept. This vote in favor of accepting minority reports as a concept received the unanimous support of those present. The GVC then addressed the issue of whether the committee should end discussion of the minority report proposed by Eva and Michael and move on to publish the document as drafted. This proposal failed by a vote of 7 to 2.

The Committee then turned its attention back to the content of the minority report offered by Mike Brown and Eva Inbar. Ted Adams suggested that the group needed to do as much as it could to respond to the issues raised by the report, and noted that he did not think that the GVC had done that at this point in time.

Valerie Olson and Lauren Hanson then distributed two printed handouts to the group, the first contained suggested rewording to the signature page and an additional paragraph to be included in the introductory section of the report. The second was a red-lined version of the minority report showing further changes to the second draft of the minority report. The discussion which ensued, focused on what changes should be made within the document in light of not having a minority report from the dissenting parties. The group then focused on refinements to wording within the material to be added to the vision document. A final draft of wording to be

added to the document was read aloud and the committee voted unanimously to augment the vision document with the language outlined to the group.

As a final matter, the group then focused on the issue of whether to allow Mike Brown and Eva Inbar to revise their minority report language to better reflect the views of the majority and include such a report into the document as an appendix. There was considerable discussion on the exact wording of suggested changes. After some word-smithing, the October 13th minority report was modified, changing portions of the first paragraph, deleting the bullets following the first paragraph, replacing language in the second full paragraph and deleting the final paragraph. This language was put to a vote of the committee and passed by a margin of 7 to 2. Those in the minority expressed the opinion that there was insufficient time remaining to discuss the matter further. The group directed Derek Johnson to forward the revised wording of both the vision document itself and the suggested changes to the minority report to its authors and request a response no later than Sunday, October 15th at 5:00 pm. The committee also asked that Derek indicate to Eva and Michael that they would not accept further revisions to the minority report other than those it had suggested, and to characterize their proposal as a “take it or leave it” final offer.

5. Wrap-up, Next Steps and Adjourn

Derek Johnson noted that the last meeting of the GVC was scheduled for October 18th in the Board of Supervisor’s Conference Room in the County Administration Building. Dinner will be provided to the committee members after the meeting. Having no other business to conduct, the committee adjourned at 7:45 pm.