



BENNETT VALLEY VOICE

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Bennett Valley Homeowners Association

September, 1991

PROPOSED SUBDIVISION IN BENNETT VALLEY



An application has been approved to subdivide 212 acres into four parcels located at 5421 and 6531 Bennett Valley Rd. This is a steep, mountain side property above Woodside Club Estates extending to the boundary of Annandel State Park. It falls within a special area (Bennett Mountain) designated as Scenic Design Regulations in the General Plan and Scenic Backdrop in the Bennett Valley Specific Plan (with a maximum density of 100 acres per dwelling). The approved subdivision is at the General Plan density of 40 acres per dwelling.

The Bennett Valley Specific Plan describes the area as

"open space, extensive agriculture, wildlife habitat, and watershed conservation". The sensitivities of the area are its visual prominence; focal point and backdrop for Bennett Valley. The constraints of the area are: unstable steep slopes of over 30% and active faults (Bennett Valley fault).

This highly sensitive area was approved for subdividing without an Environmental Impact Report; instead, a Negative Declaration was prepared by the Project Review & Advisory

Committee (PRAC) and public hearings were held in Kenwood and the County Center. The PRAC approved the subdivision, with conditions, despite protests from the residents of Woodside.

This decision was then appealed to the Planning Department after the residents of Woodside presented their concerns to the BVHA.

Last Appeal Hearing!

Thurs. Sept. 19, 2:50 pm.

Rm. 107A, Admin. Bldg.

575 Administration Drive

The BVHA is strongly recommending that a Comprehensive Development Plan be submitted to the Planning Dept. and to the Bennett Valley Design Review Committee

prior to the final approval of the subdivision by the Planning Dept. The BVHA see this as a test case to try, once and for all, to get the County Board of Supervisors to define the role of the Design Review Committee, the General Plan and the Bennett Valley Specific Plan.

We need your support at this hearing on the appeal. I will leave to your imaginations what an uncontrolled developer could do to the pristine slopes of Bennett Mountain!

Terry Babineaux

Fable Annexation Update

The Bennett Valley Homeowners Association Board has continued to keep abreast of the proceedings of the proposed annexation/prezoning of these 38.23 acres (8 parcels) located at 4520-4610 Bennett Valley Road. Previously the proposal was required to have an EIR (Environmental Impact Report) prepared. This EIR was approved late last year, although numerous concerns were expressed by various entities about its adequacy. No further action could be taken on the proposal until specific documents and information were provided by the applicant, Mr. Fable via his representative, Mr. Jim Hummer. Earlier this year, a revised application was presented to the city asking that the annexation/prezoning be approved without the policy statement and development plan which had been required by the city planning staff and requested by several concerned parties (including the BVHA Board). A public hearing was conducted by the Santa Rosa Planning Commission on Thursday, August 22, 1991.

The Santa Rosa Planning Department proposed denial of the request and the requirement of the policy statement and development plan prior to approval of the annexation/prezoning application. Numerous individuals and groups spoke out in favor of the required elements. However, in an apparently unanticipated and unusual move, the Planning Commission decided to approve Mr. Fable's request and allow the annexation/prezoning proposal to go ahead without the aforementioned documents. They further stated that a comprehensive development plan would be required whenever the first application for development was presented.

The area in question, while within the ultimate urban boundary of the city of Santa Rosa, is currently under county jurisdiction and lies between Bennett Valley School (Bennett View Drive) and the southern edge of Dan Galvin Community Park. Because of the sensitivity of the site and

the location abutting the entrance to rural Bennett Valley, your Board urged the Planning Commission to take into serious consideration the appropriate zoning (urging lower density than requested) based upon (1) the high sensitivity of the parcels, (2) the EIR notations that several mitigation conditions would still present significant impacts, (3) the desirability of "easing" the boundary between urban and rural uses, (4) the impact that the higher density would have on increased pressure to develop rural Bennett Valley, and finally, (5) what is in the best interest of the community and what the local community wants for our area.

Under the current annexation/prezoning proposal (Residential Hillside, Table 1-B), the parcels could be subdivided into 35 parcels with the minimum lot size 0.6 acres on some parcels. This would be a greater number than called for in the suggested alternative in the EIR (which suggested only 20 parcels) due to apparent inadequacies in the information used in the EIR determinations.

Should you have any questions or concerns about this proposal, the city planner is Sonia Binnendyk (524-5295), File Number: 88-0315.

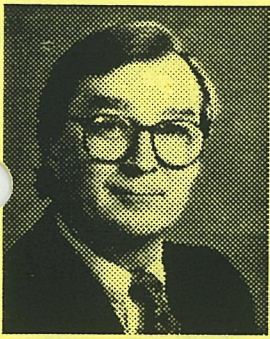
This proposal must still go before the City Council, possibly sometime between late September and early-mid October. Please let them know your thoughts on this issue, and let us know as well.

Tamara Boulton

BVHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Board meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 7:30 at the B.V. Fire Station. We invite your attendance and participation.



MEMO FROM THE PRESIDENT

Homeowners Survey Results

If members of the Bennett Valley Homeowners Association have their say, we will never see a convenience store at the intersection of Bennett Valley and Sonoma Mountain roads. Survey respondents were virtually unanimous in their strong opposition to this as well as other development ideas such as Highway 12. The survey results very clearly indicate peoples adamant desire to maintain the rural, low density residential nature of Bennett Valley.

We obtained a healthy 30% return rate to the survey, with 167 responses to the 529 mailed out. We believe that these results are powerful evidence of the residents opinions and will be very helpful in fighting such issues like Highway 12, creeping annexation, etc.

In addition, respondents provided good suggestions for improvements such as enhancing the safety of Bennett Valley Rd. by adding a bike path, stricter speed law enforcement and improving Pisenti curves.

It is important to clarify that there is no proposal to build a convenience store or any other commercial development in Bennett Valley at this time. This was just a survey idea, nothing more. So please don't worry. We thank you for your responses and for your continued support of your homeowners' association.

Kevin McCarthy

BENNETT VALLEY COMMUNITY DAY 1991

On August 18th the Bennett Valley Firemans Association once again hosted Community Day. Due to overwhelming support from the Residents of Bennett Valley, it was a huge success. This years proceeds will go towards wildland fire fighting equipment.

We wish to thank Matanzas Creek Winery and everyone else who contributed to this event.

From everyone at the Fire Department, a sincere thank you. We look forward to Community Day 1992.

Gary Galeazzi

BENNETT VALLEY FIRE DEPT.



ELECTION NIGHT

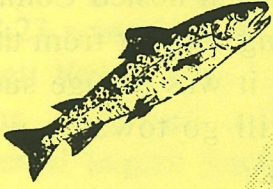
B V H A BOARD

Election Night will be held at the regular
October 16 meeting at 7:30 pm.
at the Bennett Valley Firehouse.

If you are interested in serving on the
Board, please contact Kevin McCarthy at
575-7515 or Lois Brown at 578-0708.

Members are encouraged to attend and to
vote!

California Department of Fish and Game



October 16th meeting
7:30 pm.

Bennett Valley Fire House

Fish and Game warden and local resident, Mike Wade has offered to address the Bennett Valley Homeowners Association. He will discuss issues and give information regarding Fish and Game policies pertaining to the Bennett Valley area. All interested members are invited to attend.



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HOMEOWNERS ASSOC.
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VOICE

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