

Goleta Vision Committee
February 15, 2006 6:30 – 9:15 pm
Location: Goleta Community Center
5679 Hollister Avenue

Final Meeting Notes

Meeting Purpose: To provide an opportunity for Goleta Vision Committee (GVC) Members to conclude discussions those community characteristics that warrant special attention within the Goleta Valley Community Plan Update process, to identify trends and implications for the community; and to complete discussion on agenda items not addressed during the workshop on February 4th.

Committee Members Present:	Lauren Hanson	County Staff Support:
Ted Adams	Hal Hill	
Michael Brown	Eva Inbar	John McInnes;
Gary Earle	Valerie Olson	Derek Johnson
Brian Fahnestock	James Richard	
Tish Gainey	Tim Schmidt	
Susan Grgich	Oscar Carmona	Facilitator: John Jostes

1. Welcome and Introductions

John Jostes called the meeting to order and led the introductions of committee members. He introduced Oscar Carmona, who was appointed by Supervisor Susan Rose to serve in the seat vacated by Brian Caird, representing agricultural interests in the process. Oscar gave a very brief overview of his background and expressed his interest in participating in the vision process. John then reviewed the agenda for those present at the meeting, highlighting the change in the agenda to reflect a discussion of the sequencing of discussion topics, most notably those dealing with the Housing Element Certification Process.

2. Administrative Matters

- a. **Adoption of Meeting Notes and Ground Rules from January 25, 2006 meeting:** John Jostes reviewed the meeting notes from the first meeting of the committee noting suggested revisions by Valerie Olson, as well as the ground rules that were finalized at that meeting. The Committee adopted the meeting notes as modified and the ground rules as written. John passed around a hard copy of the ground rules and members signed the document.
- b. **Adoption of Meeting Notes from February 4, 2006 Saturday Workshop:** John also reviewed the workshop notes with the committee. The committee adopted the meeting notes as written. He noted that all three documents would be posted on the website for the benefit of committee members and the general public.
- c. **Other Administrative Matters and Announcements:** John McInnes, Director of Long Range and Strategic Planning, then indicated to the committee that he had received concerns regarding the boundaries of the Planning Area. He noted that the planning area for the vision process was structured to provide input that focused on the unincorporated areas of the 2nd District, a subset of the original planning area of the existing Goleta Community plan. The actual coverage of the updated Community plan will be determined at such time as the draft Plan is developed and acted upon, and is a legislative action as opposed to an advisory role, as played by the committee.

Gary Earle announced that the attorney for the Citizens for Sensible Planning had prepared a nine page letter addressing the history of the visioning committee and providing an alternative

viewpoint/analysis of Brown Act issues contained in the memo from Shane Stark distributed at the February 4th workshop.

3. Public Comment Period

Eight members from the public addressed the Vision Committee. Their comments ranged from advocating the rezoning of selected agricultural infill sites for affordable housing to suggestions that the committee vote not to rezone any sites for increased density. Speakers urged the committee to consider external impacts from any rezonings, to become informed about previous County policies related to growth management in the Goleta Valley, and to look beyond inclusionary housing programs for tools to provide affordable housing.

4. Discussion of Housing Element Sequencing Issues

John McInnes provided an overview of the Housing Element Certification process the County is currently engaged in. He provided the following observations to the committee:

- The BOS Ad-Hoc committee recommended that the County identify and analyze sites in an EIR to update the Housing Element to comply with state law. The Housing Element EIR will proceed independently of the GVC process and will identify sites for analysis to meet the state mandate of 62 acres of high density housing at 20 units per acre.
- In November 2005, the PC identified sites in all parts of the unincorporated area (with the exception of the South Coast Housing Market Area) to be analyzed in the EIR. The PC acknowledged the Goleta Visioning and Community Plan update process and directed staff to bring back sites for the South Coast HMA in April 2006 for their consideration in the Housing Element EIR. The PC action was adopted unanimously on November 30, 2005. (John read the action item to the committee for their information.)
- The Housing Element EIR process provides the opportunity to gather technical detailed information that it may want to consider for future high density housing locations.
- It is not mandatory that the committee provide sites for the Housing EIR. The EIR is a mechanism for evaluating the environmental impacts associated with development of potential housing sites. It is not a legislative action that will rezone sites. This action will be considered by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in 2007. Therefore, the visioning process may complete its process and submit recommendations prior to any legislative action related to rezoning sites.
- If the GVC is unable or not interested in identifying sites for analysis in the Housing Element EIR process, the PC may consider other sources of information (i.e., 2nd District Neighborhood Council) to inform their decision regarding the South Coast HMA in April 2006.

John provided a brief background on the 2nd District Neighborhood Council, a summary of their process for selecting potential housing sites and the list of sites ultimately identified. Sites that received a positive response from 3 of the 4 groups included:

- Magnolia Center
- Turnpike Center
- Tatum (SBHS)
- MTD
- Carmela Investments
- Cathedral Oaks County Campus
- Calle Real County Campus

Additional sites that received support but were not reviewed by all groups

- Lane
- Bishop/Protestant Episcopal
- Salvation Army
- Yee
- Anderson (next to Thrifty Gas)
- Giorgi/Calle Real - Patterson
- Petersen
- Tosco

Following John's presentation a series of questions and comments followed. Points raised were as follows:

- We need more information before we can engage in a site selection process.
- The unincorporated Goleta Valley is being forced to do the community plan update process after doing the housing site selection process
- Can't you just rezone one single acre for 20 dwelling units (DU) and then surround it with different densities and/or open space?
- We need more credibility in the process including involving renters as well as homeowners
- What does the County look at during an EIR process?
- Is anyone comfortable making a recommendation in only 3 meeting's time? We're rushing too fast to make a recommendation
- This is an iterative process – we should move forward and get more information so that we can determine if there are any sites that make sense.
- We shouldn't make siting decisions without having siting criteria first.
- What kinds of information do people need before they can make the decision?
- We shouldn't trust the county to give us information to determine which sites should be added or removed. The County is trying to ram the sites down our throats. The approach does not have to be an all or nothing decision. There will be legal challenges if the County of Santa Barbara does not comply with our desires.
- The 2nd District Neighborhood Council site selection process was different. They were looking at acreage rather than 20 DU/Acre density. All information from the 2nd District Neighborhood Council should be dismissed due to lack of credibility.
- There are only two ways to create affordable housing – either through inclusionary zoning or through subsidy.
- The Glen Annie Golf Course site may be one that we should look at for housing.
- We haven't seen any list of sites yet. Where are the ones that the County has been considering? Maybe we should look at down-zoning commercial areas to residential for affordable housing.
- We need to have conditions that go along with rezonings in order to get truly affordable housing to be built.
- We shouldn't have to have any growth.
- Much of the criteria are already in the existing plan. All we have to do is go through the plan to identify what criteria have been applied in the past.
- There is no jobs-housing imbalance in the planning area. We need the County to provide us more information on the jobs-housing ratios for the area.
- Is there an informal EIR process that we can apply on a parallel track to that of the Housing Element EIR? Is there some kind of technical analysis we can do separate from the more formal process?
- What will the Planning Commission do if we don't meet the April deadline?

At this point in the process, the facilitator made the observation that the committee was confronted on one hand with trying to designate site specific areas which might be appropriate for high density residential development while on the other hand tasked with seeking to articulate a long term, 10 – 20 year vision of how the community should evolve. He noted that the two tasks were somewhat incompatible because one focused the group on the details of a site selection process and the other required the group to look long term at much broader, big picture issues, and that this dilemma was consuming such time and energy that the group might not accomplish either of its tasks if it did not chart a course to move forward with the important task of *Visioning*. He suggested that the group focus specifically on the question at hand, namely, 'whether the committee wished to focus on housing site identification before addressing broader land use and policy issues'.

One approach suggested was that the group needed to know what the implications of not choosing sites might be before they make the choice between focusing on housing sites versus focusing on the longer term vision. Another member suggested that the group simply needed to inform the Board of Supervisors that the committee would not address the task of designating housing sites for inclusion within the Housing Element EIR.

After much discussion, with at least two members expressing doubt about the effectiveness of going over the Planning Commission to the Board of Supervisors, it was decided that a statement would be drafted expressing the committee's frustration with having to choose sites before the planning process was complete.

(NOTE: THE LANGUAGE OUTLINED BELOW REPRESENTS THE FACILITATOR'S BEST EFFORTS TO CHARACTERIZE THE DISCUSSION AT HAND. THIS LANGUAGE IS SUBJECT TO RATIFICATION BY THE COMMITTEE AS A WHOLE AT ITS NEXT MEETING.)

The Vision Committee considered identifying areas that might be appropriate for the development of affordable housing to be an important task worthy of careful consideration. At the same time, it does not view a recommendation for designating land capable of supporting densities of 20 units per acre or greater as being responsive to that goal. The Committee believes the approach required by the State would not give enough design latitude to such rezoning to result in a large enough proportion of affordable housing in comparison to the overall increase in density, its environmental effects and potential impact on the community's quality of life. No assurances of affordability are perceived by the suggested approach. In order for the Committee to make a reasoned determination of the locations, conditions and assurances that would comprise such a siting recommendation, considerably more time, information and context is needed than is allowed by an April 1, 2006 deadline. In addition, the group believes that it should concentrate its efforts on a broader planning perspective that will provide a framework for updating the Goleta Community Plan before selecting housing sites for analysis in the EIR and potential development at the densities prescribed. For these reasons, the Committee intends to focus on articulating a land use and planning vision as a first order of business instead of identifying housing sites by the April 1 deadline.

Given this preference, and the importance of influencing the location, form, density and design of affordable housing for its share of community need, the Committee intends to focus its early vision process efforts on becoming better informed and identifying goals, siting criteria, opportunities, constraints, and a broad set of desired community characteristics to guide its intermediate and final recommendations regarding the Community Plan Update. The Committee believes that by taking this approach, it can still provide meaningful input to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors before any legislative action is taken to rezone sites for higher density housing.

The facilitator indicated that he would return to the Committee with a draft for ratification at the committee's next meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, February 22nd. The two draft paragraphs above are designed to be forwarded to the Planning Commission by the Facilitator as the Committee's consensus perspective on how to make its process useful and productive from this point forward. The facilitator then offered a series of optional approaches for committee consideration, given the change in direction and focus of the committee. Among the options he presented were:

- Receiving summary reports on existing conditions and trends from selected departments and agencies;
- Reviewing the current Goleta Community plan for deficiencies and update needs;

- Responding to potential focus questions such as:
 - Natural resources – what special areas, wetlands, trails, etc. warrant preservation within the planning area;
 - Infrastructure – what parts of the community’s infrastructure are important, should be preserved, and contribute most to the quality of life;
 - Land Use – what land use issues need to be addressed in the process?
- Identify and respond to three distinctly different scenarios (land use, urban evolution, etc.) that need to be addressed in the visioning process;
- Articulate what “quality of life” means via a homework assignment or group exercise;
- Draw a picture of the process to share with the group and explain what it captures;
- Provide input on how to outreach to the community including the involvement of renters, businesses, service providers, agriculture and employee groups.

Following this discussion, the committee received additional public input from several individuals with questions and comments. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm