

MEETING NOTES

QUEST RANCH SCOPING MEETINGS:

January 14 and February 24, 2010

The following comments were received from participants at scoping meetings held for the proposed Quest Ranch Assisted Living Facility on January 14, 2010 (Holiday Inn, Woodland Hills) and February 24, 2010 (Topanga Community Center) in response to the question as to what should be addressed in the EIR being prepared for the Quest Ranch project in addition to the issues set forth in the Notice of Preparation for the project.

Project Description/General Comments

- The relationship between the grading threshold for a CUP (5,000 cubic yards) and the proposed amount of grading for the project (277,000 cubic yards) should be clearly explained.
- What will the likely actual number of onsite residents be? How many employees will there be onsite?
- Will the applicant be able to double the capacity of the site by putting two residents in each room? Clarify “beds” vs. “rooms.”
- Will residents have kitchens? How many common kitchens will there be?
- Will residents have cars? How many will drive?
- What happens if project fails or loses funding, and is abandoned during construction? Following construction? What other uses could be permitted if project fails after construction?
- Is there liability to taxpayers if the County approves the project?
- Will the development be LEED certified?
- EIR should identify what is meant by such terms as “adjacent” or “surrounding” areas.
- How long will construction take?
- Who was notified? How were mailing lists determined?
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy should be notified of EIR availability and public hearings.
- Who will be operator of the facility be? What is their track record with facilities such as is proposed here.
- Who owns the site?
- How will the NOP and studies undertaken for the previously proposed residential development on the site be used for the proposed assisted living facility?
- Project hearing should be held in the same area as the proposed project.
- Describe the facility. Is it “pay as you go” or do residents “buy in?”
- Will there be a heliport?
- Will there be a medical facility on-site?

Geotechnical Hazards

- EIR should identify existing landslide areas and faults in relation to the project site.
- How will the adequacy of soils reports be determined?
- Be specific about the scope of the soils report. Identify borings.
- Is the permit needed for grading of 277,000 cy similar to the one needed to grade 5,000 cy?
- EIR should address the potential for earthquake-induced rockfalls.
- Site grading should be contained within the project site. EIR should clearly identify if any offsite grading is needed.
- The discussion of grading should clearly identify how the 277,000 cubic yards of grading was calculated, and make clear where earth materials will be moved from and to (identify areas of cut and fill).
- Will a ridgeline be impacted? Does the project comply with the Santa Monica Mountains North ridgeline ordinance?
- Will there be any offsite disturbance for infrastructure or other improvements? Who will be responsible for impacts to off-site properties?
- Will there be a potential for liquefaction?
- Will any blasting or rock crushing be needed as part of site grading?
- How will stability of on-site manufactured slopes be ensured so as not to impact adjacent properties?
- How will drainage and the potential for erosion be managed during site grading?
- Who will be responsible for impacts to adjacent properties during and after project construction?
- Will site grading and the potential for erosion undermine SR 27?
- Potential for sink holes.
- Potential for mudslides.
- How will large rocks on-site be handled? Will they be crushed on-site or dynamited?
- Identify areas of grading (on and off site) for new utility lines.
- Identify proximity of grading to offsite residences.

| Hydrology/Flood Hazards

- EIR should address how erosion control will be handled and how effective erosion control measures are likely to be.
- Specific facilities to control drainage should be identified.
- Clear description of what/where the on-site drainages are should be provided.
- EIR should contain a clear discussion of where offsite runoff will be directed.
- A clear comparison should be made between the amount of runoff from the site in its current (natural) condition, and what will occur following the proposed development. Identify amount and direction.
- Potential for reuse of runoff water (gray water)? Capture water and reuse on site. Capture in cisterns, catch basins, etc.
- Will any springs be affected by site development?

- Identify potential for flooding if the two water tanks to the south break during an earthquake.
- Will mud and runoff flow onto SR-27?
- Identify runoff from impermeable and permeable surfaces. Can permeable surfaces be used to control/reduce runoff?
- Will water flow into storm drains or ground?

Fire Hazards

- Potential impacts on evacuation planning should be identified. In the event of a fire, earthquake, other event or multiple events, can project residents be safely evacuated without impacting the need for existing residents to evacuate the area and the need for emergency response equipment to move freely.
- EIR should address the special needs of assisted living residents in the event of a need to evacuate the site (e.g., limited mobility of residents and families wanting to come into the area to take seniors out).
- Can the existing roadway system handle traffic in the even of an emergency?
- EIR should address the safety of project access in the event of an emergency.
- Long-term impacts of the need for fire suppression on the area's biology and long-term fire hazard levels should be addressed.
- How will proposed site development affect progress or intensity of fires in the future?
- Will brush build up due to increased regulations resulting from residential population?
- Is an additional access to Calabasas needed?
- Will proposed access to Topanga Canyon Blvd. be adequate in an emergency?
- Potential for a fire to start at the project site?
- Potential for increasing fire severity due to oxygen and other flammables being store onsite.
- Impacts on fire department's ability to respond to a fire given current limitations. By placing a dependent population onsite, will fire department priorities change to give greater protection for the assisted living population to the detriment of existing residents?
- Where are nearest fire station(s) serving the site? Are projected response times adequate?
- Evacuation plan for onsite residents and employees? Is evacuation of residents feasible even if required in an emergency?
- Adequacy of fire flow (pressure and duration).
- Fire hazards during construction.
- Prepare simulation of fire. How will project affect fire movement? If fire moves southerly and uphill, how will area to the south be affected? If fire starts at facility, in what direction will it move?
- Study access on Topanga during an emergency.
- Is evacuation to the north or south?
- Will project's use of water affect fire flow/water pressure availability in Topanga?
- What will be the impact of the project to water storage in tanks south of site?

Noise

- Noise studies should include impacts of emergency vehicles (e.g., ambulance, fire trucks) accessing the site.
- Noise studies should include impacts of project-related traffic and use on indoor noise levels at the school.
- It is important that LVUSD receive and review the EIR.
- Noise studies should include impacts on wildlife.
- Construction hours should be clearly identified.
- Noise studies should include impacts of outdoor activities, site delivery trucks, garbage trucks, landscape maintenance, etc. (all sources of noise).
- Site plan should be reviewed to move noise-generating activities (e.g., trash collection areas) away from adjacent residents.
- Impacts of site construction on the school should be addressed.
- Potential noise impacts from air rescue activities.
- How will the site's canyon setting affect noise levels?
- Does site meet applicable noise standards (impacts of SR 27 on proposed use) for development of a noise-sensitive use?
- What are the relevant provisions of County noise ordinance? Will the project comply?
- Will emergency generators be used?
- Identify hours that deliveries to the site can/will occur.

Water Quality

- Potential cumulative impacts on water quality in the Los Angeles River should be addressed.
- What provisions will the project make to address water quality concerns?
- Potential for contamination of runoff during construction due to materials being stored onsite (e.g. paint, solvents).
- Potential for use of pervious paving materials should be explored.
- Impacts of pesticide/herbicide/rodenticide use on water quality.
- Identify where runoff goes (LA River, then to Santa Monica Bay).
- How will use and storage of construction materials affect water quality?
- Identify drainages that would be affected.

Air Quality

- Stationary source emissions need to be addressed (e.g., onsite kitchen and laundry facilities, electrical/emergency generators, etc.).
- EIR should address the sensitivity of onsite residents to air pollutants.
- Impacts of removing onsite trees.
- Impacts related to climate change.
- Potential for heat gain.
- EIR should address all impacts of construction (e.g., painting of buildings, dust, off-gassing of construction materials).

- GHG emissions should be addressed.
- Study pollutants associated with increased vehicle trips.
- Will parking garages be ventilated? Will mechanical ventilation be used?
- How will dust be mitigated during grading and construction?
- Identify locations of on-and off-site sensitive receptors.
- Allergens from herbicides/pesticides, introduced landscaping.
- Exhaust from haul trucks and construction equipment.

Hazards

- Are soils clean?
- Did past agricultural usage impact site?
- Will there be EMF exposure?

Biological Resources

- EIR should identify specific plants and animal species found onsite and those likely to occur there.
- EIR should address potential impacts of displacing coyotes and other animals as the result of onsite development.
- Potential impacts of fuel modification activities need to be addressed in addition to direct project impacts.
- EIR alternatives should identify ways to reduce removal of natural vegetation.
- Numbers and locations of black walnut trees and potential for their removal should be identified.
- The potential effects of encroachment into the protected zones of trees needs to be evaluated. How will encroachment into the protected zones of trees affect/damage them?
- Identify sizes and age of trees to remain, be removed, or be encroached upon.
- Replacement ratios for trees being removed should be commensurate with the size and age of the trees being removed.
- Is there a potential to move trees rather than impacting them?
- Impacts of losing a “sobrante” (remaining) habitat should be discussed.
- EIR should address potential impacts of introduced landscaping and irrigation on the area’s natural habitat.
- Project landscaping should use “native” species.
- A clear description as to the amount of natural vegetation that will be disturbed should be provided in the EIR. Areas identified as being in open space should be evaluated as to they are being preserved in their natural condition, or was the natural landscape modified?
- How will enforcement of mitigation measures occur?
- Impacts of changing drainage patterns on offsite habitat.
- Impacts of pesticide/herbicide/rodenticide use on biological resources.
- EIR should quantify numbers of animals and plants onsite.
- Will wildlife be physically removed from site, or be forced to move offsite?
- Impacts of filling drainages on wildlife? (Include water supply for wildlife.)

- Quality of onsite oak habitat should be described using LA County oak woodland management plan (draft) quality ratings.
- Impacts on raptors/nesting birds, coast horned lizards should be addressed.
- If grading of site is not balanced, would there be fewer impacts?
- Will riparian area created as mitigation for construction of school be impacted?
- Impact of construction and operational noise.
- Consult w/ California Native Plant Society and LA Fire Department regarding landscaping plants.
- Potential for impacting wildlife corridors. Will there be fences that would affect wildlife movement?
- Will loss of open space affect balance of animal populations on site and in the area?
- Impact of light pollution on nocturnal wildlife.

Cultural Resources

- Conduct records search.

Visual Resources

- EIR should provide line of site analyses from various locations (empirical studies are needed).
- Effects on the Mulholland scenic corridor in Calabasas and Topanga Canyon scenic corridor should be evaluated.
- Potential changes to the area's existing "rural character" that will result from the proposed project should be addressed in the EIR.
- To what extent will introduced landscaping screen onsite buildings?
- Will existing landscape "screen" be lost due to project?
- Consistency with the Santa Mountains North ridgeline ordinance should be addressed.
- Consistency with the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan and Community Standards District should be addressed.
- Impacts on dark night sky
- Potential for construction of new above ground power lines, poles.
- If lights are needed for traffic safety, identify impacts to dark night sky.
- Will there be fences? What will their visual impacts be?

Traffic

- EIR should address impacts during project construction, as well as during operation of the site after construction.
- Access and traffic safety need to be addressed. The EIR should disclose the area's accident history. Adequacy of roadways and their ability to support project traffic should account for area roadways' twisting nature, limited site distances, and lack of night lighting.
- Safety of project access points needs to be addressed. What type(s) of traffic controls will be needed to support project development? What will be provided by the project?

- Project-related traffic should account for onsite workers, visitors to the site, visiting service and emergency workers, and all other sources of onsite traffic generation. Project staffing levels should be identified.
- Identify the number of trips that would be generated by the project.
- Peak hour traffic needs to be addressed. Can people get in and out of the site during peak hours? What will be the impact of drivers seeking to make left turns into the site at peak hours?
- Identify peak hour traffic patterns (directions cars come and go)
- Night time traffic safety should be addressed (lack of night lighting). Impacts of addressing nighttime safety with adding lighting needs to be addressed (dark night sky).
- What growth inducing effects will the project have on area traffic?
- EIR needs to address implications of SR27 as a state route since the County does not control the roadway.
- Transportation of residents should be addressed.
- What impacts will a lack of public transportation have on workers getting to the site?
- Are site distances at project access points adequate? Potential safety impacts of cars slowing or stopping to turn into site.
- Will there be full or partial road closures during construction of site and installation of new utilities lines? Impacts of such closures should be addressed.
- Impact on northbound left at Mulholland. Existing intersection is confusing and dangerous.
- Are any traffic signals proposed?
- If a traffic signal is proposed, how would a signal affect traffic flow and safety?
- Be specific as to what is meant by “traffic control” (signal, stop sign, striping)
- EIR should be clear as to all proposed physical modifications to existing roadways.
- Will Topanga Canyon Boulevard. be widened or reconfigured? Assess impacts of this in all topic areas.
- Impacts of stacking of vehicles waiting to enter the site. Potential northbound impacts.
- Look at traffic circulation during a fire or other emergency during construction and operation. Emergency vehicles must have access.
- Note impacts to commuters from additional traffic.
- Evaluate parking availability for staff and visitors at time of employee shift change.
- Assess impacts of project traffic on Topanga Canyon Blvd. between site and Pacific Coast Highway.

Fire and Sheriff Services

- EIR should address impacts on paramedic services.
- Consider potential for cuts to fire department funding/staff and impact of project on fire department.
- Identify existing response times.
- Identify fire station that would serve project.
- Will serving project mean fewer trucks/personnel are available to serve existing uses?

Sewage Facilities

- Potential effects of onsite biohazards should be addressed.
- EIR should note that there have been existing failures in the area's sewage system.
- Who will pay for utility extensions and facility expansions?
- Identify locations of existing and proposed lines.
- Evaluate impacts of installing new lines (construction, traffic, dust, etc.)
- Does LVMWD have adequate capacity under existing and with-project conditions?
- Why is LVMWD the service provider and not LA County?

Water Supply

- What is proposed in relation to use of reclaimed wastewater?
- Methods to reduce water consumption (irrigation and laundry) should be addressed.
- Who will pay for utility extensions and facility expansions?
- Is there adequate water storage available? Impacts on existing 2 million gallon storage tank.
- Daily water demand for proposed project should be clearly documented and include all uses on site.
- How much water will be required for dust suppression during grading?
- Identify locations of existing and proposed water lines.
- Evaluate impacts of installing new lines (construction, traffic, dust, etc.)
- Capture water and reuse on site. Capture in cisterns, catch basins, etc.
- Is there enough water to put out a fire in the community and at the project site?

Solid Waste

- How will biohazards be managed? Where will they be disposed?

Land Use

- Effects of large multi-story buildings on the area's "rural character" should be addressed.
- EIR should recognize that the uses proposed onsite are different than existing uses surrounding the site in terms of size, density, and character.
- Impacts of onsite night lighting on the area's dark night sky should be addressed.
- EIR should clearly identify what the proposed lot line adjustment is and why it is needed.
- Consistency with the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan and Community Standards District should be addressed.
- Will grading require off-site easements?
- Identify other multi-story buildings and complexes in Topanga Canyon.
- Note history of the site as horse ranch.
- What is the "North Area Plan?"
- What uses are allowed by current zoning?

Growth Inducing Impacts

- Will permitting multi-story buildings, a multi-building complex, and business uses within the area encourage additional similar uses?

Alternatives

- An alternative should be explored to move buildings or eliminate one or more buildings so as to preserve the westernmost drainage course in a natural condition.
- Include an alternative that reduces the number of impacted oak trees.