



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



Richard J. Bruckner
Director

March 28, 2011

TO: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor
Fifth Supervisorial District

Attention: Norm Hickling
Edel Vizcarra

FROM: Richard J. Bruckner
Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "RJB", written over the printed name of the sender.

**SUBJECT: CORRESPONDENCE FROM DAVE GANTENBEIN CONCERNING
LEONA VALLEY CSD REVISION AND VALLEY VINEYARDS PROJECT**

My staff has reviewed the concerns of Dr. Dave Gantenbein and has responded directly to him with our findings. Attached is a copy of our response. I trust this meets with your approval.

RJB:lg

Attachment



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Department of Regional Planning

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Richard J. Bruckner
Director

March 28, 2011

Dave Gantenbein
P.O. Box 715
Leona Valley, CA 93551

Dear Dr. Gantenbein:

RE: LEONA VALLEY CSD REVISION AND VALLEY VINEYARDS PROJECT

I am in receipt of your letter to Mayor Michael D. Antonovich, dated February 16, 2011, regarding the Leona Valley Community Standards District (CSD) revision and the Valley Vineyards project. The Mayor has requested that the Department of Regional Planning (Department) respond to you directly, with a copy provided to his office.

The Leona Valley CSD was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on February 16, 1993. Several years ago, the Leona Valley Town Council (Town Council) initiated a comprehensive revision of the CSD, which was submitted to the Department in February 2008.

In order to determine support for the CSD revision, the Town Council conducted extensive outreach and held an election regarding the CSD revision before submitting it to the Department. The election was limited to individuals who were registered to vote in Leona Valley. The election results, which were provided to the Department, revealed broad support. However, in keeping with long-standing practice, the Department must hold its own meeting to determine community stakeholder support before the CSD revision is submitted to the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) for consideration in a public hearing.

The Department hosts "town hall" meetings that all community stakeholders, including residents, property owners, and business owners, may attend. In preparation for the meeting, a notice is sent to each property owner within the boundary of the CSD. The format of the meeting is a presentation by Department staff, followed by a question and answer period and then a "show of hands" vote. The purpose of the vote is to determine whether the stakeholders in attendance support consideration of the CSD by the RPC.

To date, the Department has hosted two meetings regarding the Leona Valley CSD revision. The first occurred on October 29, 2008, and the second occurred on September 27, 2010. Both meetings had the same format, which is described above. At the October 29, 2008 meeting, the stakeholders in attendance did not support

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consideration of the CSD revision by the RPC. There were concerns regarding the CSD revision and that the CSD revision should be modified before it would be considered by the RPC. Accordingly, the Town Council collaborated with the Department to modify the CSD revision to address the concerns expressed at the meeting.

At the second meeting, Department staff presented the modified CSD revision and attempted to address the misinformation that had been circulated in the community (see attached handout, which was distributed at the meeting and posted to the Department's Web Site). A majority of the stakeholders in attendance did not support consideration of the CSD revision by the RPC, even though it had been modified. Only five out of the 54 individuals expressed support. Therefore, the Department is not going to submit the CSD revision to the RPC for consideration in a public hearing at this time.

The Valley Vineyards project (Tract No. 066952) has been "deemed complete" in accordance with the provisions of the Subdivision Map Act. Therefore, it will not be subject to the provisions of the proposed Leona Valley CSD revision, even if the CSD revision is adopted by the Board of Supervisors prior to consideration of the Valley Vineyards project by the RPC. However, the project is subject to the provisions of the current Leona Valley CSD, as well as all other relevant County regulations.

The RPC will consider the Valley Vineyards project in a public hearing on or prior to June 29, 2011. The hearing provides an opportunity for community stakeholders to express their views on the project and to request changes, such as those described in your letter. The Department will notify you of future actions regarding the project.

I trust that this information is useful to you. If you have any additional questions regarding the Leona Valley CSD revision, please contact Mr. Mitch Glaser at mglaser@planning.lacounty.gov or (213) 974-6476. If you have any additional questions regarding the Valley Vineyards project, please contact Mr. Jodie Sackett at jsackett@planning.lacounty.gov or (213) 974-6433. Our offices are closed on Fridays.

Sincerely,


Richard J. Bruckner
Director

RJB:JS:MWG

Attachment

c: Norm Hickling, Office of Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Edel Vizcarra, Office of Mayor Michael D. Antonovich



Leona Valley CSD - Common Questions

1. Will the CSD determine where you can make improvements, and what kind?

County code regulates what kinds of uses are allowed on a parcel, according to the land use plan and zoning designations. The CSD proposal has rules about specific things such as setbacks, which are larger than required in other areas of the county. The CSD proposal would also protect the scenic value of Significant Ridgelines by requiring 50-foot setbacks on both sides.

2. Will the CSD dictate what materials to use for walls of a house or for fences?

The proposed CSD amendment contains rules intended to make each house unique. This would require a new house to be different from neighboring houses. It must have a different architectural style, front setback, footprint, roof design, siding material, height and location of driveway and garage entrance.

The existing Leona Valley CSD contains rules intended to prevent fences from obstructing neighbors' scenic views. The proposed amendments specify that fences must be 75% open. Acceptable materials include split rail, open wood, vinyl rail, wire and wrought iron. A solid fence would be allowed in certain areas, such as around a swimming pool.

3. Will the CSD dictate what color people may paint their houses?

The proposed CSD amendment would encourage structures on hillsides to use surface treatments with low reflectance. Current code prohibits shiny or mirrored finishes, to prevent nuisances from glare. No particular colors are required or excluded.

4. Will the CSD regulate what kinds of plants and rocks are allowed in the front yard?

The County already has an ordinance in place which requires drought-tolerant landscaping in new construction (not renovations or existing development). The County has no existing or proposed rules about landscaping with rocks. The CSD proposal contains rules to minimize destruction of native vegetation by some kinds of development.

5. Will the CSD prevent business signs from being repaired?

Existing County code and the CSD proposal contain rules which signs must comply with. Signs which were built legally may be repaired without complying with any new rules. Signs which were constructed illegally would have to comply with the current adopted rules whenever they are repaired or replaced.

6. Will the CSD make subdividing lots overly burdensome, or impossible?

The subdivision process is established by state law, administered by Regional Planning and other agencies. The process is long and complex, and the proposed CSD amendments will not change this. The Town Council comments on projects which may affect their community, but has no power of approval. This also would not change.

The new CSD proposal does not increase the burden of providing infrastructure or public benefits. However, the CSD proposal would delete the current CSD's option of allowing 1.5-acre lots in hillside areas, and require 2.5-acres or more for lots created in every new subdivision.

7. Will the CSD force people to build public trails when they buy or sell property?

The County requires dedication of land for public trails in certain cases: 1) the property has a planned trail route across it, according to the County's Master Plan of Trails; and 2) when a discretionary permit, such as a subdivision, is applied for. Dedication for a trail may be required when both of these conditions are met. Normal single-lot projects such as a single-family home are not affected, and dedication is not required in connection to a simple buy/sell transaction.

8. Do CSDs increase taxes?

CSDs are not assessment districts, and there is no connection to property taxes.

9. Is the Community Meeting the last chance for people to voice their opinions on the CSD?

After such time as consensus is reached at a community meeting, a CSD (new or revised) must have at least two public hearings, one for the Regional Planning Commission, and one for the Board of Supervisors. Each hearing is open for public comment. In addition, letters and emails also become part of the public record, and are forwarded to the Commission and Board for their consideration. There are many opportunities for interested parties to have input in this process.

For more information: Marshall Adams
213-974-6476 (or 661-253-0111 for free transfer)
madams@planning.lacounty.gov
<http://planning.lacounty.gov/ord/draft>



September 2010
Regional Planning Dept