



PANA speedbump

Patterson Area
Neighborhoods Association

The Patterson Area Neighborhoods Association is a non-profit, non-partisan, volunteer organization that focuses on neighborhoods between Turnpike and Fairview north of the freeway. It is dedicated to giving voice to the concerns of our neighborhoods, a constituency that, at times, gets overlooked by our local policy makers and bureaucracies.

The Goleta Valley Voice publishes a monthly column written by PANA called the "PANA Perspective". It focuses on timely issues that affect our neighborhoods. We also distribute a periodic newsletter to a list of e-mail subscribers. If you would like to join the subscriber list, please send an e-mail to timschmidt@verizon.net. Past newsletters, articles, and more can be found on our website at www.panaspeedbump.org

People often ask how they can contribute to PANA's efforts. The most important contribution is one many of you are already making and that is your concern and active involvement that make our neighborhoods the wonderful places they are. If you care to do more, donations can be made to the Patterson Area Neighborhoods Association. Our mailing address is 534 San Blas Place, Santa Barbara, CA 93111.

PANA's Board of Directors, Tim Schmidt, President; Bud Sprague, Treasurer; Richard Whited, Secretary; Jude Blau, Cecila Brown, Chris Harrison, Kathy Randma, and Brenda Peter

PANA is a non-profit with a tax-exempt status so your donation is tax-deductible.

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President's Message

There is one issue that unites nearly every resident of the South Coast and that is the widespread determination of the public to play a leading role in making land use decisions. This should not come as any great surprise. In a poll conducted in 2000 in the 93111 zip code area, 83% of the respondents indicated that control over land use planning was of great or substantial concern to them. More substantial than poll results are powerful political currents that have occurred or are being considered to ensure this happens -

- The incorporation of the City of Goleta
- The not-so-veiled threats to begin a recall campaign against second district supervisor Susan Rose
- The exploration by the unincorporated area of the Goleta Valley to leave the county's jurisdiction and align itself with either the City of Santa Barbara or the City of Goleta

The trend is clear. Voters are dissatisfied with what they perceive as the growing gap between their vision for the community and the actions of some of our local officials. It is hard to escape the conclusion that the majority of residents are in great agreement on the direction they want to go and they are carefully, methodically exploring the political options that promise to deliver results. This conclusion is not meant to be boastful, arrogant or serve to intimidate. It is simply our assessment based on what we see taking place in our community.

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Neighborhood Council

As many of you may recall, last summer Santa Barbara County unveiled a proposal to build housing in the unincorporated area of the Goleta Valley

which would have required the rezoning of large agricultural or open space parcels. The opposition to this proposal was immediate and intense. The plans simply did not reflect the wishes of the people living in the unincorporated area of the Goleta Valley.

In an effort to bridge this gap, Second District Supervisor Susan Rose called several meetings of her neighborhood council to get some input on the topic of future growth in the unincorporated area of the Goleta Valley. A variety of neighborhood groups and representatives of a handful of special

interest groups participated. PANA was happy to participate since it was an excellent opportunity to express the views of our neighborhoods and to find out what others in our community felt about the future.

The meetings of the neighborhood council were tumultuous from the start. For a variety of reasons many felt that they were part of a contrived effort to provide a veneer of public input on an issue that has already been decided behind closed doors. Perhaps that will prove to be the case. But regardless of the doubt and skepticism about the ultimate effectiveness of the council's meetings, the group did reach agreement over a surprising number of shared community objectives.

- An overwhelming consensus that we should not build housing on agricultural or open space lands.

- A recognized need for affordable housing. It was agreed that this could probably best be accomplished by using county-owned land for such a purpose.

- Design standards must not be rewritten in such a way that housing projects can be approved that are not compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.

- Planning for the long term. Instead of confining the discussion to the immediate two to three year period there is a need to look at the cumulative effects of growth for the next two to three decades.

It remains to be seen what 2nd District Supervisor Susan Rose will do with the feedback provided by the council, but the message sent by those from the community who participated was clear and unambiguous.

Happenings around the Neighborhood

Regardless of the project, a home remodel or a large development, PANA strives to support the concept of neighborhood compatibility so that as changes occur they reflect the concerns of neighbors and fit within the character of the surrounding neighborhoods. Here are some projects that PANA has been following.

Noel Christmas Tree Farm

The status of this project is uncertain since the attempt to rezone it is intertwined with the county's housing element update. Thus, we have yet to hear whether a development application will be moving forward. And although there appears to be very little support in the community to rezone any agricultural land for housing, the developer is proceeding forward to plan a housing tract for this 25 acre property off Patterson Avenue.

As a result, PANA recently met with the developer to review his latest proposal and to express neighborhood concerns about neighborhood compatibility and traffic impacts. In October 2000 when the developer first presented development plans at a neighborhood meeting, he proposed 86 homes. Since that time, there have been several iterations of designs and number of homes, with the county at one time proposing as many as 300 units. Since only site planning is underway, we don't know the number of units planned.

The county continues to push for a commercial component in the project, perhaps a small grocery store. County planners believe that this will serve the neighborhood and will reduce traffic trips to nearby shopping areas. This is debatable. Since neighbors have expressed uniform resistance to commercial activities on this project, we continue to strongly oppose any commercial component.

Rowe Property Subdivision

Approximately 4 acres at Camino Campana and Kellogg, currently being used to grow citrus, are slated to be developed for 11 houses. Since this property features a hill, there is concern that any two story homes must be very carefully sited in order to avoid impacting neighboring homes. It is also important for this project to provide adequate parking so that adjacent streets do not bear the brunt of poor planning. The Planning Commission recently approved this project having addressed the above concerns.

Can you hear me now?

PANA is tracking the application of a proposed cell-site at the new Patterson Packing project on the southwest corner of Calle Real and Patterson. The applicant was considering the installation of a 50-foot antennae

designed to look like a pine tree. Following inquiries by PANA, the county is now expecting the applicant to submit a revised proposal.

Berkeley Road remodel

PANA recently supported several neighbors' appeal of the county's approval of a house remodel on Berkeley Road. The neighbor's felt an appeal was necessary since they were unable to get any substantive information about the remodel plans in any other way. What they did know alarmed them: a 4-bedroom 2-bath house would be transformed into 7 bedrooms and 7.5 bathrooms. As a result of the appeal, the applicant has resubmitted plans for a smaller project.

City of Goleta and Second Story additions

As the example above illustrates, home remodeling continues to create concern in many neighborhoods, both for those who want to remodel and for the neighbors who will be impacted by the results. In the city of Goleta, home expansion has come under increased scrutiny because of the scope of some of the remodels; it is not unusual to see square footage of homes double. Homeowners have a right to alter their homes to suit their needs. Yet this should be balanced with preserving neighbors' views and privacy.

In the city of Goleta, these concerns have led to the adoption of interim measures to limit the size of home remodels while the city completes their general plan. Currently the city of Goleta restricts home expansion to an increase of no more than 50% of the existing size of the home and a floor-to-lot area ratio no greater than 35% with second stories permitted. In order to ensure that neighborhood compatibility and other concerns are addressed, the project must go through the city's design review board.

This approach differs from the county where approval for adding a second story is an over-the-counter ministerial permit with no design review. And with only posted on-site noticing of the land use permit, not all neighbors who might be affected by the remodel are notified. PANA is working to change this so that there is notification of affected neighbors.

From our experience, the city of Goleta's approach is endorsed by the majority of residents as it is seen as a prudent way to balance property rights for all.

MTD property

The Metropolitan Transit District owns about 17-acres on Calle Real near Turnpike. Discussion have been on-going for some time to build perhaps as many as 300 to 400 "starter" homes and apartments in a mixed-use development. This project is an excellent example of why neighbors often get enraged by land-use decisions. Located immediately north of the MTD property is Forte Ranch, a planned unit development built at 8-units per acre. With density of the proposed project at 20-units per acre, the project has aroused the concern of Forte Ranch residents who have been trying unsuccessfully to meet with MTD officials for over a year. Parking is already in short supply at Forte Ranch and any efforts to limit parking at the MTD site will just be another insult to the neighbors of spill-over impacts of this in-fill development.

City of Goleta Council Elections

Two council seats are up for re-election. Two incumbents, Jonny Wallis and Jean Blois and one newcomer, Roy Zbinden, are running. To hear the views of the three candidates, a candidate forum will be held on Tuesday, Oct 19th 7:00 pm at the Goleta Valley Community Center.

Goleta School Board

The elementary schools of the Goleta Union School District are an important resource for the Goleta Valley. In November, voters will fill two positions on the Goleta School Board. Two years ago the school board made the controversial decision to close a school. Based on the continuing trend of declining enrollments throughout the district it is highly likely that the issue of school closure will resurface in the future. We encourage you to learn more about the five candidates.

Susan Epstein www.susanepstein.com
 Bill Gadsby www.goletaschools.com
 Dean Nevins www.goletaschools.com
 Chris Messner
 Eloy U. Ortega