

Spring Valley Community Planning Group

*** MEETING minutes***

Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at 6:00 P.M.

A. ROLL CALL – QUORUM

9 Present, 4 Absent (Lowes, Shaffer, Pearson, Morgan), 2 Vacant. We have a quorum.

B. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION – Opportunity for the public to speak to the Planning Group on any subject matter within our jurisdiction that is not on the posted agenda.

Robles asked the public to use the yard signs provided to warn neighbors of fraudulent contractors in our area. Snyder asked for possible group vacancy candidates from the public attending. Representative from State Senator Steve Padilla's office, Ardyel Lim, introduced himself as the local contact for questions about state offices and services. Woodruff attended the meeting at Mt. Miguel High School along with Robles and Pierce regarding the property planned for homeless cabins and that our group should be concerned about what is happening. A member of the public asked how we can get this issue on the agenda. David spoke about no response from Nora Vargas' office regarding his opposition to the homeless cabins project. He canvased the neighborhood near the project sight and got petition signatures against the project. His concerns are substance abuse and crime potential near schools. Denise wanted to know how to get his project on our agenda. Pierce advised her to contact her county supervisor. A public member suggested that needs of the homeless need to be assessed first instead of just going straight to housing where they will continue their behavior. A public member suggested the county use flashing traffic signs to let Spring Valley residents know what is happening regarding this issue. Cost would be minimal with short set-up time. Another community member felt that there was little public engagement on the issue before a decision was made. There are little nearby health services available and the project would be in a primarily residential area. A public member is concerned about the safety of children. Patricia's concern is that property values will suffer from the proximity of the project and there needs to be a full service facility rather than just tiny houses. The amount being spent will not solve the problem. Another speaker travels to work by bike in that area in the early morning and passes the homeless, who appear to be addicted to drugs. She was nearly assaulted by homeless while riding her motorcycle. One does not know the mental state of the homeless. Kaye asked why our group allows the spending which just allows drug use and destroy the new generations. It seems the county doesn't care about what may happen. She was not aware of our meeting this evening. Victoria Chavez wondering if we even know whether the project will work with between 150 and 300 homeless in the project property. What leverage does the SVCPG have in the decision process? Why can't the agreement be a smaller number of houses to start? The project would be an eyesore and property values will suffer. Group member Robles asks if we can get direction from the board of supervisors to present to our group. Chair Pierce confirms that would be done, the county will be doing community outreach in June. There is group consensus to have the county present to us. Gibbons has lived near the project area for 32 years and advises using the local TV stations to report on the concerns.

C. ACTION ITEMS with designation as to whether there will be vote or not on the item:

1. Approval of Minutes: 3/12/2024. Vote on this item.

Motion to approve by Custeau, second by Eugenio. Motion passes by 9 Yes, 4 Absent and 2 Vacant.

2. Discussion: Sweetwater River Trail Repair Draft Assessment. Presentation by Jill Terp. No vote on this item.

Jill is with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System. Dwayne Binns, San Diego Wildlife Refuge Manager is here as well. Tonight's discussion is about a project within the Valle De Oro CPG, but does affect the Spring Valley Planning Area. The refuge exists to conserve fish, wildlife and plants for the benefit of future generations. There are 4 refuges in Southern California. Mt. Miguel, the Sweetwater River corridor is all part of our local refuge. Tonight is about the Sweetwater River Trail repair project along the area of the river course, starting at the parking lot off of Millar Ranch Road,

down to the wooden bridge. Lots of erosion, obstacles and wet areas on this multiple use trail. Also is a need for accessibility. Improve trail tread by relocating parts to higher ground, close off user created trails and elevate the bridge over Steele Canyon Creek. This bridge got washed down stream by the big storm in January. The environmental assessment is out for public review and asking for public comment by May 10. Use their website or the hardcopy is at the Rancho San Diego Library. Woodruff asked if Fish and Wildlife works with the Sweetwater Authority regarding trails around the reservoir. That is a county project. Pierce asks if there would ever be a trail to the summit of Mt. Miguel. No, as the summit is private property. But there are alternative trails that do gain altitude in the area. The refuge has an acquisition boundary for planning to add land to the refuge. Right now there is no funding and no plans for an additional parking lot on Millar Ranch Road. Snyder asked about the rumor of the steel bridge going away, but that is county property and Jill did not know. Also, no luck getting a traffic signal at Millar Ranch Road. A public member asked if homeless cabins could be built on refuge land. No and when found camping on the refuge, the homeless are moved and thousands of dollars are spent cleaning up the sites. The public has seen the campers both in the refuge and camping in their cars. Sleeping during the day on the refuge is allowed and Jill is aware of car break-ins in the parking areas. Custeau asks about the trails behind Carraige Hills and is requesting options for hiking trails in that area. Also brought up the increases in homeowner's insurance and maybe even have prescribed controlled burns to reduce the fuel in that area. There is a maintained fuel break behind the houses and this break is considered a trail and can be used. A public member asked how refuge management knew to come do a presentation. Jill says that we requested the meeting, after the group received a letter about the trail repair project.

3. Discussion: Streamlining Affordable and Attainable Housing. Presentation by Morgan Angulo. No vote on this item.

Enrique Flores and Sarah Thornburgh will present from county PDS on new programs for rentals and home ownership across all income levels and get feedback on the concepts. The programs include small lot subdivision (allowing for lot subdivisions for duplexes, triplexes, condominiums, etc), senior assisted living, and a county buy right program. They are talking with developers and community groups on developing resources for these programs. AB803 allows subdivision of multifamily properties, objective design standards changes will streamline the process, has not narrowed down to changing the CEQA process to save time and money. Custeau says Spring Valley is ground zero for increasing housing density. Traffic is an issue from the 125/94 exchange down to poorly maintained surface streets. We have to understand the effects of congestion on our community. County rep mentioned that these programs do not increase density, but changes the type of housing. The county is looking for available open land. The county has not established any standards for affordability of these programs, but the goal is inclusion rather than market rate. Public speaker's concern about parking and property crime. Seems like density will overtake privacy. Gibbons asked why have these programs when we already have ADUs? Fees on these new programs are higher than ADU fees. The county discussed the differences between their programs and ADUs. Public speaker is concerned about the effect on property values when a nearby lot is more than the rest of the neighborhood. Seniors program will allow more affordable and acceptable dwellings. Create an overlay zone where these dwellings can be done faster. Also a state program of density bonuses to offset the cost of created affording assisted living homes and the county adds to these bonuses, bonus program also for accessible dwelling construction. Last option is to support housing on county owned land. Public member spoke about the affordability of an accessible dwelling for those on fixed incomes. Current county outreach is working to determine what seniors can afford. Discussion continued about senior affordability and county/state bonus support or building assisted living. County owned land is also a way to get affordable senior housing built. The buy right program would used streamlined objective design standards to cut costs, second item reviewed if the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) which would dictate how much housing is needed in a specific category, such as deed-restricted. There is a list of RHNA sites available for Spring Valley. There are already some existing homes on these sites, but these properties could be further developed. Custeau asked why the community has never got a clear answer about the administrative costs attached to home building. What percentage of building costs is fees? How about a rumored program where local governments share the ownership of properties? The San Diego Land Trust proposed this, but didn't succeed implementation. Pierce asked about illegal activities in our industrial areas and can this be rezoned to build more homes. A public member asked about the difference in affordable vs low income housing. AB1033 would allow a property owner to sell their ADU as a condo and establish a small HOA to control the property. Jurisdictions can opt-in to this program. Get public input as to the county allowing this. Custeau and Robles addressed density driving price and the need for more mixed use to provide housing. Gibbons asked the term condo not be used on ADU conversion to prevent an HOA from being formed. A complication is creating HOAs within an HOA. The county is planning focus groups with HOAs and real estate lawyers to define this assembly bill. Wallace asked if the county has looked at other jurisdictions and how they create affordable housing.

4. 10767 Jamacha Blvd, Request for Exemption from Site Plan permit processing requirements For "B" Special Area Regulation Designator, APN: 580-020-10-00. Lamplighter Village proposes solar carports/canopies and roof mount system on existing structure within a mobile home park. Vote on this item.

This project was tabled at our last meeting as our group questioned why we were voting on a solar project. PDS then said it was due to the construction of the carports that would also hold solar arrays. Custeau made the motion that we approve this project, Eugenio seconded. Robles said we are seeing this project again due to the structures created to hold the arrays and it is outside our jurisdiction to assess the solar technology. The carports do not exist yet, but will be built over the parking spaces and hold solar arrays. Snyder said the designer made a mistake and should not have used the term carports but instead had called the structure as ground mounted solar arrays. Custeau described the structural drawing and where the solar panels will be located. Vote is 9 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 4 Absent, 2 Vacant. Motion passes.

5. 3421 Hartzell Variance Request, PDS2024-VAR-24-008, APN: 503-060-21-00. Project is for an attached garage addition of 1,525 sf to an existing residence. Applicant is requesting a variance for a front setback of 42'-1" where 50'-0" is required and a side yard variance of 7'-0" to match an existing Variance 1963 V63-176. Vote on the item.

Scott Bernet is the proponent, Carl Ivancic is the property owner. House was built in 1963, before a lot of county zoning was established. Carls's brother built the house and all violations have been taken care of, except the garage setback. When the garage was built, it was matched to the neighbor's garage, as far as distance to the street. Reviewed the neighborhood overhead map, the street is substandard with a 40 ft right of way, the county stops at a 50 ft measure. The street is narrow. Bernet calculated what the setback would be, if a 40 ft right of way was on the zoning table and, if 40 ft was there, the garage would not be in violation. Custeau emphasized this logic due to the substandard narrow street. Garage was built in 2014-2015, the original owner died and due to COVID, only recently did the property clear probate. Wallace asked for further detail and questioned the size of the garage. Snyder said even with the narrow street, there are no sidewalks and some homeowners have built right up to the street edge. The group is only voting on the setback to the center of the street. Also, this was a code compliance violation reported by a neighbor. Our group did not receive any material on which residents did or did not sign off on the variance request. If the error is less than 50% of the allowed setback, this is called an administrative variance. Gabriel is one of the property owners and had questioned the original property owner on whether the garage was permitted, while it was being constructed 10 years ago. The owner told him that it was. Gabriel was upset about the construction noise. Robles believes that it sets a bad precedent to support something that is done illegally by allowing the variance. Wallace agrees. What is the next step if the group denies the variance? That the road is curved and narrow is all the more reason to respect the variance. Custeau agrees that we cannot allow the variance as it condones the lack of an original permit. Gibbons said that, if we approve the variance, the county will still require a new drawing and will come out check on the corrected work. The group vote is the first step in correcting the violation. Robles makes a motion to not approve the variance, Gonzalez seconded. Pierce emphasized that, if this motion does not pass, it would not mean that the group approves. Vote is 4 Yes, 5 No, 0 Abstain, 4 Absent, 2 Vacant. Motion fails. Second motion to approve the variance by Gonzalez, seconded by Gibbons. Vote is 4 Yes, 5 No, 0 Abstain, 4 Absent, 2 Vacant. Motion fails.

6. 545 Grand Ave, Discretionary Permit Application PDS2024-STP-24-004 Site Plan, APN: 584-440-66-00. Proposed 2800 sf Storage Building for Landscape Company (Re-start of previously approved PDS2018-STP-018-024). Vote on the item.

Gibbons presented. Our group has reviewed and approved this project before. Gustavo Ochoa is the designer, owner came to the group in 2018 with the same proposal, exact same details. The project was approved by us in 2018, but issues with the original designer delays from COVID caused the project to not go forward and the plan check expired. Custeau signed off on the original project. Motion by Snyder to approve, seconded by Eugenio. Wallace asked about landscape and the designer detail the landscape and fencing designs per our design review. Vote is 9 Yes, 0 No, 0 abstain, 4 Absent, 2 Vacant. Motion passes.

7. Dollar Tree Signage, 8745 Broadway, Request for Exemption # TBD, APN 499-250-44-00. Applicant: Mariana McGrain.

Vote on this item.

Custeau is the presenter. This project had the rest of the retail space signs approved by us last year. The space in question has been sitting vacant, frontage allows 65 sq ft of signage and the sign is 65 sq ft. Height of sign is consistent with distance from roadway. Internally illuminated LED letters, turned off when business is closed. Zoning allows for a larger sign, but the county advised the owner about our design standards. No other changes are being made to the building exterior. Motion to approve by Gibbons, second by Wallace. Vote is 9 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 4 Absent, 2 Vacant. Motion Passes.

D. GROUP BUSINESS

Announcements: Spring Valley Day is Saturday, April 28, and we will have a table there and need volunteers. Bancroft Elementary School at 10am. 2 new projects, Grand Avenue new business, laundromat replacing an illegal dispensary, signage for Buffalo Wild Wings. Gonzalez will take the signage project, Gibbons will take the laundromat project. Robles asked that we take signs warning about fraudulent contractors in the area.

1. Reports:

Chair: none

CSA 128: none

TAC: District 1 staff advised that the intersection of SR125 and Jamacha Rd was observed and signal timing deficiencies were observed and will be corrected. Gibbons did a video of the intersection and it to the Caltrans director.

Highway cleanup: Saturday, 4/28, at 8am, Sweetwater Springs Blvd.

APG: meets again in June, quarterly meeting.

Other: Water Conservation Garden is reopened at Cuyamaca College.

2. Next meeting: May 14, 2024

E. ADJOURNMENT: 8:56 PM

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

We strive to protect personally identifiable information, by collecting only information necessary to deliver our services. All information collected becomes public record, subject to inspection and copying by the public, unless an exemption in law exists. In the event of conflict, governing the County's disclosure of records, the County ordinance or other law will control. You can review any personal information collected about you. You may recommend changes to your personal information, which you believe is in error, by submitting a written request that shows, credibly, the error. If you believe your personal information is being used for purposes other than those intended, you may contact us. In all cases, we will take reasonable steps to verify your identity, before granting access or making corrections.

Purpose of Planning and Sponsor Groups

Advise the County on Discretionary projects as well as on planning and land use matters that are proposed within their respective community planning or sponsor group area.