



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

Tuesday, February 11, 2014  
7:00-9:00 pm  
Marin County Civic Center, Room 315  
3501 Civic Center Drive  
San Rafael, CA 94903

**Members Present**

Bonnie Monte  
Mary Hanley  
Tami Hull  
Gary Robards  
Oscar Segura

**Staff**

Jack Liebster, Planning Manager  
Christine Gimmler, Senior Planner

**1. Summary Minutes**

The Advisory Committee accepted the summary minutes from January 7, 2014 as presented.

**2. Land Use/Community Character**

**a. Discussion of Single-family Residential Design Guidelines**

At the previous meeting, committee members reviewed a summary of the Single-family Residential Design Guidelines and staff responded to questions about how and when the guidelines are used. The committee members present had no further comments on the guidelines themselves at this time.

**b. Design Review “Triggers”**

In response to questions raised at the previous meeting regarding the Design Review process, staff distributed a handout explaining the various situations that “trigger” the need for Design Review. In general, projects in “planned” zoning districts (such as RSP or RMP) are subject to Design Review while those in “conventional” zoning districts (such as R-1, R-A, and A-2:B-2) are not as long as they conform to the rules of that district related to height, yard setbacks, and floor area ratio. However, there are situations that do trigger the Design Review process regardless of zoning which are outlined in the handout. Staff reviewed these “triggers” with the committee, as well as a map showing the extent of planned districts zoning in Santa Venetia. Generally, hillside properties south of North San Pedro Road are in planned zoning districts so any new development in these areas would go through the Design Review process. Smaller pockets of planned district zoning also exist along either side of North San Pedro Road.

### **c. Ridgeline Development**

During past meetings, committee members had discussed the development history of the Leona Drive Subdivision and expressed concerns regarding the extent of future development that may occur in the hillside area in the vicinity of Bayhills Drive. In response to these concerns, staff distributed handouts addressing both issues.

The “Leona Drive” Subdivision contains 29 lots, and no further subdivision would be permitted. Of these 29 lots, 24 (83%) are already developed with existing homes. Of the five remaining vacant lots, two adjacent vacant lots are under the same ownership, and two more are contiguously owned with an adjacent developed property, which suggests that the five lots might not all be developed with separate residences in the future. Regardless, there is a maximum potential for five additional homes in the Leona Drive Subdivision.

Committee members have expressed concerns regarding the size and design of Leona Drive homes. Historically, many of these residences were not required to go through Design Review since they are located in a conventional A-2:B-2 zoning district. However, in 1997 the Development Code was amended to require Design Review for all development exceeding 4,000 square feet in size, regardless of zoning. In 2008, the Code was further amended to trigger Design Review for development exceeding 3,000 square feet on properties with an average slope of more than 25%. Most of the existing homes were either built prior to 1997 or were constructed just below the 4,000 square foot Design Review “trigger.” However, any future development on the five remaining vacant lots would most likely be subject to Design Review (with neighborhood notification and comment) due to topography or home size.

Another area of concern consists of a group of vacant hillside lots located above Granlee Road in the vicinity of Bayhills Drive, Summit Road, and Sylvan Way (for convenience, referred to as the “Bayhills” neighborhood). Although this area is comprised of 19 separate Assessor’s Parcels, staff research of property records indicates that there are only 13 separate legal lots in the area, one of which could potentially be split into a maximum of two lots (for a maximum potential of 14 separate legal land holdings). In addition, staff noted that serious development constraints exist related to the availability of water service, sanitary service and adequate road access, which makes it extremely unlikely that all or even a majority of the lots would ultimately be developed. Finally, all 13 properties are in a planned zoning district (Residential Multiple Planned), so Design Review would be required regardless of home size, and the entire area is located within an identified Ridge and Upland Greenbelt (RUG) zone, which prohibits development within 300 feet horizontally and 100 feet vertically of visually prominent ridgelines (whichever is more restrictive) unless no suitable building site exists outside this ridge area, in which case structures are limited to a maximum height of 18 feet. All of these factors suggest that extensive and large scale development is very unlikely to occur in this area.

### **3. Discussion of Draft Summary of Issues**

At the previous meeting, committee members noted that it would be helpful to wrap up discussion of the Countywide Plan policy matrix with a document that summarizes the status of the various issues that had been discussed and identifies “tasks” to be completed in the community plan. In response, staff prepared a draft “summary of issues” for consideration by the committee, organized into the following topic areas:

- Flood control
- Transportation
- Bicycle and pedestrian circulation
- Public transportation
- Community character
- Parks and open space
- Natural resource protection
- Noise
- Neighborhood maintenance/nuisance issues

In the time available, the committee started review of flood control and transportation issues. Some of the committee's suggestions and additional ideas for inclusion in the Community Plan include the following:

- Pursue funding for the purchase of easements along the Santa Venetia levee to provide the Flood District with legal access for future flood control improvements (Flood Control)
- Consider requiring dedication of easements along existing levees in conjunction with major remodels or new construction, either at time of construction or in the future (Flood Control)
- Provide an explanation of where traffic impact fees are used (Transportation)
- Identify speeding vehicles as a neighborhood concern and explain who should be notified of complaints (Transportation)
- Provide an explanation of sidewalk repair and maintenance issues (Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation)
- Consider resident parking permit program for areas with inadequate street parking

#### **4. Next Meeting**

The next committee meeting will be held Tuesday, March 11, 2014

#### **5. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.