



**SANTA VENETIA COMMUNITY PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Summary Minutes**

Tuesday, February 10, 2015  
7:00-9:00 pm  
Marin County Civic Center, Room 315  
3501 Civic Center Drive  
San Rafael, CA 94903

**Members Present**

Giselle Block  
Bonnie Monte  
Jane Brand  
Russ Greenfield  
Mary Hanley  
Gary Robards

**Staff**

Christine Gimmler, Senior Planner  
Lauren Armstrong, Planner

**1. Summary Minutes**

Russ Greenfield introduced members of the public in attendance, including Mark Wallace (former president of SVNA and current Chair of the Land Use Committee) and long-time Santa Venetia resident Hugo Phillips. In response to questions regarding the January 13<sup>th</sup> minutes, staff explained that there will be an opportunity for the committee to meet following Planning Commission hearings on the draft Community Plan, if necessary. Following a few clarifications, the Advisory Committee accepted the summary minutes from January 13, 2015.

**2. Continued Discussion of Community Plan Issues**

Development considerations for “key sites”

Staff presented material related to two of the “key sites” identified in the draft community plan and noted by the Planning Commission, “Oxford Valley” and the “Boyd Ranch” property. The material included a written summary describing density and development considerations as well as key Countywide Plan policies applicable to each site. Development constraints were also presented graphically on maps of each property.

For example, the material for Oxford Valley notes that the property is governed by conventional A-2:B-2 zoning, which typically requires a 10,000 square foot minimum lot size. However, the site would also be subject to the County’s hillside subdivision design standards, which require an increasingly large lot size as slope increases (up to an acre for lots with an average slope of 40% or more). The Oxford Valley site also contains mapped sensitive resources, such as stream and wetland areas, which trigger the requirement for development setbacks of 100 feet or more. Other mapped constraints on the property include native grassland areas, steep slopes, and high sensitivity for archaeological

resources. The intent of this type of material (which would be incorporated into the community plan) is to provide a clear summary of known constraints and applicable policies and regulations to ensure more realistic expectations about the development potential of a particular site. Committee members were generally supportive of including this material in the community plan. It was noted that the maps and policy summaries could be particularly helpful in early discussions with potential developers. Some committee members expressed interest in providing additional guidance about community preferences for the sites. It was noted that potential legal issues could arise if community plan policies went too far beyond those established in the Countywide Plan. Some ideas expressed regarding the Oxford site include the following:

- Any new roads or access improvements should follow the least environmentally damaging route, with particular emphasis on avoiding Stream Conservation Areas and tree removal.
- The main stream corridor traversing Oxford Valley is valued by residents as a unique wildlife corridor in Santa Venetia that provides access to water for a variety of animal species.
- The historic importance of the site as the property and residence of Mabry McMahon should be noted.

Committee members also reviewed similar information for the Boyd Ranch property. This site is governed by a mix of two zoning districts (and two corresponding Countywide Plan designations). However, the great majority of the property is within either the RUG (Ridge and Upland Greenbelt) area or within the Baylands Corridor, both of which trigger additional restrictions to protect visually prominent ridgelines and tidal baylands. In particular, the potential density on land within these restricted areas must be calculated at the lowest end of their respective Countywide Plan designations. As a result, over 90 percent of the property would be limited to a maximum density of one unit per 10 acres. It was also noted that any area of the property subject to tidal action (i.e. portions of the property on the bayward side of N. San Pedro Road) would not be included in the total "lot area" for purposes of determining density. Committee members noted that the current owner of this property has been a great steward of the land and that the community would be supportive of efforts to preserve the ranch in its current, largely undeveloped, condition.

#### Commercial use preferences

Following discussion of the "key sites", staff distributed a list of the type of retail and service uses allowed in the C-1 (Retail Business District) zoning that governs most of the commercial property in Santa Venetia (uses indicated with a "U" are permitted subject to approval of a Use Permit). Staff noted that the community plan could include "preferred uses" for commercial properties in the area. Although there was inadequate time for a detailed discussion, committee members did express an overall preference for independent, local-serving businesses over large or chain stores. Discussion of this issue will continue at the next meeting.

### **3. Update on issues and upcoming meetings**

Staff provided updates regarding the Safe Routes to Schools program and a recent CSA #6 meeting and noted several upcoming meetings of potential interest to Committee members, including Flood Control Zone 7 (February 18<sup>th</sup>) and the Santa Venetia Traffic Committee (March 16<sup>th</sup>).

**4. Next meeting date**

Committee members agreed to shift the date of the next Advisory Committee meeting from March 10<sup>th</sup> to March 17<sup>th</sup> in order to accommodate staff's work schedule.

**5. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.