



# THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

County of Los Angeles

## MINUTES

Meeting Place: Antelope Valley Transit Authority  
Headquarters Parking Lot  
42210 6<sup>th</sup> Street West  
Lancaster, California 93534

Meeting Date: March 18, 2015 - Wednesday

Time: 10:00 a.m.

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### Present:

Commissioners Modugno, Valadez, Louie, Pincetl, Pedersen

### Ex Officio Members:

Director of Public Works: Mr. Fabrizio Pachano, Senior Civil Engineer

County Counsel: Ms. Elaine Lemke, Principal Deputy

Planning Director: Mr. Mark Child, Deputy Director, Advance Planning Division

Forester and Fire Warden: Mr. Wally Collins, Fire Prevention Engineer

### **FIELD TRIP: Renewable Energy Ordinance – Project No. R2014-01160-(1-5)**

The Commission met at the Antelope Valley Transit Authority (Parking Lot) and heard an overview presentation by staff. They then boarded a van and were led by staff on a drive to view solar and wind energy facilities in and near unincorporated Los Angeles County to the following points of interest locations:

**1) Arrived at 10:29 a.m. - Antelope Acres sign on the NW corner of West Avenue J and 70<sup>st</sup> Street West – Boundaries of the City of Lancaster and the unincorporated community of Antelope acres.** Note solar project to the south (looking left from van) located within the City of Lancaster. A number of existing and planned solar projects are located in the City of Lancaster and outside LA County's jurisdiction, but may have impacts that affect unincorporated communities located near these borders, such as Antelope acres, Fairmont and Oso; then proceeded to site;

**2) Arrived at 10:31 a.m. - 110<sup>th</sup> Street West/West Avenue J – Canadian Solar [within LA County] – CUP conditions for this utility-scale solar project included: 1) limits on soil disturbance and grading, and 2) preservation of existing vegetation.** These conditions were in part to minimize fugitive dust and biota impacts. Note the natural growth of vegetation under the panels, compliant with CUP conditions; then proceeded to site;

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**3) Arrived 10:33 a.m. - Along roadway from Map 1 Point B to Point C – sPower (formerly Silverado) [within LA County]** – North of Canadian Solar is the currently undeveloped site of the approved utility-scale solar project (to the west, looking left from the van). Note the existing landscape and vegetation on these lands. This property is typical for existing conditions of a site before a solar project is developed; then proceeded to site;

**4) Arrived at 10:38 a.m. - Point C: 110<sup>th</sup> St West/Avenue E-8 – Wind energy conversion system – non-commercial (WECS-N) – [within LA County]** - Note small -scale WECS-N to the east (looking right from van) approved for on-site use. Small-scale WECS-N systems can be of various sizes, and can potentially have negative impacts, such as to avian species. This is one of the larger-sized WECS-N, which is not typical in LA County. An example of a more typically-sized WECS-N will be viewed later. Note also the boundaries of the unincorporated LA County where the proposed Renewable Energy Ordinance (REO) will be applicable; then proceeded to site;

**5) Arrived at 10:42 a.m. - Point D: Heading west on West Avenue D (CA-138) – Utility-scale wind energy facility [within Kern County]** – Note the location of the wind turbines in Kern County near LA County. Complaints from the communities have been received regarding the blinking red lights on top of the wind turbines (required by the Federal Aviation Administration). This is to show the potential visual impacts of utility-scale wind energy facilities; then proceeded to site;

**6) Arrived at 10:44 a.m. - Fairmont sign on NW corner of 140<sup>th</sup> Street West and Avenue D [within LA County]** – Unincorporated community of Fairmont [within LA County]; then proceeded to site;

**7) Arrived at 10:48 a.m. - Point E: Arrive at West Avenue D and 170<sup>th</sup> Street West – AVSR1 [within LA County]** - On the west (looking left from van) is the first utility-scale solar project approved in LA County. The CUP conditions allowed disking and rolling of solar array areas which included scraping of top 6" for site preparation. Note lack of vegetation growth under the panels. This is to show the negative effects of allowing disking and rolling, and the subsequent issues created regarding fugitive dust control. Note the size of trees (5 gal) that have been placed for landscaping along the perimeter of the project site. This was in part to mitigate fugitive dust and glare; however the size of the trees was insufficient to do so; then proceeded to site;

**8) Arrived at 10:50 a.m. - Turn right onto 170<sup>th</sup> Street West – Turn right on West Avenue A – Joshua Tree Woodlands Habitat areas [within LA County]** – Note clusters of Joshua Trees on both sides; this area is approved as a Significant Ecological Area (SEA). This is an example of an SEA where utility-scale solar and wind projects would be prohibited; then proceeded to site;

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**9) Arrived at 10:56 a.m. - Point F: Arrive at West Avenue A and 155<sup>th</sup> Street West – Sun Power [within LA County and Kern County]** Utility-scale solar project is within LA County to the south (looking right from van) and Kern County to the north (looking left from van). Note vegetation growth under solar panels. Project applicant undertook voluntary reseeding of the site to minimize ground disturbance and fugitive dust by barren soil. Note screening by perimeter fencing in areas near existing residences. This shows how screening along perimeter fencing helps soften negative visual effects and mitigate fugitive dust and glare; then proceeded to site;

**10) Arrived at 10:58 a. m. - Continue on West Avenue A heading east – make a u-turn at 140<sup>th</sup> Street West – Small-scale WECS-N [within Kern County]** – Note small scale WECS-N, which is more typical of WECS-Ns approved in LA County. This shows an example of a WECS-N smaller in scale than that at Map 1 Point C; then proceeded to site;

**11) Arrived at 11:05 a.m. - Along roadway from Map 1 Point F to Point G: - Unincorporated community of Fairmont [within LA County]** – This is the border between the unincorporated community of Fairmont, and Kern County where many solar and wind projects are proposed; Second stop for AVSR1; then proceeded to site;

**12) Arrived at 11:12 a.m. - Map 1 Point G: Arrive at 15101 Lancaster Road, Lancaster, CA 93536 – Antelope Valley California Poppy Preserve [within LA County]** – Was greeted by staff with handouts. Note proximity of utility-scale solar projects to the California Poppy Preserve, a Scenic Resource in the updated AV Area Plan. This is a key landmark and point of reference for rural character in the AV; then proceeded to site;

**13) Arrived at 11:24 a.m. - Continue on roadway heading east on Lancaster Road – Canadian Solar – Viewed from a distance [within LA County]** – Note distant view of Canadian Solar (Map 1 Point B) to the south (looking right from van). This shows the breadth of the same project from a distance; then proceeded to site;

**14) Arrived at 11:41 a.m. - Map Point H: Arrive at Sierra Highway/Avenue G – Sierra Sun Tower [within City of Lancaster]** – To the east (looking left from van), note “concentrated solar thermal collector” technology, which is different than solar panels because concentrated solar thermal collector technology creates a concentrated beam, which is harmful to avian species flying through it. This type of technology is prohibited by the REO; then proceeded to final destination;

**15) Arrived at 11:55 a.m. - Map 1 Finish Point** - proceeded back to Antelope Valley Transit Authority and continued with the Regional Planning Commission meeting scheduled for 1:00 p.m. The Commission adjourned the field trip at 11:55 a.m.

  
Rosie O. Ruiz, Commission Secretary