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Palos Colorados Visual Simulation Study

1 message

Clifford Tong <ctong@burtonvalley.com>**Fri, Feb 2, 2007 at 9:36 AM**

To: planning@moraga.ca.us

Cc: Lori Salamack <lori@moraga.ca.us>, Niroop Srivatsa <NSrivatsa@ci.lafayette.ca.us>, Don Tatzin <Tatzindon@aol.com>, LHC-Board@yahoogroups.com, Falk <SFalk@ci.lafayette.ca.us>

Dear Moraga Planning Commission,

Unfortunately I will not be able to attend your hearing on Palos Colorados on February 5th, but wanted to offer my comments on the December 2006 Visual Simulation Study conducted by the Dahlin Group on behalf of Richfield Investment.

First off, I would like to commend Richfield for taking my recommendation to include the Lafayette Community Center ballfield (viewpoint A14) in its study - this is clearly the most visible location from which to view the proposed Palos Colorados development. Unfortunately the study's photo simulation is grossly inaccurate and therefore its conclusion that the development "does not present greater visual impacts" (p. 5) when compared to the 1999 Settlement Agreement is patently false.

The developer did not perform a visual analysis from this location as part of the 1999 Settlement Agreement, but had it done this it is possible an agreement would not have been reached in the first place due to the high visibility from such a public venue. The photo simulation of the Settlement Agreement plan from this location (View A14.4) is grossly inaccurate because it assumes very tall homes and golf course buildings. Note that the photo simulation for the current plan (View A14.3) shows much shorter homes and the removal of golf course buildings to show a starker visual comparison with View A14.4.

In reality I don't believe any golf course buildings would have been visible under the Settlement Agreement plan because they would not have been allowed to be built on a ridgeline or designed with such extreme bulk and mass.

If you look at the overlay of the Settlement Agreement plan and the current plan, you will see that there are two areas that would be of increased visual impact to Burton Valley: a) new lots #88-93, and b) new lots #42-45. New lots #42-45 have been relocated to the Burton Valley side of the ridgeline and should therefore appear in View A14.3 - they don't. New lots #88-93 are part of the new street on the current plan that includes new lots #88-105, which are shown on View A14.3.

Based on this evidence and having walked both the project and viewing evaluation sites, my conclusion is that the current proposed plan does have significantly greater visual impacts to Burton Valley than the 1999 Settlement Agreement plan. I would also support the initial findings of the City of Lafayette's letter to you dated 1/12/07 making the same conclusions about the project when viewed from the Lafayette Bart station.

Sincerely,

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