



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Planning and
Development
Department No.: 053
For Agenda Of: 2/26/08
Placement: Set Hearing on 3/11/08
Departmental
Estimated Tme: 2 hours
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department John Baker, Director
Director(s) (805) 568-2085
Contact Info: Zoraida Abresch, Deputy Director
(805) 934-6585
SUBJECT: Hearing to Consider the Request for Acceptance and Initiation of the Proposed Gaffaney
General Plan Amendment, located in the Lompoc Area.

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: No

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

Set a hearing for March 11, 2008 to consider the request for initiation of the Gaffaney General Plan Amendment (Case No. 06GPA-00000-00015 filed by the applicant), located on Tularosa Road (APN's 099-650-001, -002, -003, -004, -005, -010, -011, -012, -013) in the Cebada Canyon area of the Fourth Supervisorial District.

At the March 11, 2008 hearing, the Board of Supervisor's action should include the following:

Decline to initiate the formal review process for the Gaffaney General Plan Amendment (Case No. 06GPA-00000-00015). The subject site lies on both sides of Tularosa Road where it becomes a private road, north of La Purisima Golf Course, approximately three miles east of the City of Lompoc (APNs 099-650-001, -002, -003, -004, -005, -010, -011, -012, -013), Fourth Supervisorial district.

If the Board of Supervisors determines that the general plan amendment request should proceed, it is recommended that all similar projects in this region of the County be considered within the context of a community-based “Visioning” process performed for the Lompoc/Mission Hills/Vandenberg Village region. This “Visioning” process would address the potential for intensification of development and land use alternatives for this region of the County.

As a final option, the Board could accept the proposed General Plan Amendment request, without regard to a “Visioning Process”, and direct staff to initiate the formal review process for this individual project. Under this alternative, the companion Zone Change and Tentative Parcel/Tract Map applications would ultimately be accepted for processing.

Summary Text:

The Cebada Canyon area consists primarily of agriculturally zoned parcels (100 acres or larger), three agriculturally zoned parcels which contain the La Purisima Golf Course, and the Cebada Canyon Existing Developed Rural Neighborhood (EDRN). The Cebada Canyon EDRN contains 110 parcels with Residential Ranchette (RR) land use designations; these parcels have either 5, 10, or 20 acre minimum parcel sizes. The applicant proposes to change the land use designation for nine parcels (APNs 099-650-001, -002, -003, -004, -005, -010, -011, -012, -013) from either RR-10 or RR-20 to RR-5; thereby increasing the potential density in this portion of the Cebada Canyon EDRN from 13 units to 35 units. The proposal raises concerns about the precedent of increasing density within an Existing Developed Rural Neighborhood (EDRN) in a Rural Area of the County. An EDRN is a neighborhood located in a designated Rural Area that historically developed at a greater density than the surrounding rural or inner rural lands. The purpose of the neighborhood boundary is to keep pockets of rural residential development from expanding onto adjacent agricultural lands. In essence the EDRN designation was created to recognize existing development patterns that do not fit neatly into the urban/rural boundaries because they pre-dated such designations. The EDRN designation is a planning tool designed to grant densities to these areas which they would not otherwise have obtained through the Comprehensive Planning process, and helps land owners avoid the many problems that would occur if their lot sizes were non-conforming. Although the residential use is higher in density than other rural land uses, the EDRN designation acknowledges an existing pattern of development, and an established way of life. However, the EDRN designation is considered a “containment” tool and allowing an increase in density within an EDRN could set a precedent which would allow the introduction of substantial numbers of residential units within the Rural Areas of the County at density far greater than the surrounding agricultural lands.

Background:

Existing Comprehensive Plan designations in the greater Lompoc/Mission Hills/Vandenberg Village area have been in place for more than 20 years, and there has never been a community plan for the area. At its November 14, 2007 hearing, the Planning Commission voted on and passed two motions. The first motion, passed by a vote of 5-0, recommended that the Board provide direction to prepare a regional planning study of either the Highway 246 corridor or prepare a regional planning study for the greater Lompoc, Vandenberg Village, and Mission Hills area. The second motion, passed by a vote of 3-2 (Blough, Valencia, and Jackson yes; Cooney and Brown no), deferred the decision as to whether or not to initiate the Gaffaney General Plan Amendment to the Board. Please refer to the Planning Commission staff report for more information about the site and what the applicant is proposing (Attachment A).

The Planning Commission unanimously agreed that the greater Lompoc/Mission Hills/Vandenberg Village area of the County is long overdue for some form of updated comprehensive planning, such as the completion of an Area Study or Community Plan which addresses the needs for growth in a regional manner. Therefore, the Commission recommended that the Board of Supervisors assess the need for Long Range Planning to insert such a study into their work plan in the immediate future.

Although Commissioners Valencia and Blough agreed that development pressure in this region of the County should be addressed in a comprehensive manner, these Commissioners also expressed their concerns that the completion of such a process has proven to be both time consuming and controversial. Therefore, Commissioners Valencia and Blough feel that individual General Plan Amendments, such as the Gaffaney project, should be allowed to proceed individually, based upon their own merits, for consideration by the Board. As such, these commissioners indicated that the processing of individual General Plan Amendments should proceed regardless of whether or not a Community Plan process was under way.

Commissioners Cooney and Brown acknowledged that the completion of comprehensive planning processes, such as the approval of a Community Plan, often takes years if not decades to complete and that this can be a frustration to property owners located within the planning area. However, Commissioners Cooney and Brown voiced their belief that such a comprehensive planning process is the appropriate method for addressing significant development growth within the County and that the approval of General Plan Amendments on an individual project basis should be discouraged.

Commissioner Jackson stated that if the Commission took action to initiate an individual General Plan Amendment (such as the Gaffaney project), in an area which clearly needs an updated comprehensive planning effort, that such an action could be construed as formulating County policy in regards to how General Plan Amendments should be processed. Commissioner Jackson indicated that the formalization of such a policy should be deferred to the Board of Supervisors.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

All costs of permit processing are reimbursed by the project applicant. Costs to process this application are fully reimbursed by the applicant per the department's adopted fee schedule. Permit revenues are budgeted in the Permitting & Compliance Program of the Development Review, North Division on Page D-290 of the adopted 2007 – 2008 fiscal year budget. There are no facilities impacts. The costs to process this rezone are borne by the applicant.

Special Instructions:

The Clerk of the Board shall complete noticing for the project in a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Santa Barbara ten (10) days prior to the hearing (mailing labels are attached).

The Clerk of the Board shall forward a copy of the Minute Order to Planning & Development, Attention: David Villalobos, Hearing Support.

Planning & Development will prepare all final action letters and notify all interested parties of the Board of Supervisors final action.

Attachments:

Attachment A -- Planning Commission Staff Report dated November 14, 2007.

Attachment B-- Planning Commission Action Letter dated November 14, 2007.

Authored by:

Nathan Eady, Planner II, (805) 943-6261

Development Review Division-North, Planning and Development Department

cc: Case File: 06GPA-00000-00015
Records Management
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