

COMMENTS ON THE DEIR

FROM JUDY ORIAS May 11, 2010

In reading the text of both EIR and General Plan it would be helpful if identifications of terms, agencies and plans would be footnoted on the page. This would help the reader in determination of the subject that is being discussed.

There needs to be a clear statement on all the impacts of the proposed growth plans in one location. Without certain elements of the plan that are not yet written and reviewed it has to be questionable that all the impacts are being considered. Especially of concern is the lack of a Circulation Element and a Historic Element.

The EIR needs to address if the assumptions that require a major life style change are in fact a reality. The city cannot tell a person where they will work, cannot control how many people live in a unit, cannot restrict the ownership of a car or cars and make people take the bus.

The question of where the traffic is going on 101 during the commute hours? Are they going to the city or beyond? There is need for factual data.

The question of building units so that people will no longer commute. Is the type of housing that is being proposed an answer to the commute issue? If the answer is no, as some city staff have stated, then the commute will continue.

The potential of families still seeking the single family house outside the city, the commute to jobs, affect on air quality and loss of balance in the type of housing available in the city needs to be discussed and evaluated.]

The question of can we ever build enough housing to satisfy everyone who wants to live here? If the answer is no than there should be discussion on what is the limit.

Will the lowering of the commute result in additional traffic on city streets and on impacted intersections?

The General Plan has descriptions of individual neighborhoods that consist of few facts. Missing are the impacts that the various neighborhoods deal with. For example Hidden Valley has a high fire zone, flood plain and impacted intersections (level D) that serve this neighborhood with essential services. Also missing are the location of schools, parks and other amenities. All these issues should be covered in all the neighborhood descriptions.

There is no map of the High Fire Zones and one should be included. This matter was questioned in the previous letters. The question of the location of the fire zone in Conditions, Trends and Issues Map #2

High Fire AREA Map and Map #4 Potential Secondary Dwelling Unit Location (Single Family Zones) in the Draft Update entitled City Council direction Jan. 2009 appear to have been resolved by removing the High Fire Zone map from the document. There should a map included showing consistency with other approved documents regarding the location of the high fire areas. The map should clearly show the impacted areas so that the reader can identify the names of streets.

The map showing the Flood Zone shows the entire town and again the impacted flood areas are so small that you cannot accurately determine the flood areas. The map should show the impacted areas so that the streets are identified.

There appears to be no map which shows the location of proposed secondary units or granny units. There is a statement that secondary units would not be allowed in the high fire zones but again there is no map showing this area.

The EIR needs to clearly identify what issues make an area or a neighborhood not suitable for 2nd unit development. The location of services, the ability to walk or bike safely to the location of services, the ability of the neighborhood to evacuate in time of fire. The statement that all other areas are able to accept the second units is vague and leaves all options open.

The proposals to raise density along transportation routes is questionable. Is it necessary to increase density along these routes to make the public transportation financially sound?

The reduction of the parking requirement in an effort to make people take the bus could result in adjacent neighborhoods being parked up with cars of the residents of the high density projects.

How does the increased density and population capacity fit into our city's charter and section 1507 of living within our resources? A recent water supply report indicates a shortage of our water supply in 2013, which is not far away.

Is the sewer line capacity adequate in the areas of proposed high density?

Not discussed or covered by EIR requirement but vital to our city especially in today's economics is what is the cost of the services required by this increased density? Where will the funds come from?

The document has many errors and omissions. There are many errors regarding the history of our city, the start of the zoning ordinances, and the formation of the planning commission. I would refer you to other comments submitted by other members of our city for further listing of errors. The fact that there are so many errors suggests that a committee be formed of knowledgeable residents to review and correct the document. Any lack of accuracy throws a shadow on the entire plan.

It is very difficult to critique a plan with critical elements to be written later. Important to our city's tourist trade is our historic image. Not having an Historic Element for review makes the question of density and its impact on the historic areas of town a serious omission.

The circulation element is another vital portion that should be available for review. Again any proposed density will have a negative affect on impacted intersections. Affected will also be air quality and the ability of adjacent neighborhoods to exit and enter.

If it is difficult to get into the downtown area shoppers will go where access and parking is available. If this makes shoppers go out of the city this affects the city's sales tax revenue.

Unfortunately the omissions and vague statements of the plan leave many questions which should be addressed in the plan as well as the EIR. As Dick Thomas former city manager determined that the real limit to growth is the city's financial resources. This issue needs to be addressed fully in the plan. As such the plan is incomplete and it follows that the EIR is also incomplete.

Finally what policies that are implemented need to be examined as they have a lasting effect on our residents quality of life.

Judith Dodge Orias
3788 Torino Dr.
Santa Barbara, Calif. 93105