



Susana Knolls Homeowners Association  
1409 Kuehner Dr. #5  
Simi Valley, CA 93063

July 27, 2009

Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009

RE: Re-zoning Santa Susana Knolls Properties  
Parcel No. 647012005  
Parcel No. 647012006

Dear Supervisors Bennett, Foy, Parks, Long and Zaragoza

After receiving numerous emails and phone calls from the community regarding the re-zoning of the above 2 parcels on the Santa Susana Pass Road we have decided to write you with our concerns

The Santa Susana Pass Road is a narrow, winding substandard county road with no sidewalk and a very narrow dirt shoulder. This road is used daily by many commuters to and from the San Fernando Valley. The residents that live along this road have witnessed many accidents, some of them fatal. When the 118 freeway has problems drivers will exit the 118 freeway and use this road to get to and from the valley. It is not uncommon to see a continuous stream of traffic in the early morning and evening hours.

Although we understand that the State of California is requiring the County to find properties that can be changed to the Residential High Density Zoning the re-zoning of these 2 properties defies reason. These properties will be zoned for very low and low income housing. This type of housing traditionally is placed in an area with access to public transportation, shopping centers, etc. This area of the Santa Susana Knolls is approximately 3 miles from any of these services. The Simi Valley Unified School District does not provide transportation for its students, therefore the children that will attend Knolls Elementary School would have to walk along a dirt shoulder on this very dangerous road just to get to school at the same time that commuters are leaving Simi Valley. The middle and high school students would have to walk 3 miles just to get a public bus to get to schools within the City of Simi Valley.

These properties are also located in a high fire zone area. The Santa Susana Pass Road is often closed to all traffic during a wild fire since this is usually the direction the wild fires take. These properties also border Corringville Park, a passive use park through which the fires can easily travel. The last wild fire burned a large portion of this park. If dense housing were to be placed in this area it would be a great danger not just to the families that live in these homes but also the current residents of the Knolls community.

This area has additional safety issues regarding the response time for the Ventura County Sheriff's Department. There are only two patrol vehicles to cover the unincorporated areas of the County in Simi Valley and Moorpark. It is not uncommon to wait 20 minutes or longer for response to arrive after a call is placed.

A water shortage is also a problem for the Santa Susana Knolls Community. Since 2008 a moratorium has been in place on new requests for water service in the Knolls. On July 13, 2009 the Simi Valley Water District officials started the bidding process to build a 126,000 gallon tank. City officials have stated that even with this additional water storage for fire demands, a 1-million gallon tank is needed to meet the needs for new customers and emergency water in the area. At this time the City has not been successful in locating a property for this larger tank. The proposed addition of 41 units will only increase the safety problems for this high fire area.

Placing RHD zoning in this area goes against the County's Guidelines for Orderly Development and the County General Plan. Our understanding of this zone change is to enable property owners to easily build low income housing and to bypass the process for compliance with the County and State environmental laws. We also understand that the County will do some type of EIR for the property owners, but once these properties are designated for change we are of the opinion that this review will be very limited due to the high cost of an EIR. This cost will be paid by the County and not the property owners who will greatly benefit from this zoning.

We urge you to reconsider the placement of these properties on the list for re-zoning. To have these properties developed with this high density will be nothing short of a disservice to the families that will live in this housing and also the Knolls community. The lives of the current residents will be placed at a greater risk with the addition of this high density development in a rural area. One can only imagine the chaos with these families trying to evacuate during a wild fire many with no cars and no place to go.

Although the County has an obligation to meet the states requirements it also has an obligation to the current residents. Those of us who choose to live in this beautiful environment know the danger that is involved due to living in a high fire zone area but they should not be further endangered by the very representatives who are elected to use reasonable judgments in making life changing decisions for a community.

Sincerely,

Marie Mason  
Chair Development Committee