

**MINUTES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
BUTCHER-SOLANA RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
EIR SCOPING MEETING**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Danny Santana, Planning and Environmental Manager, opened the Butcher-Solana Residential Project Scoping Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 3031 Torrance Boulevard.

2. BUTCHER-SOLANA RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Community Development Department Overview

Planning and Environmental Manager Santana outlined the purpose of the scoping meeting was to provide project information and overview, provide an opportunity for public input, and determine the scope, focus, and content of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) specifically the content related to environmental topics, potential mitigation, and potential alternatives.

The proposed site is on the southwest corner of Via Valmonte and Hawthorne Boulevard at the southern border of the City of Torrance. The surrounding land uses are commercial and residential to the north and east, the Ernie J. Howlett Park and Sunrise Senior Living Center to the south, and residential to the west.

The existing site was used as a diatomaceous earth mine until the late 1950s and is currently vacant with non-native fill soils and various vegetation.

Prior to this request, there were two prior entitlement requests on this site. The first was in 1996 with a 63 Single Family Subdivision that involved the removal of the entire cliff and a long windy road that did not connect to the hilltop. The final EIR was prepared on this request but was withdrawn before City Council made a determination on the project. The most recent request, prior to the current request, was in 2003 for a 21 Lot Subdivision that was withdrawn before the initial study commenced due to the amount of environmental review required to proceed.

The current request involves the following land use entitlements:

- Environmental Assessment (EAS16-00001) that was circulated for public comment
- General Plan Amendment (GPA16-00001) from Low-Density Residential (0-9 dwelling units per acre) to Low-Medium Density Residential (9.1-18 dwelling units per acre)
- Zone Change (ZON16-00001) from existing A-1 Zone (Light Agriculture District) to Planning Development (PD) Zone
- Conditional Use Permit (CUP16-00004) because the project involves more than 100 units and is more than three stories high
- Precise Plan (PRE16-00005) because the site is within the City's Hillside Overlay District
- Division of Lot (DIV16-00003) because the project reconfigures the existing 17 parcels into three separate parcels

The current request is 248 units and at the time the City advertised for Environmental Consultants the project was 300 units. Since that time the applicant was able to address a number

of comments from various City units that have viewed the project and they were able to revise the concept to 248 units. There is currently no density bonus that is being requested by the applicant. The prior concept had 300 units in a single structure over parking and the current concept has three separate residential buildings over a level of parking and a separate five and a half story parking unit immediately south of the buildout site.

The proposed tract map contains Lot 1 which is the prior mine area, Lot 2 as the field management and buffering area, and Lot 3 is the remainder of the site. The applicant has proposed the concept of Lot 3 as an open space area.

The project details contain the three residential buildings situated on proposed Lot 1. Each building is four stories of residential over a level of parking and on the parking structure would be a community recreation area for the complex.

Access to the complex would be provided from Hawthorne Boulevard only. The applicant has identified a right-in and right-out only driveway on Hawthorne Boulevard and the Via Valmonte driveway would be a right-out only that would head eastbound on Via Valmonte to the Hawthorne Boulevard intersection. Only emergency vehicles would be allowed inbound and an elevated orange lift would prevent normal vehicles from entering.

The complex will have 484 parking spaces with 242 spaces in the parking structure and 45 surface parking spaces not contained in the structures. The City of Torrance normally has a ratio of 2 parking spaces per unit and the proposed project has a ratio of 1.75 parking spaces per unit. As part of the PD, the applicant is requesting the Planning Commission and City Council to approve a lower than normal parking space requirement.

The proposed site features include residential amenities such as 5,000 square foot community room/gym, rooftop pool and spa over the parking structure, and 96,385 square feet of landscaping in addition to 18.92 acres of bluff-top area (Lot 3) that would be preserved as undeveloped open space.

Environmental Consultant Placeworks EIR Process Overview

Julian Capata, Environmental Consultant for Placeworks, was contracted by the City to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Butcher-Solana Residential Project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA serves to protect the environment and also demonstrate to the public and decision makers that the environment is being protected by informing the governing decision makers and the public about potential significant impacts to the environment.

Placeworks has released the initial study which starts the public review process for the proposed project and the initial study helped define and refine the issues that will be addressed in the EIR. A Notice of Preparation (NOP) has also been released which is required by CEQA when the lead agency determines an EIR will be prepared. The Notice of Preparation was filed with the California State Clearing House and the Los Angeles County Clerk and was distributed to public agencies including the cities of Lomita, Palos Verdes Estates, and Rolling Hills Estates. The purpose of the NOP is to inform those agencies and the public that an EIR will be prepared and to seek guidance in the scope and content of the EIR.

The initial study analyzed all 18 CEQA resources and identified three different types of impacts – no impact, less than significant impact, and potentially significant impact.

In the initial study, the following resources were found to have no impact:

- Agriculture

- Mineral Resources
- Population & Housing

The remaining resources will be analyzed in the EIR:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology & Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology & Water Quality
- Land Use & Planning
- Noise
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation & Traffic
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities & Service Systems

The public will have several opportunities for participation during the EIR process which is an important requirement for CEQA. The NOP was sent on July 27, 2017 and the comment period for the NOP and initial study ends on August 28, 2017. The NOP and initial study are available in three physical locations: City Clerk's Office, Walteria Library, and Katy Geissert Civic Center Library and also on the Community Development Department's website.

Three future opportunities for public participation will be the Draft EIR that will be circulated for a 45 day review period and public participation is welcome at an information meeting and also in the form of written comment, the Final EIR that will include response to public comments and will be made available prior to project approval, and the Planning Commission and City Council Hearings, all dates are TBD.

Written public comments can be mailed to Danny Santana, Planning and Environmental Manager, City of Torrance, Planning Division, 3031 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance, CA 90503 or via email at DSantana@TorranceCA.gov and must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 28, 2017 and must be in writing.

Public Comments

Ruth Vogel expressed opposition to the proposed zone change within the Torrance General Plan and believes that making an exception for this project could open the door to other planned projects that could have a negative impact on the Hillside Overlay and other Torrance districts. She stated the increase in traffic from the proposed project would be a problem for surrounding streets.

Connie Semos stated the proposed project would have an adverse impact on the harmony of the single family neighborhoods, land values and investment properties, and public welfare. She expressed concern with the history of the property and its prior uses and how that will impact the environment since it has not been studied and the possibility of landslide dangers. She requested additional inclusive studies be done for this project.

Joan Davidson stated the high density project will lower home values, and is a violation of the General Plan. She expressed concern with the environmental impact of the site's contents, NPDES water contamination, flooding concern, hazardous materials with school limits, and earthquake zone. She also requested an air quality study be done for the project.

Sanford Davidson expressed concern with traffic, environmental impacts including toxic material, neighborhood compatibility, the effect on current neighborhood environment, dangers to schools and park, home values, damage to business values, impact on historical landmarks in Palos Verdes Estates, effect on parklands, safety concerns with fire and police, fault line, and noise. He stated the proposed project would damage the quality of life of people in the South Bay and surrounding cities.

Bruce Szeles stated the General Plan should guide the city and be a vision of where the city wants to go. He stated the land owner should build within the legal zoning for the property.

Larry Estrada expressed concerned with traffic in the project area and how it would negatively impact the surrounding neighborhoods.

GJ Hatem inquired when the public could review the changes to the General Plan, Zone Change, CUP, General Use. He stated his environmental concerns are retaining walls and possible health effects from diatomaceous earth and the population & housing impact on surrounding low density areas. He also described the inaccuracy in the traffic analysis for only one hour on one day and the traffic impact should take into account times around schools.

Planning and Environmental Manager Santana addressed Mr. Hatem's concerns noting this meeting was for environmental concerns that will be incorporated in the EIR. The review of requested permits (entitlements) by the developer will be presented only after the environmental review process is complete and will be presented when they are presented to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Hope Witkowsky expressed concern with security, environmental, and safety hazards on the two lanes of Via Valmonte and traffic congestion for First Responders unable to get through traffic. She noted the proposed entrance/exit on Hawthorne Boulevard will add to the congested area.

Peter Verenkoff expressed opposition to the project's amendment of the General Plan land use to allow the introduction of new multi-family residential development and zone changes. He commented these changes will alter his neighborhood's character and are inconsistent with the values and concerns of the Hillside.

Steve Hemingway expressed concern and referenced an older Hawthorne Boulevard plan in the Walteria district and suggested we conform to what previous leaders have established in years past.

Steve Trelease commented on the 7:00 to 8:00 a.m. rush hour traffic survey in the EIR and noted his findings of traffic from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. and also from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. and expressed concern with the outbound traffic from the proposed complex in the morning.

Maureen Trelease expressed opposition against the project because of environmental, quality of life, and safety issues. She is concerned with the increase in traffic for the proposed project and stated the neighborhoods cannot absorb more traffic.

Vic Lore stated the project site was unkept and traffic is terrible and the increase in people would be detrimental to the traffic on Via Valmonte.

James McBernie opposed a change to the General Plan relating to land use and zoning. He stated that Lot 1 is 5.7 acres and the developer is asking for too large of a structure in a restricted area and there are height concerns with the garage structure. He was also concerned with the seismic consequences from the bluff and mineshaft and also the environmental impacts. Mr. McBernie requested an extension for formal submissions on this project.

Jim Illson expressed concern with the quality of life, air, noise, and light pollution from this project, change in property value, and an increase in crime. He also inquired about short term rentals and Airbnb information for the EIR.

Michael Moody expressed concern with increased car pollution and inquired long term health problems associated with this project.

Judy Brunetti, Boardmember of the Riviera Homeowners Association, suggested that high-density multi-units should be placed in an urban area and not in an open area. She stated the General Plan and zoning should not be altered.

Patty Kellner expressed health concerns regarding diatomaceous earth and the increase of traffic on Hawthorne Boulevard and Via Valmonte from the complex. She also expressed concern with the zoning change.

Jane Readeur Noll expressed concern with the increasing number of cars per unit in the proposed complex and how impactful it would be to surrounding streets.

Kristine Kobe stated the proposed project does not meet the standards of the General Planning and Zoning Ordinance and has a huge impact on infrastructure, water, sewer, traffic, schools, and public services. She also noted the new project does not meet the standards and characteristics of the Hillside Overlay District.

Julie Wesley inquired why the traffic analysis was only one hour in the morning and why the intersection at Via Valmonte and Palos Verdes Drive was not analyzed instead of Pacific Coast Highway and Crenshaw.

Charles Ludlaw expressed concern for the environmental effect of the proposed project on smaller children. He also inquired the one hour traffic analysis results.

Amy Josefek, Co-President of the Hollywood Riviera Homeowners Association, suggested this project might set a precedence for allowing multi-family residences in a community that is predominantly single-family homes and the zoning change was not the current character of the district. She also expressed environmental concerns regarding the digging and erecting of multi-family residences. She also noted the project will have a negative impact on the character of the community.

Ann Ferrelli stressed the importance of attending meetings pertaining to your community.

Michael Ning noted the amount of soot and dust on his property on Via Valmonte and discussed the increase of particulates and noise from the proposed property.

William Russell expressed concern regarding the noise from the proposed complex. He stated this project would take a good opportunity away from another business in Torrance and surrounding communities.

Dennis England stated his experience with traffic on Paseo De Las Tortugas and believes the traffic study is inaccurate.

Carrie Trimmer requested a revised traffic analysis and the addition of school population impact in the EIR.

Karen Jansen requested all documents pertaining to the Butcher-Solana project be available online. She expressed concern with the environmental impact of construction, use of the site, and students walking to Walteria school on the Via Valmonte crosswalk.

Joe Scaffidi echoed other resident's opposition to the project. He noted current problems with serious traffic accidents and also the increase in population will increase crime in the area. He requested a revised traffic study and stated his opposition to the General Plan amendment.

Joe Leung inquired the density of the project and suggested a possible solution of using all three lots instead of one for the erection of 248 units.

Cynthia Cohen expressed concern with children crossing Hawthorne Boulevard several times a day to attend school at Walteria.

Joe Cannizaro stated the traffic study is grossly inaccurate and needs to be re-calculated.

Andrew Leung noted the project disturbs the current feeling of peace and serenity. He echoed the increase of crime if the project is approved and the increase in noise from the residents.

Josey Vanderpas encouraged others attend meetings regarding community matters.

Beata Ponder expressed concern with the current volume of traffic on Newton Street and if the project is approved she worries about the substantial increase of traffic in the area.

Richard Palmer also expressed concern with the traffic on Newton, in addition to the lack of sidewalks and how children are exposed to traffic while walking to school. He noted the higher concentration of cars if the project is approved and the increase of traffic is not only residents but delivery people, guests, etc. He suggested an increase in time at traffic signals and car cut-through are not a great idea.

Craig Allsopp criticized the project and noted it was a waste of time and money.

Planning and Environmental Manager Santana responded to Mr. Allsopp's comment and noted this meeting was initial study that identified areas that have significant impacts and more environmental analysis is needed. Also, in lieu of attending the meeting comments would be accepted in writing.

Karen Logan expressed concern with the increase of sound if the project is approved and noted the environmental study is a high impact item.

Anne Watson expressed concern with the project ruining the look of the area.

Joyce Neu noted the project is out of character with the community inquired how it will impact the community.

Alan Virgil expressed concern with the increased traffic for the proposed project and stated the zoning is too aggressive. He stated environmental issues regarding recreational vehicles, diatomaceous earth when the ground is disturbed, and the deterioration of the pit from rainfall.

Joy Gruver requested an air quality study for airborne matter on children with asthma and breathing conditions and elderly people. She stated the project would de-value homes in the area.

Carlos Herrero stated the increase in traffic will hinder First Responders response times.

Sheri Patterson reiterated the need for obtaining a comprehensive and accurate report on traffic, noise, safety, and health impacts of the proposed complex.

David Caceres expressed concern with cars in the queue and the impact on the environment, noise, pollution, and overall numbers.

Valerie Case also expressed concern with traffic and noise and also inquired the effect of diatomaceous earth and silica on people with breathing problems. She requested a revision of the traffic study and noted the quality of life is a concern with the project.

Elaine Brent expressed concern with the particulates from Butcher Hill from grading and excavating of the construction site. She suggested a specialist should assess the particulates from diatomaceous earth and determine any breathing problems.

Dave Brent expressed concern with the scale of the project, noise, and light illumination from the project.

A member of the public expressed concern with the overflow parking situation for visitors of the project and inquired if they will park on Via Valmonte, in the Hillside area, or will there be visitor parking in the complex.

A member of the public requested an extension for the formal submission of comments for the project. She suggested extending the deadline to September 10, 2017, or the end of the month, due to residents being on vacation, the Labor Day holiday, and children returning to school.

Planning and Environmental Manager Santana addressed the member of the public's concerns regarding the extension and said staff would discuss the extension with the City Attorney's Office to see what our ability is to extend the deadline from August 28, 2017 to later date. He stated this request may require staff to seek direction from City Council.

A member of the public inquired why residents of Torrance and surrounding areas were not notified of this project.

A member of the public noted some residents received the meeting notice in the mail a few days to a week ago. He inquired how the mailing notification works and why are there inconsistencies with the process.

Planning and Environmental Manager Santana address the member of the public's concern regarding mailings and informed him that the City of Torrance is required to notify all property owners within 300 feet of the property in the Torrance Municipal Code, however, the Community Development Department notified all property owners within 500 feet for this project. A notice sign was placed at the intersection, a full display ad was placed in the paper, and staff notified all HOA and boards that are registered with the City. Also, any persons who asked questions about the project via email were responded to with information. An email distribution and notification list will be formed with the resident information obtained at tonight's scoping meeting.

A member of the public inquired if the project opposition emails sent to City Councilmember were being routed to appropriate staff.

Planning and Environmental Manager Santana responded that emails sent to Councilmembers, Community Development Director, and City Manager were given to staff. He noted that he and Nina Lang have responded to all emails regarding this project.

A member of the public asked when the next City Council meeting will be held.

Planning and Environmental Manager Santana replied the next meeting will take place on the Tuesday, August 15, 2017.

A member of the public noted you do not need to be a resident of Torrance to attend and speak at the City Council meeting and you have three minutes to speak during Oral Communications.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:24 p.m., the Butcher-Solana Residential Development Project, EIR Scoping Meeting ended. Planning and Environmental Manager Santana expressed staff's appreciation for public participation in the scoping process.