

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE ISSUED: October 30, 2008 **REPORT NO. PC-08-137**

ATTENTION: Planning Commission, Agenda of November 6, 2008

SUBJECT: SUNSET RANCH, PROJECT NO. 3501
PROCESS 4

**OWNER/
APPLICANT:** Robert T. Loftin and Rosalind T. Loftin, Trustees of the Robert T. and
Rosalind T. Trust dated September 1, 1999

SUMMARY

Issue(s): Should the Planning Commission approve the subdivision of an 18.78 acre parcel into 15 lots for the development of 8 single family homes with guest quarters? The project site is located at the intersection of Del Mar Mesa Road and Little McGonigle Ranch Road within the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan area?

Staff Recommendation:

1. **Certify** Findings to Master Environmental Impact Report No. 95-0353, Project 3501, and **Adopt** the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program.
2. **Approve** Vesting Tentative Map No. 430608, Planned Development Permit No. 5790, Site Development Permit No. 5787 and Neighborhood Use Permit No. 47875

Community Planning Group Recommendation: On July 12, 2007, the Del Mar Mesa Community Planning Group voted 8-0-1 to approve the project subject to conditions (see pages 5-6 of this report).

Environmental Review: Findings to Master Environmental Impact Report No. 95-0353, Project 3501, have 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 to reduce, to a level of insignificance, any potential impacts identified in the environmental review process.



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Fiscal Impact Statement: All costs associated with this project are paid from a deposit account maintained by the applicant.

Code Enforcement Impact: The applicant is subject to a Stipulated Judgment filed with the court on March 22, 2007 for grading within environmentally sensitive lands. The Site Development Permit and associated grading permits for this project will remedy the illegal grading. Neighborhood Code Compliance will continue to monitor the timelines imposed by the Stipulated Judgment to ensure the necessary ministerial permits and inspections are obtained.

Housing Impact Statement: The proposed project would provide for 9 market rate housing units. The North City Future Urbanizing Area (NCFUA) Framework Plan and the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan require new development to provide housing to accommodate the needs of low income households, as certified by the Housing Commission. The applicant has chosen the option of paying an in-lieu fee to the City's NCFUA Affording Housing Trust Account to meet their affordable housing requirement rather than provide the dwelling units. The Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan allows an in-lieu fee option in the amount of money equivalent to the cost of achieving the level of affordability required by the Del Mar Mesa affordable housing program, as determined by the San Diego Housing Commission.

BACKGROUND

The Sunset Ranch project is located on the north and south side of Del Mar Mesa Road, at the intersection of Little McGonigle Ranch Road, within the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan (DMMSP) area. The project site is designated Estate Residential within the DMMSP and is zoned AR-1-1. The Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) is located directly adjacent and to the north of the site and includes an area on the northern portion of the project site. The northerly portions of the project site located within the MHPA are not proposed for residential development, and no adjustment to the MHPA boundary is required or proposed. The Valley Ridge Estates residential development is located to the west of the site; the Meadows Del Mar residential development is located to the south; and residential development is planned for the properties located to the east (Carmel View, Project No. 72282). The site and areas to the west and east are zoned AR-1-1 (Agriculture-Residential), the area to the south is zoned AR-1-2, and the area to the north is zoned OC-1-1 (Open Space-Conservation).

The applicant is subject to a Stipulated Judgment filed with the court on March 22, 2007 for grading within environmentally sensitive lands (approximately 1.40 acres of the site area were disturbed between 2001 and 2004). The Site Development Permit and associated grading permits for this project will remedy the illegal grading.

The project requires the approval of a Vesting Tentative Map for the subdivision of land; a Planned Development Permit to allow deviations to minimum street frontage and the transfer of density (2 units) from the Terrazzo Bougainvillea project site (Project No. 6023, Final Map 15589); a Site Development Permit to allow development on a site containing environmentally sensitive lands; and a Neighborhood Use Permit to allow the development of guest quarters on

each lot. An alignment and grade study was prepared to analyze the extension of Little McGonigle Ranch Road, through the project site, from Del Mar Mesa Road to State Route 56 (Attachment 7). This approval includes upland mitigation for that portion of the future extension of Little McGonigle Ranch Road through the subdivision boundary. However, the future extension of Little McGonigle Ranch Road from Del Mar Mesa Road to State Route 56 will require additional CEQA review and a Site Development Permit.

DISCUSSION

Project Description:

The proposed Vesting Tentative Map, Planned Development Permit, Site Development Permit, and Neighborhood Use Permit would allow for the subdivision of 18.78 acres of land into a total of 15 lots for the future construction of 8 single-family residences with guest quarters, with lot sizes ranging from 1.0 to 1.5 acres. An existing residence on proposed lot 3 (1.5 acres) will remain. In addition, two on-site lots of 1.16 and 3.09 acres would be retained as open space in an open space conservation easement. The open space lots abut adjacent open space and form a natural system. The project also includes an irrevocable offer to dedicate approximately 2.7 acres within the subject property for the future northerly extension of Little McGonigle Ranch Road (which is not proposed or required as part of the Sunset Ranch project).

The AR-1-1 zoning allows one dwelling unit per 2.5 acres for a total of seven dwelling units for the entire site. The Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan (DMMSP) allows the use of a Planned Development Permit to achieve more units on a site designated as Estate Residential provided that the additional density is transferred from a site within Del Mar Mesa which has been designated as resource based open space. In this case, the Terrazzo Bougainvillea (VTM No. 9985) residential development has eight dwelling units available for transfer, and two of those dwelling units would be transferred to allow the development of 9 single-family lots on the project site. The Terrazzo Bougainvillea donor sites, which are properties within the DMMSP area, are designated as Resource Based Open Space, and have been deeded to the City (Lots 7, 8 and 9 of Terrazzo Bougainvillea Unit 1, Map 15589).

Residences would be surrounded by private yards with minimum front yard setbacks of 25 feet, side yard setbacks of 20 feet and rear yard setbacks of 25 feet as required. All setbacks off of Del Mar Mesa Road shall be 25 feet. The future residences would be required to conform to the "Sunset Ranch Architectural Design Guidelines." Access to the site would be provided from existing Del Mar Mesa Road and a proposed Valley Ridge Way. An eight-foot-wide decomposed granite (dg) hiking and equestrian trail would also be constructed along the eastern edge of the development adjacent to the MHPA as part of the project, and would be dedicated as a pedestrian and non-vehicular right-of-way connecting the proposed trail along Del Mar Mesa Road to the proposed community trail per the Valley Ridge Estates Project 97083.

Approximately 9.83 acres or 52 percent of the site would be graded for the proposed development. The project would require 24,000 cubic yards of cut and 24,000 cubic yards of fill. The maximum height of the fill slopes would be 21 feet and the maximum height of the cut slopes would be 15 feet. The slopes would be created at a 2:1 slope ratio, and the proposed

maximum 5-foot high retaining walls would be screened from public view through landscaping. Landscaping, brush management requirements, and maintenance procedures would be required to comply with the City of San Diego Landscape Standards, and the MSCP Adjacency Guidelines, and would follow the recommendations of the DMMSP.

Community Plan Analysis:

The project site is located within the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan (Subarea V of the City's former North City Future Urbanizing Area (NCFUA)). Subarea V remains part of the future urbanizing area and the allowable development density within the Subarea is subject to the provisions of either the AR-1-1 or AR-1-2 agricultural zones. The Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan (Specific Plan) was adopted in 1997 to guide development of Subarea V with the overall goal that the development be clustered to preserve the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) core resource area within the eastern portion of the community. The Specific Plan also contains community design guidelines and regulations to implement large-lot developments with a semi-rural character. The Plan's Community Design Guidelines are intended to maintain Del Mar Mesa's rural character and include standards for grading, landscaping, fencing, lighting, and lot size, in addition to the development standards of the agricultural zones. The proposed subdivision and associated design guidelines incorporate these standards.

The Specific Plan's grading objectives recommend development will be sited on the flatter areas of sites to preserve steep slopes and canyons. Generally, large quantities and large areas of grading are to be avoided and special care taken when sites develop to preserve landforms adjacent to open space. Where grading is necessary at the edges of the open space, daylight grading, excavations without manufactured slopes, is preferred. Split pads are encouraged to accommodate outdoor activity. The Specific Plan also recommends new slopes be contoured to blend with natural landforms.

The Specific Plan designates a portion of the site for Estate Residential development and a portion as resource based open space. The project proposes to develop the residentially designated portion of the site and conserve the remainder as open space. The project also proposes to construct a trail identified in the Specific Plan along the boundary between the open space canyon and the residential area.

Within the residentially designated portion of the site, grading is proposed to obtain useable lot area similar to surrounding developments. The proposed grading plan establishes vertical separation between some lots following the sloping landform of the site. Terraces are also incorporated within some lots to reduce the size of several proposed fill slopes. The proposed fill slopes would be contoured to mimic and replicate the natural landform. Slope ratios vary between the typical 2:1 vertical ratio and a shallower 4:1 ratio to create a rounded edge and more gradual transition with natural landforms. These slopes would also be landscaped with native and compatible non-native plant species to blend the manufactured and natural slopes.

The proposed site plan establishes a buffer between Del Mar Mesa Road and the developable portions of the residential lots to reduce the visual effects of the development, contributing to the preservation of the rural character of the community as envisioned by the Specific Plan. The

parkway within the fill slopes and street yards for Lots 1, 5 and 6 is proposed to be landscaped with a variety of low-water use plants. The parkway within the adjacent Valley Ridge Estates subdivision will range in width between 20 and 40 feet.

The Specific Plan encourages the use of shared streets and driveways to minimize access points and pavement in order to create the 'openness' characteristic of a rural community. This project is proposing shared access for some of the lots with the adjacent property which received recent approval of a Vesting Tentative Map (Valley Ridge Estates, Project 97083).

Environmental Analysis:

In 1995, the San Diego City Council directed the City Manager to assume the lead in the preparation of the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan (DMMSP) and accompanying (Subarea V) Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR). The DMMSP MEIR No. 95-0353 was prepared by the City of San Diego, as Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and finalized on June 6, 1996. On July 30, 1996, the San Diego City Council adopted the Specific Plan for Del Mar Mesa and certified the (Subarea V) MEIR.

The adopted DMMSP guides land use and development on approximately 2,042 acres of land in the Del Mar Mesa Subarea by providing land use designations, establishing development regulations, allocating density, providing for community facilities, establishing a circulation system, and defining the boundaries of an open-space system. The DMMSP provides for development of 685 dwelling units, a golf course and a 300-room hotel. The DMMSP (Subarea V) MEIR analyzed the impacts that would potentially result from the development described in the Specific Plan.

The City of San Diego conducted an Initial Study to determine whether the Sunset Ranch project may cause any significant impact that was not examined in the MEIR and whether the project was described as being within the scope of the DMMSP. The proposed project has been determined to be within the scope of the MEIR and the implementation is not expected to result in any additional significant impacts beyond those identified in the MEIR. All applicable mitigation measures set forth in the MEIR have been incorporated into the proposed project through a project-specific Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP). All mitigation measures as specifically outlined in the MMRP shall be implemented for the following issue areas: Land Form/Visual Character; Biological Resources/MHPA; Biological Resources/Habitat; Paleontological Resources; and Noise.

Del Mar Mesa Community Planning Board Recommendation:

The project was approved by the Del Mar Mesa Community Planning Board on July 12, 2007 by a vote of 8-0-1 (Metcalf recusing), subject to the following conditions:

Condition No. 1: A Home Owners Association (HOA) shall be responsible for maintaining the trails, right-of-way landscaping and parkway landscaping until a maintenance assessment district is formed.

- Staff Response: All landscaping indicated on the approved plans would be required to be maintained by the applicant and subsequent property owners. Staff has included a condition to address this concern (see Condition Nos. 27 and 28). No further action is recommended.
- Condition No. 2: The HOA shall maintain slope landscaping adjacent to the public rights-of-way as well as the slopes adjacent to the equestrian trail along the property's northerly boundary.
- Staff Response: All landscaping indicated on the approved plans would be required to be maintained by the applicant and subsequent property owners. Staff has included a condition to address this concern (see Condition Nos. 27 and 28). No further action is recommended.
- Condition No. 3: The developer shall adhere to the community signage program.
- Staff Response: Staff has included condition no. 50 to address this concern.
- Condition No. 4: The board's approval is contingent upon appropriate CEQA clearance issued by the City.
- Staff Response: Findings to Master Environmental Impact Report 95-0353, Project 3501, have been prepared for the project in accordance with the 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.
- Condition No. 5: Horse keeping shall be allowed on the subdivided residential lots in accordance with City guidelines.
- Staff Response: Staff has included condition no. 51 to address this concern.
- Condition No. 6: The HOA shall maintain the area of lot 4 north of the private drive.
- Staff Response: This area is shown on the Vesting Tentative Map as Lot F. Lot F is an HOA lot. No further action is recommended.
- Condition 7: The developer shall provide a 25 foot 'no build' easement in lot 6 adjacent to Del Mar Mesa Road.
- Staff Response: A 25-foot "landscape easement" has been provided along Del Mar Mesa Road adjacent to Lot 6. No building can occur within this easement.

Project-Related Issues:

Deviation – Minimum Street Frontage - The project is proposing to deviate from minimum street frontage. Lots 2, 4 and 7 will have no frontage on a public street, where the AR-1-1 Zone Development Regulations for Del Mar Mesa require 100-feet. Staff is in support of the deviation to street frontage. Lots 2, 4 and 7 will have frontage along a private access easement. The goal of the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan is to preserve the rural character of Del Mar Mesa while accommodating clustered development and the preservation of open space. In order to meet this goal, the project has been designed to limit the number of driveways accessing public streets and to preserve open space, resulting in a more desirable project than would be achieved if designed in strict conformance with the minimum street frontage.

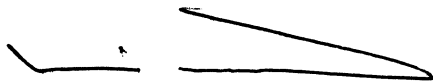
Conclusion:

The proposed Sunset Ranch project conforms to the land use density, land use designation and community design guidelines in the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan. The project would provide the required rural character and design features established in the DMMSP for estate residential development. The project as proposed is compatible with the existing surrounding developments. Findings required to approve the project are included in draft resolutions and draft conditions of approval have been prepared for the project.

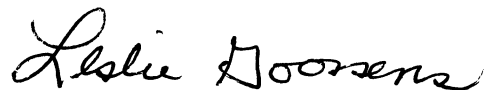
ALTERNATIVES

1. **Approve** Vesting Tentative Map No. 430608, Planned Development Permit No. 5790, Site Development Permit No. 5787 and Neighborhood Use Permit No. 47875, **with modifications.**
2. **Deny** Vesting Tentative Map No. 430608, Planned Development Permit No. 5790, Site Development Permit No. 5787 and Neighborhood Use Permit No. 47875, **if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.**

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Westlake
Program Manager
Development Services Department



Leslie Goossens, Project Manager
Development Services Department

KGB/LAG

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph
2. Community Plan Land Use Map
3. Project Location Map

4. Project Data Sheet
5. Vesting Tentative Map
6. Project Plans
7. Alignment and Grade Study
8. Draft Map Conditions and Subdivision Resolution
9. Draft Permit with Conditions
10. Draft Resolution with Findings
11. Community Planning Group Recommendation
12. Ownership Disclosure Statement
13. Project Chronology

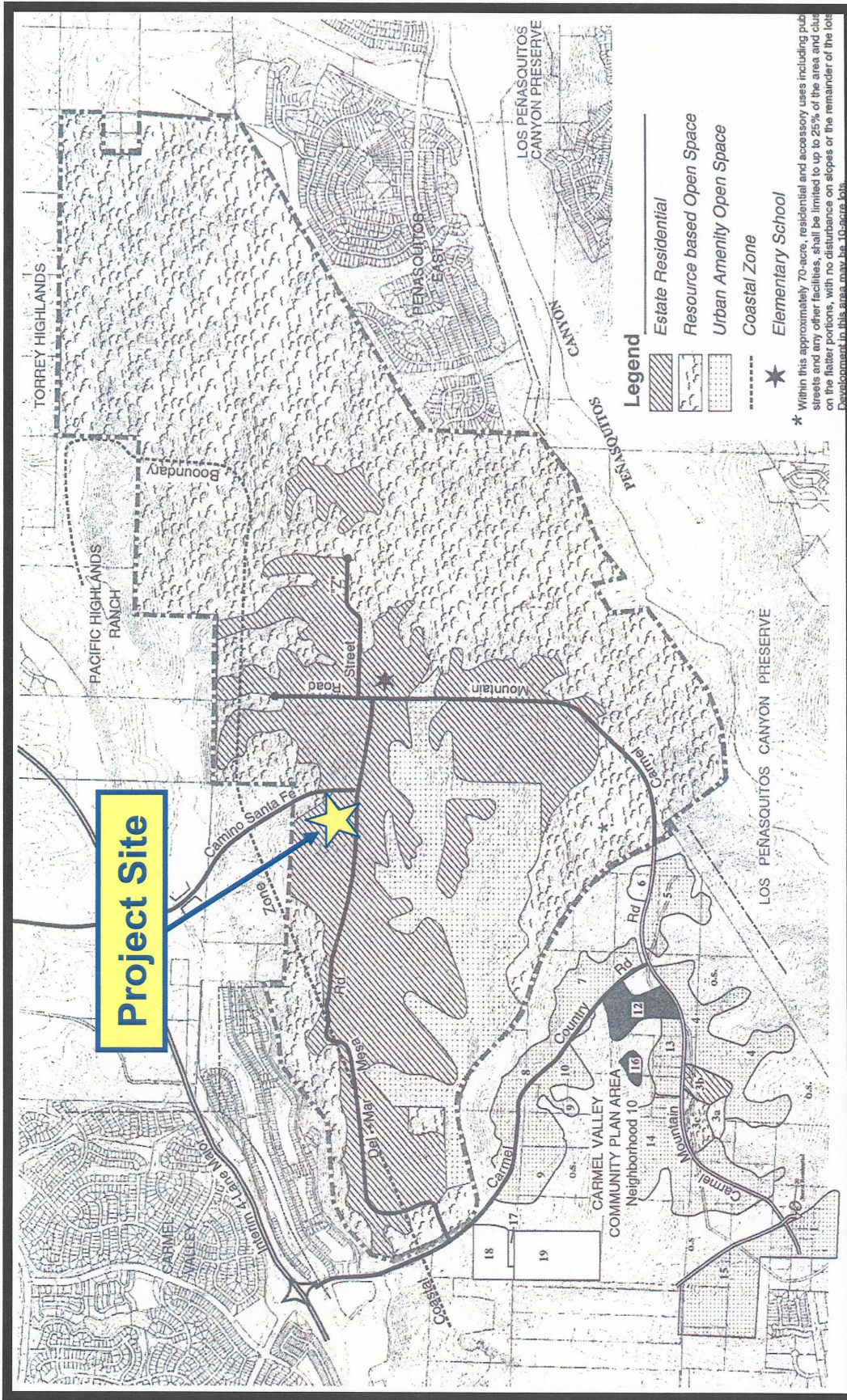


Aerial Photo

SUNSET RANCH – PROJECT NUMBER 3501

Del Mar Mesa Road





Del Mar Land Use Map

SUNSET RANCH – PROJECT NUMBER 3501

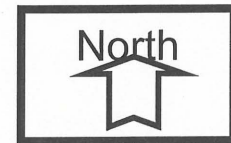
Del Mar Mesa Road





Project Location Map

SUNSET RANCH – PROJECT NUMBER 3501
Del Mar Mesa Road



PROJECT DATA SHEET

| | | |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| PROJECT NAME: | Project No. 3501 – Sunset Ranch | |
| PROJECT DESCRIPTION: | Subdivision of 18.78-acre premises to create 9 single-dwelling unit lots, 2 open space lots, and 1 IOD lot | |
| COMMUNITY PLAN AREA: | Del Mar Mesa | |
| DISCRETIONARY ACTIONS: | Tentative Map, Planned Development Permit, Site Development Permit, Neighborhood Use Permit (Process Four) | |
| COMMUNITY PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATION: | Estate Residential (1 du/2.5 acre) | |
| <u>ZONING INFORMATION:</u> | | |
| ZONE: AR-1-1 HEIGHT LIMIT: 30-feet LOT SIZE: 1-acre minimum FLOOR AREA RATIO: n/a FRONT SETBACK: 25-feet SIDE SETBACK: 20-feet STREETSIDE SETBACK: 25-feet REAR SETBACK: 25-feet PARKING: 2 spaces per dwelling unit, and 1 additional space per guest quarters | | |
| <u>ADJACENT PROPERTIES:</u> | LAND USE DESIGNATION & ZONE | EXISTING LAND USE |
| NORTH: | Open Space; OC-1-1 | Open Space |
| SOUTH: | Urban Amenity Open Space; AR-1-2 | Single-Family/ Golf Course |
| EAST: | Estate Residential; AR-1-2 | Single-Family Residential |
| WEST: | Estate Residential; AR-1-1 | Single-Family Residential |
| DEVIATIONS OR VARIANCES REQUESTED: | Deviations to minimum street frontage | |
| COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: | On July 12, 2007, the Del Mar Mesa Community Planning Group voted 8-0-1 to approve the project subject to conditions. | |