



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

Tuesday, December 3, 2013
7:00-9:00 pm
Marin County Civic Center, Room 315
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

Members Present

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

Staff

Jack Liebster, Planning Manager
Christine Gimmmler, Senior Planner
Suzanne Thorsen, Planner

1. Summary Minutes

The Advisory Committee accepted the summary minutes from November 5, 2013 as presented.

2. Countywide Plan Policy Review - continued

Advisory Committee members continued their discussion of the Countywide Plan and the matrix of policies and programs organized by topic area which was distributed and reviewed at the October and November meetings.

The Committee moved on to discuss land use, parks & open space, natural resource, and neighborhood maintenance issues, which are summarized below.

Land Use/Development

- There were no specific community suggestions related to the protection of scenic resources. However, staff indicated that it would be appropriate to identify and map important view corridors in the community plan.
- The community suggested restrictions on ridgeline development and reduced development density in more sensitive areas. Staff noted that the Countywide Plan and Development Code support both of these concepts. An additional handout addressing these issues had been prepared for the committee's review, so staff suggested postponing discussion of these topics until the handout was distributed.

- Regarding noise, the Countywide Plan establishes “allowable noise levels” which are used for purposes of planning and siting land uses. In addition, the County has noise ordinances which regulate “loud and unnecessary noises” between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., as well as noise related to construction activities. To maintain consistency, it is unlikely that the Board would support a proposal to vary from the countywide noise standards for a particular community. Similarly, restrictions on leaf blowers (and similar equipment) which have been adopted in some jurisdictions in Marin would likely be considered only on a countywide basis. However, the Community Plan could provide direction regarding appropriate hours of operation for commercial uses in Santa Venetia, particularly those in close proximity to residential areas, which could be applied to future Use Permits. In particular, the issue of noise related to late night deliveries could be addressed in this way. The committee also discussed noise concerns related to the planned soccer facility at McInnis Park in San Rafael. Staff noted that the County cannot regulate noise generated by land uses in another jurisdiction, but offered to look into the noise studies and mitigation requirements for this at project as an informational item. Finally, the committee noted that noise generated by outdoor events at the Marin Center (particularly summer concerts) had been an issue in the past.

Parks and Open Space

- Countywide Plan policies strongly support the provision of adequate parks and recreational facilities. Staff noted that recommendations regarding park acquisitions and improvements are made by the Parks Department in consultation with Santa Venetia’s existing advisory board (CSA 18). However, the community plan could be an appropriate forum for identifying community preferences related to park locations and desired features. Such recommendations would be considered as part of future updates to the County Parks Master Plan.
- Countywide Plan policies also support efforts to protect and acquire public open space. Staff noted that, as with parks, the community plan could identify community preferences related to open space acquisition. Committee members noted on-going efforts to purchase the 650 North San Pedro Road property to prevent development and preserve the land as open space. Similar efforts are also underway with support from Marin County Parks and Open Space to acquire the Buck’s Launching property for its open space and recreational values. Committee members suggested that, to the extent development projects result in the need for mitigation for impacts to parks, opens space, or habitat areas, mitigation should preferably occur within the community. Although this is a good idea conceptually, staff noted that legal, financial, and biological considerations may also influence the suitability and feasibility of mitigation sites.

Natural Resources

- As noted in the policy handout, the Countywide Plan contains so many detailed policies and programs related to Natural Resources, that only policy titles were included in the matrix to give Committee members an overview of the range of topics already addressed by the Countywide Plan. For consistency and to avoid unnecessary duplication, staff encouraged the Committee to rely on policies and programs already in place. If committee members identify natural resource issues that are not already addressed, they could be discussed at a future meeting.

Neighborhood Maintenance/Nuisance Issues

- The Countywide Plan includes a general program supporting efforts to work with law enforcement agencies and community groups on neighborhood beautification. However, it may be difficult to affect these issues through community plan policies. A number of the community suggestions related to neighborhood maintenance or nuisances would depend largely on increased funding or staffing from the County Sheriff or other agencies and County departments (for example, increased police patrols and parking enforcement or a faster response to illegal dumping by the sanitary service). In addition, while some issues can be handled by Community Development Agency Enforcement staff (for example, non-permitted construction or home businesses which don't comply with adopted home occupation standards), many commonly cited concerns, such as poorly maintained landscaping or buildings are not within the legal purview of the County and would be more effectively addressed on a voluntary basis through a community organization (for example, the Santa Venetia Neighborhood Associations beautification committee). The undergrounding of utilities improves a neighborhood's appearance but is an expensive project which must be funded by property owners. Finally, under State law, sidewalk repairs are the responsibility of the adjoining property owner. However, some funding may be allocated to sidewalk repair throughout the County in the future, which could help address this on-going concern in Santa Venetia.

3. Next Meeting

Staff noted that the next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 7th, and will include review of the Single Family Residential Guidelines and material related to development potential in the Leona Drive and Bayhills Neighborhoods.

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.