

CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

City Hall

Monday, May 23, 2011

***MINUTES***

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Hidden Hills was duly held in the Council Chambers at the City Hall, 6165 Spring Valley Road, Hidden Hills, California 91302 on Monday, May 23, 2011 at the hour of 7:30 p.m. Mayor Jim Cohen called the meeting to order and presided thereover after asking resident Dani Shulman to lead the Council and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Council:

Mayor Jim Cohen  
Mayor Pro Tem Stuart E. Siegel  
Council Member Steve Freedland  
Council Member Marv Landon  
Council Member Larry G. Weber

Staff:

City Engineer Dirk Lovett  
City Manager Cherie L. Paglia

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Upon MOTION of Council Member Freedland, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Siegel and unanimously carried, it was resolved that the agenda for the May 23, 2011 regular meeting be approved as submitted.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Cohen made the following announcements:

Congratulations to the Association for a very successful welcome party Saturday night; it was well attended, the food was good, and everyone had a good time.

A belated happy birthday to Council Member Landon's wife Jill (this past Friday, 5/20).

City Hall, Building and Safety, and the Community Center will all be closed and there will be no inspections on Monday, 5/30, in honor of Memorial Day.

Council Member Weber wished a happy 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary to Public Safety Commissioner Kim Ulrich and her husband Fred (Tuesday, 5/24).

## **AUDIENCE**

There were no questions or comments at this time.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **A. Los Angeles County Fire Department Report - April**

The following report was presented by Battalion Chief Anthony Williams:

During the month of April, there were 7 responses, including 4 rescues, 2 others (false alarm/good intent), and 1 snake removal; this is the time of year that rattlesnakes will be coming out, so everyone should be on the lookout for them; the Department will also be starting its annual brush clearance inspections; due to the late rains, this will be a chore, as there are a lot more grasses growing that residents will have to stay on top of.

### **B. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Report - April**

Lt. John Benedict provided the following information:

There were two incidents during the month of April; one was a residential burglary on Wingfield; a sliding glass door was smashed to gain entry, resulting in jewelry being taken from the master bedroom; two hand made vases were taken from the front porch area of a home on Hoback Glen; there was one collision, with a Round Meadow School crossing guard being accidentally hit on the right hip by a vehicle's mirror; seven citations were issued, with six being hazardous, and one non-hazardous; there were no parking citations and no DUIs.

Council Member Freedland asked if patrols could check the end of Dixon Trail Road after dark, as it seems there are gatherings starting up again almost every evening in that location. Lt. Benedict said he would have the deputies check the area.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **A. City Plaque/Hidden Hills Youth Recognition Program Recipient**

Mayor Cohen announced the following:

This is the most enjoyable part of the evening; tonight's recipient of the Hidden Hills Youth Recognition Program is **Ms. Dani Shulman**, a 6<sup>th</sup> grader who attends Viewpoint School; the Council has a copy of her latest report card (all As), and a copy of a letter from the Head of the Middle School, Greg Armbrister, which also included comments from other teachers; what was very impressive, is that the school did an extensive review of all of its students, not just those from Hidden Hills, and selected Dani; not only did all of the Middle School community say they thought very highly of Dani as a student, but also thought very highly of her as a person.

When Mayor Cohen asked if anyone wished to speak, Dani's father said this was a very proud moment, and that it was so nice that Mr. Armbrister was also in attendance. Mayor Cohen then presented a City plaque to Dani, who thanked the Council and everyone who has helped her, stating "I love where I am right now".

### **B. Proposed Development of Mureau Road Senior Community Project in the Unincorporated Area of Los Angeles County – Terraces at Hidden Hills**

Mike Sanders (with the help of John Polito), representing Four Star Reality Group, the developers of the project, provided the following information:

The proposed 26 acre project is located on Mureau Road, just east of the Ahmanson Ranch entrance; the project has not changed much since they made an earlier presentation some time ago; they were asked to remove Hidden Hills from the title, so the project is now being called the Terraces Senior Village; they will soon be starting public meetings and hearings with Los Angeles County (the property is in the unincorporated County area), so wanted to bring the Council up to date; their vision is to design a state-of-the-art senior care facility allowing aging in place; 70% of the site will be open space; within the project there will be independent living, maintenance free independent living, assisted

living, and dementia care; it is very disruptive for seniors to be moved from place to place as their needs change; everything will be here in one place, providing a familiar environment; this area of Los Angeles has an acute shortage of quality senior housing, which is what they are trying to provide; as people in the area get older and can't maintain their larger homes, this provides a housing option allowing seniors to remain close to family, friends, restaurants, and an area familiar to them; the project will be licensed by the State of California, and will provide a variety of programs to enhance healthy lifestyles, mental stimulation, and longevity for seniors; meals, activities, supervised programs, medical supervision, and transportation will all be available to the residents; it has been thoughtfully designed and placed in a hidden, previously graded area on the site; the style will be Mediterranean, with the buildings no higher than three stories; dark sky lighting will be used, as well as native and drought resistant planting; they will be using reclaimed water, making a line available close to Hidden Hills if the City wants reclaimed water in the future for irrigation; Mureau Road will be improved at the entrance to the project, with turn lanes for a safe entrance and a right turn only exit onto Mureau to the west due to sight limits; even though the Village will have a vast array of amenities (such as banking, beauty shops, food, etc.), transportation vans and cars will still be available to take residents to medical appointments and shopping; a professional market study was commissioned, which showed a shortage of senior housing, and that many of the residents will probably come from Hidden Hills and Calabasas; the project will be a very high standard of design and livability.

Mayor Cohen said the project did not appear to be very different from what was presented two years ago, and that the concerns expressed then were still some of the same now – visibility, traffic, fire, noise, and lighting. Council Member Freedland asked if Mureau Road was going to be widened, if the project was going to address an existing drainage issue to the east, what the schedule was, and how many trips per day would be generated. Mr. Sanders responded as follows:

They will be extending the five lanes coming from the west to the site, and then near Mesivta, the road will go back to the current lanes; they will provide a left turn pocket into the site coming from Las Virgenes Road, and a right turn only pocket exiting the site; coming from Hidden Hills, a right turn stacking lane into the project site will be physically added; two bicycle lanes will be provided, one on either side of the road; east of Mesivta there is a drainage course that they will not be near; there is a drainage facility that was constructed by Caltrans to allow water to go into a pipe and under the freeway; they will be expanding that to take the runoff from their site; they will also be providing easements and linkage to some of the regional trails; 17 oak trees will be removed (8 at the entrance), which will be replaced with multiples of the same; regarding the fire

concerns, the State requires fire proof construction and they will have sprinklers; the project is being designed as a protect in place, so during a large fire, the seniors will remain on site; the approval process should take about 24 months, with the ground breaking shortly after that, which should be about an 18 month process; this is in a sensitive area of Los Angeles, and a lot of people have been looking at the project; they have met with all the major groups, have taken a lot of input, and feel they've addressed most of the issues; at the peak hours, the project will add less than 20 trips per day; seniors don't generate much traffic, and they will also stagger deliveries and worker hours; they have tried to aim the traffic more toward Las Virgenes Road.

Mayor Cohen reminded everyone that peak hour traffic at Round Meadow School is really bad. Council Member Freedland wondered if they had considered a "no right turn" into the project to encourage people to use the Las Virgenes Road off-ramp, to which the answer was no. In response to Mayor Pro Tem Siegel, Mr. Polito explained that "by others" on the legend just meant someone else would be doing the design of that particular item.

Mayor Cohen asked about the parking and signage, to which Mr. Sanders replied as follows:

There will be some subterranean parking, and about 75 surface spaces; they will be providing way over the required minimum; they are expecting that the clientele will be pretty affluent; the signage will be very minimal – there will be a 3' berm monument sign in the project's driveway median (not on Mureau).

In response to Council Member Landon's questions regarding the visibility from Hidden Hills, and the installation of story poles, Mr. Sanders and Mr. Polito explained the following:

There is a prominent ridge, and the project is being built in a bowl, so they do not believe it will be visible from Hidden Hills; they can provide sections; there might be one house in Mureau Estates that will see the southern portion of one building; they still have a full EIR to prepare, and once the public hearings begin, the story poles will go up.

Mayor Cohen expressed the Council's appreciation for the presentation and the changing of the project name, inviting the applicants to come back anytime in the future to provide additional information if they would like.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **Variance No. V-376 24355 Little Valley Road New Single Family Residence**

The following staff report was presented by City Engineer Dirk Lovett:

The applicant is requesting a variance for a new single family dwelling that will encroach 20' into the required 50' front yard setback; there is currently a single family dwelling and detached garage on the property which will be demolished; the current encroachment is 27' into the setback, with the new structure being pulled back 7', resulting in the 20' encroachment; notices have been posted and sent to all those within a 500' radius, with no comments, either for or against, being received; the lot is just under one acre in size; all of the houses on the street have similar encroachments into the setback; the applicant feels the variance is necessary due to the shape and size of the lot, and the reduced pad area; as with all variances, the Council needs to make four required findings, all of which staff feels can be made; staff is therefore recommending approval of the variance.

Mayor Cohen opened the public hearing at this time. George De La Nuez, the architect for the project, pointed out that they went up and down the street verifying setbacks, and that the 30' setback is to the front porch and balcony, with the remainder of the house actually pulled back an additional 11'.

Council Member Landon asked for confirmation that there were no encroachments into the side yard setback, with that confirmation being given. Council Member Landon then stated the following:

He has visited the site several times; he does not like variances if there is any way to stay away from them; but in this case, all the houses in the area fit the same category; this house is being pulled even further back from the road than the existing structure, and it will be in conformity with a majority of the other houses on the street; he therefore is personally in favor of approving the variance.

Council Member Weber agreed with Council Member Landon. All of the Council Members at this time, with the exception of Mayor Pro Tem Siegel, stated they had visited the site. In response to Mayor Cohen, Mr. De La Nuez stated that the two-story entry did not contain any living space, and that there was only one room of the living portion that was in the setback.

As there were no further comments, Mayor Cohen closed the public hearing. Upon MOTION of Council Member Weber, seconded by Council Member Landon and unanimously carried, it was resolved to approve the requested variance as all four of the required findings could be made, and to adopt by title only Resolution No. 837 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS SITTING AS THE PLANNING AGENCY APPROVING A REQUEST FOR VARIANCE NO. V-376 FOR A NEW SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE WITHIN THE FRONT YARD SETBACK LOCATED AT 24355 LITTLE VALLEY ROAD.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

- A. City Council Minutes – May 9, 2011**
- B. Demand List**
- C. Disbursement List – April**
- D. Financial/Treasurer’s Report**

Upon MOTION of Mayor Pro Tem Siegel, seconded by Council Member Landon and unanimously carried on roll call vote, it was resolved to approve items A, B, C, and D of the consent calendar as submitted.

**MATTERS FROM CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

- A. Report from 5/17/11 Hidden Hills Community Association Board of Directors Meeting**

The City Manager pointed out that the Association would like everyone to return the horse census that was mailed out, and that the Kids Welcome Party would be held on 6/18. The report was received and filed.

- B. Report from Sphere of Influence Adhoc Committee Meeting with City of Calabasas Representatives**

The following report was provided by Council Member Freedland:

He and Mayor Pro Tem Siegel (and the City Manager) met with Calabasas Council Member Jonathan Wolfson and City Manager Tony Coroalles recently to discuss potential annexation opportunities that Calabasas has, two areas of which are in the Hidden Hills' Sphere of Influence (SOI); the two areas are Mountain View and Craftsmen's Center; Calabasas is currently working on the annexation of Mont Calabasas (at the far northern end of Las Virgenes Road, on the west side), but the city is not sure about the annexation of Mountain View; Calabasas was originally approached by residents of Mountain View regarding annexation, but then there were others who expressed opposition; mutual opportunities and interests the two cities might have were discussed, but Calabasas is still in the very early stages in relation to these possible annexations.

Mayor Pro Tem Siegel agreed, stating that other than the Mont Calabasas annexation, Calabasas is really only in the thinking stages currently; there is indecision regarding Mountain View Estates, and the annexation of Craftsmen's Center is a long range plan. In response to Mayor Cohen, Mayor Pro Tem Siegel said the cities will remain in contact regarding these issues, but no other meetings have been scheduled at this time.

### **MATTERS FROM STAFF**

#### **Discussion and Direction Regarding Possible Comments in Response to a Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report form the City of Calabasas for the Proposed Messenger Development at 4790 Las Virgenes Road**

City Engineer Dirk Lovett provided the following staff report:

We received a Notice of Preparation and Initial Study from Calabasas regarding the Messenger project; if we wish to comment on the project and the environmental documents, those comments are due by June 9<sup>th</sup>; the proposed project is located at the east end of Agoura Road where it crosses Las Virgenes Road; the 77.5 acre property is currently vacant; the project would consist of a 21,400 square foot shopping center, 158 residential units (75 multi-family and 8 senior affordable), and some recreational facilities which look like tennis courts; the project may have potential significant impacts, most of which will not affect Hidden Hills; but since the project is only about two miles from the Mureau Road/Round Meadow Road corner, where traffic already backs up due to Round Meadow School traffic, there could be some impacts in that location; the EIR will require a traffic study, and he would recommend that Hidden Hills send a letter asking for that location to be addressed in the study, and expressing any other concerns of the Council.



Mayor Pro Tem Siegel wondered where the children living in the new project area would attend elementary school, and how the project would affect that portion of the historic El Camino Real trail just to the east of the project. Mayor Cohen thought the traffic implications should definitely be questioned, with Council Member Landon agreeing. As there was no further discussion, staff was directed to draft a letter to Calabasas asking for the following items to be addressed: traffic impacts on Round Meadow School and the Round Meadow Road/Mureau Road intersection, elementary school impacts due to additional attendance, and any impacts on the existing trail to the east of the project.

**CLOSED SESSION**

**CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL:**

**Existing Litigation Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(a): Number of Potential Cases – 1**

**Paul Ottosi v. City of Hidden Hills, et. al., Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. LC 089678**

There was no need for a closed session at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, upon MOTION of Mayor Pro Tem Siegel, seconded by Council Member Weber and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adjourn the regular meeting of May 23, 2011 at 8:18 p.m..

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Jim Cohen, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Cherie L. Paglia, City Manager/City Clerk