



Memorandum

TO: COYOTE VALLEY SPECIFIC
PLAN TASK FORCE

FROM: Sal Yakubu

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF SOUTH COYOTE
VALLEY /GREENBELT PROPERTY
OWNERS MEETING ON 10/25/04

DATE: November 22, 2004

Approved

Date

Property Owners and Representatives:

Richard Barberi, Camille Campbell, Chi Chan, Eric Chan Wai Fong, Roger Costa, Janet Hebert, Paul Hebert, Jo Crosby, Consuelo Crosby, Denise De Smet, Richard DeSmet, Maxine Eldridge, Jack Faraone, Tedd Faraone, Eric Flippo, Lisa Flippo, Luis Freitas, Mark Freitas, David Gibson, Richard Hom, Anthony Intravia, Mary Marchese, Christopher Marchese, David McBirney, Siu Mok, Chou Mok, Wilker Mok, Wing Mok, Tom Montez, Ray Malech, George Osako, Michiko Osako, Eddie Osako, Parvin Patel, Manjula Patel, Danford Perusina, Peter Raap, Lois Raap, Billy Roach, Ray Russo, Alice Sakauye, Robert Sakauye, James Smith, Laura Sellheim, George Stewart, Beverly Stewart, Wayne Wei, Guo Yuan, Michael Zanotto, Rosalie Cacitte, Liz Hirata, Lucy Lofrumento, Heng Tan, Yoo Ng, Annie Saso, and Tam Wayland.

Members of the Public Present:

Dennis Kennedy (Mayor of Morgan Hill) and Kerry Williams (Coyote Housing Group).

San Jose City Staff Present and Consultants:

Councilmember Forrest Williams (District 2), Supervisor Don Gage (Santa Clara County), Emily Moody (District 2), Rachel Gibson (Supervisor Don Gage's Office), Laurel Prevetti (PBCE), Sal Yakubu (PBCE), Darryl Boyd (PBCE), Susan Walsh (PBCE), Perihan Ozdemir (PBCE), Doug Dahlin (Dahlin Group), Roger Shanks (Dahlin Group), Sibella Kraus (SAGE), Jim Thompson (HMH), Jim Musbach (EPS) and Eileen Goodwin (Apex Strategies).

1) Welcome and Introductions:

Eileen Goodwin, with APEX Strategies, welcomed everyone in attendance and reviewed the agenda. A show of hands indicated that a majority of the people in attendance also attended the last Greenbelt property owner meeting on July 22, 2004.

2) Preliminary Findings:

Laurel Prevetti, Deputy Director of the City Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, presented the background of the Coyote Valley Specific Plan, the City Council's Vision and the Greenbelt Interim Planning Principles. She also explained the existing land uses and the regulatory agencies that are involved in the Greenbelt area.

Sibella Kraus, with SAGE (an agriculture viability specialist), explained the existing physical conditions, land uses and parcel sizes in the Greenbelt. She summarized the input she has received regarding challenges and opportunities from interviews with Santa Clara County, Greenbelt property owners and farmers, and environmental, open space, agricultural and food interest groups. Sibella also highlighted her findings regarding a number of case studies, implementation techniques employed by other agricultural organizations, and explained some possible Greenbelt activities.

Doug Dahlin, with the Dahlin Group, explained the land use principles and assumptions and some possible strategies for the Greenbelt. He discussed examples involving the Napa Valley food and wine lifestyle, the Arcadian rural ideal, the South Livermore Valley, agricultural land trusts and easements, contract growers and subscription vegetables farmers. He also presented a first draft of a non-urban buffer land use concept showing what might happen in the Greenbelt and projecting the ultimate build-out under existing policies and the consolidation of lands.

Laurel stated that this is a work in progress and staff and the consultant team would like to know if they are heading in the right direction and get comments and feedback from the property owners. She indicated that there is a need to answer questions as to how to finance these ideas and how to deal with the regulatory barriers.

3) Property Owner Comments and Questions:

Eileen asked for questions and comments and received the following from the audience:

- A lot of these ideas do not seem valid or realistic. *Sibella indicated that at this point this is just a collection of ideas. The consultants are not ruling any ideas in or out at this early stage.*
- The interviews Sibella conducted with various groups do not seem very representative of all of the Greenbelt owners.

- What will the City do to help reduce water costs in the Greenbelt? *Sibella reminded the audience that this is meant to solicit input, and that most of these questions could not be resolved at this meeting, but would be investigated during the specific plan process .*
- Several of the environmental groups should not be considered stakeholders since they are just interest groups.
- What percentage of those interviewed are really farming? *Sibella indicated that she talked to 50 people, 43 of whom were currently farming or have farmed, with rest being businesses.*
- Observation that there seem to be a lot of inherent conflicts.
- Who will work in the farms to keep agriculture in the Greenbelt? *Sibella acknowledged that the labor and housing for laborers would be a major challenge. She indicated that one of the biggest employers, Monterey Mushrooms, has 400 workers per day commuting into Coyote Valley.*
- Workers in apricot orchards were historically paid \$3.00 per hour and now they are paid \$8.00 per hour. Question whether workers can really make a living on that.
- Concern regarding the noise, dusty and other potential impacts from farming in close proximity to residential areas.
- Comment that many neighboring farmers are bankrupt.
- Recommend that there be some consideration given to the idea of dividing the Greenbelt into developable parcels along Monterey Road and retaining the rest as Greenbelt. *Sibella indicated this idea would be examined.*
- How will this plan affect the numerous small parcels in the Greenbelt? *Sibella indicated that impacts and opportunities would be considered for all property owners in the Greenbelt and indicated that she would like to interview as many owners as possible. (Anyone who has not been interviewed should sign up on the list that is being circulated.) By a show of hands it appeared that only 5 or 6 property owners had not been interviewed.*
- Lucy Lofrumento, with the Silicon Valley Law Group representing the Coyote Valley Alliance for Smart Growth, stated that the vision statement for the Greenbelt has some flaws as described by many property owners. She stated that while there might be a positive visual experience for passersby, she questioned the quality of life for those living in the Greenbelt?
- Who will use the ballpark and equestrian facility and where will the utilities come from? *Sibella indicated that these would be community facilities and would be served by septic and wells since urban services will not be extended into the Greenbelt.*
- Why is the City involved with the Greenbelt since it is in the County? *The Greenbelt is in the City's sphere of influence where the City has the responsibility for planning.*
- Observation that there is no purpose to working on this Greenbelt area except that the North and the Mid Coyote Valley areas need it. They cannot annex to the City and they will not be able to get services and utilities. The North and the Mid-Coyote Valley area are getting a free ride.

- Many of us have already lost a lot of money and some have gone into bankruptcy trying to pursue agricultural uses in this area. “I’ve tried for 25 years to do Doug’s vision and it is not realistic.”
- Recommend that the Greenbelt be left out of the plan.
- Forrest Williams presented his idea for density transfer in which assigned density credits could be transferred from the Greenbelt to north and mid Coyote. Negotiations between property owners would be needed to transfer and sell density credits. The areas from which credits are transferred would become permanent open space. All parties would have to participate in the infrastructure costs for the CVSP.
- Under the density transfer scheme, would the Greenbelt property owners be assessed for payment of infrastructure costs? *Co-Chair Williams stated that they would be assessed only if they wanted to participate..*
- If a community septic system is possible for affordable housing units in the Greenbelt, the City should consider clustered development.
- Is there a possibility of extending urban services into the Greenbelt? *Sibella stated that urban services would not be extended into the Greenbelt area.*
- The Coyote Valley Alliance for Smart Growth (CVASG) requested 3 things: 1) that their properties be taken out of the Greenbelt, 2) that they be given fair market value for their land or 3) that they be able to subdivide into ½ acre lots. If these will not work they would like the Task Force to consider clustered housing with community septic and limited urban services.
- Two more scenarios that the CVASG would like to have considered include: 1) reduce the minimum subdivision lot size to 4 acres with some provision for open space, or 2) allow for a minimum lot size of 2.5 acres with the allowance with some common interest lands that could be farmed.
- Under Forest William’s plan for virtual credits if you sold 2-10 ac. what would happen to the land selling the credits? *Forrest Williams indicated that the land would become permanent open space and be maintained by the Open Space Trust.*
- If the 20- acre minimums are to stay then the City should consider providing a tax break.
- Recommend that it would be easier for the property owners in the North and the Mid-Coyote Valley areas to buy development rights in the Greenbelt.
- Concern that the land is not very good for vineyards.
- How many people make a living farming in CV? *Sibella indicated that there are a few making a living with agriculture.*
- Concern that the best soil is in the North Coyote Valley area, and not the Greenbelt.
- Recommend that photos of the actual Greenbelt be shown in addition to the pretty pictures of other areas.
- Question as to whether the Greenbelt is now an integral part of the specific plan? *Laurel indicated that the Greenbelt is a part of the Specific Plan and that the Greenbelt will be studied as a part of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).*
- How often will the CVSP team meet with the Greenbelt property owners? *Laurel indicated that there might be another Greenbelt property owner meeting soon and that the Task Force will be considering the Greenbelt ideas on December 13, 2004.*

- It is shocking to see that you envision orchards for our land.
- Coyote Valley should not be compared to Napa Valley because they are very different areas.
- Is it correct that there is no way that urban services can be extended into the Greenbelt? *Laurel affirmed that under the current City General Plan urban services couldn't be extended into the Greenbelt. To change that policy it might require a vote of the public and there has been no discussion of changing the policy. The City Council recently reaffirmed their Vision for the Coyote Valley, which includes a provision to maintain the Greenbelt as a permanent non-urban buffer between the City of San Jose and the City of Morgan Hill.*
- Request that the City bring in buyers to the next meeting, and let the buyers tell us what they are willing to pay for lands in the Greenbelt.
- The soil in the Greenbelt area is adobe, which causes root rot.
- We would like to sell our land and get out of here.
- The cucumber farm on the corner of Palm Avenue was one of the last cucumber farmers and they went out of business.
- Peppers and pumpkins have failed and there are a lot of complaints from neighbors about farming.

4) Adjourn:

Councilmember Forrest Williams thanked everyone in attendance and indicated that the comments will be forwarded to the Coyote Valley Specific Plan Task Force and the City Council for their consideration.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.