



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning



Planning for the Challenges Ahead

Jon Sanabria
Acting Director of Planning

December 31, 2009

TO: Paul McCarthy, Hearing Officer

FROM: Donald Kress, Regional Planning Assistant II *DJK*
Land Divisions Section

**SUBJECT: PROJECT NO. 03-093 – (1)
VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 54236**

January 5, 2010; AGENDA ITEM NOS. 6a and b

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The project proposes to create eight single-family lots on approximately 4.64 gross acres (3.87 net acres). The proposal requires approval of Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 54236 ("TR 54236") for the subdivision.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") reporting requirements. Effects mitigated to less than significant levels include geotechnical, noise, water quality, visual qualities, traffic/access, and environmental safety.

NOVEMBER 17, 2009 PUBLIC HEARING

Prior to the November 17, 2009 public hearing, four items of correspondence were received from the Workman Mill Association ("Association"). The Association's main concern in their letter dated November 3, 2003, is that the 20,000 square foot required lot area would allow for owners to construct a barn or a second residence on their lot. The main concern of the Association's letter dated May 19, 2003, was that a decision on this tract map not be made until the Avocado Heights Community Standards District ("CSD") was adopted. The main concern expressed in their letter of November 8, 2009 was ineffective off-site drainage in relation to the subject property. The letter of November 10, 2009 reiterated the concern about drainage and requested a pedestrian-operated traffic signal for safe access across Don Julian Road to the entrance of Avocado Heights Park.

During the November 17, 2009 public hearing, the Hearing Officer heard a presentation from the case planner. The case planner summarized the project and letters received. These letters included a concern about off-site drainage in relation to the subject property, and a request that a pedestrian-operated traffic signal be installed for safe access across Don Julian Road to the entrance of Avocado Heights Park, across the street from the subject property. The applicant's engineer and representative did not make a presentation, but were available for questions from the Hearing Officer.

During the November 17, 2009 public hearing, Steve Burger from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works ("Public Works") responded to questions from the Hearing Officer regarding the drainage situation on the subject property and the suggested crosswalk. Mr. Burger indicated Public Works would review the drainage concept for the proposed project. He also noted that the request for a crosswalk from the Association was a recent request and that mid-block crosswalks are installed only where warranted, as traffic signals in improper locations may create hazards in some situations. He stated that Public Works would review the traffic situation along Don Julian Road near the subject property.

During the November 17, 2009 public hearing, a representative of the trust which owns of the subject property, Ms. Robin Eidelman, testified. She expressed concerns that realignment of the subject property's driveway, or of the Don Julian Road right-of-way, may be required. The Hearing Officer explained that no such realignments were being required. The Hearing Officer also explained to Ms. Eidelman that if a mid-block crosswalk was made a condition of approval for the project, the cost of this crosswalk would be borne by the property owner. Ms. Eidelman stated she understood this.

During the November 17, 2009 public hearing, the case planner stated that there was an outstanding building code violation on the subject property regarding a corral, which had been constructed without the proper permits from the Division of Building and Safety of Public Works. The Hearing Officer asked the applicant's representative whether the corral could be demolished prior to January 5, 2010. The applicant's representative stated that it could be.

On November 17, 2009, the Hearing Officer continued the public hearing to December January 5, 2010, to allow the applicant time to resolve an outstanding building code violation on this property, and to allow Public Works time to review the drainage situation on the subject property and whether a mid-block pedestrian crosswalk across Don Julian Road in the vicinity of the subject property would be appropriate in response to concerns brought up by neighbors and the Association.

PROJECT ISSUES

The main project issues brought forth at the November 17, 2009 public hearing included

ineffective off-site drainage in relation to the subject property, a request for a pedestrian-operated traffic signal for safe access across Don Julian Road to the entrance of Avocado Heights Park, and the presence of a corral constructed on the subject property without proper permits.

STAFF EVALUATION

The issues noted in the Association's letter regarding offsite drainage may require a modification to the storm drain system, including additional inlets, and potentially a small desilting basin with paved access. Public Works is attempting to contact the constituents and applicant's consultant to obtain information as to any modifications that may be required. If a solution can be agreed upon, Public Works will be bringing forth a modified condition to address the drainage.

Regarding the crosswalk, Public Works does not find that a signalized crosswalk is warranted at this location as a result of this project. If the community feels that a crosswalk is needed to address regional circulation issues, then Public Works can investigate this matter from a more global perspective, but that would be an action independent from this project.

The property owner has applied for a demolition permit for the unpermitted corral on December 10, 2009. At the time of this writing, the corral has not been demolished.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation is subject to change based on oral testimony or documentary evidence submitted during the public hearing process.

Staff recommends that the Hearing Officer continue the public hearing to a date certain to allow the applicant time to demolish the unpermitted corral, to allow Public Works time to resolve the drainage issue on the property, and to allow staff to prepare the appropriate findings.

SMT:dck

12/31/2009