



NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL #3
THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 2024, 7:00 P.M.
CITY HALL COMMUNITY ROOM
2929 TAPO CANYON ROAD

AGENDA

NC #3 Chair	Fred Peterson
NC #3 Vice Chair	Revathi Pudhota
NC #3 Secretary	Steven Baker
City Council Liaison	Council Member Mike Judge

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Pledge of Allegiance

2. Agenda Review

3. Approval of Minutes

4. Correspondence

5. Public Statements/Comments

This is the time allotted for public statements or comments on matters within the subject matter and jurisdiction of the Executive Board not on the agenda. Statements and comments are limited to no more than three (3) minutes per speaker.

6. Informational Presentation(s)

a. Gauge Your Emergency Preparedness: Are You Prepared?

No Action: Receive Information

7. New Business(s): None

8. City Staff Comments



9. Executive Board Comments

This is the time allotted for Executive Board member statements or comments on matters within the subject matter and jurisdiction of the Neighborhood Councils, to give an Ad Hoc Committee Report, or to make any announcements related to community events and other items of interest.

10. Adjournment: Thursday, September 12, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

/s/

Mara Malch
Deputy Environmental Services Director

If any interested individual has a disability that may require accommodation to participate in this meeting, please call the Neighborhood Council Program at (805) 583-6756. Upon advance notification, reasonable arrangements will be made to provide accessibility to the meeting.

MINUTES

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Welcome

Chair Fred Peterson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

Fred Peterson	P	Steve Busco	P
Revathi Pudhota	P	Andy Goitia	P
Steven Baker	P	David Kritzer	P
Rachel Bystrom	P	Robert Martins	P
Jon Gatewood	A	Nick Palky	P
Peter Carrube	P	Donald Wismar	P
Tony Hudacs	P	P=Present; E=Excused; A=Absent	

2. Agenda Review

No changes were made to the agenda.

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Peter Carrube and seconded by Steven Baker to approve the May 16, 2024 minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Correspondence

A resident emailed a public statement in opposition to the proposed Envision Specific Plan. Printed correspondence was distributed to the Executive Board and attending public.

5. Public Statements/Comments: None

6. Informational Presentation(s)

a. Running Effective Neighborhood Council Meetings

Kelly Duffy, Community Services Coordinator, welcomed the new Executive Board members. She announced agendas are sent via govDelivery; adding simivalleyca@public.govdelivery.com to your safe sender email list will ensure receipt. All Executive Board members should calendar the Neighborhood Council meeting dates. Executive Board attendance is crucial as a quorum is needed for City Business. Report absences to neighborhoodcouncils@simivalley.org before 5 p.m. Executive Board members were given an after-hours phone number to report absences after 5 p.m. Executive Board members should distribute Neighborhood Council brochures and business cards to neighbors and encourage attendance and participation as general members. The motion process was reviewed, emphasizing the Chair controls the meeting. Public statements, Executive Board comments and discussion procedures were also reviewed. Kelly Duffy

stated that Neighborhood Councils are non-political and should not be used for partisan politics or personal gain.

b. Strategic Urban Development: The Role of a Specific Plan in Land Use

Naren Gunasekera, Principal Planner from the City of Simi Valley, presented The Role of a Specific Plan in Land Use. A specific plan is a detailed framework for the development of a particular area within a city. It refines the broader policies outlined in the City's General Plan, which serves as a long-term blueprint for the City's growth and development. While the General Plan provides overarching priorities and directives for development, the Specific Plan focuses on a specific geographic area, often including unique standards and regulations that may override the general development code. The current General Plan, covering from July 2012 to 2030, includes an Environmental Impact Report and is available on the city's website, along with various Specific Plans for Simi Valley.

7. New Business

- a. Review of a request for a recommendation to the Planning Commission on the Envision Simi Valley Specific Plan, to create a community vision for the development of areas of Los Angeles Avenue and Tapo Street, including the provision of new housing, commercial, and recreational opportunities; a General Plan Amendment to amend the Land Use Map and related General Plan text; a Zone Change to amend affected zoning maps, and Development Code Amendment to remove the Tapo Area Planning and Los Angeles Avenue Planning Overlay Districts; and the adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and Mitigation Monitoring Plan for the subject application.

Audience members asked questions and comments relating to: Opposition for the Envision Simi Specific Plan, current commercial vacancy rates, rejected business permits, current street deterioration, and possibility of one way streets. A resident emailed a public statement in opposition to the proposed Envision Specific Plan. Printed correspondence was distributed to the Executive Board and attending public.

City staff responded to the above questions as follows: City Staff showed visual of 2024 Year to Date (YTD) commercial vacancy rates at 8.9%. Not every shopping center is vacant for the same reasons. City has not considered one way streets.

Executive Board members asked questions and made comments relating to: Reasons behind the City's desire for certain area developments, City's initial investment in development, support of housing before commercial development, state driven initiatives, State's ability to override the City, opposition to four story buildings, height restrictions due to land size, setbacks, step backs, waivers, incentives for developers, definition of high density

housing, current waitlist for businesses, street deterioration concerns, freeway and street congestion concerns, objection to lane closure on East Los Angeles Avenue, infrastructure, parking structures, current commercial vacancy rates, mixed-use planning for parking, state mandated parking requirements, Simi Valley Bicycle Master Plan and road diet considerations, simplified General Plan considerations, support for pedestrian friendly infrastructure, support for setbacks and recessed design, recommendation for City staff to study Thousand Oaks green painted bike lanes, bicycle/car collisions, concern Envision Specific Plan does not go far enough to encourage development, conditional use permitting process, permits for businesses that serve alcohol, future of current developments in the Specific Plan areas, statements the Envision Specific Plans feels like the San Fernando Valley, statements in support for love of Simi Valley as it is now, and protection of small town feel, Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District's role in the Envision Plan, and uses of State representatives.

City staff responded to the above questions as follows: The City secured state grants to assist local governments to update their planning documents and implement process improvements that will facilitate the acceleration of housing production. The State mandates a certain number of houses to be built and offers density bonuses for affordable housing. High density is defined as a minimum of 20 dwelling units per acre. The City prioritizes progress, not stagnation, promotes jobs and housing. Very rarely does the City make the initial investment. The City aims to expand housing capabilities, with staff, Naren Gunasekera, presenting visuals for population and vacancy. Four-story mixed-use buildings are allowed in mixed-use zoning. Affordable housing alternatives are limited. Housing and development are developer driven. Without standards, developers tend to do the minimum. The specific plan aims to counteract minimal compliance. The City offers developers incentives and community benefit bonuses. There is low risk for vacancy if developer proceeds. Vacancies are in the older commercial shopping malls. Parking requirements are future oriented. Shared parking for mixed-use will have legal agreements. Gas stations and businesses serving alcohol are Conditional Use Permitted developments. Current applications are grandfathered in. Businesses and housing already in the specific plan area will be grandfathered in. The City is trying to improve housing and mobility. The General Plan, including the Land Use Section, is available on the City's website. There is no State repayment obligation if the plan is rejected. Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District was included in the stakeholder's meetings. City Council collaborates with representatives and lobbyists.

Upon conclusion of the discussion, the following motion was made by Steven Baker and seconded by Andy Goitia:

MOTION: Recommendation to reject the Envision Simi Valley Specific Plan, to create a community vision for the development of areas of Los Angeles Avenue and Tapo Street, including the provision of new housing, commercial, and recreational opportunities; a General Plan Amendment to amend the Land Use Map and related General Plan text; a Zone Change to amend affected zoning maps, and Development Code Amendment to remove the Tapo Area Planning and Los Angeles Avenue Planning Overlay Districts; and the adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and Mitigation Monitoring Plan for the subject application **citing concerns with building heights over three stories, requirements for Conditional Use Permits (CUP) and impact on traffic and walkability, specifically, increasing traffic due to losing a lane on East Los Angeles Avenue.**

Executive Board vote:	10 Ayes;	2 Noes;	0 Abstentions
Audience vote:	2 Ayes;	0 Noes;	0 Abstentions
Unincorporated Area vote:	None		

The motion carried.

8. City Staff Comments

Community Services Coordinator Kelly Duffy announced Rancho Simi Recreation and Parks District offers a summer passport program exploring various locations and activities, with a chance to win prizes at the end of the season. Transportation to the Ventura County Fair is available on August 6, 2024. Register at <http://www.rsprd.org/recreation/trips> or call 805-583-6059 for more information. The Simi Valley Public Library offers diverse summer activities, including water-wise gardening classes. There is a free landfill event for residents on July 21, 2024. Visit the Simi Valley Landfill website, www.wm.com/location/california/ventura-county/landfill/free-days.jsp, or call (805) 579-7267 for more information. The City's Homebuyer Assistance Program provides up to 20% down payment assistance, subject to program guidelines. For more information, or to apply, contact housing staff at Housing@simivalley.org or 805-583-6779.

9. Executive Board Comments

Donald Wismar inquired about how to assist neighbors in finding the appropriate contacts for their issues. He asked if he should call agencies directly. The Executive Board members advised addressing concerns at the NC meetings during the Executive Board comment period. Kelly Duffy emphasized that Executive Board members should not contact agencies directly. Formal contacts on behalf of the Neighborhood Councils shall be made by or through the

Neighborhood Council Coordinator and all inquiries from residents on who to contact can be routed to staff.

Revathi Pudhota asked Executive Board members to familiarize themselves with the concept of charter cities. She also announced the City Council should tax Airbnb properties in Simi Valley to generate revenue for the City.

Rachel Bystrom expressed her dissatisfaction with the work done by Fiber City on her street. Executive Board member Peter Carrube mentioned that he contacted Fiber City to fix his street successfully and recommended that she do the same.

10. Adjournment: Thursday, August 15, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

By consensus of the Executive Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

DRAFT



Neighborhood Council #3
Executive Board
Simi Valley City Hall
2929 Tapo Canyon Road
Simi Valley, CA 93063

Re: Agenda Item No. 7a(Recommendation to the Planning Commission on the Envision Simi Valley Specific Plan, to create a community vision for the development of areas of Los Angeles Avenue and Tapo Street, including the provision of new housing, commercial, and recreational opportunities; a General Plan Amendment to amend the Land Use Map and related General Plan text; a Zone Change to amend affected zoning maps, and Development Code Amendment to remove the Tapo Area Planning and Los Angeles Avenue Planning Overlay District; and the adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration(MND) and Mitigation Monitoring Plan for the subject application).

Dear Members of the Executive Board:

Though I did not attend the Community Workshops, I have visited the designated City website's Envision Simi Valley web page, and read the Existing Conditions Report(March 2022), and Land Use Concepts Report(July 2022), as well as the draft Plan in your packet. While all of these plans are well compiled, and present a wonderful environment and delightful vision, I have concerns.

Back in the 1990s, I addressed the Simi Valley Community Development Agency's Community Development Project Areas. Redevelopment was new to me; planning for vacant parcels and blighted conditions, but the City taking on debt? I participated in the process because when I read the draft Plan for the CDA's Merged Tapo Canyon|West End Community Development Project Area, I was stunned to see that a road was depited from Cochran Street to Apricot Road! This was going to impact a friend's property! I met with City staff regarding my concerns, and was told no such road would be in the Plan. Years later, researching property taxes

pass through and residual taxing entities' and City's shares from the Ventura County Auditor-Controller's Office's website, I learned about other Project Areas:

1. Simi Valley West End 8936 (Agreements)
2. Simi Tapo Canyon 8937 (Agreements)
3. Simi Valley West End Anx 85 8939 (Agreements)
4. Simi Tapo Anx 85 8940 (Agreements)
5. Madera Royale Simi 8945 (Agreements)
6. Simi West End Anx 2 8949 (Agreements)
7. Simi Tapo Anx 3 8951 (Agreements)
8. Simi Tapo West End Merge 8961.

Among the property taxing entities that benefit from the Special District pass through and residual funds are:

1. Rancho Simi Rec and Park
2. El Rancho Simi Pioneer Cemetery
3. Calleguas Municipal Water District
4. Metropolitan Water Bond

Members of the Executive Board, within the past 2 years, I learned about the Commercial Development Project Area that was added to the Merged Tapo|West End Community Development Project Area that was approved by the City Council in 2011. Just yesterday, I learned that the term of this redevelopment plan is for 45 years!

Members of the Executive Board, the boundaries for the Los Angeles Avenue Specific Plan Area, and the Tapo Street Specific Plan Area look very familiar! I have searched the City's website, and have googled the Merged Tapo Canyon|West End Community Development Project Area looking for a map, but have come up empty. It would be most helpful for City staff, or the consultant to provide maps for this Project Area, and the added Commercial area.

1. Are the mapped areas for the Los Angeles Avenue Corridor, and the Tapo Street Area part of the Merged Tapo Canyon|West End Community Project Area, or the Project Area with the Commercial aspect, or both?
2. Will the proposed Specific Plans impact the Merged Tapo Canyon|West End Community Development Project Area, the Merged Commercial Tapo|West End Community Development Project Area, and the areas of other Community Development Project Areas for which there are "agreements"? If so, how?
3. Will the property taxing entities funding be impacted?

Members of the Executive Board, it was difficult to keep track of the Los Angeles Avenue related text in the draft Plan in your packet because there were references to the Los Angeles Avenue Planning Overlay(LAAPO), and Los Angeles Avenue Corridor. In other text references are made to the Los Angeles Avenue Specific Plan Area, and the Los Angeles Avenue Corridor Specific Plan Area. I also did not find any information regarding the TAPO, and the LAAPO; this information is found in the March 18, 2022 Existing Conditions Report. The reader, and legislative body(Executive Board) should not have to cross-reference documents in order to get a complete picture of what is being presented, and proposed.

Members of the Executive Board, I am opposed to the Envision Simi Valley proposal for the following reasons:

- #1 - The Tapo Area Planning and Los Angeles Avenue Planning Overlay District is proposed.
- #2 - The Mixed-Use Overlay will be removed from the Specific Plan Area.
- #3 - On Page 134 of the draft Plan it is stated in Table 6.4: Implementation Strategies, under Value Creation and Capture - Create funding streams for future improvements, that "Explore the potential of a tax increment financing tool, such as an EIFD, around the study area to support broader infrastructure needs and affordable housing. An enhanced infrastructure

financing district(EIFD) will increase funds over time by capturing the tax increment gained from increased property values. This tax increment will be separately allocated from the General Fund to be used toward a specific set of capital investments that support long-term goals listed in Chapter 1.0 of the Specific Plan." For 30+ years, I have followed the City's annual budgets, and have learned that projects funded through the General Fund do not always end up being funded through this revenue source; other revenue sources are used to pick up the tab!

- #4 - On Page 6, under Relationship to Other Plans, second paragraph, it is stated that "This Specific Plan wholly replaces the Tapo Area Planning Overlay(Tapo) District and the Los Angeles Avenue Planning Overlay(LAAPO) District and supersedes the provisions of other overlapping districts and underlying zoning designations."
- #5 - It is mindboggling, and unnerving that once again the Simi Valley Municipal Code is mentioned yet while so many sections have been updated the SVMC Title 4, PUBLIC SAFETY Chapter 5(EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS), and Chapter 6(FIRE PREVENTION) to date have not; I made my first request on October 16, 2020 in an email to the City Council, and ever since.
- #6 - Page 28, under General Plan Amendments/Zone Change/Zone Text Updates, first paragraph, it is stated "The allowable Levels of Service within commercial areas will also need to be updated as some elements of the Mobility Plan for the Specific Plan that involve repurposing lanes may result in Levels of Service below current levels laid in the General Plan.

It is stated on Page 26, second paragraph, under Los Angeles Avenue Corridor, that "...all parcels are within the LAAPO(Los Angeles Avenue Corridor Overlay) overlay district. LAAPO stands for Los Angeles Avenue Planning Overlay. Change LAAPO to LAACO, or change the district's name to reflect the abbreviation/initialism.

Include the year that the Tapo Area Planning and Los Angeles Planning Overlay District(Agenda Item's Subject/ Title) was formed as done for the Citywide Design Guidelines, and the Landscape Design Guidelines(Page 6).

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

1. Will the final plan have a cover page?
2. Will the final Plan have a Table of Contents?

Members of the Executive Board, I commend everybody that has participated in this great undertaking because I know what all is involved. It was an honor for me to have addressed and participated in the City's "Vision 2020 SEEDS for the Future", and its Implementation Plan; vital documents which are no longer found on the City's Search area, or online. Hope the City has a copy. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Teresa Jordan