

**Community Plan Update
Goleta Vision Committee
March 22, 2006 6:30 – 9:00 pm**

Location: Vieja Valley School
434 Nogal Drive

Final Meeting Notes

Vision Committee Members:	Hal Hill	County Staff Support:
Ted Adams	Eva Inbar	Terri Maus
Michael Brown	James Richard	John McInnes
Oscar Carmona		Derek Johnson
Gary Earle		George Amoon
Tish Gainey		
Lauren Hanson		Facilitator: John Jostes

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Facilitator John Jostes opened up the workshop and led the introductions of those members of the Vision Committee in attendance. He provided a brief overview of the agenda and reminded participants that this was the second of four workshops initiating the visioning effort. He indicated that good progress had been made at the previous workshop and that he hoped that the group would build on that momentum. He also noted that there would be ample opportunity for the public to have input into the process given the workshop nature of the evening's meeting.

2. Administrative Matters

The meeting and workshop notes from February 22nd and March 11th were reviewed. The meeting notes from February 22nd were adopted without any changes. The workshop notes from March 11th were revised to rephrase the wording to more accurately reflect a perspective that the group felt it had adequate information regarding water supply conditions and trends to conduct the vision process. With this revision, both sets of meeting/workshop notes were adopted by a consensus of the group.

In addition to adoption of meeting notes, John Jostes provided several information items to the group. He noted that a full-color brochure explaining the Goleta Community Plan vision process would appear as an insert in the Goleta Valley Voice on March 24th. (Copies of the handout were distributed at the meeting.). He noted that a letter to Supervisor Rose had been drafted and signed by ten of the twelve committee members indicating a preference not to designate housing sites for the Housing Element EIR process. He also noted that Tim Schmidt had drafted a letter to the Committee suggesting the use of co-chairs to run the meetings in place of the facilitator; he suggested that the committee take up the issue at the conclusion of the meeting after its regular business had been considered. The group concurred. John McInnes clarified the County's position regarding its Ad Hoc Housing Task Force recommendations and sought to correct misleading and inaccurate statements made within the Santa Barbara News Press' coverage of the issue.

3. Public Comment Period

A short period for public comment was provided. Three members of the public addressed the committee on issues related to housing sites and support of the work of the vision committee.

4. Agency Discussion of Emergency Preparedness Issues

The Committee heard presentations from Bruce Carter, Manager of the County Office of Emergency Services, Tom Franklin, Deputy Chief of the County Fire Department, and Tom Walton, of the Division of Emergency Planning and Preparedness. Each speaker gave a general overview of the existing trends and conditions facing the County and other responders in dealing with wildfires, floods, tsunamis, evacuation and related disaster planning and preparedness issues. The Vision Committee members raised a large number of issues and questions that contributed to a broad-ranging discussion and information exchange.

5. Round-Table Discussions Agency Discussion of Emergency Preparedness Issues

Members of the public and Vision Committee members then broke into small groups of 5-6 individuals to discuss each of the topics and issues as they related to three focus questions: 1) What existing conditions and emerging trends with respect to water and sanitation issues are most important? 2) Where are we headed and is that the right direction? 3) Where should we be going over the next 5, 10- or 15 years? After the focus group discussions, each group presented their findings and conclusions to the broader group as a whole. The following observations and commentaries were presented:

(Facilitator's Note: The observations below have been reorganized to provide for greater topical consistency.)

Existing Conditions and Needs

- Today, we are in pretty good shape with regard to emergency preparedness
- There is a real concern over the availability of emergency personnel to get to the South Coast if access is restricted on Highway 101. While people can travel to and from the planning area on a day to day basis, if an incident were to occur that blocks 101, there could be real problems.
- Need to focus on the determinants of response time
- Currently, there are not enough fire fighters
- High housing cost is making it difficult to keep adequate emergency personnel
- Residential density issues are addressed by providing adequate fire flows and interior site access – this is typically integrated into the development review process
- Fuel management is a big issue and funding is scarce for field crews
- Fuel management is critical to control fire hazards

Current Direction/Emerging Trends – Where are we headed?

- We need a new command and control center (EOC)
- For each increase in population of 10,000, a new fire station will be needed – the area will need new fire station over time
- Need funding for more brush burns and controlled burns
- Worsening traffic problem from external sources
- More people are living in the foothills where the fire hazards are greater
- Increased traffic will negatively impact emergency response and access
- Response times are longer in the foothills, where the high fire hazards exist

Future Directions

- Should require better lighting to reduce crime
- Need a new North County Jail
- Need more prescribed burns for fuel management purposes
- Development standards should be developed for better environmental security
- Provide more resources to educate people in being better prepared for a disaster
- Provide for a permanent emergency operations center
- Evacuation routes need attention
- New roads should be wider, particularly in the foothills
- Should institute more zoning restrictions in foothill areas to retard growth

6. Committee Discussion of Emerging Issues

Having finished its formal agenda, the Vision Committee turned its attention to several issues that had emerged since its last meeting – most notably, the need to establish a GVC Chair or Co-Chairs, and a clearer articulation of what is meant by consensus.

On the issue of the need for a chair or co-chairs, facilitator John Jostes indicated that he would be comfortable with a reorientation towards a chair-based committee, if the group felt there was a need to move in that direction. There was some concern that the individual who brought up the issue, Tim Schmidt, was not able to attend the meeting, and that another member interested in process, Valerie Olson was also not in attendance. While the sense of the committee was not to make any formal decisions without their attendance, committee members did take the opportunity to voice their perspectives on the chair issue. There was general agreement among those who spoke that the group was now moving ahead with visioning, as evidenced by the current and previous meetings, and that the process was working well enough not to warrant a change at this point in time.

Regarding the need to clarify the term consensus, one member commented that addressing the housing sites issue was a particularly difficult one that did not lend itself to achieving full unanimity on a preferred course of action and therefore, that applying the “Unanimity” definition of consensus may have been overambitious at that stage in the process. Another member observed that it would be helpful to see how other groups have defined consensus and for that matter, how they have undertaken visioning. The facilitator indicated that it was his intent, in defining consensus as unanimity rather than majority rule, to achieve the highest degree of agreement possible without dividing the group into factions that might polarize the work of the group. He also noted that when groups revert to majority rule, or even a super majority rule, the typical result is one in which the most agreement you get is how you’ve defined the decision making process. He also noted that as the group moves more into the vision process and develops packages of draft recommendations, the greater opportunity there is for unanimity on a preferred package because the end result has a greater chance of having something that everyone wants and can live with.

Committee members also requested an opportunity for input into the process similar to the discussion that took place on the above issues. They also asked county Staff and the facilitator to seek guidance from them as they designed future meetings. John Jostes noted that he would be happy to take that approach, but noted that the group would need to stick to the basic format and schedule outlined within the pamphlet being distributed to the broader public in the Goleta Valley Voice newspaper insert.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm. The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday evening, April 5th at the Goleta Community Center.