Carmel Valley Association
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Since 1949

Oral Statement of Glenn Robinson, CVA President
Re: Rancho Canada Subdivision Scoping Hearing
May 19, 2005

The Carmel Valley Association has expressed a number of concerns pertaining to the proposed 281-unit subdivision at Rancho Canada. Our communications to Monterey County include our initial letter of May 17, 2004 and our recent letter of May 9, 2005, in addition to numerous other communications. This huge project contains the potential to permanently alter the quality of life for all residents of Carmel Valley. As such, CVA hopes and expects that Monterey County will fully answer our concerns and the concerns of all residents of Carmel Valley before preceding with consideration of this subdivision.

Our concerns may be summarized as follows:

1. This project is clearly subject to the subdivision moratorium currently in effect in the Carmel Valley Master Plan area. Please explain why this application is even being considered given this prohibition.

2. This project is clearly subject to state law Government Code 66413.5 that prohibits the final approval of a major subdivision while an incorporation application is pending. Please explain why the application does not note this highly relevant law, and how the County will address the issue.

3. This project is clearly inconsistent with numerous policies contained within the Carmel Valley Master Plan (as detailed in CVA's letter of May 9, 2005). Please explain how a project so inconsistent with governing policies was not rejected *a priori* by the County.

4. Related to point #3, the sheer size and density of this project in no way can be considered consistent with preserving the rural character of

Carmel Valley, the Number 1 planning goal of the CVMP. Please provide a definition of "rural character" that would accommodate the paving-over of 36 acres to build 281 homes.

5. As detailed in Dr. Tim Sanders' letter to the County, the traffic study is fatally flawed to the point of public embarrassment. Carmel Valley Road and Carmel Hill are already among the most congested and problematic traffic areas in the County. We simply cannot afford sloppy analysis on such an important issue. Please explain how the County is planning on fixing the flawed traffic study.

6. This project will clearly impact water flows during periodic flooding of the lower Carmel River in ways that are not even known. Approximately two-thirds of the houses will need to be raised above the flood plain with fill, and the riverbanks will have some 200,000 cubic yards of dirt dug out of them. The application cannot seriously address flooding issues until the current FEMA mapping is completed. Please explain why this application is progressing in the absence of the FEMA maps, thus in the absence of any scientific knowledge of the potential flooding impacts of the project.

7. We live in a geologically active area. There are three earthquake fault lines close to the project. Approximately two-thirds of the homes are to be built completely on fill, a substance that is most prone to liquefaction during earthquakes. Fill liquefaction produces extremely high rates of death and injury during earthquakes. Given the state of geological knowledge we have today, please explain why the County would even consider putting so many families at risk by allowing construction on such unsafe soil.

8. This project is being "sold" as an affordable housing project. In reality, this is not really the case. It includes the County minimum of 20% inclusionary or affordable housing. The project also includes 30% workforce housing for workers earning up to about $95,000 per year, but only on a temporary basis (as of the last time we were briefed). If this provision remains, then after 15 years this project loses the workforce housing and consists only of the bare minimum affordable housing and over 200 high-end homes. Please explain why this project seems to be getting special consideration for a characteristic that it really does not possess.

9. While we all agree on the need for some level of affordable housing provision in Carmel Valley, it remains at the level of assertion rather than proven level. What is the expected use level of affordable housing in the CVMP area (the proper boundary)? On what basis, specifically, is that expected use level arrived at? Put another way, how many jobs in the CVMP would qualify for affordable housing consideration, and how many of those job holders would likely take advantage of the opportunity? This is a scientific and good-planning question that needs a solid answer before projects get approved based on it. How does the Rancho Canada project fit into the expected use level?

Thank you. We look forward to your thoughtful deliberations on these and other critical issues pertaining to this very large subdivision, and we look forward to receiving your detailed replies to these questions.

Sincerely,

Glenn E. Robinson
President
Carmel Valley Association