

Spring Valley Community Planning Group

*** MEETING MINUTES ***

Tuesday, May 28, 2024 at 6:00 P.M

A. ROLL CALL – QUORUM

Roll: 10 present (Gonzalez, Lowes, Pierce, Eugenio, Shaffer, Gibbons, Pearson, Custeau, Woodruff, Snyder) , 3 absent (Robles, Wallace, 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.

Update from state senator Steve Padilla’s office, Spring Valley liaison is Rosanna Javier. Contact her if you need assistance with any state agencies. 13 bills have been introduced by this office. Highlights are a bill to coordinate college programs to obtain a degree and teaching credential in 4 years, large employers must disclose wastewater discharge that could contaminate water shed, restrictions on landfill that could harm the Tijuana River watershed, establish a framework for AI service providers to meet established standards, build an AI research hub with our universities. The office has a part-time opening for a digital research assistant.

Grace Nakashima, Community organizer for SAY San Diego, did a follow-up from her March 2024 presentation regarding smoking debris at Spring Valley bus stops. Those stops with no smoking signage had less debris than those lacking the signs. She asked that our group contact the supervisors’ offices to have the no smoking stickers at every bus stop and a sample letter was provided.

Scott, supporting 79th Assembly District candidate, Colin Parent. Colin has served on the La Mesa City Council since 2016. Focus is on road maintenance, public safety support and accountability and homelessness solutions. Mr. Parent runs a nonprofit that focuses on affordable housing.

Max Ellorin, Director for Public Engagement for Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe, introduced the new community representative, Joshua Dunn. They felt that Spring Valley Day was a success, the supervisor did attend and the office allocated \$10,000 toward the event. A review of the Sweetwater and Jamacha Roads intersection signal light timing was requested and the consultant has gathered the data. The report will go to the County and Caltrans on June 10th and hope for changes afterwards. 8 bids came in for the Calavo Park construction, one bid was responsive, but over budget. Attempts to find more funding will be done. The pilot subsidy program for older adults, a Homelessness Solutions Equitable Communities program, for 220 seniors and just added 160 more spaces for applications. Contact 619-780-3684 for further information. UCSD innovative partnership for essential behavioral healthcare at East Medical Campus, providing 30-45 beds for acute psychiatric services for medical applicable individuals. June 10th s their budget forum at 5101 Market Street Southeastern Live Well Center.

Kate Needham-Cano, community rep for Congresswoman Sara Jacobs. Ms. Jacobs has requested funding for new apparatus has been approved for San Miguel Fire. Ms. Jacobs is in her district for Memorial Day services at Veteran’s Cemeteries and other locations.

Jim Custeau, SVCPG member, speaking about property insurance challenges the community is facing in cancellations and large increases in premiums. His circumstance is due to proximity to brush in the open space preserve. Insurance companies do not share their modeling that comes up with premiums and Jim says that a fire has not come within a half mile of his home. Homeowners need to have support from the government in what we need to do to make our homes safe from fire. Increased premiums are a factor that affects housing affordability. He would like to see SVCPG take a position and address this situation. There is a consensus to add this issue to an upcoming agenda.

Mikayle Lowery, community rep for Supervisor Nora Vargas’ office. The tiny home project for the homeless has been

placed on hold, due to community input. The small business grant funding is no longer available for this fiscal year. Chris Pearson, SVCPG member, announced that our group has two vacancies and to email our chair if you are interested in serving on the group.

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

1. Approval of Minutes: 4/23/2024. Vote on this item. Motion to approve by Pearson, second by Woodruff. 9 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain, 3 Absent, 2 Vacant. Motion carries.

2. Discussion: Broadband Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA): \$9 million ARPA-funded grant program to help address broadband access and affordability in unincorporated communities. Presentation by Lucy O’Keeffe. No vote on this item.

Lucy O’Keeffe, of Guidehouse, working with the county to improve and promote high speed broadband access in the unincorporated areas. Joined by Michael Del La Rosa from the county. Harriet Taylor, chair of the Sweetwater CPG, is attending as this presentation is not scheduled for her Bonita group. Lucy says that an online webinar is June 6 at 6pm. She is speaking to 7 CPG picked due to broadband needs. 9 million will be awarded to high-speed infrastructure and affordability projects through validation criteria recently released online on the county’s broadband engagement website. They use FCC definition of high speed. She covered the wide range of benefits of access and the timeline of engagement by the county, building on engagement and analysis in the last 2 years on availability, reliability and affordability. The county has identified unincorporated areas in need at this time. Now collecting community feedback on the NOFA selection criteria. Public comment will close June 10. Grant awards will be in the fall of 2024. Lucy detailed the review criteria for unserved and underserved areas as outlined in the NOFA. Potential ISP subsidies are also considered. 3 evaluation criteria have been defined by the county, ROI (the largest category), environment safety and regional collaboration. Should any criteria be prioritized more is the subject of community input. Eugenio asked about what is considered underserved. Locations not receiving 120 MBPS, down and up and have been identified by the CPUC map. Custeau asks if all of our rural communities are included in the map. Challenge is the cost, not many ISPs can provide. This program is most beneficial to the rural communities. Affordability is the biggest challenge in our community. Shaffer asked about projects submitted being limited to fiber or is spectrum being considered. Lucy says the systems considered could be any format. Harriet Taylor says that even though her community has access, they have issues as well with the internet. The NOFA is technologically agnostics, all internet delivery methods are considered. Lowes asked if the money is toward infrastructure or subsidizing user cost. The funding is for ISP proposals and ‘last mile’ projects for connectivity, i.e. street to user. Custeau asked, “who does that last mile?”. Would be the ISP. Snyder asked about fire hazard when infrastructure gets increased and fire potential along with it and to keep that in mind. Eugenio asked how many other counties are involved in this. Just San Diego County. Lowes asked where the 9 million is going. Directly to the awarded projects for infrastructure. This money is part of a much larger federal funding of 1.9 billion. ROI and economics are certainly factors in why service is scant in outlying areas. Custeau said that 9 million won’t go very far, what is our share? No, the 9 million is from a completely separate pool. Harriet Taylor asked how the county knows what areas are underserved. Look at the broadband engagement site and CPUC site for related materials. Snyder asked if the county is working with SANDAG on this and De La Rosa said other agencies are involved.

3. Discussion: Development Feasibility Analysis (DFA) Update. County-led study to explore housing development in unincorporated communities. Presentation by Paola Garcia-Betancourt. No vote on this item.

Claire Moss, planning manager with PDS, presented for Paola. Presentation is an informational update from their last visit in the fall of 2023. Where do we see development in Spring Valley and our recommendations. The team will be back later this summer to discuss their technical findings. Now they are identifying opportunities and constraints for development, such as inadequate infrastructure, water, sewer, storm water, zoning issues, real estate market is too costly, etc. are doing a lot of outreach to developers, property owners, communities to get a sense of opportunities and barriers. Report back to the board in the fall on barriers, solutions, and timelines. 4

communities were selected for review, including Valle De Oro and Spring Valley. Selection was based on a variety of criteria such as transit, closeness to freeways, urban services, vacant parcels, funding, environmental justice considerations such as disproportionate hazards such as pollution. DFA community in Spring Valley is La Presa. Claire described the suburban characteristics of our community, such as residential and business mix and high density and rural lots. Lowes wonders if there is any constraints on development between the county and state opening up high density opportunities. Claire says there are constraints, as the developers cite lack of interest and why people pick communities for amenities other than housing. Part of it is the lack of profit for developers. People in Spring Valley want development, but it isn't happening and the county wants to know why. The analysis may say that the market does not support development. This is primarily about residential development, but the county is aware that other infrastructure goes along, such as parks. They are considering upzoning blighted corridors as well. Pearson brought up the over budget bid for Calavo Park as an example of the kind of asset that developers look for. Lots of property owners are not interested in converting to residential due to cost. There are steps PDS can take to be more developer friendly. Other people have stated this issue, such as "could there be just one county liaison" and the need for consistency. Claire asked, what does Spring Valley value most in amenities? What is the community character? Vincent is developing a property in Spring Valley and it's difficult find your way through PDS. Developers want speed. Spring Valley wants parks, trails, access to open spaces, lack of blight, clean and safe communities and fixing the many zoning and code infractions. A SVCA poll said proximity to freeways is important. Custeau commented that Spring Valley was never master planned, having heavy industrial right next to residential, citing the pool chemical plant, zoned M54, right next to a large trailer park. This affects the developers perception. A good example is the swap meet parking lot potential. Pierce brought up the now operating rock quarry across 125 from the swap meet. Lowes believes the county needs to clean up the zoning. Custeau asked when do we get to the point when we are proud of every aspect of our communities, but the county needs to address the code infractions and the zoning issues. Claire says that they are conducting an infrastructure gap analysis. Lowes says the county has been the biggest obstacle to improving the community. Eugenio brought up the proposed battery storage plant and the effect of a fire to the people living right next to it. The county is accumulating comments regarding needed improvement and changes, such as more grocery stores, zoning changes and flood control. Claire's team will be back this summer to discuss their market feasibility study results and their proposed recommendations. Custeau says parks are important, parking is an ongoing challenge, we need all types of housing, create buffers from fire, control home insurance. Shaffer spoke of smarter planning of zoning; density allotments are not realistic. Pierce mentioned our trail system is lacking, we can't get to our reservoir, open spaces have disorganized trails. Gibbons emphasized the need for sidewalks, infrastructure must be fixed. A discussion about tree planting; more trees, but how to care for them, the liability of root damage, what kind of trees. What are the barriers to development? Snyder mentions land owned by trusts and they don't care about infrastructure improvements, also the large amount of C36, mixed use zoning, here, so get the zoning updated. Pearson asked about a zoning inspector assigned to this area. Custeau mentioned eminent domain as a past tool to get development started. A community member brought up the Casa De Oro plan as a way to get change rolling, expedite the permitting process. Eugenio spoke of the county's inability to solve problems, such as drainage on his street. Snyder and Taylor say there is a difference between what PDS allows and what the CPG/SGs allow, and that the developer is not advised of this, costing time and money. Custeau asked what PDS has heard from building industry experts. The experts are concerned when the necessary infrastructure is not in place. A nearby development, instead of paying PLDO fees, built and is maintaining a small public park on their property, fees in addition to their HOA fees. Spring Valley doesn't seem to get their money's worth from community taxation. Snyder mentions our zoning map, the many zones throughout and the need to correct. Custeau is concerned about the final report being ignored. Claire stressed that the report would include actionable items and a timeline. Shaffer commented that we reviewed the design checklist at the request of PDS and did an update.

4. 729-731 Grand Ave, Request for Exemption from Site Plan permit processing requirements For "B" Special Area

Regulation Designator, APN# 584-360-73-00. Conversion to Laundry Services. Vote on this item.

Vincent Dicklow is the property owner. The building was a smoke shop, became a dispensary, they want to convert it to a commercial laundry, the power is back on and they are new owners of the site. Gibbons had advised them how difficult it is to get a B waiver, not having site plan design details. There are no code violations on the property, no area to landscape, no modifications to the building. Having a laundromat would be an asset to the community. Site is all asphalt and concrete, no landscaping, which is a problem for the group regarding approving B waivers. No plans for fencing. Custeau questioned all the bollards around the building, but those are from the previous tenant. Motion to approve by Custeau, second by Pearson. There is no trash enclosure on the plans, just an area for trash containment. A community member asked if we could put suggestions on the form, but a B waiver is just an up or down approval, with no conditions or comments. Vote is 5 Yes, 5 No, 3 Absent, 2 Vacant. Motion fails.

5. 513 Sweetwater Rd, Minor Deviation of Existing Site Plan, APN# 584-520-26-00, Buffalo Wild Wings. Vote on this item.

Gonzalez will present. This is a straight-forward signage request. At the Albertsons' shopping center where the T-Mobile was. Signs on the front and back. Initial plans were adjusted to meet our guidelines as far as square footage. Individually illuminated letters with a black background. Some discussion about signs on two sides of the building being comparable to a double-faced sign. Gonzalez moves to approve, second by Custeau. Vote is 10 Yes, 0 No, 3 Absent, 2 Vacant. Motion passes.

D. GROUP BUSINESS

1. Announcements: Pearson wants to reiterate disappointment over the over budget bids on Calavo Park. Suggestion is to draft a letter to all elected officials to get the park funded and back on track. The letter will be on the next agenda.

2. Chair: Spring Valley Community church, 6pm on May 30th, Olive and Bancroft, Caltrans engineers will present on the 125/94 interchange project. Lowes needs to complete her 700 form filing.

CSA 128: Opening is now posted and you have to apply for the position. Pearson is interested.

TAC: Meeting on June 7th, Custeau posted on Nextdoor regarding the right turn lane, east bound from Jamacha Blvd to east bound SR 94 (just east of our planning group boundaries). This is a Caltrans issue. The turn and lane just after will be widened and Jamul Casino will be paying for this intersection improvement.

Highway cleanup: just did one 2 weeks ago and will notify us when the next clean-up will be.

APG: meeting June 1 and they are adding Sponsor Groups to the membership. Custeau will bring up the 125/94 interchange to push hard on that project.

Other: SPCA got a grant to wrap 7 signal boxes, eventually 14 total and are graffiti resistant. Possibility of a grant for SVCPA for technology or a canopy for public outdoor meetings. Send grant request ideas to Pierce.

3. Next meeting: June 11, 2024

E. ADJOURNMENT 8:31 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.