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REDDING PLANNING COMMISSION
 Regular Meeting, 4 p.m.
 Tuesday, September 23, 2008
 City Council Chambers
 777 Cypress Avenue
 Redding, California 96001

MINUTES

Chairman Randall Smith called the meeting to order at 4 p.m., with Commissioners Emmett Burroughs, Jim Chapin, Michele Goedert, Bert Meyer, Lynne Wonacott, and Chris Young present. Also present were Development Services Director Jim Hamilton, Planning Manager Douglas DeMallie, City Attorney Rick Duvernay, Land Development Manager Marty Wayne, Associate Planner Ron Adams, and Executive Assistant II Anita Felion.

PUBLIC HEARING - TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP APPLICATION S-12-05, AUSONIO SUBDIVISION, by Andrew Ausonio, requesting approval to subdivide 24.3 acres to create 48 lots for single-family homes on property located in southwest Redding, on the ridge between the end of Auburn Avenue and West Street, in an "RS-4" Residential Single Family District. *Environmental Determination: Mitigated Negative Declaration. Staff Recommendation: Adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and approval. S-101-096*

Associate Planner Ron Adams summarized the staff report. He noted that the Ausonio Subdivision occupied a large area of the undeveloped ridgetop located between the end of Auburn Drive and West Street in southwest Redding. He stated that the general area contained dozens of undeveloped lots that were first created in 1901 as part of the historic Boardman Addition Subdivision. Mr. Adams indicated that most of these lots remained undeveloped today, since they were platted over steep terrain and/or have no developed public access or utilities.

Mr. Adams discussed the key planning issues affecting this project, which included zoning/General Plan consistency, the need for secondary street access, neighborhood traffic concerns, grading and tree preservation, and right-of-way and easement needs. He observed that the public-street extensions to be constructed with the subdivision would complete an important second route of access from the current end of Auburn Drive out to West Street as was originally planned with the adjacent Indian Hills Subdivision. He pointed out that this would benefit not only the proposed subdivision, but also existing homes in Indian Hills, which were currently limited to a single route of access out to Starlight Boulevard.

Regarding traffic, Mr. Adams noted that the proposed roadway connection between Auburn Drive and West Street would function as a residential collector route, allowing residents of the subdivision and the surrounding neighborhoods a travel option either west to Buenaventura Boulevard or east to Railroad Avenue/Court Street. He said the main traffic issue presented by the proposed street extensions was the potential for a general increase in traffic on Auburn Drive, West Street, and other connecting streets as a result of opening a through connection between these streets. Mr. Adams stated that it was assumed that the increased trips would be primarily from persons living and working in the neighborhood and not from substantial cut-through trips. He continued that opening a through connection between Auburn Drive and West Street presented some concern for the potential for increased speeds. Mr. Adams explained that proposed street alignments included at least two major turns in the roadway that helped minimize straightaway sections that could encourage speeding. He also noted that a focused traffic analysis prepared by DEW Traffic Consulting in 2006 for a larger 56-lot subdivision estimated that the overall traffic conditions, plus the project, at the intersection of Auburn Drive and Starlight Drive would be approximately 1,660 average daily trips (ADT) and 2,140 ADT at West Street, where the new public road would connect. He observed that the current project would provide only 48 units, thus these traffic numbers were likely overstated.

Mr. Adams advised that the Board of Administrative Review received public comment on the project and related environmental issues at the August 27, 2008, meeting. He stated that a few residents in the Indian Hills Subdivision attended the meeting and expressed general concerns regarding potential

traffic-safety problems on Auburn Drive and having a road and pedestrian-access connection to the edge of the Martin Luther King neighborhood along West Street, thus opening up easy access between the neighborhoods. He said staff explained the benefits and basis of General Plan policy of having a second public-street connection, including the benefit to existing residents in the Indian Hills Subdivision.

Grading and tree retention were also discussed by Mr. Adams. He noted that the proposed development plan included a comprehensive grading scheme to support phased-lot development on the ridgetop, along with necessary road and utility extensions, while minimizing development around important natural features, such as steep slopes and creeks. Concerning tree retention, Mr. Adams stated that while the planned avoidance of steep slopes and waterways would result in the retention of numerous trees, the variable site terrain and the project's roadway and utility demands made it unfeasible to save most trees in areas planned for construction/grading in a meaningful way; therefore, tree preservation focused on retaining the trees in the greenbelt and 20 percent slope areas. Mr. Adams said staff recommended that the Planning Commission adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and approve Tentative Subdivision Map Application S-12-05, Ausonio Subdivision, subject to the conditions of approval, which he reviewed.

In response to questions from the Commissioners, Mr. Adams advised that PACE Civil, Inc., had prepared a hydrological analysis, with two detention basins proposed. He said the analysis was reviewed and accepted by City Engineering staff.

Planning Manager Douglas DeMallie explained the requirements for formation of a landscape maintenance district discussed in Condition 50.

Commissioner Lynne Wonacott voiced concern about access into the detention basin behind Summit Drive. She observed that the road went through a very large 20 percent slope area. She acknowledged that the detention basin would need maintenance but was not happy with the removal of the trees and the significant impact to the slope. Ms. Wonacott felt other alternatives should be considered. Regarding the grading plan, she wondered about Lots 14, 16, and 35 and others that appeared to have no room for building. Ms. Wonacott was not comfortable approving a plan that showed nonbuildable lots.

Mr. DeMallie agreed that the proposed access shown on the map was very challenging. He explained that the intent was to provide the access from Summit Drive's existing easement. He continued that if the access could not be achieved, the City Engineer had the option of allowing an alternative access from Auburn Drive. He advised that the alternative road would only be constructed if the Summit Drive access could not be achieved but that staff was confident that access from Summit Drive was possible. Mr. DeMallie also acknowledged that staff was allowing some encroachment into the 20 percent slope, which was predicated by Planning Commission policy adopted in 2002, which allowed that type of activity for extension of streets and infrastructure and creation of buildable pads.

Ms. Wonacott inquired if the Planning Commission could eliminate the proposed alternative. Mr. DeMallie replied affirmatively. He added that the utility department had standards for maintaining the detention basins. Mr. Adams interjected that the existing access off Summit Drive was a well-established utility access and would likely be improved to provide the necessary access. He agreed with Mr. DeMallie and did not expect that the alternative access would be needed.

Commissioner Chris Young had chaired the Board of Administrative Review meeting when the item was reviewed. He believed the Fire Marshal had done an excellent job in explaining the need for a second access. His concerns still dealt with speed and the increase in traffic, and he requested that something be implemented to slow down traffic.

Chairman Randall Smith observed that Linden Creek would receive a significant amount of runoff from this project. He felt it was an oversight that no consideration was given for the amelioration of Linden Creek. Mr. Smith also mentioned opening some of the cul-de-sacs off West Street so that residents could access Railroad Avenue. Mr. DeMallie advised that there was no plan to redevelop the short cul-de-sacs, which were built to avoid mixing residential with commercial districts. He said a study indicated that the most immediate access to West Street was Laurel Avenue and that the project would not overload those streets. The Chairman opened the public hearing at 4:51 p.m.

Tony Frediani, 3292 Auburn Drive, voiced concern about speeding and the safety of children. He requested that this subdivision be a gated community to keep the public from using the road as a way to West Street. He asked that if the subdivision was approved with the road going through to West Street, that there be a bike lane and a double yellow line to stop people from passing. Mr. Smith acknowledged his concerns but advised that when subdivisions were created with public access for deeded streets over to the City, they could not be gated because the thoroughfare then became public access. Mr. Smith told Mr. Frediani that if there were problems with traffic, perhaps traffic-calming measures could be implemented to discourage violators.

Mr. DeMallie said staff was not proposing traffic-calming measures within the subdivision. He pointed out that from the end of Auburn Drive, there were very short street segments before making a 90 degree turn, so staff did not believe the speeds would be excessive within the subdivision. He added that there were no reported accidents on the existing portion of Auburn Drive between 2001 and today.

Beverly Sands, 3480 Summit Drive, worried about moving heavy construction equipment on Summit Drive. She also was concerned about erosion problems. Ms. Sands mentioned the impacts to wildlife and contended that the whole ecosystem would be destroyed.

Fred Lucero, applicant's engineer, PACE Civil, Inc., agreed with the conditions of approval.

Eric Parent, Auburn Drive, asked about the undergrounding of the utilities. Mr. DeMallie advised that he would be happy to meet with Mr. Parent to show him the plans. Mr. Parent noted that he bought his home at the end of the street so that his children could play in the street. He also mentioned that there were a lot of registered sex offenders in the West Street area and that he did not want them coming into his neighborhood. Mr. Young remarked that Megan's Law showed the locations of the registered sex offenders but did not show the ones camped out in the open spaces that this development would help to eliminate. Determining that no one else wished to comment, the Chairman closed the public hearing at 5:07 p.m.

Commissioner Michele Goedert was also concerned about speeding on Auburn Drive. She asked if a bulbout had been considered at the entrance to the subdivision. Mr. DeMallie replied that staff had considered it but that it was a short distance to the 90 degree turn onto Road A as shown on the tentative map.

Commissioner Jim Chapin agreed with Ms. Goedert's concerns about speeding. Ms. Goedert asked that a bulbout or other traffic-calming measure at the entrance to the subdivision on Auburn Drive be added to the conditions of approval.

Ms. Wonacott requested that the alternative for the detention basin be eliminated from the conditions of approval. Discussion ensued regarding alternatives for the detention basin and possible continuation of the item. Mr. DeMallie stated that the item could be approved (instead of continued) with the condition revised to require that the item return to the Planning Commission for discussion of alternatives if the access from Summit Drive was not possible.

Motion: Commissioner Michele Goedert moved that the Planning Commission adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and find and declare that, as set forth in the Government Code of the State of California, Section 66474, none of the conditions as listed in (a) through (g) exists with regard to this proposed subdivision and that the proposed subdivision is consistent with the Redding General Plan and approve Tentative Subdivision Map S-12-05, Ausonio Subdivision, subject to the conditions of approval as recommended by staff, including the addition of a condition to require a bulbout or other traffic-calming measure at the entrance to the subdivision on Auburn Drive and revision of Condition 45 to eliminate the alternative for the detention basin.

Second: Commissioner Emmett Burroughs.

Ayes: Commissioners Burroughs, Chapin, Goedert, Meyer, Smith, Wonacott, and Young.

Noes: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

PUBLIC MEETING - SCOPING MEETING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT EIR-1-08, FOR TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP APPLICATION S-15-07, SALT CREEK HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION; REZONING APPLICATION RZ-6-07; AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PLAN APPLICATION PD-11-07. *The purpose of this meeting is to solicit public comment on the scope and content of information to be included in an environmental impact report (EIR) being prepared for the subdivision. The project area consists of approximately 272 acres of undeveloped land (with approximately 100 acres suitable for development) located along the north side of Eureka Way (SR 299) and west of Buenaventura Boulevard at the western City limits.*

The project includes the development of 440 residential units designed with a mix of housing types, including 248 single-family homes, 96 single-family homes located on "motor courts," and 96 apartment units and a 13.9-acre park. The proposed subdivision action will include a rezoning to apply the Planned Development Overlay District to the property. L-010-075

Due to a conflict of interest, Commissioner Lynne Wonacott recused herself and left the dais.

Planning Manager Douglas DeMallie announced that the purpose of today's meeting was to accept public comment on the scope and content of information to be included in an environmental impact report (EIR) being prepared for the project. He referenced the description that included the term "motor courts," which had created some confusion. Mr. DeMallie said a better description would be "garden court" homes. He explained that access to these clustered homes' individual units would come from a shared driveway. Mr. DeMallie also noted that the local newspaper had referred to a request for a General Plan amendment but that there was no such request being made. He said, however, that there was a rezoning request in order to apply the Planned Development Overlay District to the property. Mr. DeMallie then introduced Bruce Grove, RBF Consulting, who was the consultant preparing the EIR.

Mr. Grove utilized a PowerPoint presentation to describe the project, which included the extension of Buenaventura Boulevard from Sunflower Drive across Gold Run Creek, provision of public parklands and trails, and construction of stormwater-detention facilities and sewer and water infrastructure. Mr. Grove described the subjects that would be included in the EIR and advised that the public's stated and written concerns would also be included. He indicated that the document would be released for public review approximately in mid-November.

Chairman Randall Smith said he appreciated the fact that the consultant used the term Gold Run Creek, instead of Druse Creek, and asked that the EIR also use the name Gold Run Creek. Mr. Smith opened public comment at 5:32 p.m.

Pauline Arellano, 827 Sunkist Court, voiced concern about water pressure, noting that her second home on Leisha Lane had very low water pressure. She also was concerned about impacts to traffic and sewer. Ms. Arellano stated that traffic already backed up at Shasta High School. She questioned where the proposed trail would be. Impacts to wildlife were also mentioned by Ms. Arellano. Mr. Smith assured Ms. Arellano that the items she mentioned would be addressed and studied thoroughly in the EIR.

Janet Tyrrel, 891 Sunriver Lane, mentioned the confusion caused by the term "motor courts." She also was concerned about water pressure. Ingress and egress issues were mentioned by Ms. Tyrrel. She wanted to ensure that Eureka Way would be improved to handle the traffic. Mr. Smith commented on his experiences with sufficient water pressure in the Sunset Terrace neighborhood and noted that the City had improved the Foothill Water Treatment Plant.

Marc Narasaki, 857 Leisha Lane, had not realized that Buenaventura Boulevard would be extended when he bought his home. He asked that the City conduct an independent traffic study. He complained that the extension of Buenaventura Boulevard was not mentioned in the Property Owner Scoping Letter and requested that all the property owners receive notification about the intent to extend Buenaventura Boulevard. Mr. Narasaki believed that the access from Eureka Way should be developed prior to the Buenaventura Boulevard extension to reduce the impacts of noise and pollution to existing homes along the Buenaventura Boulevard corridor. He wanted to know the cost

of the homes to be built and what the rents for the apartments would be. He asked if there would be an effort to save existing trees. Mr. Narasaki contended that 440 homes would add to the surplus of homes on today's market. He demanded a meeting after 5 p.m., to allow more people to attend. Mr. Narasaki worried about safety with so many units being built and recommended that the applicant have a 24-hour security force in place. He felt the impact to wildlife should also be included in the EIR. He also disagreed with Mr. Smith, noting that his water pressure was very poor.

Todd Slaughter cited concerns about ingress and egress, recalling that the issue was discussed when Sunset Avenues Subdivision was built. He said the public had received assurances that access would be sufficient during that time. He stated that he lived in one of the nicest areas of Redding and worried about higher density. Mr. Slaughter felt the Sunset Avenues Subdivision was very dense and unattractive. He contended that the EIR also needed to consider aesthetics and believed the City should not allow high density in this area with the most prime property. Mr. Smith pointed out that his neighborhood, Sunset Terrace, had almost 350 homes with no stoplight but that Mr. Slaughter's neighborhood had less density and did have a stoplight.

Mr. DeMallie interjected that there had been a lot of discussion recently with smart growth and green growth, which was mainly predicated on higher density. He explained that when the City developed the General Plan in 2000, effort was made to find sites in West Redding that could support higher densities. He indicated that this particular site lent itself to higher density because of the existing infrastructure and moderate topography on the broad ridgetop, as well as being very isolated from existing development. Mr. DeMallie pointed out that the overall density was not that high—the development envelope was 4.4 units per acre, which was considered moderate.

Development Services Director Jim Hamilton added that the City also had the issue of providing housing opportunities for all segments of society, not just based on income, but on people's desires to have different types of housing. He continued that staff had identified on the west side, just as it had done throughout the entire City, locations where higher-density housing could be achieved. Mr. Hamilton advised that single-family homes would be adjacent to the existing subdivisions and that the apartment units would be within the development to the west on a ridge.

Scott Leininger worried about the increased traffic and contended that there would be gridlock on Eureka Way. He said it sometimes took him five or ten minutes to turn onto the highway when leaving his home. He stated that he also had trouble turning into his home due to traffic.

Lynsey Mitchell also cited traffic concerns and impacts on the river and wildlife. She asked about the historical artifacts on the property. Ms. Mitchell asked if she would be required to hook up to City sewer, noting that she was on a private road and had a septic tank. Ms. Mitchell mentioned the high number of homes in foreclosure and wondered why more homes would be added to the inventory of homes on the market. Mr. DeMallie responded that Ms. Mitchell would not be required to hook up to City sewer.

Stephen Steiner asked what would happen to the trail to the Sacramento River. He inquired about safety procedures in case of fire. Mr. Steiner also wondered why more homes were being built when Redding had so many homes on the market. Mr. Smith replied that this project would have no impact on the new trail. He advised that the EIR would address the urban wildland interface. Mr. Smith mentioned that he had also seen the fires earlier in the summer and was glad there would be development between his home and the next fire, which would allow a further safety valve. He said the Planning Commission did not make economic decisions. Mr. Smith continued that the project applicant, Red Emmerson, was one of the wealthiest people in the United States and that Mr. Emmerson would do all that was required to make this project one of Redding's shining lights; because of that, his deep concerns about Salt Creek had virtually evaporated.

Dwayne Floyd worried about an increase in crime and pollution. He acknowledged that growth was needed, but with the decline in the real estate market, this project would bring housing prices down even lower. He asked if there was anywhere else in Redding where the lower-income homes could be placed, outside of the higher-priced neighborhoods. Mr. Floyd also mentioned concerns about the overcrowding of schools.

Steve Zlotowski noted that the subject property bordered Salt Creek Canyon. He believed the custom homes would destroy the aesthetic corridor. He did not believe any EIR would assuage his concern that there would be damage to the waterway. Mr. Zlotowski mentioned the traffic going to and from Shasta High School. He worried about erosion, damage to Salt Creek, and density issues. He claimed that apartments were out of the aesthetic character of the west side and felt the entrance to Redding from SR 299 should be aesthetically pleasing. Mr. Zlotowski wondered about the impartiality of the people he was addressing, considering Mr. Smith's comments. He took offense to Mr. Smith's statement about homes providing a buffer to his home in case of a fire.

Diana Leininger stated that she had seen a lot of accidents on Eureka Way. She worried about more traffic. Ms. Leininger echoed Mr. Zlotowski's sentiments regarding Mr. Smith's comment about Red Emmerson. Mr. Smith apologized for any rudeness the audience felt. He explained that he wanted people to understand from both sides what issues were present. He explained that he was a volunteer, in his sixth year on the Commission, and had formed some opinions about what was right for Redding or what he would like to see, and he shared them with the audience, just like the speakers had share their views. Mr. Smith believed give-and-take was part of the democratic process and again apologized to the audience.

Nena Perry concurred with the other speakers about their concerns. She also agreed with Mr. Zlotowski's statements.

Adele Fostis, who lived in Old Shasta, hoped that the EIR would also address the impacts to Whiskeytown Lake and the highway further west. She believed the impacts to wildlife and of traffic, pollution, and water quality were all-encompassing.

City Attorney Rick Duvernay noted that the California Environmental Quality Act did not require the City to hold a scoping meeting. He said the City was going above and beyond in order to get additional comment from the public.

Tim MacLean, applicant's representative, Sharrah Dunlap Sawyer Inc., responded to questioning from the Commissioners. He explained that the custom-home sites' locations were along the ridgeline and that the locations on the map were approximate. He indicated that a previous plan had included more custom-home sites but that after working with City staff, the applicant made adjustments to the map. Mr. MacLean continued that there were other pocket areas for the home sites but that to access those sites would have required a fair amount of grading to get to them.

Padelo Gallego, who had lived adjacent to the subject property for 32 years, had initially been against the surrounding subdivisions that were recently built. He pointed out that the people who had built their homes near his house did not worry about traffic or other issues while their homes were being constructed. He noted that SR 299 was not a local street—it was a highway, with traffic coming from Eureka and the coast. Mr. Gallego acknowledged that there were a lot of angry people speaking against the development but noted that most of it would not be visible from the highway due to its location on the other side of the ridge. He did not believe Salt Creek would be affected. Regarding the animals, Mr. Gallego believed the development might help keep them from getting killed on the highway. He said he missed the land that had been undeveloped before the other subdivisions were also built and the slower traffic, but he was not afraid of progress. Mr. Gallego felt the crime would not increase just because of the homes being built; instead, it would help the crime problem because there were a lot of transients in the undeveloped area who would have to leave once the subdivision developed. He believed the project was nice for Redding. Concerning the comments made by the Chairman about Mr. Emmerson, he understood Mr. Smith to mean that Mr. Emmerson would not do a shoddy job on the project. Determining that no one else wished to speak, the Chairman closed public comment at 6:32 p.m.

Commissioner Chris Young asked if traffic signals or turn pockets on SR 299 were anticipated. Mr. DeMallie stated that traffic improvements could be anticipated, but he felt it was premature to say what the improvements would be; that was the purpose of the EIR.

Commissioner Bert Meyer commented that items such as this one resulted in late-night meetings. Mr. Smith explained that the Planning Commission meetings started at 4 p.m., and ran as long as necessary. He asked Mr. Meyer if he desired that a special meeting be held for this item.

Mr. Young noted that the meetings started at 4 p.m., but that items on the agenda would be presented well after that time. He noted that this item tonight did not start until approximately 5:30 p.m. He advised the audience to inform their neighbors that more than likely, the returning item would last well after 5 p.m., and that they would still have a chance to speak.

Mr. Smith interjected that the Draft EIR would also be available through staff for review and that written comments, which necessitated a written response, would be included in the Final EIR.

Mr. Hamilton advised that the Draft EIR would also be posted online, in addition to being available in the public library.

Commissioner Emmett Burroughs explained that the public meetings allowed the Commissioners to hear the residents' concerns. He added that the project would be conditioned based on information that was received and that the Commissioners would be sure their concerns were addressed.

Mr. DeMallie stated that he would be happy to answer questions after the meeting. He also said he would be available for those who wanted to come into the Planning Division office during normal business hours. He thanked the speakers for their input and informed them that this would be a very thorough and exhaustive EIR.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Michele Goedert referred to comments made by City residents, when discussing subdivisions, that they did not know their road with a barricade at the end would eventually be extended for further development. She proposed that developers be required to sign a barricaded road stating that "This is a future connection to another road." She suggested including this requirement in standard subdivision conditions.

Planning Manager Douglas DeMallie advised that a new standard condition for the signing of barricades was adopted in 2007. He suggested the possibility of putting such signs on existing barricades.

Commissioner Jim Chapin agreed and suggested also putting the wording on the final map as a note so that homeowners would be informed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Development Services Director Jim Hamilton advised the Commissioners that the field trip to look at infrastructure improvements would be scheduled for October 14, 2008, beginning at 2 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Chairman Randall Smith adjourned the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

Jim Hamilton, AICP
Acting Secretary

Randall Smith
Chairman