

**Subject:** GVPAC Meeting Summary for April 22, 2009

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Hello Everyone,

Reminder: The GVPAC Workshop will be held on July 11, 2009 at the Vieja Valley School, 434 Nogal Drive in Goleta. While the workshop is an all-day event, you can stop by anytime during the day. *If you can attend only one GVPAC meeting, this is probably the one to attend.*

The following summarizes the general issues discussed during the last GVPAC meeting.

Meeting Notes for April 22, 2009:

1. Next Meeting:

- a. *Date:* May 5, 2009
- b. *Location:* Planning Commission Hearing Room
- c. *Agenda:* Agricultural Land Use
  - i. Rural and Urban Agriculture
  - ii. Location, function, and role of agriculture
  - iii. Agriculture land-use policies

2. Main Overview: The primary purpose of this meeting was to learn about the Community Development Super Element of the 1993 Goleta Valley Community Plan (GCP), and in particular Commercial and Industrial Land Use.

- a. *Historical Context:* During the last community planning process in 1993 industrial and commercial development had outpaced residential development.
  - i. While a wide variety of jobs and business opportunities were available, there was a noted increase in commuter traffic. The Goleta Growth Management Ordinance (GGMO) therefore placed limits on commercial development while attempting to balance residential growth. [The ordinance was later repealed by the Board of Supervisors.] Most 1993 planning focused on revitalizing Old Town Goleta and no longer applies to EGV.
  - ii. In sharp contrast, today we have an abundance of homes, but very few jobs in Eastern Goleta Valley. Most jobs are located outside of our planning area.
  - iii. Policies still relevant from the 1993 plan include support for mixed-use commercial development. There are no relevant industrial land-use policies.
- b. *Existing Commercial Land Use:* A successful commercial land use-plan considers commercial developments with transportation and neighborhood compatibility in mind. Easy access to services is necessary without causing disruptions to other services and residences.
  - i. Currently there are six major commercial/retail nodes in EGV: Patterson Storage, Magnolia Center, Turnpike Center, Turnpike/101, and East Hollister Avenue/Modoc, and San Marcos Corner.
  - ii. Turnpike Center was proposed for mix-use redevelopment in the past. Turnpike/101 is currently designated as Highway Commercial. The East Hollister Avenue/Modoc area has the most potential for change in the future. San Marcos Corner (at the foot of 154) consists of one vacant lot and one office building. There was some contamination in the past when it was a gas station.

iii. County Campus is the source of the largest number of jobs in EGV.

c. *Commercial Land-Use Projections:* The Regional Growth Forecast (RGF) for the entire South Coast projects fewer than 20,000 new jobs between 2005 and 2040, or a total change of 14.8%, between 2010 and 2040 with most new jobs being created by 2025. Many jobs in the South Coast are in retail and tourism and UCSB is the largest employer.

i. Existing commercial land use in our area includes 5,259,554 sq. ft. of floor space, some of which is in residential zones.

ii. The maximum added future capacity of existing commercial land is 1,499,926 square feet. This is the absolute maximum under the assumption that commercial development occurs only on land currently designated for commercial land use. Realistically, however, only 22 acres of vacant commercial land exists for retail development use. Redevelopment for increased capacity is less likely to occur. Therefore, the maximum realistic square footage that can be developed commercially (under current zoning) is 301,528 square feet.

iii. Using the RGF as a model, only 3.25 new jobs will be created per year over the next 20 years in EGV. Today there are approximately 702 jobs in EGV with a total population of approximately 29,000.

d. *Commercial Land-Use Planning:* The form of the commercial development determines its function. Certain forms limit the type of commercial activity, supermarkets, for example. Other forms allow for greater flexibility in its use. Form is everything: accessibility, connectivity, location, and function need to be compatible.

i. Conditions of approval can include improvements to roadways, parking, streetscape, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle paths, among others. Improvements in safety should be a factor in the approval process.

ii. Can encourage people-orientated community facilities (museums, parks, and gathering places) that help develop community character.

iii. Form-based code can be applied to small areas and existing neighborhoods. It prescribes certain forms that define the desired character of the neighborhood. Emphasizes the relationship between structures and the public space. A few simple graphics can establish the form and style desired.

e. *GVPAC Discussion:* Various issues were discussed by the GVPAC members related to commercial land use and other topics:

i. Several of the ongoing development projects were mentioned including the preservation of Goleta Beach, the Knoll Development, as well as others. Several members of the committee expressed disappointment in changes to the permitting publication process. The online publication of permit applications is apparently being updated.

ii. A great deal of the discussion focused on form-based code and methods of how to implement it in our area. Underground parking or placing parking in the back of the structure to help focus on the activity and on the people were mentioned as ways to change the character of commercial districts. Form-based code will help direct the redevelopment over time. It will not happen overnight. A vision is required.

iii. The eastern Hollister corridor (upper State Street)/train tracks/overpass area was mentioned often as an area that requires improvement. Improvements in walkability, circulation and form are needed.

iv. The Turnpike Center, and its underutilized parking area, was another area of frequent discussion for improvement.

### 3. Public Comment:

a. *Anne Crosby:* Mentioned that one of the primary questions that needs to be answered is “Why does the Eastern Goleta Valley have to grow?” She quoted some numbers that she attributed to the County staff as presented to the SBCAG. Each new mile of road cost an additional \$15,000 a year to maintain. Providing public services will cost the County an additional \$1,000 for each new house built (from the County Budget Book). The cost to process new development proposals is estimated to be \$500,000. [Note: I have not

verified these numbers. Nor have I verified if those costs will be offset by development fees for new developments.]

Anne also provided many interesting ideas for our streetscapes, including edible/ornamental plants, fruit/nut trees, and community gardens. Minimizing maintenance costs by allowing schools to make use of and maintaining gardens and trees along our streets. She stressed the need to avoid depending on developers and instead to rely on our own resources.

For additional information, the official minutes, and the meeting audio, please see the county website:

<http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/planareas/goleta/gvpac.php>

Once again let me know if you do not wish to receive these e-mails, and feel free to forward them to others.

Thank you!

-Kenan ([Kenan.Ezal@cox.net](mailto:Kenan.Ezal@cox.net))

Note: I am fully responsible for any errors you may find in the above—no one else.

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