



General Plan Advisory Committee

Riverside County 2008 General Plan Update

MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time: June 18, 2009, 9:00 AM

Location: County Administrative Center, Room 5C

Members Present: Dennis Chinaeff (Chair), Joseph A. Richards (Vice Chair), Mark Balys, Bill Blankenship, John Criste, George Hague, Michelle Randall, Stan Skipworth, Matt Webb and Steve Pastor (Alt. for Steve Corona)

Members Absent: Barry Burnell, Tom Kirk, Steve Robbins, John Snell and Ronald Sullivan

County Present: George Johnson, Ron Goldman, Damian Meins, Jerry Jolliffe, Katherine Lind, Leslie Mouriquand, Kristi Lovelady, Mitra Mehta-Cooper, Josh Lee, Cindy Thielman-Braun and Phayvanh Nanthavongdouangsy

Guests Present: Dan Silver (Endangered Habitats League), Trip Hord, Robert Wheeler, Scott R. Sewell (CDFG), Pat Ratliff (UCCRC), Joyce Schwartz (UCCRC), Bruce Colbert, Marilyn Rogers

- 1. Call to Order:** GPAC Chair, Dennis Chinaeff, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** Motion made by Member Balys to approve minutes from previous meeting (May 6, 2009) and seconded by Chair Chinaeff. Approved unanimously.
- 3. Roll Call:** Roll call of GPAC members in attendance (as per list, above) and introduction of County staff and guests/public attendees.
- 4. Oral Communications:** The Chair stated that Supervisor Ashley had requested a continuance on agenda item 6.b.i., the proposed Northeast Agriculture Conversion (NAC) Policy Area. The Chair then invited anyone wishing to speak on NAC to comment at this time. Member Webb excused himself and left the room to avoid a conflict of interest. CDFG representative, Scott Sewell, stated that his agency plans to submit comments in regards to the NAC Policy Area. Joyce Schwartz spoke against the proposed NAC policy, proposed developments in the area (which are not a part of the General Plan Update) and any "large-scale development" in the area. Patt Ratcliff, president of Union of Concerned Citizens of Riverside County (UCCRC), spoke in objection to the language and assumptions of the NAC policies. Marilyn Rodgers, long-time Nuevo resident, spoke in opposition to any urbanization of the Lakeview/Nuevo/San Jacinto Valley area. Upon conclusion of the comment period, Member Webb returned to the meeting room.

5. Old Business:

- a. Response to Comments:** Mitra Mehta-Cooper, Principal Planner Riverside County, presented letters received since last meeting: Imperial Irrigation District, Cameron Bucher (May 6, 2009) re EIR 521 NOP comments; George Hague, GPAC Member (cover letter dated June 19, 2009) re comments on GPA 720, GPA 721 and SP 342 (Villages at Lakeview) and environmental issues. Five letters received after the deadline were also distributed at the meeting: Darcy Kuenzi, Legislative Assistant to County Supervisor Marion Ashley, (June 17, 2009) asking for a continuance on item 6.b.i (Northeast Agricultural Conversion Policy Area) to allow additional stakeholders the opportunity to participate in the discussion. Endangered Habitats League, Dan Silver (June 9, 2009) expressing opposition to the NAC Policy Area; general support for proposed revisions to the Administration Element, cultural resource policies and Prado Dam Policy Area; and critical comments for consideration on the other agenda items. Two letters, Friends of the Northern San Jacinto Valley, Ann L. Turner-McKibben (June 16, 2009), and Clinton E. Stoutenburgh (June 17, 2009) both expressing opposition to the NAC Policy Area. And, lastly, Autumn DeWoody for Inland Empire Waterkeeper (June 17, 2009) requesting specific items and “stronger language” be used for proposed water conservation policies.

- b. Action Items from Last Meeting:** The following items were carried over for discussion and possible action from the prior meeting.
 - i. Northeast Agriculture Conversion Policy Area:** (Also previously referred to as the “Northeast Dairies Policy Area”). This item was continued to the next GPAC meeting. Public comments had already been solicited, as per agenda item 4, above.

6. New Business:

- a. Presentations and Informational Items:** None.

- b. Discussion - Proposed Action Items:** (*Voting actions require quorum*)
 - i. Administration Element:** Mitra Mehta-Cooper, County Planning. Proposal to amend the Element to ensure consistency between the General Plan and other policies (Ordinance 348, state laws, etc.). In particular, this includes extending the General Plan review cycle from five to eight years, consistent with SB 375. It also includes language clarifying the role of the GPAC and Planning Director in the Foundation review and GPA cycles. It also clarifies procedures for processing agricultural GPAs. After the staff presentation, GPAC members asked a variety of questions regarding the need for the proposed revisions and discussed their implications. Public comments included Dan Silver stating that EHL supports staff’s recommendations and further urges greater restrictions be applied to agricultural GPAs. Dr. Silver also mentioned that there would be a workshop on SB 375 later in the month.

Action - Motion was made by Member Balys to support staff’s recommendation to revise the Administration Element as proposed. Seconded by Member Webb and passed unanimously.

- ii. **Multipurpose Open Space Element - Cultural Resources Revisions:** Leslie Mouriquand, County Archeologist, presented the proposed revisions and explained how they were necessary to ensure that countywide procedures for addressing cultural resources in the General Plan are updated to reflect current practices and regulatory directives. During discussion by the GPAC members, several expressed the desire to see the Element's title ("Multipurpose Open Space Element") changed to "Open Space and Conservation Element," to more clearly reflect its purpose and contents. In addition, members discussed making several additional revisions to the proposed policies to make them both stronger and more clear; namely combining some of the proposed policies and also rearranging them so that key policy principles are expressed first. During public comments, Dan Silver indicated EHL generally supports staff's proposal.

Action - A motion was made by Member Criste, and seconded by Member Skipworth, to support staff's recommended revisions with some additional changes: Combining the new proposed policy of OS 19.3 into the new proposed OS 19.2 or OS 19.4, and moving the resultant policy to the top of the policy list; and also modifying proposed policy OS 19.6 to make it more implementation oriented. In addition, the GPAC included in the motion a proposal to recommend changing the Element's title to "Open Space and Conservation Element." Motion passed unanimously.

- iii. **Land Use Element & Multipurpose Open Space Element - Water Conservation Policies:** Kristi Lovelady, Principle Planner, Riverside County, presented the proposed policies/revisions, explaining that they were necessary to ensure coordination between the General Plan and existing Ordinance 859 (Water-Efficient Landscaping Requirements). A lengthy discussion of the proposal then followed. With some GPAC members wanting stronger, more directive language, concurrence was reached on revising proposed policy LU 16.2(a) to use "and" to link its two sentences. Staff pointed out that Ordinance 859 contains explicit directive language and is a suitable instrument for full enforcement of the policies. There was also discussion on the use of recycled water in determining water budgets; whether drought conditions in Southern California should be labeled as a "trend" or not; and, whether drought and other climate change-related items should be added to the "5 bullets" list on page OS-4. Staff indicated that climate change issues would be addressed collectively in a separate section. Ultimately, the GPAC reached consensus on leaving the list as proposed. It was also pointed out that the proposed policies needed to clearly distinguish between "natural" and "artificial" turf to avoid confusion. And, lastly, GPAC members felt that the section should apply to all County activities, not just new development. However, they accepted staff's suggestion that starting implementation with new development, which the County has clear discretionary approval authority over, is the most feasible way of establishing the basis for water conservation programs at this time. During public comments, Dan Silver had questions on when the policies and the ordinance apply and stated that EHL would like to see the County adopt more stringent and comprehensive water efficiency and conservation policies, particularly regarding use of recycled water.

Action - Motion made by Member Balys to support Planning staff's recommendations with the additional revision that proposed policy LU 16.2 be revised to make it stronger than merely "encouraged." Seconded by Member Richards and passed 9 to 1 (George Hague voting against, stating that the language should be stronger).

- iv. **REMAP - Anza Valley Policy Area / Rural Village Overlay Study Areas:** Jerry Jolliffe, County Deputy Planning Director, presented an outline of the proposed policy revisions to REMAP to address the Anza Valley area. Specifically, the changes entail deleting policy REMAP 2.1 (addressing an unspecified Rural Village Overlay Study Area) and replacing it with a set of explicit policies and boundaries under a new "Anza Valley Policy Area." The policies proposed for Anza were based on work done in consultation with the Anza Valley Municipal Advisory Council (AVMAC). During discussion, GPAC members debated the size of the proposed policy area, the objectives of the policy area and whether the proposed policies meet those objectives. They also discussed at length the region's water supply issues and how to ensure any development ultimately permitted is appropriate for the water conditions. Public comments included Bob Wheeler, who presented a history of the region's water study and litigation issues; Dan Silver, who agreed with Bob Wheeler that the Rural Village Overlay within the policy area was too big, as well as that Anza's "village statement" was "at odds with" its stated policies and that water supply uncertainties would be a severe constraint on any future growth in the area. After lengthy discussion, Planning Director Ron Goldman suggested tabling the discussion until the next GPAC meeting scheduled for July 29th.

Action - None taken; continued to next meeting.

- v. **ELAP - Lake Elsinore Environs Policy Area (Lakeland Village):** Josh Lee, County Planner, explained how the proposed policy revisions were prompted by new 100-year floodplain data for Lake Elsinore issued by FEMA. As a result of the new data, staff has prepared policies to clarify acceptable levels of future development and adjust land use designations to facilitate more appropriate patterns of use given the area's constraints. The proposed revisions will also ensure that the General Plan reflects appropriate levels of flood protection along the lake. It was also determined that, being a statement rather than policy directive, proposed policy ELAP 7.4 should be deleted and its text incorporated into the Policy Area's introductory paragraph.

Action - Motion made by Member Balys to support Planning staff's recommendation, with the revision of ELAP 7.4 mentioned above. Seconded by Member Criste and passed unanimously.

- vi. **EAP - Prado Dam Inundation Policy Area:** Josh Lee, County Planner, explained that changes had been made to the height (and thus reservoir capacity) of existing Prado Dam. The construction altered the dam's inundation area, which is now predicted to reach up to an elevation of 566 feet above mean sea level. As a result, two new policies (EAP 2.1 and 2.2) are proposed to ensure that any development approved in the area is appropriate for the flooding risks and/or has appropriate

engineering conditions to ensure flood protection. GPAC's initial discussion, headed by Member Webb, revealed several issues to be considered before the Committee would feel comfortable rendering an opinion on staff's proposal. As a result, further discussion on the item was deferred to the next GPAC meeting.

Action – None taken; continued to next meeting.

- vii. County-Initiated Parcel Changes:** Mitra Mehta-Cooper, County Planning, explained that the list of proposed County-initiated parcel changes (CIC's) comprises eight categories of mapping revisions that have been identified since the adoption of the RCIP General Plan in 2003. The changes to individual parcels are intended to correct mapping errors and other inconsistencies identified by the County. Staff also brought to the GPAC's attention the request made by a developer to delay taking action on the CIC proposed for Reinhardt Canyon (i.e., CIC C3-16). Ron Goldman also added that the individual parcel changes would be examined in detail by the Planning Commission and that the CIC's did not represent any General Plan-level policy changes. When asked by Member Criste, staff clarified that none of the CIC's for either Eastern or Western Coachella Valley have proven controversial to date.

Action – Chair Chinaeff made a motion to support all of staff's proposed CIC changes, including CIC C3-16 (Reinhardt Canyon). Motion seconded by Member Blankenship and passed unanimously.

- 5. GPAC Member Comments and Staff Announcements:** Member Hague pointed out that two additional letters expressing opinions on the proposed NAC Policy Area were submitted. Staff assured the GPAC that the letters would be included in the next meeting's packet. Principal Planner, Mitra Mehta-Cooper, announced that the current work schedule is slated to allow GPAC to wrap up its review of GPA 960 within the next three meetings. She also informed the members that Planning would be presenting the some of the completed GPA 960 items with their GPAC recommendations to the Planning Commission in a workshop, being held at 9 a.m. on June 24, 2009, in the CAC Board Chambers.
- 6. Adjournment:** At 11:59 a.m., Chair Chinaeff adjourned the meeting until July 29, 2009, at 9 a.m., in Room 5C or other room (to be announced) if 5C is unavailable.