

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

DATE: FEBRUARY 8, 2006

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: GREG RAMIREZ, CITY MANAGER

BY: MIKE KAMINO, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF TRIANGLE RANCH PROJECT

The purpose of this item is to provide information to the City Council regarding the Triangle Ranch Project in the County of Los Angeles. The proposal consists of the subdivision of a roughly 320-acre project site into 71 single family residential lots, as well as several landscape and open space lots. The site is located south of Agoura Road along Kanan and Cornell Roads, and is within unincorporated Los Angeles County, near the southern boundary of the City of Agoura Hills (see Attachments 1-3). The site is bounded by fairly steep hillsides, and straddles Medea Creek. Since the project abuts the City, it would act as the City's southern gateway, and it is likely that many of the future residents of this project would utilize the various services and facilities in the City.

The City of Agoura Hills Planning and Community Development Department prepared the attached letter dated May 11, 2005, which outlined comments on the project's March 2005 Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) which. The main concerns centered on potential aesthetic and light and glare impacts, traffic issues, and parks and recreation impacts. In particular, comments addressed grading of hillside areas; possible grading of lands and removal of vegetation for fuel modification within the City that are dedicated to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy; location of urban development along Cornell and Kanan Roads in what is currently a semi-rural setting; participation in the City's Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) program; and dedication of Quimby (park) fees to the City. With regard to the latter two items, since the project residents would be utilizing City roadways and City park and recreation facilities, as acknowledged in the DEIR, the City requests that the appropriate facility fees be paid to the City of Agoura Hills.

On June 22, 2005, the project and DEIR were brought before the County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) for consideration. The County RPC asked that the applicant redesign the project with particular consideration given to reducing the number of residential units, further protecting sensitive habitat and species, and reducing the amount of grading and cut/fill slope height, among other issues, and return to the RPC at a later date.

The applicant has since revised the project, and the County Regional Planning Department distributed a Notice of Availability for a Revised Project Design Summary for the Triangle

Ranch Project. The public review period began on October 31, 2005 and ended on December 14, 2005. The revised Triangle Ranch project description shows a reduction in ten houses, from 81 to 71, and corresponding reductions in the amount of grading, size of cut slopes, height of retaining walls, and in some cases, lot sizes.

Although there have been some changes to the project description, most of the comments and questions identified in the City's letter dated May 11, 2005 on the Draft EIR are still relevant. (It is important to note that the changes to the project description were a result of the Commission's request, and not necessarily in response to public comments on the DEIR). As such, City staff prepared and submitted to the County Regional Planning Department a letter dated January 19, 2006 (attached), requesting that the issues in the May 11, 2005 letter be addressed as DEIR mitigation measures, and offering three additional comments relating to the recently changed site plan. These comments included consideration of further reducing the height of cut slope to be consistent with the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan (October 2000), which is the County land use plan for the area; requesting information on whether the Significant Ecological Area Technical Advisory Committee has reviewed the latest site plan (given the site's location in SEA No. 6); and further analyzing impacts to sensitive plant species resulting from site plan changes.

The County Regional Planning Department staff has indicated that the proposed changes to the Triangle Ranch project description do not necessitate additional DEIR analysis and recirculation. Therefore, the County anticipates utilizing the same March 2005 DEIR to assess the revised project description. Responses to the DEIR comments in the City letters, either May 11, 2005 or January 19, 2006, have not yet been made available to the City. A County RPC hearing to consider the Triangle Ranch Project has tentatively been scheduled for February 22, 2006.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council review and discuss the two letters dated May 11, 2005 and January 19, 2006 prepared by Staff, and provide any necessary direction relating to comments provided to date.

Attachments:

1. Surrounding Vicinity Aerial Photograph (from March 2005 DEIR)
2. Triangle Ranch Revised Project Design – text
3. Triangle Ranch Revised Project Design – Exhibit 1
4. Letter from City of Agoura Hills staff to County of Los Angeles Regional Planning Department, dated May 11, 2005.
5. Letter from City of Agoura Hills staff to County of Los Angeles Regional Planning Department, dated January 19, 2006.

