



Planning Commission Staff Report

October 22, 2008
Item 6.a

- SUBJECT:** PSP-11 and PRZ-44, Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch Project, Corresponding Environmental Impact Report (EIR), and Planned Unit Development (PUD) Rezoning/Prezoning for Staples Ranch
- APPLICANT/
PROPERTY OWNER:** Alameda County Surplus Property Authority (ACSPA)
- GENERAL PLAN:** *Alameda County General Plan—Mixed-Use/Business Park*

City of Pleasanton General Plan—Medium Density Residential (2 to 8 dwelling units per gross acre) and High Density Residential (greater than 8 dwelling units per gross acre); Parks and Recreation; and Retail/Highway/Service Commercial, Business and Professional Offices
- SPECIFIC PLAN:** Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan
- ZONING:** 122.5 acres of the 124 acre project site are located in unincorporated Alameda County and are currently zoned Agriculture by Alameda County and 1.5 acres of the project site are located in the City of Pleasanton and are zoned Planned Unit Development-Medium Density Residential (PUD-MDR).
- LOCATION:** The project site is located at the southwest corner of the I-580 and El Charro Road intersection.
- ATTACHMENTS:**
1. Exhibit A: Draft Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch, Dated October 2008 (including pages 42 and 43, missing from previously distributed draft)
 2. Exhibit B: Draft Environmental Impact Report, Dated April 2008 (previously distributed)
 3. Exhibit C: Final Environmental Impact Report, Dated August 2008 (previously distributed)
 4. Exhibit D: California Environmental Quality Act Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations
 5. Exhibit E: PUD Rezoning/Prezoning Map
 6. Exhibit F: Correspondence

BACKGROUND

In October of 1989 the City Council adopted the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan (SDSP), a specific land use plan for 293 acres located east of the Pleasanton Meadows subdivision and bordered by Trenery Drive on the south, I-580 on the north, and El Charro Road to the east. The City's 1986 General Plan called for the development of a Specific Plan for the area and designated the area with a mix of low, medium, and high density residential land uses, and commercial, parks, and school uses. The land use designations were intended to be conceptual, with final land uses and densities determined by the SDSP. Land uses were determined for each site, and sites were selected for neighborhood parks, an active use community park, and an elementary school. Development of the Specific Plan area requires significant public improvements, including the ultimate extension of Stoneridge Drive to El Charro Road and construction of a bridge over the Arroyo Mocho.

Since 1989, all of the SDSP area has been constructed, with the exception of the 124 acre Staples Ranch property. Currently the site is designated for service commercial and light industrial uses, retail and service commercial uses, and a 17.2 acre community park.

The Alameda County Surplus Property Authority (ACSPA) proposes to amend the 1989 SDSP planned land use designations, development intensities, and circulation patterns and to apply for annexation of the property. The entitlements required for this project include a Specific Plan amendment, PUD rezoning, prezoning, and development plan approval, tentative subdivision map approval and final map approval. Partnering with the ACSPA are the City, which would develop the parks, Hendrick Automotive Group, developer of the proposed auto mall, Continuing Life Communities (CLC), developer of the senior continuing care retirement community, Fremont Land, developer of the proposed retail shopping center, and San Jose Arena Management, llc/Logitech Ice, developer of the proposed ice center on the community park.

The Planning Commission reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch project on May 14, 2008 during which it received comments from the public and provided comments of its own regarding the Draft EIR.

Since the last Planning Commission hearing, staff and City consultants have completed a variety of project related documents. These include a Final Environmental Impact Report, including California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) findings, a Statement of Overriding Considerations, a Draft Specific Plan Amendment, and a rezoning and prezoning map. These are discussed below.

The purpose of this meeting is for the Commission to receive public input and make recommendations to the City Council regarding the Final EIR, proposed Specific Plan Amendment, and proposed PUD rezoning/prezoning.

I. SPECIFIC PLAN

The Draft Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch (Specific Plan) concepts were reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council at the November 8, 2007 Planning Commission and City Council joint workshop. At the workshop, various master plan

concepts were presented for discussion including: roadway design; emergency vehicle access; pedestrian and multi use trail connections; and landscaping concepts. These concepts have been incorporated in the draft Specific Plan Amendment, as appropriate and staff is recommending its adoption.

Because the majority of the original Specific Plan area has been developed and because of the numerous changes in plans, policies, and surrounding land uses over the last 18 years, many of the policies and much of the text of the original Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan document are no longer relevant to guiding the development of the Staples Ranch property. In recognition of these changed circumstances, the Specific Plan amendment has been drafted as a “stand alone” document that builds upon the original 1989 Specific Plan where appropriate, while modifying plans and policies to guide the development of the Staples Ranch property to reflect today's environment.

Also, because it is anticipated that the PUD applications for Staples Ranch will be submitted for Planning Commission and City Council review within the next few months only some specific PUD requirements have been addressed. Additional project specific conditions of approval can be added to the individual PUDs, as deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission and City Council, at that time.

Staff has recently received correspondence about the Specific Plan project which is in Exhibit F, for the Commission’s information.

II. PUD REZONING/PREZONING STATUS

With the exception of a 1.5 parcel located on the western side of Staples Ranch, the entire Staples Ranch property is part of unincorporated Alameda County and is proposed to be rezoned and ultimately annexed to the City. All PUD zoning requirements directly reflect the land use provision contained within the Specific Plan and the rezoning/prezoning map is complete and recommended for adoption.

As proposed, once the site is annexed, Staples Ranch would have the following zoning designations:

- Auto Mall Site: PUD-C (Commercial)
- Retail/Commercial Site: PUD-C (Commercial)
- Continuing Care Community Site: PUD-C (Commercial), for the parcel with the Health Center
PUD-HDR/C (High Density Residential/Commercial), for the remainder of the site
- Community Park Site: PUD-P (Park)
- Neighborhood Park Site: PUD-P (Park)

It is anticipated that the Continuing Care Community site will be subdivided into multiple parcels. The parcel with the Health Center is proposed to be rezoned PUD-C, and the remainder of the site is proposed to be rezoned PUD-HDR/C, indicating the mixed commercial and residential nature of the development. However, through the review process,

the City Council may determine that the entire site should be rezoned PUD-C or PUD-HDR or a similar combination depending on how they ultimately feel the site should be characterized.

A 1.5 acre parcel, located directly adjacent to the existing residences along Vermont Place in Pleasanton, is within the existing city limits of Pleasanton and is zoned PUD-Medium Density Residential (PUD-MDR). The Continuing Care Community will provide approximately 19 feet of additional backyard space to Vermont Place residents whose homes back up to the site, so that the shared property line can be "squared". This additional backyard space will continue to be zoned PUD-MDR. The remainder of the 1.5 acre parcel will be rezoned PUD-C or PUD-HDR/C or a similar combination depending on how the City Council ultimately determines the Continuing Care Community site should be characterized.

The Planning Commission and City Council will review how many senior continuing care units to count against Pleasanton's housing cap during the review of the senior continuing care community's PUD application.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The Draft EIR for the project was completed on April 16, 2008 and circulated for public review. The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on the Draft on May 14, 2008 and the formal 45-day written comment period ended on June 4, 2008. Together, the Draft EIR and Final EIR compose the entire EIR document for the project. CEQA Findings and the Statement of Overriding Considerations are stand alone documents which were derived directly from the EIR. Staff is recommending adoption of these documents.

The Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment/Staples Ranch EIR identifies potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures. The EIR concludes that, if proposed mitigation measures are adopted, impacts resulting from the Specific Plan Amendment and subsequent development of Staples Ranch could be reduced to a less than significant level, with the exception of three significant and unavoidable impacts as follows:

- Visual resources as a result of conversion of Staples Ranch from undeveloped to developed land and the loss of rural character
- Air quality as a result of emissions of ozone precursors above thresholds used by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District
- Traffic congestion as a result of increased vehicular trips from Staples Ranch development at intersections outside the jurisdiction of Pleasanton

The EIR also includes an analysis of alternatives to the Specific Plan Amendment, including No Project (no build), development of Staples Ranch under the 1989 Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan, development of an Ice Center as part of the Community Park site development, and a primarily open space option for the Community Park.

Other impacts resulting from the Specific Plan Amendment are described in the summary section of the Draft EIR and in Section 4 of the Final EIR. A brief summary of some key mitigation measures are described below:

- The proposed project would create new sources of light and glare. The mitigation measures require lighting plans and establish lighting criteria. The criteria would require extensive shielding, lower exterior lighting levels in the auto mall vehicle storage areas, and lower lighting levels by existing and proposed dwelling units. The mitigations would require lower light standards (poles) at the auto mall by CLC, lower light standards on roof tops, and all interior lighting to be turned off during non-operational evening hours, with the exception of lighting needed for security reasons.
- The proposed project would have the potential to expose future on site residents to substantial Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) due the project's close proximity to the I-580 freeway. As such, a proposed mitigation measure has been added which requires a health risk assessment for all proposed residential units within 500 feet of the freeway.
- The California tiger salamander, California red legged frog, and western pond turtle could occur in the arroyo and its riparian habitat. Recommended mitigation measures include providing construction monitoring, educating construction workers about the possible presence of these animals, limiting construction to dry seasons when the red legged frogs are less likely to be present, and providing fencing during construction.
- Both the white tailed kite and the northern harrier have been observed on the site. The California horned lark is known to occur north of the I-580. Suitable nesting and foraging habitat for the loggerhead shrike occurs on the site. Recommended mitigation measures specifically related to birds include conducting nesting bird surveys and limiting when grading and construction can occur to minimize nesting impacts.
- Recommended mitigation measures include limiting light spillover into the arroyo, and considering wildlife in the design of the proposed parks by providing wildlife habitat including opportunities for cover, food, and water for native and migratory wildlife.
- The recommended mitigation measures would require each developer to prepare and implement a site specific Water Quality Management Plan with targeted pollutant removal rates and a pesticide management plan. The use of diazinon would be prohibited or severely limited.
- The recommended mitigations require deed disclosures about the proximity of the Livermore Municipal Airport, the potential for noise, and other nuisances from aircraft operations. The recommended mitigations also require CLC to be the initial contact for any and all airport noise complaints from residents within its development. Disclosures about potential nuisances from quarry operations would also be required.
- Recommended noise related mitigation measures include the following:

Senior Continuing Care Community

- Prior to PUD approval, require a noise study showing how noise impacts from traffic on I-580 can be reduced and require appropriate noise reduction measures

- Require exterior to interior noise reduction measures to reduce interior noise levels

Auto Mall and Retail Center

- Require exterior to interior noise reduction techniques to reduce interior noise levels
- Limit exterior noise levels from the auto mall car wash stations, including vacuuming areas, to 60 dBA at any habitable structure on the CLC property

Community Park

- Limit areas within the 65 CNEL contour to primarily open space (with limited trails) and place active park uses such as playgrounds outside of the contour

Stoneridge Drive (by Proposed Bridge)

- Provide noise attenuating pavement to new portions of Stoneridge Drive (by the proposed bridge)
- Recommended mitigations require pile driving vibration to be less than the structural damage threshold. Early public notices about bridge construction dates are required, as well as a posted sign stating the construction date on site. A noise disturbance coordinator would be appointed who would be responsible for handling complaints about noise during construction.
- Recommended traffic mitigations include requiring the payment of the City's existing Traffic Development Fee or the fee update which is anticipated to be completed prior to the payment of fees by this project. The improvements (e.g., new turn lanes, through lanes, changing cycle length, narrowing lanes to reduce pedestrian crossing times) would reduce the project's impacts to less than significant levels. The Hopyard/Stoneridge signal would need to be retimed by the City.
- Per the 2007 Cost Sharing Agreement between the cities of Pleasanton and Livermore and the ACSPA, the City of Livermore is obligated to address impacts at the El Charro Road/I-580 off ramp. The agreement also provides that if this intersection is not improved by Livermore then the City of Pleasanton will make the improvements.
- The funding of the improvements required for the intersection of Stoneridge Drive/El Charro Road (in the cumulative scenario) will be included in the overall funding plan for the extension of Stoneridge Drive which would be developed by the City of Pleasanton at a future date. If that funding has not occurred when building permits are issued, the City will be responsible for making these improvements.
- The recommended mitigation measures require each developer to provide a construction access plan which minimizes the use of Stoneridge Drive as a construction route. Measures such as notification procedures for adjacent property owners regarding when major deliveries and lane closures would occur would also be required.

- As a mitigation measure, a geotechnical study for the site would be required prior to Tentative Map approval, and buildings would be required to be set back at least 20 feet from the top of the arroyo bank, in case there is a seismically induced bank failure.
- An archaeological resource measure is incorporated which requires an archaeological monitor to be on site during native soils disturbing activities and establishes procedures which must be followed if archaeological resources are discovered.

Per Mitigation Measure PH-1.1, if the senior continuing care project is deemed to be a “residential” project or partially a “residential” project, a recommended mitigation measure requires the senior continuing care developer to submit a phasing proposal which would be consistent with the City’s residential Growth Management ordinance. Staff recommends that this mitigation measure be removed and that the timing of construction be required to be consistent with the Development Agreement for the project. The Planning Commission will have an opportunity to review the draft Development Agreement, prior to its review by the City Council.

CEQA Findings

CEQA requires the lead agency to adopt findings for each potentially significant environmental impact disclosed in an EIR. Specifically, for each significant impact, the lead agency must make one or more of the following three findings:

- Changes or alterations have been incorporated into the project to avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effects identified in the EIR;
- Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and should be adopted by that agency; or
- Specific economic, social, legal, technological, or other considerations make the mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the EIR infeasible.

The CEQA findings are in Exhibit D, for the Planning Commission’s review.

Statement of Overriding Considerations

If a lead agency approves a project without mitigating all of the significant impacts, it must prepare a statement of overriding considerations, in which it balances the benefits of the project against the unavoidable environmental risks. The statement of overriding considerations must explain the social, economic, or other reasons for approving the project despite its environmental impacts.

Staff has examined reasonable project alternatives. Staff has found that the Existing Specific Plan, No Project, and Open Space Alternatives and the Project would not achieve the core project objectives or would not significantly reduce the significant and unavoidable impacts identified for the Project. The Ice Center Alternative is considered a viable option. For this reason, staff recommends that the Ice Center Alternative be approved. Although implementation of the Ice Center Alternative would result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to the loss of the rural character of the project, air emissions above the thresholds used by the BAAQMD, and increased traffic congestion at intersections outside

Pleasanton, staff finds that the benefits of the project to the community are overriding considerations when weighed against the environmental impacts listed above. Adoption of the Ice Center Alternative will allow numerous community goals to be achieved including:

1. The ice center developer has offered to contribute to and construct a substantial share of the remainder of the 17 acre Community Park.
2. A City sales tax revenue increase when visitors come from out of town to ice center special events and do business at local hotels, stores, and restaurants.
3. Retail sales tax dollars would be generated by the ice center restaurant and retail shop.
4. Social benefits resulting from the Ice Center Alternative would include the introduction of many activities to the community relating to education, recreation, family life, and special needs provided by a variety of ice skating activities.

A comprehensive list of benefits, including social benefits, is provided in the Statement of Overriding Considerations (see Exhibit D). Staff believes that the potential benefits outweigh the environmental risks of the Ice Center Alternative.

NEXT STEPS

It is anticipated that the Planning Commission will hold a hearing for each of the four major projects, Hendrick, CLC, Fremont Land, and the community and neighborhood parks in late 2008/early 2009. In addition, a draft development agreement will be reviewed. The actual date for the PUD hearings is dependent on the developers' completion of their PUD plans, which are still in progress.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission take the following actions:

1. Receive public input on the project and then close the public hearing;
2. Recommend the City Council approve the EIR documents (Draft EIR, Final EIR, CEQA Findings, and Statement of Overriding Considerations), including a deletion of mitigation measure PH-1.1 as described in the Environmental Issues section (above);
3. Recommend the City Council approve Draft Specific Plan Amendment; and
4. Recommend the City Council approve the proposed PUD rezoning and pre-zoning.

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