



## PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

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**City Council Chamber**  
200 Old Bernal Avenue, Pleasanton, CA 94566

**APPROVED**

**Wednesday, December 9, 2009**

*(Staff has reviewed the proposed changes against the recorded proceedings and confirms that these Minutes are accurate.)*

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The Planning Commission Regular Meeting of December 9, 2009, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Pearce.

#### **1. ROLL CALL**

Staff Members Present: Brian Dolan, Director of Community Development; Julie Harryman, Assistant City Attorney; Steve Bocian, Assistant City Manager; Robin Giffin, Associate Planner; Mike Tassano, City Traffic Engineer; and Maria L. Hoey, Recording Secretary

Commissioners Present: Chair Jennifer Pearce, Commissioners Phil Blank, Kathy Narum, Arne Olson, and Jerry Pentin

Commissioners Absent: Greg O'Connor

#### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**a. October 14, 2009**

**b. October 28, 2009**

Commissioner Narum noted that "Chair Blank" on the second and fourth paragraphs of page 7 should read "Commissioner Blank" and requested that the change be made.

Commissioner Pentin requested that for clarification purposes, the second full paragraph of page 13 be revised to read as follows: "Referring to 'Actions Taken by the City Council' of the Planning Commission packet, Commission Pentin requested that when an action taken by the Council is different than from that taken by the Planning Commission, staff identify what those differences are."

Commissioner Blank moved to approve the Minutes of October 14, 2009 and October 28, 2009, as amended.

Commissioner Narum seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**AYES:** Commissioners Blank, Narum, Olson, Pearce, and Pentin.

**NOES:** None.

**ABSTAIN:** None.

**RECUSED:** None.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner O'Connor.

The Minutes of the October 14, 2009 was approved as submitted, and the Minutes of October 28, 2009 was approved as amended.

**3. MEETING OPEN FOR ANY MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE TO ADDRESS THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON ANY ITEM WHICH IS NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA**

No comments were received.

**4. REVISIONS AND OMISSIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no revisions and omissions to the Agenda.

**5. CONSENT CALENDAR**

There were no Consent Calendar Items.

**6. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND OTHER MATTERS**

**a. Draft Supplement to the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch Environmental Impact Report (SEIR).**

The Proposed Project evaluated in the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/ Staples Ranch Environmental Impact Report (EIR) assumed modification of the land uses of the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan for the 124-acre Staples Ranch project site from 100 acres of retail and service commercial uses and a 17-acre community park to a 46-acre senior continuing care community, a 37-acre auto mall, an 11-acre retail/commercial center, a 5-acre neighborhood park and a 17-acre community park (Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment). The EIR also assessed the effects of a four-rink ice-skating center in the community park, together with the other Proposed Project land uses, as a project alternative (Ice Center Alternative).

**This Draft Supplement to the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch EIR (SEIR) reevaluates the Proposed Project to determine whether: 1) Updated surveys for the California tiger salamander, the California red legged frog, the western pond turtle, and the San Joaquin spearscale result in different impacts than described in the EIR; 2) Updated analysis of potential impacts to the environment resulting from the production of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are different from those described in the EIR; and 3) The Proposed Project's contribution to cumulative biological resources impacts, cumulative noise impacts and cumulative impacts in conjunction with nearby quarry operations are different from those described in the EIR.**

**The Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment for Staples Ranch, adopted by the Pleasanton City Council on February 24, 2009, included a full four-lane extension of Stoneridge Drive to El Charro Road concurrent with development of the Staples Ranch site. The City Council also adopted the Ice Center Alternative, including the four-rink ice-skating center as part of the Staples Ranch land uses. This SEIR reevaluates this approved project as the "Four-Lane Concurrent Extension Alternative." The second alternative evaluated in this SEIR is the same as the "Four-Lane Concurrent Extension Alternative," with the single exception that it would limit the number of traffic lanes over the Arroyo Mocho to two lanes instead of four lanes, but would re-stripe the bridges to four lanes total at some point in the future. The SEIR identifies this alternative as the "Two-Lane Constrained Extension Alternative."**

**Significant environmental effects anticipated as a result of the project which cannot be mitigated to a less than significant impact include: (1) Aesthetic and Visual Quality Impacts; (2) Air Quality Impacts (Including Greenhouse Gas Emissions); (3) Transportation Impacts; and (4) Noise Impacts.**

Steve Bocian presented the format staff would follow in presenting the staff report. He then started the PowerPoint presentation and gave an overview of the project, its background, recent activity on the project, and a summary of information in the Draft SEIR. He noted that the Planning Commission has recommended approval of all the PUD's to the City Council and that City staff have been working on the design and construction of El Charro Road which is linked to the project with the City of Livermore, as well as a flood control improvement project. He added that City staff has also worked with the Alameda County Surplus Property Authority (ACSPA) consultants and developers regarding the Tentative Map and hope to have all the PUD's, Final EIR and Specific Plan amendment, and lease and development agreements before the Council in the February/March timeframe. He noted that if the SEIR is certified then, annexation is anticipated in the summer of 2010.

Brian Dolan then presented the purpose of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), stating that CEQA requires state and local agencies to identify environmental impacts of their actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts, if feasible; and to disclose to the public a complete project description and any potential environmental impacts, and the reasons why it approved the project in the manner the agency chose if significant environmental effects are involved.

Mr. Dolan then discussed the purpose of the SEIR, which is to incorporate data and analysis, based in part on new information available to the City since the preparation and certification of the EIR; to respond to issues raised in litigation challenging the adequacy of the EIR; to re-evaluate the Four-Lane Concurrent Extension Alternative approved by the City Council, which includes the construction of two two-lane bridges and a four-lane Stoneridge Drive extension through Staples Ranch at the same time as the development of Staples Ranch; and to evaluate a new roadway configuration option, a Two-Lane Constrained Extension Alternative, which differs from the Four-Lane Concurrent Extension Alternative, by reducing the total number of lanes by one in each direction across the proposed Arroyo bridges.

Finally, Mr. Dolan explained the relation of the SEIR to the original EIR, stating that the SEIR is intended for use in conjunction with the EIR and that the SEIR needs to contain only information necessary to make the original EIR adequate.

Robin Giffin next presented the biology highlights of the Draft SEIR, stating that a new mitigation has been added to address potential impacts to the San Joaquin spearscale habitat on the site, consisting of ACSPA purchasing credits or land in Alameda County for a total of 1.77 acres. She noted that additional biological surveys were conducted by WRA Environmental Consultants for tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, and the western pond turtle, for which no species were found.

Ms. Giffin reported that a new noise study was conducted by Charles Salter and Associates for the Two-Lane Constrained Extension and the Four-Lane Concurrent Extension alternatives. She noted that as the noise program of the 2005-2025 Pleasanton General Plan states that ambient noise level increases of more than 4 dBA are considered significant and because areas along Stoneridge Drive will have such noise level increase, a mitigation measure has been added requiring noise-attenuating pavement on Stoneridge Drive from Kamp Drive to El Charro Road prior to the completion of Stoneridge Drive extension to El Charro Road. She added that ACSPA has also agreed to fund \$500,000 to help pay for the repaving of Stoneridge Drive sooner than the City's regular replacement schedule.

Mr. Dolan followed with an overview of the greenhouse gas (GHG) and global climate change analysis. He noted that standards of significance and quantification of items for mitigation of GHG emissions and comparison of findings to a threshold, which were not contained in the Draft EIR, have been added in the Supplemental EIR. He indicated that GHG continues to evolve and that additional guidance was received from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) which will provide a greater level of

specificity and is incorporated in the SEIR to address GHG emissions. He then discussed the District's efficiency standard which calculates a standard of emissions based on a per-service population, noting that GHG emissions would have a significant unavoidable impact on the environment.

Mike Tassano provided a breakdown of the Four-Lane Concurrent Extension and the Two-Lane Constrained Extension alternatives, noting that staff looked at the intersection model for each alternative (the Pleasanton model) and roadway segments including freeways and arterial segments (the Alameda County model).

Commissioner Blank inquired if the original EIR incorporated the "No Stoneridge Drive Extension" and the Emergency Vehicle Access (EVA).

Mr. Tassano confirmed that it did.

Commissioner Pentin inquired what the acceptable level of service (LOS) is.

Mr. Tassano replied that it was LOS E and below.

Mr. Tassano continued that when the Alameda County model was used, the EIR stated there were no impacted intersections; however, at the beginning of the SEIR work, staff reviewed all the data and found an error in one of the projects for the Santa Rita road-link segment, which then identified Santa Rita South of I-580 as having a significant and unavoidable impact. He then briefly discussed the Two- and Four-Lane alternatives and their impacts in terms of the Alameda County and Pleasanton models.

Commissioner Blank inquired why opening four lanes would impact I-580 but not having the lanes would not.

Mr. Tassano explained that when the roadway is opened to the south, traffic is improved at El Charro Road and now moves farther to the east, thus creating an impact on I-580.

Commissioner Blank inquired if a different segment of I-580 was impacted.

Mr. Tassano replied that was correct and this is how the other four work, as well. He continued to describe the Two-Lane Constrained alternative and the Alameda County models of the link segments for the freeway and arterial segments, stating that there are no segments impacted and that the Santa Rita Road south of I-580 impact is also removed. He clarified a discrepancy between the Summary and Alternatives sections regarding whether or not mitigation is required in the Two-Lane alternative for the Santa Rita Road at Stoneridge Drive intersection and indicated that the asterisk in the Summary section should be deleted. He indicated that this would be corrected in the Final EIR.

Commissioner Blank inquired if calculations are impacted by whether or not Dublin and Livermore implement their mitigations.

Mr. Tassano said no. He explained that the problem is identified, and the model assumes the problem is fixed; it does not make it any worse as congestion is far within their cities.

Mr. Bocian then explained the next steps in the process, stating that after all the comments are received, staff will prepare responses, which would be the Final EIR. He added that this will be reviewed by the Planning Commission and would come before the City Council for final certification.

Mr. Dolan stated that with respect to comments from both the public and the Commission that are stated in the form of a question, staff will not be responding to those comments at this meeting but would note them down and respond in the Final EIR.

Commissioner Blank noted that the Commissioners had received an e-mail earlier in the day discussing a variety of potential procedural defects about notification and whether it was published, and about the Notice of Completion. He added that they had also received an additional comment letter this evening regarding the 45-day review period and other process items. He requested that staff address these issues and identify any impacts when the matter comes back to the Commission.

Mr. Dolan stated that most of the comments were received today and that staff will consider them. He added that it may be possible that staff would consider an extension to the review period and would notify the Commission in advance of the Commission's consideration of the Final EIR.

Commissioner Narum inquired what the speed limit would be in the existing Stoneridge Drive residential neighborhood for the Four-Lane and Two-Lane alternatives.

Mr. Tassano replied that speed limits are established based on the speeds people drive. He guessed the speed limit in that area could be 40 miles per hour.

Commissioner Narum inquired what the speed limits would be by the auto mall and retail areas.

Mr. Tassano replied that this area might be slightly lower than the residential section of Stoneridge Drive because drivers tend to slow down when they have a lot to maneuver and there are more interactions.

Commissioner Narum noted that in the Supplemental EIR, there is a significant negative impact at Santa Rita Road and Valley Avenue. She inquired what the reasoning for this is.

Mr. Tassano replied that there is not really a negative impact on this the way the table is set up; it shows a level of service before the signals are tweaked. He noted that the

volumes are essentially the same, and the intersection at Santa Rita Road and Valley Avenue is at capacity. He added that this is the reason why he periodically asks for widenings. He stated that the City actually has about a 200-vehicle reduction on Santa Rita Road going southbound, but when Stoneridge Drive takes those 200 vehicles and puts them on Stoneridge Drive, it takes those vehicles currently using Kolln Drive and Mohr Avenue to bypass the Santa Rita Road and Valley Avenue intersection. He noted that there would then be a zero net change at the intersection, but a 200-vehicle reduction on Kolln Drive.

Commissioner Pentin referred to Backyard Noise by Proposed Bridges on page 10 of the staff report and noted that at the end of the first paragraph, it states that future airport-related noise adds a decibel or two. He inquired why that is part of this EIR and why the City would have be concerned about the additional airport noise in this EIR as being a significant and unavoidable impact.

Mr. Dolan replied that it adds to the cumulative scenario.

Commissioner Blank inquired whether there would not have been residences near the bridges in the other EIR. He stated that he believed the subject was discussed extensively in the other EIR.

Ms. Harryman replied that this addresses the 4 dBA significant increase criteria.

Commissioner Pentin inquired if it was over the 4 dBA with or without the airport.

Ms. Harryman replied that it is both with and without the airport.

Commissioner Pentin referred to the repaving and inquired, even with ACSPA putting in \$500,000 to fund it, what the replacement schedule was and whether it would have to be done with the same type of paving.

Mr. Bocian replied that he was not certain if the replacement has been scheduled to be completed in a specific year and that it would have been done with the same type of paving.

Commissioner Olson inquired if there is a follow-up process to ensure that all mitigations discussed are actually carried out. He referred to the list of best management practices relative to the GHG emissions mitigation and indicated that he appreciates that it is a moving target for the City; however, he noted that some of the mitigations would happen given the design of the project or they could be built in once the project is completed. His indicated that if he were looking at this from a public standpoint, he would get a comfortable feeling knowing that it will happen.

Mr. Dolan replied that there are three ways mitigation becomes mandatory: first, if it is incorporated into the project as part of the proposal; second, if it is a condition of approval which is enforced just like all conditions; and third, if it is included as a

mitigation measure in the environmental document, which become conditions of approval, as well.

### **THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS OPENED.**

Commissioner Blank disclosed that he knows Mr. Morrison but has not seen him for about a year and has not discussed the matter with him.

Matt Morrison referred to a letter he had submitted earlier in the evening and cited the transportation section of the Two-Lane Constrained Alternative which states that the City retained Dowling Associates to analyze the potential traffic impacts of the alternative in the same manner as the proposed project in the EIR. He noted that the two-lane traffic analysis prepared by the City only references the cumulative analysis prepared by Dowling Associates in 2008. He indicated that he wanted to see the reference documents for the Two-Lane Constrained Alternative prepared by Dowling. He added that he also did not see anything in the intersection analysis regarding the two entryways to the medical center and to the road going along the Arroyo and the Ice Center. He stated that according to the maps, these are not full intersections; one will be a right turn only, and it looks like the medical center will have an unguarded left turn going northbound on Stoneridge Drive and the right turn going southbound, without an analysis on how they affect traffic. He indicated that he also wanted to know more about the Pleasanton traffic model, how long it has been in use, how it was developed, and how accurate it has been. He stated that he did not know if it was appropriate to address it in an EIR or not. He also noted a footnote in the Dowling report that states it is simply a model used.

Mr. Morrison stated that he believes there were problems with the posting, and requested an extended comment period if staff does not find a reason to withdraw the Supplemental EIR and reissue it.

Ralph Kanz, Conservation Director for the Alameda Creek Alliance, stated that most of the Commission received his e-mail of today. He pointed out that the City went to BART to indicate that it was not kept in the loop for the BART EIR, and for that reason BART extended its comment period for 30 days and added an additional hearing in Pleasanton. He stated that similarly, the Notice of Completion was not posted on the City's website until last Friday, which came out as a result of his e-mail requesting dates. He indicated that the Notice is normally posted with the EIR, but it was not.

Mr. Kanz stated that reference documents for the EIR were not available until this past Monday and that there are two additional documents referenced in the EIR that the City has indicated it will not provide until after the comment period. He noted that CEQA law provides that they must be available at the same place the EIR is available for review, and they are not. He stated that the 45 days does not begin until those documents are available and ready for review.



With reference to staff's reporting on traffic issues and looking at segments along I-580, Mr. Kanz stated that the BART EIR has the same analyses of different stretches of I-580 and how each of the nine different alignments would impact segments of I-580. He requested that these be incorporated into the Supplemental EIR to make it an adequate document.

Jeff Miller, Director of the Alameda Creek Alliance, stated that he also works for the Center for Biological Diversity and voiced interest in the biological aspects of the project and special status species along the Arroyo. He indicated that he would reserve his biological comments for his written comments and requested an extension be granted for the comment period.

Commissioner Blank disclosed that he also knows Mr. Carroll.

John Carroll noted that he e-mailed his commentary regarding GHG emissions and referred to the chart on page 39 of the SEIR that provides a breakdown of each of the components. He noted that the Ice Center was not listed as one of the component. He indicated that there is a section on page 98 where this information is found, but for comparison purposes in terms of being able to compare them both, he suggested the report include the Ice Center along with the other categories.

Mr. Carroll also commented on the visual character and noted that one of the things the report indicates is that it has significant visual impacts but they are not mitigatable. He stated that his feeling is that the old map originally proposed for the park shows that the Ice Center would be located farther towards what would be Stoneridge Drive and away from the Arroyo Mocho; however, the Ice Center has been relocated to a position where it is much closer. He stated that environmental sensitivity should be better respected, and a larger buffer should be provided. He asked that the Ice Center be shifted closer to the commercial area where it would have less impact than if it were out in the middle of the park.

Mr. Carroll noted that the SEIR claims there is no increased hazards when Stoneridge Drive is extended to El Charro Road and stated that he did not see how this is possible as there are quarry trucks and other impacts related to utilizing El Charro Road versus the private section of that road. He requested an explanation of how there will not be additional hazards, given the additional vehicles going through the area.

Mr. Carroll stated that he is still hoping that the City will provide a regional agreement in writing that states a plan among Livermore, Dublin, and other regional players in terms of the regional traffic situation, when the road is going to open up, and how the traffic report will follow sequence to dovetail and minimize impacts of traffic.

Mr. Carroll requested another mitigation in the form of either setbacks or sound walls along Stoneridge Drive, but not like those found on Santa Rita Road that are significantly lower and lower in quality of building materials. He indicated that he would

like to see improved sound walls or other mitigation to reduce noise along Stoneridge Drive.

Mr. Carroll stated that he is still a proponent of a re-alignment of Stoneridge Drive, which he thinks the BART situation will cause to be done anyway. He requested that instead of having the road go through the community park and neighborhood park, it go around so there is one contiguous park.

Finally, Mr. Carroll requested that an independent traffic study be done to verify the information regarding the Two- and Four-Lane alternatives.

### **THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS CLOSED.**

Commissioner Blank inquired where the extra 1 to 2 dBA from the airport was coming from.

Mr. Dolan replied that staff will be responding to the question in writing.

Commissioner Olson inquired what the timeframe would be on the decision regarding whether or not to extend the review period and if it would be before the current end of the 45-day review period on December 17th.

Mr. Dolan replied that staff will make a determination as soon as possible so members of the public would know should they have additional comments.

Commissioner Narum requested staff to define the units listed under the amount column of the chart on page 77. She indicated that she had trouble figuring them out until she got to the back of the document.

With respect to noise, Commissioner Narum requested that additional mitigations be considered for houses around where the bridge will be located that do not have sound walls, specifically for Vermont Place and Chocolate Street, as referenced on the chart on page 109. She voiced concern about the noise study that the speed limit used by the noise consultant was based on 30 miles per hour, which seemed low to her, and she asked what additional impacts as to noise along the existing section of Stoneridge Drive would be if the speed limit was higher than 30 miles per hour.

Commissioner Narum stated that there is a reference on page 41 to a pedestrian network as a mitigation for reducing GHG emissions. She requested clarification as to whether this includes ensuring there are adequate ways to cross Stoneridge Drive, especially in the newer part between the parks and the Ice Center.

Chair Pearce noted that additional comments can be submitted in writing until at least December 17, 2009.

## **7. MATTERS INITIATED BY COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Commissioner Olson stated that some time ago, there was a house explosion and fire on East Angela Street and inquired what its status is.

Mr. Dolan replied that staff has opened a Code Enforcement case on the matter and is exploring whether or not the City has the authority to mitigate the situation. He indicated that he would inform the Commission of any development.

## **8. MATTERS FOR COMMISSION'S REVIEW/ACTION**

### **a. Future Planning Calendar**

No discussion was held or action taken.

### **b. Actions of the City Council**

No discussion was held or action taken.

### **c. Actions of the Zoning Administrator**

No discussion was held or action taken.

### **d. Election of Planning Commission Chair and Vice-Chair for 2010**

**Chair Pearce moved to nominate Arne Olson as Planning Commission Chair for 2010.**

**Commissioner Blank seconded the motion.**

### **ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**AYES: Commissioners Blank, Narum, Pearce, and Pentin.**

**NOES: None.**

**ABSTAIN: Olson.**

**RECUSED: None.**

**ABSENT: Commissioner O'Connor.**

**Chair Pearce moved to nominate Kathy Narum as Planning Commission Vice Chair for 2010.**

**Commissioner Pentin seconded the motion.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**AYES:** Commissioners Blank, Olson, Pearce, and Pentin.  
**NOES:** None.  
**ABSTAIN:** Narum  
**RECUSED:** None.  
**ABSENT:** Commissioner O'Connor.

Commissioner Narum and fellow Commissioners thanked Chair Pearce for a great year, given contentious items and significant public meetings.

**9. COMMUNICATIONS**

No discussion was held or action taken.

**10. REFERRALS**

No discussion was held or action taken.

**11. MATTERS FOR COMMISSION'S INFORMATION**

- a. Brief report on conferences, seminars, and meetings attended by Commission Members

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Pearce adjourned the Planning Commission meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully,

DONNA DECKER  
Secretary