

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

Supplemental Report

August 24, 2010

City Manager's Office/

Community Development Department

TITLE: SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT TO THE STONERIDGE DRIVE SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT/STAPLES RANCH ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT SUPPLEMENT (SEIR) AND RELATED CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) DOCUMENTS (CEQA FINDINGS, STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS (SOC) AND MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PLAN (MMRP)), CASE PSP-11 (STONERIDGE DRIVE SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT), AND CASE PRZ-44 (PRE-ZONING/REZONING OF THE STAPLES RANCH SITE), AND THE STAPLES RANCH POLICY STATEMENT

SUMMARY

Attached to this Supplemental Report is the June 15, 2010 agenda report concerning the Staples Ranch project Environmental Impact Report Supplement (SEIR) and other related environmental documents, the revised Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch (SPA), and the rezoning/pre-zoning for the Staples Ranch site. Since the issuance of the June 15, 2010 agenda report, staff has met with Safe Streets Pleasanton, the Alameda Creek Alliance and the Center for Biological Diversity to address their concerns regarding the timing of the extension of Stoneridge Drive from its current terminus to El Charro Road and certain specific environmental matters. These discussions have resulted in the development of a Staples Ranch Policy Statement which is included with this report as Attachment 1. The Policy Statement sets forth certain conditions assuring the opening of Stoneridge Drive to through traffic in a predictable manner. Staff is recommending that the Policy Statement be adopted and the items in the Policy Statement be reflected in the environmental and planning documents discussed in the June 15, 2010 agenda report as well as the development agreement for the Staples Ranch project which the City Council will consider on September 7, 2010. To effectuate these changes, this report revises some of staff's recommendations contained in the June 15 report. This report also includes attachments that highlight the changes to the environmental and planning documents to satisfy the Policy Statement. Except as provided in this report, all information included in the June 15, 2010 report remains unchanged.

As a separate matter, the Alameda County Surplus Property Authority (ACSPA) is preparing an agreement to be executed by the ACSPA, the Alameda Creek Alliance and the Center for Biological Diversity that represents their understanding regarding environmental issues.

As a result of the Staples Ranch Policy Statement, the City Council will also be considering approval of a Policy Statement by the County of Alameda and the Cities of Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton Regarding Transportation Priorities and Commitments in the Tri-Valley (referred to as the "Regional Agreement") on the same evening that this report is being considered. As a result, certain policy statements in the Regional Agreement are reflected in the Staples Ranch Policy Statement and this report.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the June 15, 2010 agenda report as this supplemental report does not amend Planning Commission recommendations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

(These recommendations replace the Staff Recommendations set forth in the June 15, 2010 Agenda Report.)

1. Approve the Staples Ranch Policy Statement with Safe Streets Pleasanton, Alameda Creek Alliance, the Center for Biological Diversity, the Alameda County Surplus Property Authority (ACSPA) and the City of Pleasanton and authorize its execution by the City Manager (Attachment 1).
2. Find that the SEIR is complete and adequate under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and adopt the attached resolutions:
 - a. Certifying the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch EIR Supplement (SEIR) as presented in the June 15, 2010 agenda report. (Attachment 2).
 - b. Rescinding the CEQA Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan related to the Staples Ranch project approved by the City Council on February 24, 2009, and adopting revised CEQA Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan for the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch. (Attachment 3). [To implement the Staples Ranch Policy Statement, Exhibit 1 of Attachment 3 to this agenda report highlights recommended revisions to the CEQA Findings that were included with the June 15, 2010 agenda report; the Statement of Overriding Considerations and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan have not changed.]
 - c. Rescinding the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch (Specific Plan) adopted by the City Council on February 24, 2009, and approving and adopting a revised Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/ Staples Ranch. (Attachment 4). [To implement the Staples Ranch Policy Statement, Exhibit 1 of Attachment 4 to this agenda report highlights recommended revisions

to the Specific Plan that was included with the June 15, 2010 agenda report and additional related recommended revisions.

3. Introduce the ordinance rescinding the pre-zoning/rezoning of the Staples Ranch site (PRZ-44) adopted by the City Council on March 3, 2009 and approving the pre-zoning/rezoning as presented in the June 15, 2010 agenda report. (Attachment 5).
4. As a non-CEQA-based action, direct staff to amend the Capital Improvement Program to include funding for the placement of noise attenuating pavement from Stoneridge Drive between Santa Rita Road and Kamp Drive within a timeline that assures that the pavement is in place prior to the opening of Stoneridge Drive to through traffic to/from El Charro Road.
5. As a non-CEQA-based action, direct staff to amend the Capital Improvement Program to include funding for the installation of a sound wall at the location identified in Exhibit B to Attachment 1 which is generally identified as being along 65 feet of the west end of Snowdrop Circle on the south side of Stoneridge Drive. In addition, direct staff to meet with the property owners whose homes front Snowdrop Circle to determine if there is support for extending the recommended sound wall to Trevor Parkway. Staff will report back regarding the outcome of these discussions.
6. Prior to the start of construction of the Stoneridge Drive bridges, direct staff to hold a public workshop in the Stoneridge Drive neighborhood detailing the mitigations and conditions required for the opening of Stoneridge Drive to through traffic to and from El Charro Road and also providing residents with a potential timeline when milestones are likely to occur.
7. To implement the Staples Ranch Policy Statement, direct staff to work with the ACSPA, CLC and Hendrick Automotive to develop an acceptable location of a temporary gate or barrier that will inhibit through traffic on Stoneridge Drive to/from El Charro Road. Once agreement has been reached as to a suitable design and location of the gate/barrier, staff will forward it to the City Council for consideration.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The City's financial impact relates to non-CEQA based items, namely its cost to place noise attenuating pavement on Stoneridge Drive between Santa Rita Road and Kamp Drive (estimated at \$400,000), constructing an approximately 65-foot soundwall at the west end of Snowdrop Circle (estimated at \$30,000), and the potential for extending the soundwall to Trevor Parkway (an additional \$200,000). Staff anticipates the cost for all these improvements will be paid from Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan fees collected previously, Traffic Development Fees generated as part of the Staples Ranch project and/or roadway improvement funds.

BACKGROUND

During the course of many public meetings related to the Staples Ranch development, residents have expressed varying view points concerning the extension of Stoneridge Drive to El Charro Road. Some members of the community support the extension as a means of improving local and sub-regional traffic while others have concerns regarding its potential quality of life impacts for those residents living in proximity of Stoneridge Drive. As a result of this community debate, whether to extend Stoneridge Drive to El Charro Road has been one of the most difficult elements of the proposed Staples Ranch development. In addition, two environmental groups, the Alameda Creek Alliance and the Center for Biological Diversity, have expressed concerns with the biological analysis conducted, primarily about the project's impacts on the San Joaquin Spearscale and on the riparian habitat in the Arroyo Mocho adjacent to the construction of two new bridges as part of the Stoneridge Drive extension.

In an effort to address these concerns more fully, in June 2009, the City Council authorized staff to conduct a supplement to the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch Environmental Impact Report that was approved by the City Council on February 24, 2009. This EIR Supplement (SEIR) has undergone public review and the Planning Commission in May 2010 recommended City Council certify the SEIR. Nevertheless, some residents have continued to express general concerns regarding the extension of Stoneridge Drive to El Charro Road. In addition, the two environmental groups have continued to raise questions regarding certain specific aspects of the SEIR's biological analysis.

In an effort to address the residents' and the two environmental groups' concerns, Continuing Life Communities (the developer of the proposed continuing care community) met with neighborhood representatives and the environmental groups and scheduled a subsequent meeting with City staff and the ACSPA in an attempt to resolve differences.

As part of the meetings with the groups, staff and the ACSPA, all parties agreed to the following objectives to help assure a successful resolution:

- Be open to compromise realizing that the goal is to generate benefits to the city as a whole.
- Acknowledge all interests, including environmental, and assure that they are heard.
- Establish timelines and/or milestones related to the opening of Stoneridge Drive to through traffic.
- Avoid further litigation
- Recognize regional interests related to traffic issues included in the Regional Agreement.

The outgrowth of this effort is a Staples Ranch Policy Statement (Attachment 1) that City staff is recommending be approved.

DISCUSSION

Stoneridge Drive

The ability to compromise on the extension of Stoneridge Drive is a significant accomplishment towards reaching a final decision on the Staples Ranch development. As indicated previously, while there has been little debate regarding the CLC, Hendrick and Neighborhood Park PUD's, and the Specific Plan in general, issues related to Stoneridge Drive have persisted. As a result, gaining support and reaching compromise between all parties including, Safe Streets Pleasanton, the environmental groups and the ACSPA, enables the City Council to more fully focus on the overall merits of the development as a whole. The Staples Ranch Policy Statement reflects support for the opening of Stoneridge Drive to through traffic conditioned on it being carried out in a predictable manner that includes, most likely, three phases: a partial opening with no through traffic; through traffic with the portion of the road on the bridges over the Arroyo Mocho constrained to two lanes; and opening of the full roadway with four travel lanes. Further, unlike previous recent alternatives that tied the road's opening only to events outside the control of the City, namely the completion of certain regional improvements by other jurisdictions, the Staples Ranch Policy Statement reflects both the regional events and City Council control over its roadways. Finally, the Staples Ranch Policy Statement includes provisions for informing the public of the timing of the extension and the timing of certain improvements (e.g., the placement of noise attenuating pavement on Stoneridge Drive) that will further minimize impacts from the extension. A summary of these conditions is detailed below.

Phase I –Full roadway construction with partial opening and no through traffic to El Charro Road - This phase includes the full construction of Stoneridge Drive, including two bridges over the Arroyo Mocho, and four lanes, with turn lanes, at the intersection of El Charro Road. It also includes the use of a gate(s) or barrier(s) that will be installed at a yet to be determined location(s) east of the entry way to the CLC continuing care community and the Staples Ranch Community Park to allow full ingress and egress to these sites on Stoneridge Drive from the west. Staff anticipates presenting the City Council with a barrier design and location at a future date.

The Staples Ranch Policy Statement also allows the ingress and egress to and from the Auto Mall site via Stoneridge Drive from the west and El Charro/Stoneridge Drive from the east provided the design inhibits through traffic from using the Auto Mall entry road to bypass the gates and/or barriers. Access to the Community Park from the east will be addressed when the Council considers the PUD for the Community Park. Assuming the City of Livermore has not opened Jack London Boulevard as a two lane roadway between El Charro Road and Isabel Parkway (with four lanes at the intersection of El Charro Road and Isabel Parkway), the gates/barriers will remain in place until Jack London Boulevard is so opened. During Phase I barriers will include gates with automatic opening devices to allow public safety employees, Zone 7, Wheels and other public agencies to have access to and from El Charro Road in order to meet the public interest as deemed appropriate by the City Council.

Related to Phase I, the City will, prior to the start of bridge construction, hold a public workshop in the Stoneridge Drive neighborhood detailing the mitigation and conditions required for the opening of Stoneridge Drive to through traffic. The workshop will also provide timelines for when the individual phases or milestones are expected to occur.

As detailed in the SEIR, the ACSPA will contribute \$1.5 million for off site traffic improvements which includes its share of the repaving between Kamp Drive and Trevor Parkway. The placement of noise attenuating pavement will be included on the new portions of Stoneridge Drive as a condition of the project. The City will repave Stoneridge Drive between Kamp Drive and Trevor Parkway in phase I with funding from the ACSPA.

It should be noted that as explained below, because the opening to through traffic on Stoneridge is tied to the extension of Jack London Boulevard in Livermore, it is possible, but not likely, that Jack London would be extended to El Charro before the Stoneridge Drive improvements are completed; in that case, Stoneridge Drive would not be closed to through traffic.

Phase II – Removal of gates and/or barriers to allow two lanes of through traffic to El Charro Road. This phase will begin when the City of Livermore has opened Jack London Boulevard as a two lane roadway between El Charro Road and Isabel Parkway. In this phase, the bridges over the Arroyo Mocho will be striped to allow only one lane of traffic in each direction with the remainder of the road striped to allow two lanes of travel in each direction. This constraint will address the concern of residents about the use of the roadway for cut through traffic. During Phase II, all Staples Ranch developments will have vehicular access from both the east and the west. In addition, the freeway entrance at El Charro Road will be metered, further inhibiting the desirability of the road for cut through traffic.

Prior to the implementation of this phase the City will place noise attenuating pavement on Stoneridge Drive from Santa Rita Road to Kamp Drive and install a sound wall on Snowdrop Circle as depicted in Exhibit B to the Staples Ranch Policy Statement.

Phase III - City Council discretion to evaluate the opening of Stoneridge Drive to four lanes of through traffic two years after the start of Phase II. This phase has been developed to accomplish two concerns. First, that there is a predictable time during which the neighborhood can become acclimated to the roadway extension prior to its full opening. Second, this timing allows the City adequate opportunity to gather traffic data to determine the implications of opening the roadway to its full capacity prior to making a decision to do so. Unlike Phase II, which requires the opening of the road once an event has occurred, the Council is not obligated to open the roadway to four lanes after two years. Rather this phase allows the City some discretion based on traffic data, neighborhood interests and/or other legitimate factors. However, in accordance with the Regional Agreement, the City would be obligated to open Stoneridge Drive to four lanes once the City of Livermore has opened Jack London Boulevard to four lanes.

To assure the implementation of the Policy Statement, it is necessary to revise the following two planning documents as they are presented in the June 15 agenda report.

- To reflect the adoption of the phasing plan, the CEQA Findings have been revised and are set forth in Attachment 6 to this report. Generally, the amendments reflect that the “preferred project” will have gates/barriers on Stoneridge Drive until Jack London Boulevard is opened as a two lane roadway between Isabel Parkway and El Charro Road.
- The Specific Plan has also been revised reflecting the proposed phasing. The proposed amendments are included as Attachment 7 to this report.

In addition to the above, the development agreement for the Staples Ranch project will include language reflecting the Policy Statement. The City Council is scheduled to consider the development agreement on September 7, 2010.

Environmental

Appropriate mitigation for the loss of habitat for the San Joaquin Spearscale and the impacts that the construction of the Stoneridge Drive bridges will have on the Arroyo Mocho habitats have been debated since the early phases of the project. While the SEIR provides for further mitigations related to these matters, debate has continued. To address this matter, the ACSPA and the two environmental groups mentioned earlier have reached agreement in principal on appropriate actions to address these concerns. The agreement has two primary elements. First, ACSPA and the two environmental groups have negotiated a dollar amount that will be used for acquiring land with alkaline soil habitat suitable for San Joaquin spearscale and other species. Second, the ACSPA will work with Zone 7 and the environmental groups to provide replacement plantings for riparian habitat that may be impacted during the construction of the Stoneridge Drive bridges. Preferably, these replacement plantings will occur adjacent to and just downstream of the Staples Ranch site. If the adjacent area cannot be used for replacement plantings, then ACSPA and the environmental groups will work with Zone 7 or another agency to find an appropriate replacement site for the area. Because these matters are not required mitigations under CEQA, these actions do not require any revisions to the CEQA Findings or the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Plan. However, consistent with the Staples Ranch Policy Statement, formal agreements between the parties is required prior to the August 24 meeting.

With the approval of the recommendations set forth in this report, all parties with whom the City and ASPCA have been in discussion either support and/or do not oppose the environmental and planning documents under consideration on August 24 as well as the PUD’s for CLC, Hendrick Automotive and the Neighborhood Park and related documents that will be considered on September 7.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Recommendation Number 4 in the June 15, 2010 agenda report concerns City Council consideration related to the Planning Commission's recommendation about the planting of spearscale seeds on the community park site and/or constructing a soundwall at Snowdrop Circle between Guzman and Trevor Parkway on the south side of Stoneridge Drive. Regarding the soundwall, staff's recommendation as included in this report supports generally the Commission's recommendation, although the residents may not want the soundwall to run the entire length between Guzman and Trevor Parkways. Once staff meets with the affected residents, the scope of that recommendation will be returned to City Council for action. Staff is not recommending the planting of the spearscale seeds in view of the agreement between the ACSPA and the two environmental groups and on the advice of the SEIR's botanist who is of the opinion that the soils in this area are not conducive to supporting the plant.

Submitted by:



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Approved by:



Nelson Fialho
City Manager

Attachments:

1. Staples Ranch Policy Statement
2. Resolution certifying the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch EIR Supplement (SEIR) as presented in the June 15, 2020 agenda report
3. Resolution rescinding the CEQA Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan related to the Staples Ranch project approved by the City Council on February 24, 2009, and adopting revised CEQA Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan for the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch
4. Resolution rescinding the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch (Specific Plan) adopted by the City Council on February 24, 2009, and approving and adopting a revised Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch
5. Ordinance rescinding the pre-zoning/rezoning of the Staples Ranch site (PRZ-44) adopted by the City Council on March 3, 2009, and approving the pre-zoning/rezoning as presented in the June 15, 2010 agenda report
6. June 15, 2010 Staples Ranch Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch Environmental Impact Report Supplement City agenda report.