

TRANSCRIPTION OF SANTEE CITY COUNCIL MEETING

FANITA RANCH WORKSHOP III

ITEM 12

OCTOBER 23, 2019

1 October 23, 2019

2 -oOo-

3
4 MAYOR MINTO: All right. That takes us to -- if I
5 get this right -- Item No. 11.

6 CITY CLERK: Twelve.

7 MAYOR MINTO: Twelve. Looking at 12, saying 11,
8 holy mackerel. Do we need a quick break or anything?
9 Okay. All right. Let's go to Item No. 12.

10 COUNCILMEMBER KOVAL: (Unintelligible) for a second.

11 MAYOR MINTO: Okay. Fanita Ranch Workshop III.
12 This has to deal with parks, trails and open space.
13 Melanie.

14 DIRECTOR KUSH: PowerPoint up and ready. One
15 second. Should I --

16 MAYOR MINTO: We didn't take enough time to get you
17 ready on that other one?

18 DIRECTOR KUSH: Okay. Okay. Thank you. The --
19 good evening, again. The purpose of tonight's workshop
20 is to provide information on the parks, trails and open
21 space that is proposed for the Fanita Ranch development.
22 The City will present the first few slides, essentially,
23 to describe the project components that promote physical
24 activity and enjoyment of nature. HomeFed will present
25 more details in their remaining slides.

1 As a reminder, this workshop is informational,
2 and no decisions are made tonight. This is our ongoing
3 commitment to inform the community, and you, about the
4 many aspects of the Fanita Ranch development.

5 So recall that the overall site plan is
6 encompassing 2,638 acres to be accessed by extensions of
7 Fanita Parkway, Magnolia and Cuyamaca Street. The Fanita
8 Ranch Villages are denoted in color, and named Fanita
9 Commons, Vineyard Village, Orchard Village, and there is
10 a special use area designated in the southern portion of
11 the property.

12 These villages, and special use area, are
13 visually dominant on this exhibit. The focus now is to
14 shift the eye to the softer sides of the proposal.

15 The General Plan establishes goals, relative to
16 the provision of parks and recreational facilities. For
17 example, in the recreation element, there is a method for
18 determining the acreage of parks and recreation required
19 to serve the population demand. Based on the proposed
20 2,949 units, a minimum of 47 acres of developed parks and
21 recreational facilities would be required.

22 As proposed, the Fanita Ranch development will
23 offer 52.4 acres. And all parks within the development
24 will be improved by HomeFed and accessed by the public.
25 One of the policies in the trails element is the

1 provision of trails with plan development to provide safe
2 and direct access to both the community and the regional
3 trails.

4 Currently, this proposal includes 35 miles of
5 trails in a variety of ways; sidewalks, nature trails and
6 primitive trails. These will all be described by -- in
7 future slides in this presentation.

8 And lastly, the conservation element contains a
9 city-wide policy, in support of the protection of
10 biological resources. This element establishes a target
11 of 2,600 acres in our city. And these are to be
12 preserved in permanent, open space. The proposed project
13 sets aside almost 1600 acres or 61 percent toward meeting
14 this target, which will be permanently established and
15 managed, by methods to be determined by the developer and
16 the City.

17 So I wanted to just bring those numbers to the
18 forefront by summarizing them in this table. It
19 encapsulates everything I just said, so that everyone
20 remembers it in the test, in the future. Okay. So that
21 was my at-a-glance slide. Okay.

22 The next slide shows that the permanently
23 conserved areas are popping out as bright green here.
24 And the result of this is that the slopes will be
25 preserved, adjacent to the homes that abut the property,

1 especially to the south and to the east, so that hillside
2 views would remain an important part of the Santee view
3 shed.

4 The following slides illustrate before and
5 after views of these hillsides. One showing a distant
6 view from State Route 125, coming in to Santee, and one
7 showing the view from Cuyamaca Street, looking north, and
8 I will show those now.

9 Okay. So here we are on 125, heading down
10 towards Mission Gorge Road and -- and this is an existing
11 condition. Back again. The Fanita Ranch development,
12 once built, you can -- you can maybe not see it so well
13 here, for those in the audience, but that -- that area
14 there would be an area where the -- the houses would --
15 could -- could be seen in the distance. Okay.

16 The next slide is from Cuyamaca Street, looking
17 northward, and --

18 VICE MAYOR HOULAHAN: Melanie.

19 DIRECTOR KUSH: Yes, sir

20 VICE MAYOR HOULAHAN: I'm sorry. So go back to that
21 last one. There you go, right there.

22 DIRECTOR KUSH: Uh-huh.

23 VICE MAYOR HOULAHAN: Is that supposed to be a
24 rendering of -- of the after --

25 DIRECTOR KUSH: Yes, so --

1 VICE MAYOR HOULAHAN: -- of what the -- the actual
2 view --

3 DIRECTOR KUSH: Afterward.

4 VICE MAYOR HOULAHAN: -- should -- would be like
5 after it's developed?

6 DIRECTOR KUSH: Yes.

7 VICE MAYOR HOULAHAN: So --

8 DIRECTOR KUSH: Can't really see it.

9 VICE MAYOR HOULAHAN: -- there is -- oh, do that
10 again. Do whatever -- there you go. All right. Got it.

11 DIRECTOR KUSH: All right.

12 VICE MAYOR HOULAHAN: Doing that, you see that now?

13 DIRECTOR KUSH: Okay. And put the --

14 VICE MAYOR HOULAHAN: All right.

15 DIRECTOR KUSH: Can --

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Unintelligible).

17 DIRECTOR KUSH: So -- so we're trying to show you
18 where it would be, with that oval. And at this distance,
19 you really can't see very much. So the next slide,
20 again, is you're standing on Cuyamaca, looking northward,
21 and the project improvement is -- once built, would look
22 like this. You see the -- the trees in the street and
23 the circle showing some ridge -- some ridge top homes up
24 there. That would be one of the -- the views of the
25 site, once it's developed. Okay. I move on. All right.

1 Keep going.

2 So this is a close up of the trails component
3 of the project. This is the northern portion of the
4 property. And within the site, trails will be either
5 concrete and those, which are compacted earth or dis --
6 disintegrated granite. This shows the northern portion,
7 where the on-site trails will facilitate connections to
8 the regional trails, such as Stow Trail, Goodan Ranch and
9 trails to the Sycaman -- Sycamore Canyon County Preserve.

10 This -- this portion of the exhibit is the
11 southern portion of the site, where the primitive trails
12 are proposed. The blue asterisks on this exhibit is
13 located in the special use area, shown in white, is the
14 location of a fully improved trail head, with parking on
15 an extension of Carlton Hills Boulevard. Some of the
16 amenities are that you would see the trail head, such as
17 this, are shown in the next slide. Kiosk, informational
18 kiosk, picnic tables, shade structures.

19 Now, there are many dead-end streets along the
20 Fanita Ranch property, as many as 26, as these blue dots
21 illustrate. The City and HomeFed are evaluating which of
22 these street ends might make sense for controlled access
23 to the site and onto the primitive trails. So this is a
24 work in progress and we -- stay tuned once -- as we move
25 forward with that analysis.

1 So stay tuned and stay informed. This is the
2 slide I always end with. It's my cue to -- to turn it
3 over to HomeFed for their portion of the presentation.
4 Just to let you know, our next workshop will be on fire
5 and public safety issues and -- coming up in -- in
6 probably early January. But at this point, I will turn
7 it over to HomeFed.

8 MAYOR MINTO: Thanks, Melanie. Before -- Jeff,
9 before you get started, I just want to let everybody
10 know, we do have 18 speaker slips. And so, we're not
11 going to be accepting any more speaker slips on this
12 item. And we're going to hold con -- our speakers to two
13 minutes, otherwise we're gonna be here extremely late
14 tonight. So thank you very much for your patience.

15 MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you, Melanie. Good evening,
16 Mayor, City Council and Staff. I'd also like to thank
17 Melanie and Bill Maertz, that we have spent hours on with
18 the trails and -- with the -- figuring out the trails and
19 the park system for Fanita Ranch. Also, I'd like to
20 thank Davey's group, who put together the presentation
21 tonight. One other thanks is all the people behind me,
22 who have decided to stay until after 9:30 tonight, when
23 they could've been home watching the World Series. With
24 that said, my presentation will take about 15 minutes,
25 and it will talk about four main -- main components.

1 First slide here, once again, is the outline
2 of -- of Fanita Ranch. It takes up about a quarter of
3 the City's area and 90 percent of the remaining open
4 space. These are the four topics we are going to talk
5 about tonight: Open space trails, agriculture and parks.

6 This is the open space. Melanie's slide sort
7 of showed a similar item. We have 76 percent of our site
8 will be dedicated to native open space, parks and our
9 community farm. Also, we will have 1700 acres, which
10 will be native open space, which is throughout our
11 community, and that will be untouched. It will never be
12 built on. It will contain the trail system, but nothing
13 else, in perpetuity.

14 We're going to talk a little bit more about the
15 open space, as we go through the slides, but right now I
16 would like to discuss the trail system. We have 35 miles
17 of trails that are planned for Fanita Ranch, and these
18 trails will be open to the entire public, not just Fanita
19 Ranch people, but -- but anyone that wishes to use them.

20 The trails will be of various surfaces.
21 Actually, two different surfaces. It'll be a native,
22 decomposed granite or concrete, and it will depend on
23 where those trail -- trails are located, for what that
24 surface will be. Our trails will be for hiking, biking
25 and any kind of recreation.

1 The first trail Melanie spoke about are the
2 primitive trails. These are trails in the native open
3 space. They will be DG or dirt trails. They'll be very
4 narrow, two to three feet wide. And they will be,
5 generally, on where existing trails are today. So we
6 won't be making very many new trails in the primitive
7 trail -- for the primitive trails, only where existing
8 trails are today.

9 The next one we're going to talk about are
10 native -- nature trails. These nature trails are in
11 blue. It's a little bit hard to see, but these nature
12 trails are, again, soft surface trails, DG or dirt.
13 They're approximately four feet wide and they will
14 connect the development area to the primitive trails.

15 COUNCILMEMBER HALL: Why only four feet wide?

16 MR. O'CONNOR: That's -- they vary a little bit, but
17 we're trying to keep them narrow or the actual use of the
18 trail. Some of our future -- some of the other trails
19 I'll talk about tonight are much wider than that.

20 We are going to have two precrossings, one in
21 the northern part of our development, and then, one in
22 our southern part of our development -- development
23 that -- that cross creeks. They also provide access to
24 the school, access to the park, so that people can walk,
25 instead of drive.

1 Village nature trails. These are, again,
2 nature trails. They'll be soft surface. They'll be a
3 little bit wider, in the neighborhood of six feet wide,
4 and they will connect the different villages together.
5 This is a rendering of a -- of a paved trail that could
6 go through our -- our community.

7 Perimeter trails. This perimeter trail -- our
8 perimeter trail system is generally through the northeast
9 section of our community called Vineyard Village. And
10 what we are doing it's going to be in the fire management
11 zone. It's going to be a bench about 20 -- 20 to 30 feet
12 below the building pads, so people on a trail will not be
13 able to look in people's backyards, and people in the
14 backyards won't be able to see the people using the
15 trails, and they will go all around the -- the
16 northeast -- eastern portion of our development and there
17 will be fantastic views. They're about three or four
18 hundred feet above everything else in the area.

19 Village access trails. These are when we go
20 into the hard surface trails. These trails are concrete,
21 and they are approximately -- they -- they vary from six
22 to eight feet wide, depending on where they are, and
23 again, they connect the villages together. We're trying
24 to get people out of their cars and start using bikes
25 and -- and -- and -- and their -- and their legs.

1 Multi-purpose trails. These are the trails
2 that are going to be generally adjacent to Fanita Parkway
3 and Cuyamaca. Again, they'll be concrete and they will
4 vary from eight foot to twelve foot wide.

5 Our trail system is designed to connect to
6 other trails in the area, including Goodan Ranch, to the
7 north, and Mission Trails Park, to the south.

8 This is a trail map. I know it's a little hard
9 to see. Fanita Ranch is in the middle. You can see the
10 green in Fanita Ranch is our open space, where we'll have
11 most of our trail system. To the north is Goodan Ranch,
12 and you can see that our development has as much green as
13 Goodan Ranch. It's about -- we have the same amount of
14 open space as Goodan Ranch does.

15 And then, Mission Trails Park is in the bottom
16 left-hand corner. Mission Trails Park is huge. It's
17 bigger than ours, but we're connecting -- we're
18 connecting these -- these parks together. And also, the
19 long -- the long, skinny green part, on the southern
20 part, that is San Diego River Park, where the City has a
21 trail system that we will be accessing as well.

22 Now, we're gonna start talking about the farm.
23 Before we do that, though, the pink area here is what we
24 call the A -- the ag meander trails. These are trails
25 that I just spoke about. If you've seen some communities

1 where they have different stations along their trails,
2 they might have a station to do sit-ups, a station to do
3 push-ups, maybe to do chin-ups or trying to get people
4 healthy while they're hiking, well, we're doing the same
5 thing, with a little bit different concept.

6 What we're doing here is we are going to teach
7 people and educate them about farming and about ag --
8 agriculture. So along these -- this pink trail area, we
9 are going to have stations that talk about farming, and
10 talk about growing crops. It'll also have certain areas
11 where we will have certain crops along the trail. We
12 might have fruit trees or different vegetables or
13 different landscaping that -- that goes with the -- with
14 the farm. This is very unique. This really hasn't been
15 done anywhere in San Diego, and not very much in
16 California.

17 So now we're gonna talk more about our
18 community farm. Community farm is located in Fanita
19 Commons, known as our -- our town center. Twenty-five
20 acres just for the farm part. The two brown arrows, the
21 one in the lower level is a trail from the school. And
22 the one on the top is a trail from the active adult
23 neighborhood.

24 What we're trying to do is we're trying to get
25 people to understand and learn and engage in the -- in

1 the -- in the farm. What -- and -- and that includes
2 having a -- a -- a system set up with a school district,
3 to bring the kids in after school, which is gonna --
4 gonna be close to the farm to teach them about farming.

5 Some of the amenities in the farm. We'll have
6 a event barn. This could be used for different events,
7 such as weddings. On the weekends we -- we'll bring the
8 farmer in and he can get a group of people and explain
9 what is going on in a farm and how it's going to benefit
10 the community. We'll have vegetable crops in the middle,
11 orchards around the outsides. There will be a farmer's
12 market on -- on the farm. And there will also be a farm
13 to table restaurant, adjacent, in our town center.

14 Vineyard Village will be just that. There will
15 be vineyards as you go in to the -- to Vineyard Village.
16 They'll be along the slopes, and this will be part of the
17 farm as well.

18 So what we're trying to do, as we move into the
19 next section is we have a garden-themed living community,
20 where we want -- where we're putting -- we're putting our
21 land to work, for the benefit of the community, and that
22 all starts with farming.

23 Now, we're going to talk about parks. We have
24 one community park, 36 acres in size. Eight neighborhood
25 parks, which are about four acres each. And then, we

1 have 31 mini parks or passive parks. So let's talk about
2 the community park. Thirty-six acres -- 36-acre park is
3 about the size of 36 football fields or 34 soccer fields.
4 It's really going to be a large park.

5 This is the playground section. The
6 playgrounds are going to be in this location. These are
7 some of the components of the community park. We're
8 going to have lighted sports fields and ball courts
9 located in -- in the south and northern section. We
10 absolutely have -- are gonna have a great dog park.
11 Open, like I said, to all the public, not just Fanita
12 Ranch residents.

13 COUNCILMEMBER HALL: Sorry to -- sorry to interrupt,
14 but how does that compare to Town Center Park? How big
15 is Town Center Park? 55 acres. So a little smaller than
16 Town Center Park.

17 MR. O'CONNOR: Right. We also have what we call the
18 Passive Park Knoll. This is an area that we're leaving
19 native. It's about 80 to 100 feet higher than the Town
20 Center. There will be a trail system up there. There
21 will be park benches and picnic tables and you'll have a
22 360-degree view of everything in -- in Fanita Ranch.
23 It'll be absolutely stunning. This park will be built
24 and -- built by us. It will be turned over to the City
25 and the City will manage this park.

1 The rest of the parks that we're gonna look at
2 now, the eight neighborhood parks, which are four or so
3 acres, four football fields in size, we have eight of
4 those. Those will be built by us and they'll be man --
5 they'll be maintained by our HOA. We're taking some of
6 the burden off the City, so we're gonna maintain them,
7 but they'll be open to all the public. Same thing with
8 the mini parks. They're a little bit smaller.

9 So let's take a look at one of the neighborhood
10 parks. This one's located in Orchard Village. These
11 parks are in the dark green. You can see the two on
12 either -- either side and there's a long, linear park
13 on -- in the upper corner. That long, linear park is
14 adjacent to a -- a creek, and a little gray thing, going
15 in a north/south direction, that is the -- that's the
16 bridge that we're going to -- going to build.

17 So we're gonna look at the one in the bottom
18 left hand corner. This could be what it looks like.
19 This is a rendering, but we're working with Bill in
20 Community Development right now on -- on what's gonna be
21 built in the parks. You can see they're big enough to
22 have active fields. They will have a neighborhood plaza,
23 a playground, picnic area and -- and some of the
24 neighborhood parks will have bathroom facilities.

25 Now we're going to look at a passive, smaller

1 park in Vineyard Village. Again, the dark green are the
2 different parks. You can see they're relatively --
3 there's a lot of them and some are larger and some are
4 smaller. We're going to look at the passive park in the
5 bottom corner.

6 This is what it could look like. It's
7 relatively large in size. It'll be open play area.
8 There'll be picnic benches, seating areas. There will
9 also be -- most of the parks in Vineyard Village will be
10 trail points or points that will begin or end your
11 trails. And again, these are phenomenal views all across
12 the Vineyard Village.

13 So that -- we're almost at the conclusion of my
14 presentation. I just wanted to, again, show you the
15 description of -- of the open space and how everything
16 fits together, on an acreage standpoint, in Fanita Ranch.

17 Over 2,000 acres will be dedicated to open
18 space, habitat preserve parks and agriculture. Only 340
19 acres will be residential. This -- the 32 acres that
20 Melanie talked about, the special use area in the south,
21 that will be -- right now, is programmed for solar and
22 possibly recreational vehicle storage. And then, we have
23 about 50 acres or so in our Town Center, Village Center
24 and school.

25 So that concludes my presentation. I'll be

1 here to answer questions. I think you're probably gonna
2 go to public comment now.

3 MAYOR MINTO: Yes.

4 MR. O'CONNOR: Okay. Thank you.

5 CITY CLERK: If we can have people line up, please.
6 Van Collinsworth, Derek Hadge or Hodge, Karen Schroeder,
7 Jim Whalen.

8 MAYOR MINTO: Eighteen.

9 MR. COLLINSWORTH: Van Collinsworth, representing
10 Preserve Wild Santee. As you're aware, we have a very
11 different vision for Fanita Ranch. And obviously it's
12 been a long haul, at least the last 25 years, with a lot
13 of the residents hoping for, basically, conservation of
14 the entire property.

15 So, you know, how many communities can you
16 think of that have a regional park, have a state river
17 park conservancy, and the opportunity for a state park or
18 something like that? I can't think of any, other than
19 ours. I mean, we are a very unique place, and we have --
20 this land that we have conserved to this point, can be a
21 special opportunity for us, because we can conserve the
22 whole thing. We don't have to grade however much it is.

23 And -- and part of the question that I have
24 here, too, is you know, I see the spin about the 76
25 percent, but I think that number's gonna come down when

1 you start to look at, you know, fire buffers and, you
2 know, what -- when you start to look at what is actually
3 conserved for the wildlife there, and I would bet that
4 that's closer -- gonna be closer to around 60, 62 percent
5 of the site that's actually conserved.

6 This site that you see -- or this design, has
7 tremendous amount of edge affect, so there's a lot of
8 endangered species, threatened -- threatened species on
9 this site. So we talked about the knoll. That's a site
10 for quino checkerspot butterfly. The -- supposed to be
11 a --

12 CITY CLERK: Next is Karen Schroeder.

13 MR. COLLINSWORTH: Well, I'll just --

14 MAYOR MINTO: Thank you, Van.

15 MR. COLLINSWORTH: You've heard a lot from me
16 tonight, so I would just like to see it all conserved and
17 I think that's -- we could actually do that.

18 CITY CLERK: Karen Schroeder.

19 MS. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mayor and Council and
20 Management and Staff and audience. My name's Karen
21 Schroeder, long time Fanita Ranch homeowner. And I
22 first -- I do want to acknowledge HomeFed and Jeff
23 O'Connor. Last time we spoke was back in May. And the
24 very next day, I saw up in hills, where I live, I saw,
25 like, a little bobcat or a little bulldozer kind of going

1 around and creating, like, a fire break, up in the hills
2 where I live, and I'm very grateful and appreciative for
3 that.

4 That being said, the project, it -- it's --
5 it's fantastic. It's absolutely fantastic. The problem
6 I see is that all of this is just like icing on top of a
7 mud pie, because there's no mitigation for the fact there
8 is no north evacuation escape site possible. There are
9 two on the side.

10 In terms of insuring the -- the potential
11 homeowners, I have no clarity about how and if and when
12 homeowners would even be able to afford or even get
13 policies. Policies in Santee right now are being
14 cancelled. I live right by the hills, in the very high
15 fire danger area. I -- my -- I'm still kind of waiting
16 and thinking that my policy might be cancelled at any
17 minute. And then what am I gonna do?

18 I just -- I just think it's -- it's warranted
19 to stay a hundred percent open. Or maybe some little,
20 small day-use commercial ventures. Because if so much is
21 being open, then why not maybe create some type of
22 day-use, whether it's, I don't know, anything crazy like
23 ziplining or some kind of hiking, biking or some
24 commercial enterprise and just leaving an open space with
25 some, you know, zoning for commercial use and then

1 there's not the -- the liability for all the homeowners,
2 the 3,000 homes that are gonna go up there. And I thank
3 you for your time.

4 CITY CLERK: Next is Jim Whalen.

5 MR. WHALEN: It's been a long night. I'll try and
6 be quick. It's Jim Whalen, J Whalen Associates. This
7 time for HomeFed. I've worked on this property since
8 1989. This is different from previous efforts. I take
9 exception to what Van says, the open space, it's about 50
10 percent more than it was in the Newland and Barratt
11 plans.

12 The trails are gonna be managed, where they're
13 not now. The destruction of the property, in front of
14 our very faces is -- will be stopped. For those who do
15 care about having that conservation, each one of these
16 trails was carefully sited to avoid areas of future
17 conservation. There are sensitive species there and the
18 trails are designed to avoid them. And the last thing
19 I'll say is that the -- the City can do almost anything
20 that Van wants, without thwarting it's own future
21 ambitions and hurting it's economy. Thank you very
22 much.

23 CITY CLERK: Patty LaBouff. Next is Ben Stone,
24 Janet Garvin and Mark Finch.

25 MS. LaBOUFF: Good evening, again. I have a couple

1 of concerns. I'm -- where is the through -- with coyotes
2 and other kinds of wildlife, where is the movement going?
3 It looks like you have this -- of the habitat preserved
4 in the southern portion of the property. And how will
5 the animals move through to the north? Are they gonna go
6 through -- right through the community so you'll -- I --
7 I just don't see how -- well, what I see is that we're
8 bordering up this habit -- the habitat preserve in the
9 southern part and we're casing in the animals and
10 surrounding them with humans.

11 Also, what are the conservation measures that
12 HomeFed is going to take to protect the habitat? I -- I
13 would like to hear more about their plans for
14 conservation. How are you going to keep people away from
15 the areas that do have endangered species? I haven't
16 heard anything about that element.

17 In general, I am opposed to putting 3,000 homes
18 up into this area. I think the proposals that HomeFed
19 have put together are very forward-thinking and
20 progressive. I -- I do see why people in Santee, it
21 would appeal to them, but the part that just doesn't work
22 is 3,000 homes in this area. It's just not -- it's just
23 not safe. Thank you.

24 MAYOR MINTO: Thank you.

25 CITY CLERK: Ben Stone.

1 MAYOR MINTO: As you're coming up -- and Jeff --
2 Jeff could -- are -- are you making notes of these
3 questions?

4 MR. O'CONNOR: (Unintelligible).

5 MAYOR MINTO: Okay. 'Cause -- and if we -- if -- if
6 you have an answer for those, I'll have you come up last
7 and try and answer those. Thank you. Go ahead, Ben.

8 MR. STONE: Good evening. My name is Ben Stone. I
9 work for the San Diego Mountain Biking Association, as
10 our Trails Coordinator. I believe the last time I was up
11 here speaking was when the City Council approved the
12 easement for the Stow Trail connection, when we reached
13 an agreement with the Marines for access. That was quite
14 a large feat and we thank you guys for your continued
15 work to -- between that and HomeFed, to keep that trail
16 open for all the residents of Santee, and that is an
17 incredibly important connection.

18 Tonight, I'm here to speak about trails. You
19 know, I look back at my calendar to kinda see when it
20 was, and I've been working with the Applicant since 2015
21 on trails through this area, and I have to say they have
22 continued to take our feedback. They've been very open
23 to what our members are sort of interested in, who live
24 in the area, specific to trails. And I think it's been a
25 great model for -- for other applicants on -- on -- on

1 how to approach the community and take this feedback.

2 The trails that are in this area are a gem.

3 The -- the proposal in front of us tonight has
4 additional trails, and although it hasn't been codified
5 in the final EIR, we are hopeful that this -- you know,
6 what we're seeing right now is the trails plan that would
7 move forward and we are very supportive of the trails and
8 the trail connections. We've worked exhaustively with
9 the County, as well, for connections and trailheads
10 through Sycamore Goodan Ranch to make these through
11 connections.

12 Also, from Mission Trails. I mean, this is
13 Mission Trails master plan update. It was just approved
14 by City Council couple months back. Huge connections
15 through this community and -- and very vital and
16 important to everyone who lives in this area and our
17 members. Thank you.

18 MAYOR MINTO: Ben, before you go, did you work with
19 San Diego on that plan, also?

20 MR. STONE: Yes. We worked exhaustively on the
21 Mission Trails master plan and I also spent a lot of time
22 with City of Poway and -- and the County on the Sycamore
23 Goodan Ranch plan. And actually, there's a trail, one
24 day that will be legal, to get you all the way through
25 Sycamore Goodan Ranch and over into Poway, into the

1 communities of Poway, all -- all without touching a road,
2 most likely.

3 MAYOR MINTO: Great. Thank you.

4 MR. STONE: Thank you.

5 CITY CLERK: Janet Garvin. Mark Finch. Next is
6 Michelle Perchez and Sean-Paul Chambers.

7 MR. FINCH: Good evening, Mayor, Councilmembers. My
8 name is Mark Finch and I've lived in Lakeside since 1975,
9 so I've seen a lot of change around here. I remember the
10 days of Mission Gorge when there was nothing but a K --
11 KCBQ and a roller rink.

12 So back in 1980, it made a big, bold move to
13 incorporate, and now the difference between Santee and
14 Lakeside is pretty evident. I happen to be in the
15 building industry. I build commercial buildings for a
16 living. I've been doing that for 40 years. This plan
17 that HomeFed has put together is extremely unique, and if
18 I was bestowed the honor to be on this Council, I would
19 be extremely proud to support this development. I think
20 it's really, really unique and I hope it passes. Thank
21 you.

22 CITY CLERK: Michelle Perchez.

23 COUNCILMEMBER McNELIS: I'm sorry, hold on. Before
24 you leave.

25 MR. FINCH: Sorry?

1 COUNCILMEMBER McNELIS: Are you -- are you one of
2 the builders for this developer?

3 MR. FINCH: No.

4 COUNCILMEMBER McNELIS: Okay. So you're not --

5 MR. FINCH: No. All I do is commercial buildings.

6 COUNCILMEMBER McNELIS: Okay. Thank you.

7 MR. FINCH: I don't touch houses.

8 MS. PERCHEZ: I believe he left me extra time. Just
9 kidding. I'm gonna throw out a bunch of questions, so
10 write down, Jeff, furiously. Who was the consultation
11 person on the trail placement? Like to know that
12 person's background and --

13 CITY CLERK: I'm sorry, Michelle, can you not hold
14 onto the mic, 'cause it --

15 MS. PERCHEZ: Sorry. Sorry about that. Who's gonna
16 maintain those trails? Whose gonna make sure that
17 there's no illegal activities, like camping and various
18 types of harassment? Who knows?

19 In terms of the open space, who's gonna
20 maintain that? What's the management plan? And we
21 want -- we want details. Right? Are citizens gonna be
22 in charge of this? People on the HOA gonna be in charge
23 of this?

24 For the farm, how are you going to control any
25 toxic runoff? What I mean by that is excess fertilizer

1 from the farm onto native areas.

2 In general, I believe this -- this area should
3 be a hundred percent open space, with a nature center for
4 us all to enjoy. We can have access to trails then.
5 Would provide some education, a citizen, science type of
6 programs for students, and also, the general public.

7 Your plan, as proposed, really does fragment
8 the habitat, so for all the lovely people wearing "Open
9 space for Santee" little badges, provided for HomeFed, if
10 you really cared about open space, you wouldn't want this
11 project, because it's really going to interrupt the flow
12 of organisms, between all those wonderful, natural areas
13 that we all appreciate and enjoy.

14 I think -- oh, also, your ridge-top
15 construction is likely to impact vernal pool habitats. I
16 know most people don't know about vernal pool habitats,
17 but if you ever saw one, you would be delighted. And I
18 hope they -- they are maintained. Okay. Thank you.

19 CITY CLERK: Sean-Paul Chambers, and then Lynda
20 Marrokal.

21 MR. CHAMBERS: Hello, Mr. Mayor, Council. Thank you
22 so much for your time. My wife and I were really
23 interested in the plans. We're interested in what
24 HomeFed has already done. We went to their portfolio
25 online and found the Village of Escaya in Chula Vista and

1 drove down, visited that. It's amazing. It's beautiful.
2 We would love to raise our family there or -- or
3 something like that. The layout is very-well planned,
4 very holistic, very community-oriented, and it's -- it's
5 brand new.

6 And then, we also found that HomeFed did the
7 San Elijo Hills up in San Marcos, and we went up there
8 and it's -- it's been -- been there for about 10, 15
9 years now, I believe. And -- and it's just amazing to
10 see what it's become and we're really excited about the
11 potential for something like that in Santee. Thanks so
12 much.

13 MAYOR MINTO: Thank you.

14 CITY CLERK: Lynda Marrokal.

15 MS. MARROKAL: Good evening, my name is Lynda
16 Marrokal, and what no one has spoke about is in the
17 General Plan, 1400 homes could go onto that site, on much
18 larger lots, which would stop us from having any open
19 space at all, no trail systems, no working farm, and
20 also, our 36-acre public park.

21 So it's been a long time in Santee that we have
22 received anything of this magnitude, as a community, and
23 I feel that if we sit on it too long and it goes away,
24 the General Plan will be dropping 1400 homes on much
25 larger lots, which will take away all the 52 Freeway

1 being dealt with, the farm, and all the open space, and
2 we'll be left with, like, Carlton Hills, which I
3 experienced when I was younger. It was our open space
4 and it developed and it's a community. This is far, far
5 more acceptable for us, as citizens in Santee, to have.
6 And all of the benefits that we will receive from this
7 project.

8 I've been against Fanita Ranch for over 25
9 years, and this is the first time that these developers
10 have stepped it up, and I hope that our Council realizes
11 that we could lose all this and they could just build.
12 They could start building in a month, if they want, but
13 they're holding off, and they're holding off for a better
14 community for us, to enjoy it. Thank you.

15 CITY CLERK: Sandy Shielke. And then, Alison
16 Liebrecht is next.

17 MAYOR MINTO: Is Sandy here? Okay. Go ahead.

18 MS. LIEBRECHT: Good evening. I'm Alison Liebrecht.
19 Mayor and City Council, thank you for having me today.
20 As a resident of District 1 and as a member of the San
21 Diego Mountain Biking Association. I have many concerns,
22 also, that some of my neighbors here have shared.
23 However, I will keep to discussion of trails and open
24 space for today.

25 There are many existing trails that have been

1 built and maintained by multi-use trail users, and that
2 would be mountain bikers, hikers, runners, bird watchers,
3 et cetera, using sustainable methods and should be kept
4 in the plan. These are single-track trails, and to
5 Councilman Hall, less than four feet wide, that have less
6 of an environmental impact than the fire roads and
7 easement roads that also exit there. They are heavily
8 used by residents, wildlife and bring visitors from out
9 of the area, which also brings business and serves as
10 additional eyes, to help prevent fires, as well as the
11 trails giving breaks and access to the more remote areas.

12 The trails and parks are one of the number one
13 reasons why we moved to Santee. They are part of what
14 keeps families here to stay and play, enhancing the
15 quality of life of our community. Hopefully, though,
16 with less homes and a second sportsplex that maybe can be
17 used in a different manner. I do appreciate your time
18 and consideration to keep as many of these sustainable
19 trails in Fanita Ranch and Santee at large. Thank you.

20 CITY CLERK: Next is Mike Root, and he has a
21 handout. And then, Dan Bickford, if you can come sit up
22 here, please, and John Olson.

23 MR. ROOT: I'm not speaking for or against Fanita
24 Ranch, however, I would like to point out that the City
25 does not keep their promises regarding developments. And

1 to get there, you make developers spend money on studies,
2 reports, a habitat manager, in perpetuity, for example,
3 in Sky Ranch. You drive up the cost, so who profits?
4 You've got consultants, bureaucrats and attorneys. So
5 what you get is the worst of both worlds. You drive up
6 the cost and then your oversight sucks. Let me give you
7 some examples from Sky Ranch.

8 You had a habitat manager, again, funded by --
9 funded by Lennar, who's supposed to be there in
10 perpetuity. He's supposed to attend meetings. He
11 doesn't. He's supposed to hand out brochures. He
12 doesn't. He's supposed to educate the community. He
13 doesn't. All the things he was supposed to do, he
14 doesn't, except for he -- he put a kiosk up.

15 I reported something to him at one point. Here
16 was his response. And you have this redacted copy in
17 front of you. This is from Marcus Spiegelberg, from the
18 Center of Natural Lands Management. "Sorry to hear. I
19 don't have any authority to do anything. I just
20 communicated with the HOA your e-mail and concern and
21 have awaited for their response." The CCNRs give him
22 full authority to act, he just doesn't. So why did
23 Lennar spend a million bucks to fund that?

24 MAYOR MINTO: Mr. Root, are you gonna make a
25 connection to this --

1 MR. ROOT: Yeah.

2 MAYOR MINTO: -- workshop tonight?

3 MR. ROOT: Yes. I'm pointing out that you don't
4 keep your promises. The -- the view shed that you were
5 shown, that's fantasy. And it was for -- and it was for
6 Sky Ranch, because as you drive by, you can look. And
7 what the HOA did was they just mowed down all of Zone 1,
8 which per code, is supposed to be irrigated and
9 ornamentally planted. So the view shed doesn't match
10 what they did, and now you're proposing for Fanita Ranch.
11 You're gonna have eight parks managed by an HOA and no
12 one provides any oversight? And I'll give some
13 additional photos later.

14 MAYOR MINTO: Thank you.

15 CITY CLERK: Dan Bickford.

16 MR. BICKFORD: Oh, thank you again. Dan Bickford
17 here. What's not to love about this? I mean, we've got
18 about 2,000 acres of open space and parks and 35-acre
19 park and community farms, you know. Unlike some of the,
20 you know, the speakers, I did read Fanita Ranch's plan
21 and they have the migration -- animal migration taken
22 into -- into account there. They plan for that. Big
23 open space right there in the middle of the two villages
24 there, where the -- the -- that's a migration path. You
25 know, the -- the open spaces are not fragmented, not at

1 all.

2 The -- I mean, I know -- I'm -- I'm looking
3 forward -- I'm gonna take advantage of the 35 miles of
4 trails. Doesn't look like I'm doing that, but any case,
5 I will -- I will work -- you know, go out to that 35 my
6 acre park. Absolutely, I'll make -- I'll make use of
7 that. I love -- I love Santee -- Santee's park system.
8 It's great. Well taken care of. Community parks or HOA
9 parks, I'm a little on the fence on that. I wanna see
10 how that works, but certainly looking forward to those
11 also. Thank you.

12 MAYOR MINTO: Thank you.

13 CITY CLERK: John Olson. And then, Justin Schlaefli
14 last.

15 MR. OLSON: Good evening, Mayor, City Council and
16 City Manager. I'm trying to keep this quick, because I
17 have the under on 11 o'clock. So I'm -- I'm for Fanita
18 Ranch. I like this project. Throughout the process --
19 or the time that I've lived in Santee, we've always heard
20 about the developers and the mean guys, with all the
21 money, from New York, coming in, doing all the mean
22 stuff. Being mean, ornery people and why don't they do
23 this and why don't they do that and why don't they think
24 of all of the wonderful things that HomeFed has thought
25 of to make this a great community that they wanna

1 build up there?

2 They have the rights to build on their
3 property, just like you have the rights to build whatever
4 you want to build on your property, within the code. And
5 for me, it's a land use issue. And if they're willing to
6 fund the improvements to the 52 thirty years prior --
7 before they're scheduled to be funded, and it's gonna
8 cost us a couple more homes and increase our -- our
9 property tax collection and -- and bring in a -- a wealth
10 year clientele into the community or resident into the
11 community that will make everything better for -- for
12 everyone and solve a lot of our problems. Thanks.

13 CITY CLERK: Justin Schlaefli.

14 MR. SCHLAEFLI: Thank you, Mayor and Council, as
15 well as -- and, perhaps, especially with Staff for these
16 workshops. I think the opportunity to educate citizens
17 on this process and provide feedback, which will
18 presumably help the developer or fine-tune the project
19 and really make it a good fit for Santee is -- is the
20 right way to have a process. I understand there are
21 citizens on both sides for and against 100 percent open
22 space, 76 percent open space.

23 It all sounds like a good thing to me. I mean,
24 that's a lot of open space. We're really pushing for the
25 goals of maintaining a livable community, a community

1 where people want to come, that we value parks and we
2 value open space, and I think that's a lot of what Santee
3 is. So I see this plan very much in the mold of -- of
4 what we want Santee to be and I -- I like that.

5 Also, through this process, although, I don't
6 yet have a final position on Fanita Ranch, personally.
7 I'm listening to a lot of these things. I look forward
8 to reading the EIR, which will be prepared. But more and
9 more, I feel like HomeFed is becoming a partner with the
10 community, through this process, and that they're really
11 starting to, you know, give a -- a -- a very good
12 project. So I'm excited to see that.

13 I also see these tags in the audience, "Open
14 space for Santee," and a comment was made earlier and
15 I -- I thought it kind of resonated. It really resonated
16 with me. Who says no to open space? Think we're all in
17 agreement on that. I think 76 percent, while maintaining
18 housing and some of the goals that we need, with the RHNA
19 numbers and everything else, seems like a good balance.

20 Really excited to see the farm element. I know
21 that was profiled at the Santee Street Fair and they've
22 had kind of demonstration booths -- booths and stuff to
23 explain a bit more about that, and that's an exciting
24 element. And I'll -- I'll stop with one final thought.
25 I hope that the community park that they're putting in,

1 that they put in a very nice concession stand, just like
2 we have at Town Center Park with some good food and drink
3 options for patrons of the park. Thank you.

4 CITY CLERK: No further speakers.

5 MAYOR MINTO: Thank you. Jeff, you wanna come back
6 up. You have any answers to any of those questions?

7 MR. O'CONNOR: I have a few.

8 MAYOR MINTO: Okay.

9 MR. O'CONNOR: And I'll try to be brief. First of
10 all, there's some questions about HOAs and how we're
11 gonna manage all the open space and what -- what we are
12 going to do. We've done this before. We've done this at
13 San Elijo Hills. San Elijo Hills started in 1998.
14 It's -- we have 15 homes left to build out of 3500.
15 We'll -- we'll finish those off early next year.

16 Our HOA dues there are \$80 a month. The reason
17 they're \$80 a month is because we think about the HOA
18 when we're -- when we're designing things. All -- all
19 the perimeter slopes at San Elijo Hills, they are -- they
20 are managed for fire, brush management, and the brush
21 management zones, but they're all native palette. We
22 establish them through irrigation, and then, when they're
23 established, if you irrigate native plants, in the wrong
24 time of the year, you're gonna kill them or they will
25 stunt their growth.

1 We do not have -- water any of the perimeter
2 slopes in San Elijo Hills anymore. That number one cost
3 for Homeowner's Association is water. Number two cost
4 is -- is -- is landscape management. You cut those two
5 way down and your HOA dues will -- will be low. Our HOA
6 is one of the strongest HOAs in California. Every once
7 in a while they take a break on paying their dues, per
8 month, because they have more money than they need. And
9 you can use that money to do the open space management,
10 and that kind of thing. If you have 1500 homes, you can
11 only raise half the money, as if you have 3,000 homes.
12 So when you start cutting down the number of homes, your
13 amenities go down.

14 I'll go through a few of the -- of the
15 questions we had. Talking about conserving 100 percent
16 of San -- of -- of Fanita Ranch. That -- if that happens
17 nobody -- it's not open to the public. It's private
18 property. We own it. If the development doesn't go
19 through, there won't be any parks. There won't be any
20 trails. There won't be anyone that goes on to Fanita
21 Ranch anymore. We want to do something for the
22 community, that's why we need our development approved,
23 then everybody gets to recreate on -- on Fanita Ranch.

24 67 percent of our property will be open space
25 preserve. Van was talking about it's gonna be closer to

1 60 percent. It's 67 percent, two-thirds. The previous
2 developer was half of that, only 50 percent conserved.

3 Fire breaks. Karen had some question on the
4 fire breaks and the mitigation. Looking at this picture
5 here, it's a little bit small, but that's 3,000 acres
6 there, almost 3,000 acres. And we have a -- there's a
7 corridor that -- that goes underneath Cuyamaca. It a
8 wildlife corridor, underneath the road, that ties
9 everything together. Between the two development areas
10 is at least a thousand feet. In most cases, it's close
11 to 1500 feet. All up the eastern side, there's a -- a
12 thousand-foot corridor up there as well. It all ties
13 together with Goodan Ranch and all the open space on the
14 Marine Corps Air Station property.

15 Insurance. There was -- Karen had a big
16 question on -- on insurance. And it's like, to me,
17 your -- if -- if her insurance is -- is going up -- I'm
18 not sure what that has to do with -- with our property.
19 We are building up-to-date, cutting-edge homes that will
20 be as fire resistant as they can be. And we're working
21 with insurance companies now. I'm gonna speak to -- to
22 Ronn, 'cause Ronn is in the insurance business, to see
23 how -- what we can do to make it even more affordable for
24 insurance companies to insure properties at Fanita Ranch.

25 We talked -- oh, a little bit more about the

1 wildlife. Oh, I did talk about the wildlife crossings
2 and the conservation measures. How are we gonna manage
3 the open space? We are going to do that through our HOA.
4 We're gonna have plenty of money, because we have the
5 volume of homes to create a -- enough money to hire
6 people to manage the open space. We're gonna have a
7 habitat and management plan and we're going to have a
8 restoration plan.

9 The restoration plan is going -- if -- if
10 you've been out this lately, or you've seen some of the
11 aerial photographs, there are trails that are getting put
12 in almost daily. Four-wheel drive vehicles are out
13 there. We try to patrol and keep them off as much as
14 possible, but it's difficult. Motorcycles are going over
15 the pristine vegetation and ripping it out. What we are
16 going to do, when we get a project approved, is have a
17 restoration plan, where we take a certain amount of the
18 acreage every year and we restore it. We restore it. So
19 we're gonna be planting plantago and other things for the
20 quino butterfly, for hermes, what -- what -- the
21 vegetation they like. We're gonna do a certain amount
22 every year, until it's all done, and that will be in
23 our -- our restoration plan. And our habitat and
24 management plan will be the management plan that manages
25 it all when we're done.

1 Let me see. Someone else was talking about on
2 our trail plan. Our trail plan will be, also, managed by
3 the HOA, and the landscape -- or -- we have landscape
4 people out there on a daily basis and they will be on the
5 trails every day to see if there's erosion, to see if
6 there are trails that are getting creating when -- where
7 they're not supposed to be. As soon as they see them,
8 they shut them down.

9 And by the way, when residents move in to a
10 community, they take ownership of that community, so they
11 police the community themselves. If they see something
12 going on that's not supposed to be there, they tell the
13 HOA and we get it fixed right away.

14 Okay. Farm. There's a question on, what are
15 we gonna do with the runoff from the farm with
16 fertilizers. It is going to be a biodynamic, organic
17 farm. There won't be any toxic fertilizers used in -- in
18 our -- in the farm.

19 Ridge top vernal pools. Most of the vernal
20 pools -- and there are vernal pools on Fanita Ranch --
21 are located in the north and the northeaster --
22 northwesterly corners. Okay? We are preserving as many
23 of the vernal pools as we can. And they're -- you see
24 the little knob at the very top? That is vernal pool
25 central. We are gonna create massive vernal pools in

1 that area. Vernal pools can be created. It works all
2 over the place, and we have already been talking to our
3 biologist how -- how we go -- go ahead and do that.

4 Lynda -- Lynda mentioned a few things on, we
5 could go out there and build -- and start building next
6 month. We can't do that. Okay? But we could go out
7 there and start building various -- well, we are looking
8 at options. This is our Option A, and B, and C. We do
9 have other options. We could build what's in the
10 General -- what's in the General Plan. 1390 or so units.
11 Okay? With that, you're not gonna get the freeway
12 improved. You're gonna have half the number of -- have
13 the acreage of parks. You're not gonna have the revenue
14 coming into the City. Our revenue to the City is going
15 to be northward of \$400 million with -- with that plan.
16 You, also, probably won't have a farm with the 1395
17 units. It just doesn't make sense when you cut down the
18 number of units.

19 Alison was talking about the narrow trails.
20 Some trails are going to be narrow, two feet wide,
21 single-track trails for hiking and biking. Some of
22 them -- we -- we want trails for everyone. Some people
23 like to walk on a wide sidewalk through -- through town
24 centers. We're gonna have that and we're gonna have
25 everything in between.

1 I think that is it. Does City Council have any
2 other questions for me?

3 MAYOR MINTO: No. I do have one for Mr. Whalen,
4 though.

5 MR. O'CONNOR: Okay.

6 MAYOR MINTO: Come back up, Jim.

7 COUNCILMEMBER KOVAL: I have one.

8 MAYOR MINTO: Oh, I'm sorry.

9 COUNCILMEMBER KOVAL: So you said, "wide sidewalks,"
10 and that was actually one of my questions. But I heard
11 six foot wide; is that the widest?

12 MR. O'CONNOR: No. And -- and -- and by the way, I
13 forgot, we have been working with Padre Dam. Courtney
14 here is in the audience tonight -- tonight about working
15 with -- it's a -- it's a win/win situation. We're gonna
16 complement the park at -- at Padre Dam and you're gonna
17 complement our -- our park and our development and our
18 trails.

19 To get to your question, Laura, the trails --
20 the concrete trails that are six foot, maybe seven foot
21 wide, those are most of the ones -- some of the ones in
22 our town center. The wider trails will be on -- on
23 Cuyamaca and Fanita Parkway. Those are gonna be 10 to 12
24 foot wide. So they have varying widths of trails.

25 COUNCILMEMBER KOVAL: My -- my comment to that would

1 be at Santee Lakes, the -- the old part of Santee Lakes,
2 the east side, those are all six-foot wide concrete, you
3 know, walking paths, and we found that they're too narrow
4 to handle the kind of foot traffic that you have in a
5 community like that. So all the -- the sidewalks on the
6 other side, on the west side, are eight foot wide, and
7 that -- you know, the six foot wide is wide enough for
8 maybe a stroller and a -- and a child. And so eight foot
9 seems to be the right -- the right amount of space. Just
10 some feedback.

11 MR. O'CONNOR: Well, absolutely, and we'll take it
12 into consideration.

13 COUNCILMEMBER HALL: And the dog. Don't forget that
14 one.

15 MR. O'CONNOR: Other questions?

16 COUNCILMEMBER HALL: Well, again, I -- I have the
17 same problem. I mean, you know, Walker Trails is 14 feet
18 and when you put a bike on one of those things, and
19 unless you're gonna have a separate bike lane, I just
20 don't think they're wide enough, frankly.

21 MR. O'CONNOR: And -- and we do have separate bike
22 lanes in most of the areas where we have -- where we have
23 trails, but well taken. Thank you.

24 COUNCILMEMBER HALL: But the width -- the width
25 bothers us.

1 MR. O'CONNOR: Okay. All right. Thank you very
2 much.

3 MAYOR MINTO: Thanks, Jeff. Okay. Quick question
4 for you, California Conservation Corps --

5 MR. WHALEN: Yes.

6 MAYOR MINTO: -- what kind of work do they do?

7 MR. WHALEN: Here, the California Conservation Corps
8 is urban corps.

9 MAYOR MINTO: Okay.

10 MR. WHALEN: They're the state-chartered entity that
11 is the -- fulfills the role of the California
12 Conservation Corps.

13 MAYOR MINTO: Okay. And are they the only ones that
14 are allowed to do, like, vegetation mitigation, with --
15 as state permitted?

16 MR. WHALEN: Oh, no, not at all

17 MAYOR MINTO: Okay.

18 MR. WHALEN: There are -- there's probably a dozen
19 entities that can manage habitat. And Jeff pretty much
20 put me out of a job with everything he said. He's the
21 first client we've had that's worked on Fanita Ranch that
22 actually absorbed all the conservation issues. The only
23 thing I would add to him is that -- what he said was that
24 we had Dudek hand plan every segment of the trails that
25 went in there, to make sure that they were sensitive to

1 the environment, and -- and over the long haul. The
2 problem with habitat conservation is it's short-termed,
3 sometimes, like the man complained. It's really, you
4 have to take the long haul.

5 MAYOR MINTO: The reason why I was asking those
6 questions is because I remember correctly that -- that is
7 your business is -- is habitat management, some of those
8 things, right?

9 MR. WHALEN: It was a -- it's a side business,
10 because we had to deal with these small entities. It's
11 the -- the larger ones wouldn't -- the small open space
12 areas that the larger habitat managers wouldn't take on.
13 So I also have -- I hoped that Urban Corps would have a
14 permanent funding source, 'cause they're a very, very
15 good program. They take at-risk youth, put them through
16 a GED program and then they get a trade. One of the
17 trades is -- 'cause habitat management is permanent.

18 When you set these endowments up, you get
19 quarterly payments that's used to fund the organization's
20 effort's over time and they build up a reserve. And if
21 it's done correctly, which we like to think it is, then
22 it works in perpetuity.

23 MAYOR MINTO: Would they be able to do some of the
24 work around -- maybe not necessarily inside this
25 footprint, but maybe some of the areas around it that

1 might become overvegetated or have other problems?

2 MR. WHALEN: Oh, yes. They do -- they do brush
3 clearing. They do channel clearing for drainage --
4 drainages, like you have many of them here. And how they
5 work is because they have many unskilled people that
6 are -- they work under the direction of a biologist,
7 who's out there with them and say, "Pick that, but not
8 that."

9 MAYOR MINTO: Okay. Great. Thank you very much.
10 Jeff, can you come back up for a minute, please. Sorry
11 about that. He -- he prompted some questions. So
12 here -- here's my question: Is there any way for you --
13 this is where I do another ask. Is there any way for you
14 to set up any kind of endowment to help with doing
15 something like that to continue mitigating vegetation
16 issues or habitat issues around your development?

17 MR. O'CONNOR: Around -- on our property?

18 MAYOR MINTO: Yeah.

19 MR. O'CONNOR: We -- we've been -- we've talked
20 about that. We have to -- to set up some kind of funding
21 mechanism into perpetuity. There are different ways to
22 do it. You can do it through CFD. You can do it through
23 endowment, or you can do it with a strong HOA, but we
24 need to prove to the wildlife agencies, that are HOA, if
25 it goes away, what happens then. And you can do that

1 through a dormancy FD that if -- if our HOA goes away,
2 then the dormancy FD kicks in. So there are different
3 mechanisms, we're looking into all of them.

4 MAYOR MINTO: So you're already on top of that?

5 MR. O'CONNOR: Correct.

6 MAYOR MINTO: Okay. Great. Thank you very much.

7 MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you.

8 MAYOR MINTO: Council, comments or questions?
9 Anybody?

10 COUNCILMEMBER HALL: As far as the home insurance
11 goes, you can get home insurance, for -- for that
12 comment. It's -- if you got non-renewed now in that
13 zone, it's gonna happen. People are getting non-renewed
14 northern Santee. It's just part of life. The fire
15 insurance nowadays, in East Counties is California Fair
16 Plan. So that's gonna be the part of it. I don't know
17 well -- where they're gonna fit in with insurance
18 companies. A lot of the major companies are keeping
19 people. A lot of the smaller companies are bailing
20 quick. So that's what's happening. We've already talked
21 about that before.

22 The trail system, the bike system, you know,
23 again, I think -- Laura and I both think they're a little
24 small, so if we can increase those, that'd be great. The
25 fire break, we'll address that in the next one. I've

1 brought that -- I've beaten that one to death, too. And
2 the farm, I'm just curious, if that doesn't make it
3 beating this one to death, too, what happens then?

4 MAYOR MINTO: Stephen.

5 VICE MAYOR HOULAHAN: Well, on -- just to look at it
6 on paper, everything does look very nice. I do have a
7 number of concerns. I would say 76 percent of the land
8 being saved is open space habitat, parks and -- and
9 potential farm land. That's definitely an improvement
10 from past applications. Not too crazy about the special
11 use area, but I guess that'll be discussed at a later
12 time.

13 The -- the sections, when we were looking at
14 the -- the before and after, driving down the 125 and
15 having the -- the Vineyard Village, it's gonna be
16 pretty -- pretty far up there on -- on top of that
17 hillside. And I think -- I think that'll definitely
18 alter, permanently, the visual aesthetics of the City of
19 Santee. Many people like having the -- the beautiful
20 views. Of course, it is their private property. It's on
21 our city seal, so hate to see that go. I know Poway's
22 built and San Diego built as far down as they can onto
23 the border, to the north, and Santee seems to have been
24 the last area to not build on those hills.

25 Also have concerns about the Orchard Village.

1 It, basically, on its west side, it buttresses up very
2 closely to the Roy Stoyer Treatment Facility, which is
3 gonna be greatly expanded. I -- I ride on the Stow Trail
4 almost every Sunday, legally, with a pass. And there's
5 a -- there's -- there's a fragrance that comes from
6 treating sewage. And when it is expanded, potentially,
7 greatly expanded, there will be quite a -- quite a bit of
8 fragrance. And I understand that maybe there'll be some
9 sort of deodorizer applied. But either way, the --
10 what's there is there, whether it's masked or not. The
11 wind typically does blow from west to east. And so that,
12 combined with the -- the expansion of the landfill, which
13 will eventually, likely be the largest mountain in
14 Mission Trails, the odor will -- will likely drift into
15 the Orchard Village.

16 As far as the Commons, the -- the knoll, which
17 is very familiar to the mountain bike community. Just to
18 the west of the knoll there's an area that has grinding
19 stones, native grinding stones. It doesn't look like
20 that'll likely be saved. It looks to me like there's
21 potentially be a sports field put -- put over that. It
22 might be possible for that to be conserved, if this plan
23 was to go forward. I think that is an important,
24 historical place of significance that is not necessarily
25 well-known to the people of Santee and -- and should be

1 preserved.

2 Getting back to the Vineyard Village. It looks
3 great to see all these vineyards on the side. I just --
4 wow, it's gonna be a whole lot of water. It's gonna be a
5 whole lot of water. And it's -- it's gonna forever
6 change the character of the hills to that area.

7 As far as the -- the width of the trails, I
8 know Ronn would like everything to be a hundred yards
9 wide. I have to disagree. When you go up to those
10 trails and you're mountain biking, you do want a single
11 track. And so you don't -- it -- it takes away all of
12 the pleasure of being out there. Everything is a
13 six-foot wide or eight-foot wide or 10-foot wide,
14 decomposed granite trail.

15 So I do appreciate that there will be a variety
16 of trails. A great deal of them will be on current SDG&E
17 easements. The vast majority of the trails to the south
18 of the property, nobody will ever ride anyway. They're
19 too steep. And so yes, it is open space that's been
20 saved. It is the hillside, and it has limited
21 opportunity for recreation. Although, there are a lot of
22 us hardcores that will ride up that mountain and ride
23 down it without killing ourselves.

24 The -- the -- the fact that there is an attempt
25 to try to join the open space to the north and the open

1 space to the south -- southwest. But it does appear that
2 it -- it does fragment the open space greatly. It does
3 have a -- a large perimeter, so -- but I guess we talk
4 about fire and safety at the next meeting.

5 As far as coming up from Cuyamaca, again, it'll
6 be quite -- quite a view of -- of the Vineyard Village.
7 I don't think that's necessarily gonna be a -- a huge
8 crowd pleaser for the people of Santee.

9 I do appreciate the fact that HomeFed has done
10 a great deal to try to make this project the best it
11 could possibly be, when it's located in a box canyon, on
12 a very heavily-congested -- in a very heavily-congested
13 city. I do appreciate the \$4 million that was put
14 forward for the traffic study, which we'll discuss
15 next -- at the next meeting or whatever the next
16 workshop, in January.

17 I think that it's disingenuous to say that,
18 that work would not be done if this project was not
19 approved, because that, I believe, is false. I believe
20 that the money that has been put forth by Fanita Ranch,
21 and is great. However, at this point, we're actually
22 looking grants from the federal government that likely
23 will not -- would -- would not be altered, based on what
24 happens with Fanita Ranch. So I -- I think that, that's
25 disingenuous, at best.

1 Along with the fact that, yeah, there was a
2 project for 1300 plus homes, that was approved, that also
3 lost when it went to court. So again, I don't believe
4 that 1300 homes could be built at any time. It would
5 have to go through this whole process, yet
6 [again|general]. So I -- I don't believe that -- that
7 those sorts of statements are legitimate, and likely,
8 should not -- I think it's misinformation that should not
9 be spread.

10 Now, having a farm, I think that'd be
11 spectacular. I just don't think that the -- that the
12 water's there for it. But I guess when the -- when the
13 amount of sewage that's pumped into the -- the treatment
14 sewage plan goes up 15 times what it is now, then maybe
15 there'll be a lot of reclaimed water to use up there.
16 However, I -- I do have a lot of concerns about how much
17 water it will take.

18 So I'll leave it at that. But yeah, I'm -- I'm
19 happy to see this much conservation to land, and also
20 happy to see the extent to try to conserve the trails,
21 and so thank you for that.

22 MAYOR MINTO: Rob.

23 COUNCILMEMBER McNELIS: All right. So 76 percent of
24 open space equals 76 open space. That means it -- it's
25 space that can't be built on to say -- to say it's really

1 gonna be 60 or 50 or whatever. No, it's 76. It's 76.
2 You can't build on it, that means it's open space.
3 Whether part of it is a -- a fire -- a -- a fire buffer
4 or whatever, it's still open space.

5 For -- also say that we shouldn't build this
6 because buyers won't buy it, because it's close to nox --
7 a noxious-odor producing plant or because it's -- it's
8 too high and -- and a fire hazard, that's -- that's for
9 the buyer to decide. That's -- they're gonna be
10 presented with all the options that are in front of them.
11 Insurance options are still going to be available,
12 otherwise nobody would be able to buy, because no one can
13 buy a house and not have insurance on it, and still be
14 able to finance it. It's -- it's impossible.

15 The reason for building on the hill tops; is;
16 actually to allow for animals to use their natural paths
17 in the valleys. That is their natural source. The
18 reason for the break in the middle was because that is a
19 natural trail for the animals, currently. That's what
20 they -- that's -- these are the trails that they're
21 already using. These are the paths that they're already
22 using and that's the reason that they decided to build on
23 the peaks, rather than in the valleys, and so that they
24 could preserve the open spaces for the wildlife.

25 I wholeheartedly believe a lot of these

1 arguments all revert -- all these -- the fire, the
2 noxious odors, the -- the trail stuff, all that just
3 revolves back to -- it's up to 2630 homes in my backyard,
4 and I just don't want anything in my backyard.

5 That's what I think most of these arguments
6 break down to, whether people wanna admit it or don't
7 wanna admit it. That's the reality. You can make this
8 as pretty -- they can do everything they want. People
9 are still gonna say no, because it's in their backyard
10 and they don't want any more development at all. Period.
11 End of story. I got my house, you shouldn't have yours.
12 And that's just the reality. That's not fair, because,
13 as somebody stated earlier, they thought the same thing
14 when all Carlton Hills was built. I didn't want any more
15 development, because I've got my house, I don't want you
16 to have yours. And that was in the '80s, '70s.

17 These trails only become accessible -- legally
18 accessible, if this project is approved. Should this be
19 defeated, they have the right to fence the entire
20 property and keep everybody out. They've opened this up,
21 currently, and legally, to people that want to utilize
22 the trails, bike, all that stuff, because they're trying
23 to be good neighbors and -- and provide some community
24 spirit and -- and work with the mountain bikers, the
25 hikers, the walkers, all that stuff, in order to --

1 I'm -- I'm sure garner some favor from them and in hopes
2 that they will help them in support of this project. I
3 understand why they do it, but that is the reality. If
4 they wanna close this up and fence it off, it's their
5 right. It's their property.

6 I saw -- I saw when Jeff was up here talking
7 about that very thing, I saw a few people in the audience
8 going, So what? Okay. Who cares? The same people that
9 were saying, Well, we need these trails. That brings me
10 back to its 2630 homes. That's the real reason.

11 Who maintains -- who -- who's -- who's gonna
12 look out for the -- the camping on the project and
13 loitering on the project? Who's doing that now?
14 Currently, there's nobody up there to do that. It's
15 private property. We could have encampments up there,
16 kids starting fires, doing silly things, all that stuff,
17 all day long. It would take way longer to find that and
18 deal with it than it ever would, if there was development
19 up there, because as the Applicant stated, neighbors take
20 care of their own property. Neighbors take care of their
21 backyard. Neighbors are looking out for this stuff and
22 they're -- and they're guarding for that. Who would
23 maintain that, if it was just a -- a nature center?
24 We're not gonna be able to pay for anybody as a -- as a
25 free nature center. Nobody's gonna be out there

1 maintaining and looking and making sure there's no
2 camping or -- or anything of the nature.

3 And just for the record, the previous project
4 lost in court, because the developer went bankrupt, prior
5 to being able to go back and fight against it and fight
6 the concerns for the fire issues. There were two fire
7 chiefs, our own and another outside specialist, that both
8 stated that the project was safe from fire. The judge
9 wanted more information on that and wanted to challenge
10 that. The Applicant went bankrupt, prior to being able
11 to go back and -- and reviewed it.

12 So that's the reason it died. It wasn't
13 because it was defeated by the courts and anybody beat it
14 down. It was -- they went bankrupt. That's -- that's
15 the real reason it died when it died. The new developer
16 wants to come back and go after that same project, the
17 same way, all they would have to do is just deal with
18 that and they're moving forward in that manner. So those
19 are the realities.

20 COUNCILMEMBER KOVAL: All right. So full
21 disclosure: In 1982, I was on a mountain bike in the
22 Julian Mountains. Yes. And about 40 miles an hour, took
23 a nasty fall and shredded off my kneecap. Still pulling
24 out asphalt to this day, so I'm not a mountain biker.
25 And no, I'm not much of a bike rider at all.

1 But that being said, I've been a part of the
2 Stow Trail Task Force since 2016, as a Park Director.
3 Stow Trail runs right alongside of Santee Lakes.
4 Actually, I was a part of that task force before the City
5 of Santee got involved with that task force, because at a
6 certain point, when Fanita Ranch, HomeFed, was willing to
7 share an easement and reroute the route, the City of
8 Santee needed to be involved in the -- in the task force
9 to make that happen.

10 So I've been a -- a part of the conversation
11 with the trail system for almost as long as I've been the
12 park director, and you know, this is the -- the County of
13 San Diego, the City of San Diego, Miramar, Santee Lakes,
14 Padre Dam, different developers, all -- all working
15 together to make these trail connections happen.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Unintelligible).

17 COUNCILMEMBER KOVAL: Yeah, absolutely. And -- and
18 I -- I learned a lot about being -- being on that task
19 force. And so, I was really glad that Ben Stone showed
20 up tonight to talk about what the mountain bikers
21 actually feel about the trail system, but that's really
22 important for this conversation tonight. So them working
23 with HomeFed on the development is important. There's a
24 big community out here. I wish more mountain bikers were
25 here tonight to talk about this, because there is a big,

1 active community in Santee that this is really important
2 to them. And connecting the Stow Trail, they've been
3 working on -- on this just as long as, you know,
4 HomeFed's probably been working on trying to get their
5 development built. They've been trying to connect the
6 trails just as -- just as long, and they're just as
7 passionate.

8 So this looks to me like, you know, you've --
9 you've worked out something that will be that final
10 connection. My understanding, from being on the task
11 force is there -- there's one small sliver of a property
12 left on the west side, a little bit south of Santee
13 Lakes, south of Miramar. One property owner that is a
14 hold out, but people are still riding through his
15 property, illegally, anyway, because you're, you know,
16 they're not stopping the people on the trail. So that's
17 my comment about the trail system, and you know, we've
18 heard enough about it tonight, so I think I'll leave it
19 there.

20 MAYOR MINTO: Well, thank you. I was here when
21 Barratt proposed their plan, and I heard many of the same
22 concerns then, as I do now. Something that I asked
23 Barratt to do was to sit down with the environmental
24 community, people that wanted to use these -- this area
25 for trails and things, and they had some conversations,

1 but not many. And then, I asked HomeFed to do the same
2 thing and I know that you've had several different
3 environmental groups at the table, discussing these
4 things.

5 I -- I find it, I don't know, I guess quite --
6 quite nice that you're willing to actually even create
7 vernal pools, because I know that's been discussion for a
8 long time. And we know that vernal pools are caused by
9 many things. They're maybe some natural things that
10 occur. You know, a stone may have dropped somewhere
11 sometime and left an impression and then washed away
12 and -- and then -- or things of that nature.

13 One of those motorcyclists, on the property,
14 illegally, could have driven through an area that had a
15 depression, left a greater depression and it rained and
16 now that's a vernal pool. How that can happen, I think
17 people who created those rules and said that's a vernal
18 pool probably did that, because that's their preference,
19 versus what reality should be. Motorcycle tires aren't
20 nature. That doesn't create things like that, in my
21 opinion, but that's just me.

22 I think the fact that, you know, we're
23 putting -- you're looking at putting vineyards up there.
24 For somebody to say that -- that -- pardon me, Stephen,
25 to say that, that's going to ruin the view, I -- I beg

1 you to go to maybe Italy or someplace where those are
2 what thousands, if not millions of people, over years,
3 have gone to those regions to see the vineyards. And --
4 and so -- so I think -- I know I've gone many places
5 throughout the State of California, just to see where the
6 vineyards are. They're beautiful, especially when
7 they're in bloom.

8 So I -- I think they're really gonna enhance
9 the hillside, especially when they are in bloom. And
10 it's -- so we're just gonna have to disagree on that one.
11 I think that -- this is our third workshop, and I find it
12 very interesting that we're -- we're actually doing this,
13 to be quite honest, 'cause normally, what we do is we
14 wait for all the studies to come in, the Environmental
15 Impact Report to be finished and then a 45-day public
16 review. And that really doesn't give us a chance to look
17 at anything, but we're getting that an opportunity ahead
18 here.

19 I know that when this comes actually before us,
20 to make a decision, I'm gonna be better informed on it.
21 I would hope that the rest of the Council's better
22 informed on it. I would hope that the community's better
23 informed. I'm not in a position, though, to say -- I
24 know some people like to hear, say, Oh, yeah, I'm voting
25 for this thing or no, I'm not voting for it, but there's

1 not enough information to do that now. This is just a
2 collection of information for all of us.

3 So -- but I do like what I see, Jeff. And you
4 know, I -- I had no idea that Mr. Whalen was working on
5 this project. And be honest with you, I saw -- that's
6 why I asked him to come up, it's because I know he's been
7 working in this, you know, area for a long time. We've
8 had those conversations. And -- and I know what your
9 preference is on making sure the habitat is safe and
10 secure. So I think that was a good choice, having him
11 come onboard. And regardless of, you know, what anybody
12 says, we're still gonna hold your feet to the fire and
13 make sure that it's a quality project.

14 So that's all I have to say about that. So
15 let's note and file that, I guess. Thank you very much,
16 everybody, for your comments. And thank you for staying
17 so late. Appreciate it.

18 -oOo-
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

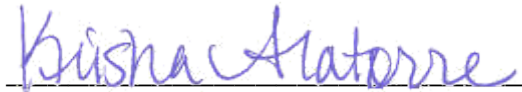
C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Krisha Alatorre, a transcriber and court reporter for Barrett Reporting, do hereby certify:

That said tape recordings were listened to by me and were transcribed into typewriting under my direction and supervision; and I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript of the tape recordings is a full, true, and correct transcript, to the best of my ability.

I further certify that I am neither counsel for nor related to any party to said action, not in any way interested in the outcome thereof.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name this 28th day of August, 2020.



Krisha Alatorre

CSR No. 13255