

DATE ISSUED: January 17, 2008

REPORT NO. PC-08-03

ATTENTION: Planning Commission, Agenda of January 24, 2008

SUBJECT: **RANCHO VALLEY FARMS - PROJECT NO. 5029. PROCESS 5.**

OWNER/

APPLICANT: Pardee Homes (Attachment 17)

SUMMARY

Issue(s) - Should the Planning Commission recommend City Council approval to subdivide and develop ten single family lots with ten single family homes and guest quarters on a 41.83 acre site located between El Camino Real and Old El Camino Real, south of San Dieguito Road in the AR-1-1 zone in North City Future Urbanizing Area, Subarea II?

Staff Recommendation -

1. Recommend the City Council **Certify** Mitigated Negative Declaration 5029, and Adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and
2. Recommend the City Council **Approve** Vesting Tentative Map No. 8295, Planned Development Permit No. 8294, Site Development Permit No. 8292, Neighborhood Use Permit No. 411907 and Coastal Development Permit No. 419844.

Community Planning Group Recommendation - There is no officially recognized community planning group for Subarea II. For information purposes, plans for the proposed project were forwarded to the adjacent community planning group in Carmel Valley. The Carmel Valley Community Planning Board voted, on June 12, 2007, 10:0:0 to approve the proposed actions, with two conditions. See Discussion section of this report for more information.

Environmental Review - A Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 5029 has been prepared for the project in accordance with State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Guidelines. A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program has been prepared and will be implemented which will reduce, to a level of insignificance, any potential impacts identified in the environmental review process.

Fiscal Impact Statement - No fiscal impact. All costs associated with the processing of the application are recovered through a deposit account funded by the applicant.

Code Enforcement Impact - None with this action.

Housing Impact Statement - The project is eligible to pay a fee in-lieu of providing affordable housing because the project contains only ten dwelling units. The North City Future Urbanizing Area policies allow a project with ten or fewer dwelling units or projects with densities of less than one dwelling unit per acre to pay the in-lieu fee. The fee for Subarea II is presently equal to \$4,840 per dwelling unit. The project would pay a maximum of \$48,400.00 should all ten lots be developed with a dwelling unit each.

BACKGROUND

The Progress Guide and General Plan designate the site for estate residential and open space uses (Attachment 1). The site, located on a knoll overlooking the San Dieguito River basin, is adjacent to and north of the mouth of Gonzalez Canyon (Attachment 2). Gonzalez Canyon is an important wildlife corridor and open space feature of the Pacific Highlands Ranch subarea, and terminates in Subarea II into the San Dieguito River basin. The 41.83 acre site is located between El Camino Real and Old El Camino Real, south of San Dieguito Road in the AR-1-1 zone in Subarea II (Attachment 3). The site has been in agricultural production for several decades yet is presently fallow (Attachment 4). Several easements traverse the site for wastewater, storm drain, slopes, and electrical services. Of the property's 41.83 acres, approximately 33.45 acres are located within the Multiple Habitat Preservation Area (MHPA). Resulting from many years of agricultural activities, several unpaved agricultural roads cross the site. The San Dieguito Flood Plain fringe extends across portions of the site, yet not up to or over the area proposed for development.

The San Dieguito River and Lagoon are northwest and west of the site. It is within the San Dieguito River and Lagoon that a major wetland restoration project is under construction to create and enhance wetlands and tidal flushing. The Fairbanks Ranch housing development is located across Old El Camino Real east of the site. The El Camino Real Road and Bridge Widening project on El Camino Real Road is proposed north of San Dieguito Road.

DISCUSSION

Progress Guide and General Plan Analysis

The project site is within the “future urbanizing” phased development area of the 1979 Progress Guide and General Plan. Future urbanizing is an interim phase intended to prevent premature urban development and manage public and private resources efficiently. The 1993 City Council Policy 600-29 “Maintenance of the Future Urbanizing area as an urban reserve” also provides direction for managing growth within the future urbanizing area (FUA), and the proposed development, pursuant to the Agricultural Zoning regulations, is consistent with this policy. The Council Policy specifically allows for residential development pursuant to the rural cluster development provisions of the Planned Development Permit (PDP) regulations. The PDP regulations and AR-1-1Z one allow single-unit residential development at a maximum density of one dwelling unit per four acres. The project proposes ten residential lots within the 41.83 acre site consistent with this density.

The portions of the FUA within the northern part of the city are also subject to the policies of the 1995 North City Future Urbanizing Area (NCFUA) Framework Plan. The Framework Plan provides a blueprint for development of the NCFUA including requirements for shifting the 5 planning sub-areas to allow urbanization. The Framework Plan has not been submitted for certification by the California Coastal Commission and many of the planning areas in the San Dieguito River valley are within, or contain, areas of deferred certification. The proposed project will therefore require Coastal Commission approval.

The project site is within Subarea II of the NCFUA and is designated for Estate Residential development and Environmental Tier open space. The Framework Plan locates Estate Residential neighborhoods in areas with sloping terrain and significant natural features and where a visual break is needed between higher density compact communities. Appropriate housing types are “estate” lots less than one dwelling unit per acre and compatible uses identified include parks, places of religious assembly, group housing and agriculture. The proposed residential lots average approximately one-half acre and are considered estate-type lots consistent with the Framework Plan.

The Environmental Tier has been superseded by the Multiple Species Conservation Program Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA). Approximately 33.45 acres of the project site is within the MHPA and is proposed to be conserved as open space. The grading limits of the project have been slightly reduced allowing more of the development area outside the MHPA to be conserved as open space. The area of the site within the MHPA previously disturbed by agriculture would be planted with native plants to increase the biological value of the MHPA.

The Framework Plan also requires preparation of a single, unified subarea plan prior to development approval of any increase in density over one dwelling unit per ten acres. The proposed project is consistent with the regulations of the AR-1-1 Zone, as allowed by the approval of a Planned Development Permit, which allows for the clustering of units at a density of one for every four acres where the remaining open space is preserved. Within the future urbanizing area, except within the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan area, an increase in density of up

to one dwelling unit per four acres of lot area may be requested through a Planned Development Permit in accordance with Process Five subject to the regulations in Section 143.0402. The remainder of the premises shall be left undeveloped in perpetuity. Where an acre of development is proposed it must be balanced by four acres of open space and all dwelling units must be clustered to reduce the development impact. The zoning regulations incorporate and apply the adopted policies of the Framework Plan. Staff is not requiring a subarea plan for approval of the proposed project because public land acquisitions have greatly reduced private development potential in Subarea II. The subarea planning process would achieve objectives related to the need to site and pay for public facilities to serve new development and to site mixed-use town centers located within other subareas. Due to the diminished number of potential units within the Subarea II, the proposed ten unit project would not directly or incrementally generate a need to site new facilities. A needed trail facility has been identified by the Park and Recreation Department within this portion of Gonzales Canyon and the project is proposing to construct that portion of the trail which would cross the site. The project would also be assessed a development impact fee to fund any future facility needs and proposes the construction of a public trail to be located in the proposed open space.

A subarea plan for Subarea II would also incorporate the North City Local Coastal Program policies which limit filling and development within the 100-year floodplain of the San Dieguito River, provide wetland buffers and maintenance of viable habitats, and limit grading of scenic slopes on the southern end of the valley. The Environmental Tier has been superseded by the Multiple Species Conservation Program Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) and the proposed residential development area is located outside the MHPA and outside of the 100-year floodplain.

The Framework Plan's Urban Design Element contains implementing principles to guide development at the neighborhood and project level. The following design principles were considered in the evaluation of the proposed project and would be implemented by the project design:

The street system: Development should give special attention to the design of street edge conditions, strengthening the landscape character of buildings and open spaces as viewed from the street.

The development has limited street frontage along Old El Camino Real due to the open space configuration on the site. A proposed landscaped area, which varies in width from ten feet at the driveway entrance to 30 feet or greater at the transition with the natural open space, would soften the view of the residences from the street. Open, wrought iron fencing would be installed at the property line rather than solid masonry walls allowing the view of plantings within private yard areas to extend the landscaped area.

Development in hillside areas should conform to the unique natural setting of each site, retaining the character of existing landforms and preserving significant native vegetation. Within the Coastal Zone, strictly limit the grading of landforms of 25 percent grade or more.

A portion of the property is within Gonzales Canyon, a significant landform in the subarea. All development is proposed to be sited within the flatter portion of the site atop the existing knoll formerly disturbed by agricultural activities. The existing slopes and floodplain within the canyon would be preserved as open space in Lot "A." The proposed grading does not encroach into steep slopes (Attachment 5).

Mass grading shall be avoided. Grading will be limited to the building footprint, accessory uses and access corridors essential to development of the site. Disturbed areas on a site which are to be retained as open space shall be contoured to blend with natural slopes and shall be revegetated with native plants.

The area proposed for development is a relatively flat area atop the existing disturbed knoll. The proposed grading would extend to the edge of the proposed open space within the MHPA without the need for large fill slopes, therefore limiting the visual impact of building pads. Grading generally follows the site contours and graded areas as well as a portion of the disturbed area within the MHPA would be conserved as open space. All disturbed areas within Lot "A" to be dedicated as open space within the MHPA would be revegetated with native plant species.

The development pattern in hillside areas should be designed so that structures do not stand out prominently when seen from a distance.

No development is proposed in hillside areas or areas of steep slopes. The proposed structures would be setback from the edge of the building pad between 50 and 90 feet to contain all brush management within the development envelope and outside of the open space. These relatively large setbacks would reduce the visibility of the proposed structures as seen from public view corridors within the San Dieguito River Valley, such as El Camino Real and the future Coast-to-Crest trail along the San Dieguito River.

The Framework Plan also contains design principles that apply within the Focused Planning Area of the San Dieguito River Park. The subsequent adoption of the Concept Plan for the River Park added more extensive design and development standards. The project was reviewed for consistency with the River Park Concept Plan and approved by the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA). The JPA is the agency empowered to plan, develop and maintain the River Park. The City of San Diego is a member agency of the JPA.

Public Trails

The City's Park and Recreation Department and the JPA are planning a trail within Gonzales Canyon to connect the future Coast-to-Crest Trail with the trail system in Pacific Highlands Ranch. The applicant proposes a public trail link across their site that would serve multiple user groups including the relatively large equestrian community in this area. The proposed trail would cross the open space in Lot "A" and then be sited parallel to the proposed sidewalk within the Old El Camino Real right-of-way to ultimately connect with the properties south and east of the site. From the right-of-way, the trail would follow the toe of the slope adjacent to Lots 6 through 10 and connect with an existing trail within the open space of Lot "A" in the MHPA.

The trail segment in the right-of-way would be surfaced with an all-weather material suitable for all users, including horses, rather than concrete or asphalt. The trail would be separated from the Old El Camino Real right-of-way by a four foot wide concrete sidewalk with a six inch landscaped area between the sidewalk and trail. Where the sidewalk ends, approximately 30 feet from the south property line, the trail would transition to within one foot of the curb. Acknowledging that the right-of-way in this area is constrained, staff considered the placement of a physical barrier between the street and the trail as a means to provide a separation between users of the trail and users of the street. However, a solution that met all City requirements could not be achieved. The proposed trail plan and design implement the multiple objectives for a public trail segment across the project site.

Project Description

The project proposes to subdivide and develop a 41.83 acre site with thirteen lots; ten lots for construction of ten single family homes with the potential for guest quarters, four lots for a homeowners association and one lot for dedication to the City for open space (Attachment 6). Lot "A" would be dedicated in fee to the City of San Diego for open space, and Lots "B" through "E" for a private drive and other minor improvements which would be owned by the homeowners association. Lot "A" is entirely within the Multiple Habitat Preservation Area. Of the 41.83 acres, the net area of the development would measure 5.42 acres while 33.45 acres would be preserved for open space (Attachment 7). The project would provide 28 parking spaces for vehicles where 20 is required. Eight spaces would be available for guests. If guest quarters are developed, an additional parking space would be provided on each private property. Adjacent to the landscaped median within the private driveway would be the location of the eight guest parking spaces. Except at driveways into each lot, the entire curb line of the private driveway would be painted red to prohibit parking to assure emergency access to the interior of the subdivision.

Proposed Grading and Existing Utilities

Of the 41.83 acre site, 7.35 acres or 17.57 percent would be graded. The earthwork design would create a balance on the site. Excavation and embankment would both equal 28,000 cubic yards of material. No import or export of material would be required for the proposed design. Minor embankment slopes would be created by the design of the subdivision. Adjacent to lots 3 through 6 the fill slope would be fifteen feet at its highest. Adjacent to lots 6 through 10 the fill slope proposed would measure twenty-one feet at its greatest height (Attachment 6). According to City Council Policy 600-25, subdivisions in agricultural zones are not required to underground existing overhead utilities. The site is crossed by and or contains several easements for utility purposes granted to San Diego Gas and Electric Company and easements for drainage and sewer facilities and slopes granted to the City of San Diego. One line which crosses the site in a northeast to southwest direction is no longer necessary and will be removed. A 150 foot wide SDG&E easement contains large above ground lines of high voltage. These will remain in place along with the existing lines within the Old El Camino Real right-of-way as is consistent with Council Policy 600-25. All new utilities necessary to serve the proposed development will be placed underground.

Vehicular & Pedestrian improvements and Security

The single family lots would have access to Old El Camino Real from a private driveway. At its widest section the private driveway would be fifty-eight feet in width as measured from the face of the curbs on either side with a landscaped median of varied width. The median would vary from eighteen to fifty-four feet wide. Either side of the project entry would be punctuated by substantial stone pilasters and a low stone wall. A decomposed granite walk measuring four and one half feet wide would provide pedestrian access within the subdivision and to Old El Camino Real (Attachment 8).

A five foot wide trail through the open space and connecting to an existing unpaved trail would be constructed as a feature of the proposed project. The design and alignment of this trail has been coordinated with the Park and Recreation Open Space ranger responsible for this area. The trail would begin at the southeast property corner and proceed northerly along Old El Camino Real to a point just south of Lot 10. At this point the trail would continue in a westerly direction along the toe of a manufactured slope in Lot "E" and then connect to an existing trail within Lot "A." Rather than the standard curb to property line street improvements in the right-of-way, the trail adjacent to Old El Camino Real would also continue parallel to Old El Camino Real and terminate at the northerly portion of Lot "B" (Attachment 9). The Park and Recreation Open Space ranger responsible for this area would, with the help of a crew, create a shorter section of trail from Lot "B" to another existing trail in Lot "A" to establish a full loop for equestrians and other users.

At the project entry from Old El Camino Real and adjacent to lots 1 and 10 a low masonry stone wall would be constructed for an approximate distance of sixty-five feet. Together with the entry plantings this low stone wall would define the project entry. The rear yards of the lots and the eastern side yards of lots 1 and 10 would be secured by a square tube steel fence painted a color selected by the project landscape architect. The ten single family lots would be surrounded by security fencing constructed from square tube steel (Attachment 9).

Dedication of Open Space and Brush Management

Approximately 33.45 acres of the site is located in the MHPA and would be dedicated to the City of San Diego as and for open space purposes. No development within Lot "A", including brush management, would occur in this area with the exception of an open space trail (Attachment 6). All brush management necessary for the proposed project would occur within the boundaries of the single family lots and or within homeowners association owned manufactured embankment slopes. No brush management would occur within the MHPA. The brush management "zone one" is designed to vary from fifty-five to ninety feet in width and the "zone two" widths vary given the width and location of zone one (Attachment 9).

Architectural Site Plan and Building Design

The project would develop four typical models of various floor plans, detailing, exterior treatment and materials (Attachment 10). Two models would be single story homes, two would

be two-story homes. Buyers could choose from four different models. Each model would have three design motifs to choose from, yet within the subdivision there could be four different architectural styles. Models One and Two would have a choice of Tuscan, French Country and Spanish. Model Three and Four presents Monterey, French Country and Spanish as style choices. Each model and each style has differences and unique features to create a feeling within the subdivision of a custom development. With only ten lots in the project and so many architectural choices it is unlikely any one model and style would be repeated. Model One would offer two floor area options of either 3,759 or 3,771 square feet. Model Two would offer a floor area of 3,959 square feet. Model Three would offer 4,750 square feet of floor area and Model Four would have 5,311 square feet of floor area.

The Spanish models would include two inch recessed windows, concrete "S" tile roofing, wood beam covered porches, exposed rafter tails, stone and wrought iron detailing, stucco finish, sectional wood garage doors, arched entry way, Juliet balcony, and decorative clay tiles. The French Country models would include two inch recessed windows, porches with stucco posts and wood brackets, concrete flat tile roofing, sectional garage door, pot shelves and wood brackets, stucco finish, an entry gate and pilasters with lights, wood shutters, stone veneer at entries and wood balconies. The Tuscan models would include stucco columns at the porch, two inch recessed windows, concrete "S" tile roofing, exposed rafter tails, round tower element dressed with stone veneer, sectional garage door, stucco finish, shaded windows, an arch way entry and arched front door. The Monterey models would include stucco balconies with wood railing, concrete "S" tile roofing, wrought iron railing at Juliet balcony, two inch recessed windows, brick veneer at the garage wall, sectional garage door, Juliet balcony over arched front entry and a rotunda entry.

Model One could be sited on all lots except Lot 7, yet would require a ten foot side yard setback on five of the nine lots. Model Two could be sited on all lots except Lots 1 and 7, yet would require a side yard setback of ten feet on five of eight lots. Model Three and Four could be sited on any of the ten lots without any deviation to yard setbacks. Attachment 11 describes which of the four proposed models would fit on the ten proposed lots. The chart also describes which dwelling units would require a deviation to the minimum side yard setbacks and the minimum distance between housing units. Without the structures being plotted on the Site Plan, this attachment indicates the many unit type and configuration options available to buyers.

Project Deviations

The project proposes two deviations from the required setbacks of the AR-1-1 Zone. The first deviation would allow a minimum front yard setback of fifteen feet where garages are turned towards the side yard and not facing the private driveway. In all other cases the minimum front yard setback would be twenty feet. The second deviation would allow the interior side yard setback to vary as described in Attachment 11. A minimum of 30 feet shall be maintained between two adjacent two-story structures on adjacent lots and 25 feet shall be maintained between two adjacent one-story structures on adjacent lots. On lots where a one-story structure is adjacent to a lot with a two-story structure the setback shall be no less than 15 feet on each lot. A minimum of 25 feet shall be maintained between structures in which one is a one story structure. Based on the product types planned for the project, a range of possibilities exists for the plotting

of the proposed homes. Attachment 11 indicates the range of possible setback scenarios for each lot given the product type selected. Not all product types would fit on all lots. As such the plotting choices are limited and so are the number of possible deviations to the side yard setback.

Landscape design

Street trees, shrubs and ground cover species would be planted parallel to Old El Camino Real and within the project entry and median. The plant species selected for the project are all California native species. Tree species include *Quercus agrifolia*, *Platanus racemosa* and *Cercis occidentalis*. All street trees would be a minimum of twenty-four inch box specimens while trees used on manufactured slopes would be twenty-four inch box and five gallon specimens. Shrub species include *Salvia gregii*, *Muhlenbergia rigens*, *Cistus salvifolius* and *Heteromeles arbutifolia*. All shrubs would be planted from a five gallon containers minimum. Turf would not be used in the common and public areas.

In an effort to increase the natural rate of revegetation and restoration in the disturbed open space areas of Lot "A" a native hydroseed mix would be applied to those areas previously disturbed by agricultural activities (Attachment 12). Lot "A" would be deeded in fee to the City as and for open space purposes.

Storm Water Quality Controls

A storm water detention basin would implement some of the water quality control measures necessary to prevent water quality impacts from occurring downstream as a result of the project. The detention basin would be located in Lot "D." Other features would be implemented in connection with the standards of the state Water Quality Control Board and best management practices.

The proposed project is consistent with and would not adversely affect the Progress Guide and General Plan which designates this site for estate residential development and open space. The proposed project is in alignment with the land use policies of the Progress Guide and General Plan and the regulations of the Municipal Code.

Environmental Analysis

The Environmental Analysis staff of Development Services, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act, considered several issues of potential concern in their review of the proposed project. The subject matter included Biology, Paleontology, Archaeology, Geology, Soils and Erosion, Human health, Public safety and Hazardous materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Landform alteration and Visual Quality, Land use, Noise, Public services and utilities.

The proposed project would require mitigation to address potential impacts to Paleontology resources, Archaeology resources and Biological resources. No mitigation would be required for the other subjects studied by staff.

Community Planning Group Recommendation

The Carmel Valley Community Planning Board (Board) voted, on June 12, 2007, 10:0:0 to approve the proposed actions, with two conditions (Attachment 13). In the first condition the Board strongly recommends the City Engineer approve a superior design for improvements in the public right-of-way to provide an alternative surface (e.g. decomposed granite) pathway suitable for multiple uses including equestrian, instead of a concrete sidewalk. The second condition requests the trail portion of the development be fully constructed concurrently with the project grading and to remain open and useable throughout construction. Open and usable meaning to the same standard as generally applied to public streets.

The applicant and City staff have evaluated the planning group's recommended conditions. The standard public improvements from the face of curb to the property line have been replaced by provisions to provide a trail from the right-of-way to the open space. The trail, to be completed with the grading of the site, may remain open and usable throughout the development of the ten lots. No special conditions of approval are required to assure this occurs should the project be approved as the trail is shown on the proposed vesting tentative map.

CONCLUSION

Staff has reviewed the request for a Vesting Tentative Map, Planned Development Permit, Site Development Permit, Neighborhood Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit for a fifteen lot subdivision. All issues identified through the review process have been resolved in conformance with the adopted City Council policies and regulations of the Land Development Code. Staff has provided draft findings to support approval of the subdivision map, development and use permits (Attachments 14 and 15) and recommends the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council approval of the project as proposed.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Recommend the City Council **Certify** Mitigated Negative Declaration 5029, and Adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program;
2. Recommend the City Council **Approve** Vesting Tentative Map No. 8295, Planned Development Permit No. 8294, Site Development Permit No. 8292, Neighborhood Use Permit No. 411907 and Coastal Development Permit No. 419844, **with modifications.**
3. Recommend the City Council **Do Not Certify** Mitigated Negative Declaration 5029, and **Do Not** Adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
4. Recommend the City Council **Deny** Vesting Tentative Map No. 8295, Planned Development Permit No. 8294, Site Development Permit No. 8292, Neighborhood Use Permit No. 411907 and Coastal Development Permit No. 419844, **if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Westlake
Program Manager
Development Services Department

John S. Fisher
Development Project Manager
Development Services Department

BROUGHTON/JSF

Attachments:

1. Progress Guide and General Plan Land Use Map
2. Aerial Photograph
3. Project Location Map
4. Existing Conditions, sheet 2 of 22
5. Slope Analysis, sheet 4 of 22
6. Vesting Tentative Map, sheet 1 of 22
7. Proposed Site Plan, sheet 3 of 22
8. Fence and Wall Plan
9. Planting & Brush Management Plan with Trail Alignment
10. Perspectives, Elevations and Floor Plans
11. Setback Summary
12. Natural Revegetation Plan
13. Community Planning Group Recommendation
14. Draft Map Conditions and Subdivision Resolution
15. Draft Resolution with Findings
16. Draft Permit with Conditions
17. Ownership Disclosure Statement
18. Project Chronology