

CREST-DEHESA-GRANITE HILLS-HARBISON CANYON SUBREGIONAL PLANNING GROUP. Minutes of the meeting on 12 June 2023, at Olde Ironside Park, 326 Harbison Canyon Road, El Cajon.

**A. ROLL CALL.** Chair Darin Wessel called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM. Planning Group members Rich, Ulm, Wessel, Bretz, Manning, Lutz-Partain, Scholl, Geiger and Lucas were present, forming a quorum of 9. Members Nehring, Becker and Wilbur were absent, but excused. Seat 4, Seat 7, and Seat 13 are vacant.

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.** Discussion of the minutes of the 8 May 2023 meeting led to the Chair's suggestion that the needed corrections (including the correct website address for San Miguel Fire District: [info@sanmiguelfire.org](mailto:info@sanmiguelfire.org)) will be incorporated into a corrected revised version, which will be sent by email to all Group members.

Planning Group member Tim Lucas moved the Group approves the minutes of the 8 May 2023 meeting, as corrected in the email copy provided by Chair Wessel. The motion passed (9 yes; 0 no; 0 abstain).

**D. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION.** Planning Group member Pat Ulm reported that residents in the area served by the Crest Fire Safe Council could be added to its one-call system for Reverse 911 notifications, by contacting: [kathyfedor@gmail.com](mailto:kathyfedor@gmail.com).

Planning Group member Mary Manning reported that the Jamul Rural Fire Safe Council will accept Harbison Canyon within its service area; that it is well organized, and is in the process of developing a community volunteers base to help with programs such as residential yard cleanup and vegetation chipping events; and that it is looking for a 1-acre site for chipping that is at a safe, convenient and accessible location. She also reported that a Harbison Canyon resident contacted her about requesting the Group to consider a future agenda item regarding safety and traffic issues on Harbison Canyon, Francis, and Rosalia roads and intersections, but that this person is not present tonight.

A Crest area resident spoke about a recent fatal accident on La Cresta Road, asking if the Planning Group could do anything to help improve the safety on the community roads.

< Chair Wessel announced that the issue of community road safety would be an agenda item at the July meeting, for the Group to consider the various dangerous road-related problems (including potholes, clogged storm drains, erosion, inadequate signage, sightline obstructions, etc.) for which it could make recommendations for improving public safety, to appropriate government officials/departments. >

Dehesa resident Lynn Spicer announced that she is interested in filing an application and seeking the Group's nomination for Board of Supervisors appointment to fill one of the Group's vacants.

**E. ACTION ITEMS.**

**E1. Presentation by County staff on Climate Action Plan – update on project and proposed CAP measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.** County staff provided a

handout of, and gave a PowerPoint presentation of, slides depicting the Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update regarding the County's efforts over the past two and one-half years to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the unincorporated area and County operations, with the goal of reaching net zero emissions by 2045 from the County's jurisdictional areas. They described various strategies and programs the County is supporting, the current status of different programs, and the timeline expected for reaching the Final CAP/Public Comment/Public Hearings stage in Fall 2024. Contact for information about the County's CAP is available at: [cap@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:cap@sdcounty.ca.gov), and <https://sandiegocounty.gov/sustainability>.

During discussions about the presentation, Planning Group members expressed concerns that conserving more land, without planning for the maintenance of reduced fuel load on certain critical areas, will actually increase future wildfire hazard and danger; that the County's CAP does not include State and Federal lands interspersed within the County unincorporated areas; that current fire management plans, and their implementation, are inadequate for preventing impossibly high fire insurance costs for rural property owners; that the County needs to restore a system of strategically located and convenient Regional Dump Sites throughout the unincorporated County, to reduce the miles driven (or the illegal dumping) by rural residents for disposing of trash; and that programs to incentivize use of electricity, while eliminating the use of gas/propane fuel, could have negative impacts for rural residents dependent on those fuels regularly, or during emergencies.

**E2. Discussion and potential action regarding alleged Crest gas station zoning/use permit violations, 24-hour operation of gas pumps, and allegations of misrepresentations by project applicant during prior presentations to the Planning Group.** Chair Wessel opened discussion with a brief history of the Group's prior considerations of the alleged Crest gas station hours of operations and possible zoning/use permit violations, and introduced a representative of the owner at the meeting to discuss this agenda item.

The owner's representative stated that the business has permits for 8 pump area canopy lights that can be on all night, but the building lights must be off at 11:00PM; that fuel delivery trucks do not interfere with street traffic, but that other vendors sometimes have; that the owner is working on better educating all vendor delivery drivers, and by providing an area on the business property for delivery trucks to park, to eliminate future traffic issues; and that the current night lighting is less than the permit has approved, but some night light is needed for security.

Discussion included some disagreement whether fuel delivery trucks caused traffic problems, but also included some agreement that it could be possible to further reduce the amount of night lighting using different strategies; that making the gasoline pumps available all night long with no business attendant present is not safe, and they could possibly be locked and unavailable when the business is closed; that night security issues would be different with the business closed, lights off, and pumps unavailable after 10:00 PM. The owner's representative asked that the business owner have some time to review the operating alternatives allowed by current or amended business permits; and the owner will immediately reduce the canopy night lighting further, while considering possible locking of pumps during hours with no attendant on site.

Member Michael Rich proposed that the July meeting agenda include additional consideration of this item.

Chair Wessel decided this item should be tabled, and continued at the 14 August 2023 meeting of the Group, since this does not expand the July meeting agenda, while it provides time for the owner of the Crest gas station to review and consider possible operating options.

**E3. Community member request for revisions and updates to County's shooting ordinances.** Two residents of the Dehesa area spoke about the need for revisions and updates to the County's shooting ordinances, which was last done in 2011 (to add amendments concerning fireworks); and that they were doing research and seeking maps that depict current ordinances, and County areas controlled by these.

Chair Wessel stated that Supervisor Anderson's office staff would like to have comments from the Planning Group regarding this issue; that in most of the Dehesa area shooting on private property requires approval of the property owner; but that the County's ordinances and maps are vague and need updating; and that public education to promote compliance with shooting ordinances is needed.

**E4. Ad Hoc Committee update regarding evacuation in case of wildfire.**

**(Nehring/Lucas).** Member Tim Lucas reported that the Ad Hoc Committee is researching and reviewing the references to Fire Safety that are incorporated in our Subregional and Community Plans, and will be requesting the Fire Districts and Fire Stations serving our communities to provide their comments and suggestions.

The next meeting of the Committee will be at 2:00 PM, 14 August 2023, at the Crest Community Clubhouse.

**E5. Update on the closure of California Riding and Hiking Trail in Sloane Canyon / Beaver Hollow Road. (Wessel).** Chair Wessel reported that the public access gate to the California Riding and Hiking Trail, for the segment going from Sloane Canyon Road to the south along Beaver Hollow Road to Jamul, is still chained and padlocked and not available for public use; and that County ordinances do prohibit shooting on the Trail. Wessel gave a brief history of the illegal closure to public access to this segment of the CHRT beginning in February 2022; he discussed past community and Planning Group communications with California Department of Parks and Recreation, and with County DPR, regarding this issue.

Discussion of the group included that there appears to be a solid paper trail providing the basis for a legal action against the property owner(s) responsible for the closure; and that the Dehesa Valley Community Council (DVCC) might possibly take such legal action on behalf of the community and the public. A consultant and advocate for public Trails (who advises DVCC), offered to review these Trail access issues discussed tonight with an appropriate California DPR Trails Use/Maintenance specialist.

**E6. Ratification of Chair's 18 May 2023 letter to Board of Supervisors – in support of agenda item re: unincorporated county representative to SANDAG Board.**

Member Pat Ulm moved that the Planning Group ratifies its approval of Chair Wessel's

18 May 2023 letter to the Board of Supervisors, supporting the addition of a representative of residents of the unincorporated county to the SANDAG Board.

The motion passed (9 yes; 0 no; 0 abstain).

**E7. Discussion and potential action regarding the funding and actions by County Department of Parks and Recreation related to improvements for South Lane Park.**

Discussion of DPR management of South Lane Park included concerns of Group members and community residents that 90% of the Park needs maintenance vegetation trimming, and that its current state constitutes a significant fire hazard for the community of Crest.

Chair Wessel agreed that a letter to DPR, expressing the community's concerns and the Planning Group's recommendations regarding the need for vegetation trimming, is an appropriate action.

**F. GROUP BUSINESS.**

**F1. Announcements and Correspondence Received.** Chair Wessel reported that he received an email from the County announcing there is no change in the current \$2 per household Street Lighting Annual Assessment rate.

**F2. Discussion Items. (DPW Annual Resurfacing Plan Update for Fiscal Year 2023-24, Year 7).** Chair Wessel reported that he received an email from the County providing a spreadsheet describing the DPW Annual Resurfacing Update for Fiscal Year 2023-24, Year 7).

**F3. Meeting updates.**

**F3a. Reports on and upcoming BOS, PC and other Hearings/Meetings.** Chair Wessel reported that he received a letter from the Landscape Architecture Grant Program, inviting applications for community-based programs to carry out community landscape improvements; and that he will forward this letter to the Crest Community Association for its consideration

**F3b. Next meeting date, 10 July 2023, at Olde Ironside Part, 326 Harbison Canyon Road, El Cajon, AC 92021.**

**G. ADJOURNMENT.** Member Robert Lutz-Partain moved adjournment at 8:35 PM. The motion passed unanimously (9 yes; 0 no; 0 abstain).

Respectfully submitted, William Bretz (Secretary)