



El Dorado Hills Area Planning Advisory Committee

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El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

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July 2, 2013

El Dorado County Planning Services
Attn: Tom Dougherty, project Planner
2850 Fairlane Court
Placerville, CA 95667

Subject: Application S12-0015/pd 12-0003 - Green Valley Convenience Center and Special Use permit request and Development plan for construction of the Center.

Reference: APAC Letter dated March 16, 2013

APAC's Green Valley Corridors Subcommittee (GVC) reviewed the County's response to the APAC's request that the project include a Deceleration lane as part of the design to prevent a safety problem on Green Valley road. Members of APAC and the GVC find the County's DOT response unacceptable and lacking credibility. APAC has determined the County response is inaccurate and misleading. Their response suggests the Safeway Station has more traffic passing on the Green Valley road entrance than the proposed project, which justifies the need for a deceleration lane. APAC's research shows just the opposite of the DOT position. Using the County traffic count data published on the DOT website for 2012, the count for Safeway is approximately 14,000 ADT with a peak hourly count of 515 vehicles and the proposed ARCO station has approximately 24,000 ADT and a peak hourly count of 1,200. These numbers clearly justify a deceleration lane requirement for the projects. One other consideration for a deceleration lane is the accident report in the Traffic Impact Analysis for the project that documents the number accidents along Green Valley road. The documentation shows an accident ratio of 5 to 1 ratio (20 to 4) in 2007 in the area where the ARCO project is located compared to the Safeway area.

Therefore, APAC's GVC recommends Non- Support of the project.

The full APAC committee will not meet until July 10, 2013 and the GVC will recommend non-support to the full committee. APAC has some **major** concerns regarding the project designs and entry points into the project. **Based on APAC's Traffic and safety findings, the GVC will recommend that APAC Committee withdraws its previous Conditional Support for the project:**

APAC's base is decision on the following concerns:

- a. **A right turn deceleration and acceleration lane must be added on East bound Green Valley road entrance to the project as well as other improvements. Increasing the Green Valley drive width may improve internal circulation but will not alleviate the need for a deceleration lane. (See note 1)**

- b. **The reduction of the Wetland setback from 50 feet to 10 is not granted without additional mitigation. (See note 2)**
- c. **The traffic impact study is using questionable data and must be revised (See note 3)**
- d. **Onsite circulation should be reviewed for improved circulation and provisions (i.e. temporary use permit for the drive thru) defined to ensure that the drive through window does not impact traffic flow on either Sophia Parkway or Green Valley Road. (See note 4)**
- e. **Project signage program should use back lighted signs and not exceed 20 feet 8 inch high and 5 feet 6 inch wide at the proposed location on the site (See note 5)**
- f. **Noise and lighting must be restricted (See note 6 & 7)**
- g. **The 12 ft. high wall located on the edge of east property line should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing to the residents that will overlook the site. (See Note 8)**
- h. **All mechanical and communication equipment must be screened do that it is not visible from any direction including the homes on the hillsides surrounding the project.**

Note 1: The site is deficient in clearing entry traffic from the roadway. There are no turn lanes that would remove slowing traffic from Green Valley Road as they enter the site. Traffic can be travelling east along GVR at 50 mph through the intersection and come upon cars at a near stop turning into the project. At this same location, the addendum notes the criticality of the west bound left in to accommodate patrons' vehicles and 40' tandem delivery trucks (fuel). Many issues arise from this entry point that needs additional consideration.

- a. If a 40 foot tanker is to cross two lanes of traffic into the project entrance, there should be a much greater site distance requirement due to the extended time of entry vs. a single automobile.
- b. The turn pockets indicated to control queuing, utilize outdated TIA's based on the general plan and extrapolated data to 2025. Not only are these numbers outdated and an inaccurate representation of current traffic in the area, but the study neglects the effects of the opening of the HWY 50 interchange at Sophia parkway. When this occurs, the turn lanes suggested by this project will be will not have sufficient queuing capabilities and will not be able to make adjustments due to the raised median, "Left In" turn pocket created immediately aft of the Sofia Parkway left turn. A similar queuing issue will occur along Sophia blocking the right in right out entrance of the project.
- c. APAC realize that other businesses located near the project site don't have deceleration lanes, but these businesses do not generate anywhere near the level of the traffic that will enter the ACRO project once built. A reasonable comparison for the ARCO station operation would be the Safeway station located east of the project on Green Valley road. The Safeway station has both a deceleration and acceleration lane that helps mitigate traffic safety problems on Green Valley road.

We recommend County DOT to reevaluate the requirement for a deceleration lane as part of the project approval conditions. APAC and the Community want a safe road system that functions with a minimum number of accidents. This is achieved by requiring the correct infrastructure to support smooth flow of traffic. It's APAC's opinion, that a deceleration lane must be included in the project design to facilitate a smooth flow of traffic and not create a safety problem at the projects entrance on Green Valley road.

- d. The trees in the wetland area shall be trimmed at least twice a year by a certified arborist to maintain adequate sight distances on Sophia Parkway. All trimming shall be conducted with aerial equipment to prevent entering into the wetland area.

Note 2: Wetland encroachment

1. The wetland 'encroachment' is really more invasive than pictured – 6 feet to the 'water line' is a trampling, basically, during construction.
2. The mitigations do not mention the containment of oil/asphalt runoff – some containment should be mentioned, and the parking slope & 'edge' of the pavement becomes important
3. The wetland contains a seasonal stream that supports plant life. The applicant should plant additional native trees and grass to mitigate the loss of 40ft of wetland.
4. The project site actually contains potential nesting sites for special-status birds, per the report. The mitigation (#2) says that IF a nest is found, it will be 'flagged' for a minimum 250', but from what structure?
5. APAC feels as though they are trying to cram too much onto this site. A gas station, sure, and associated food/deli; but drive through food and separate drive through carwash is too much. There just is not circulation space, particularly if they provide an actual reasonable setback to the wetland area.
6. APAC suggests elimination of the self-service carwash which will allow additional room on the side to meet the Wetland requirements and provide better traffic circulation on the side. Moving/rotation the carwash to relieve site congestion will improve the circulation on the site but APAC is not sure if this will create an acceptable level of onsite circulation.
7. Trash enclosure should be moved to the northern most portion of the site to minimize trash entering the wetland area on the south side of the site.

Note 3: The methodology in determining Approved/Pending Projects (APP) is flawed in that the county staff provided only Wilson Estates, Green Valley Center and Dixon Ranch for review purposes. They neglected to evaluate the project with cumulative effects of Alto, Grand Amis, La Canada, Diamante estates, Green Springs Equestrian, Summer Brook, Silver Springs and the PA07-0067 commercial and 10 residence projects. All of these projects contribute to the congestion of Green Valley Road. (See measure Y below)

Page 7 paragraph 3 states annual volume adjustments were made based on 2% annual increase or an increase based on a straight line interpolation from 1998 to 2025. El Dorado Hills has already exceeded the GP growth projections of 2%. Population growth of EDC was 2% or 27,000 people. The El Dorado Hills growth exceeded 9% between 2000 and 2010 which was 24,000 people. 90% of the growth was in EDH. Traffic models based on the GP are deficient at best in this area. Recommendation would be to run a current traffic study for the project area.

Trip distribution needs to be based on a real time study performed at the project site. As a resident of this area, it is apparent that the project trip distributions in table 4 are an inaccurate representation of traffic flow in this area. West toward Folsom at 20% is low and East to EDH Blvd (South) is extremely high at 30%.

Road improvements noted as mitigations are included in the CIP to be completed in the next 20 years (after 2021). This does not meet the community expectations for approval of this (or any other) project along this corridor.

Note 4: On site Queuing: The drive through could block through traffic around the buildings and car wash when autos pass the ordering sign and proceed to the pickup window. APAC has regularly opposed development of fast food outlets outside the Highway 50 corridor. The proposed deli sandwich shop would be an exception. A Special use permit (or other provisions) must be established to preclude blocking traffic onto Sophia Parkway.

Note 5: The sign must be a back-lite non electronic display. Signage should be limited to the North side of the building and temporary signs and banners should be prohibited.

Note 6: All noise emitting equipment shall be enclosed on all four sides with a top and include sound absorbing material. The Car Wash noise must be limited to prevent sound migration to the residential area near the project site.

Note 7: Project must comply with El Dorado County dark skies policy (17.14.170).

Note 8: The residents near the site recommend the retaining wall be stacked with large boulders to match retaining walls in the surrounding community.

Overall APAC believe this is the right site for a commercial application of this type, but the site is too crowded with the addition of the car wash and has significant traffic safety issues that the developer needs to consider before moving forward seeking a project approval.

If you have any question about any of the comments and concerns expressed here, please contact John Hidahl, APAC Chairman at Hidahl@aol.com or Norm Rowett GVC subcommittee Chairman at arowett@pacbell.net.

APAC appreciates having the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

John Hidahl,
APAC Chairman