

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA** 917B




FROM: TLMA/Planning Department **SUBMITTAL DATE:** March 10, 2003

SUBJECT: **COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 616/CHANGE OF ZONE NO. 6672/TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 30399, AMENDED MAP NO. 4 - EA38604 - Monroe Partners, LLC - Fourth Supervisorial District - Lower Coachella Valley Zoning District - 40 Gross Acres - A-1-20 zoning - Easterly of Monroe Street, southerly of Avenue 55 - REQUEST:** Amend the Land Use Allocation Map of the Eastern Coachella Valley from "Agriculture" to "Residential 2B" (2-5 du/ac) with change of zone from A-1-20 to R-3 or R-1-12,000 and R-1-20,000 and divide 40 acres into 77 residential lots with additional common recreational and retention basin lots, and a well site lot.

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES: Public testimony before the Planning Commission included increased lot sizes to buffer adjoining agriculture preserve and equestrian uses, landscape berms, fencing, and horse trails along the tract boundaries (no walls), limited street lighting, removal of sidewalks adjacent to public streets, location of the tract well site, and compatibility of the tract with the Vista Santa Rosa community. These issues were resolved through discussion and modifications to the conditions of approval.

BACKGROUND: The Planning Commission approved this project at their meeting on February 5, 2003 based a slightly different map design and layout (Amended Map No. 3). Since that time, the land divider's representative has submitted an amended map (Amended Map No. 4) to reflect relocation of the "well site" (intended for the Coachella Valley Water District) from the northeast property corner to the southeast area of the tract map. This is necessary to accommodate a required 1000 foot separation between the proposed CVWD "well site" and a pre-existing, private well on adjoining property to the east. Amended Map No. 4 also reflects a minor adjustment of a retention basin lot location as the result of the CVWD "well site" being relocated. No other design



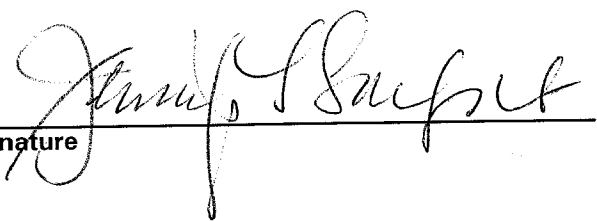
Ron Goldman, Interim Planning Director
(Continued on attached page)

3/10/03

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C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE



County Executive Officer Signature

Policy
 Policy

Consent
 Consent

Department Recommendation:
Per Executive Office:

THE HONORABLE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Form 11A

CGPA616/CZ6672/TR30399

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changes have occurred as the result of the new amended map. Amended Map No. 4 has been transmitted to the major county departments and the CVWD and that amended map has been approved by those departments/agencies. Planning Department staff recommends approval of the Amended No. 4 map as being substantially within the Planning Commission's approval recommendations, and the attached conditions of approval reflect that map's proposed design and improvements.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

**The Planning Department recommended Approval; and,
THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDS with Commissioners Porras, Snell, Roth, and Zuppardo in favor and Commissioner Petty in opposition:**

ADOPTION of a De Minimis Finding as follows: An Initial Study has been prepared by the Riverside County Planning Department for the project described in Environmental Assessment No. 38604, so as to evaluate the potential for adverse environmental impact, and, there is no evidence that the proposed project will have a potential adverse effect on wildlife resources; and

ADOPTION of a MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION NO. 38604, based on the findings incorporated in the initial study and the conclusion that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment; and,

TENTATIVE APPROVAL of COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 616, amending the Land Use Allocation Map of the Eastern Coachella Valley of the Comprehensive General Plan from "Agriculture" to "Residential 2B" (2-5 du/ac) in accordance with Exhibit No. 6a and the attached Planning Commission resolution; and,

DENIAL of CHANGE OF ZONE NO. 6672 from A-1-20 to R-3; but,

APPROVAL of CHANGE OF ZONE NO. 6672 from A-1-20 to R-1-12,000 and R-1-20,000 in accordance with Exhibit No. 4; and,

APPROVAL of TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 30399, AMENDED MAP NO. 4, subject to the attached conditions of approval, and based upon the findings and conclusions incorporated in the staff report.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY ON A COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, ZONE CHANGE AND TENTATIVE TRACT MAP AMENDMENT IN THE LOWER COACHELLA VALLEY AREA, FOURTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing at which all interested persons will be heard, will be held before the Board of Supervisors of Riverside County, California, on the 1st Floor Board Chambers, County Administrative Center, 4080 Lemon Street, Riverside, on April 15, 2003, at 1:30 P.M. to consider the application submitted by Monroe Partners, LLC, on Comprehensive General Plan Amendment 616, which proposes to amend the Land Use Allocation Map of the Eastern Coachella Valley from "Agriculture" to "Residential 2B" (2-5 du/ac); Change of Zone 6672, which proposes to modify the A-1-20 to R-3 or R-1-12,000 and R-1-20,000, or other such zones as the Board may find appropriate; and, Tentative Tract Map 30399, Amendment 4, Schedule "A", which proposes to divide 40 acres into 77 residential lots with additional common recreational and retention basin lots, and a well site lot. The project is located easterly of Monroe Street, southerly of Avenue 55 in the Lower Coachella Valley area, Fourth Supervisorial District.

*Please be advised that we have properly
only excel to this and we support this project*

*April Acker
Duane Young*

*81910ACLLS
INDSD, CA 92201*

CHRISTIAN H. NEUMANN, M.D.
82-425 Avenue 55
Vista Santa Rosa, CA 92274

April 2, 2003

Clerk of the Board
4080 Lemon Street, 1st Floor
P.O. Box 1147
Riverside, CA 92502-1147

Re: Application by Monroe Partners, LLC, Comprehensive General Plan
Amendment No. 616 for change of zone from agriculture to residential 2B
on 40 acres east of Monroe and south of Avenue 55, lower Coachella Valley

Dear Sir/Madam:

Please be so kind as to accept this letter as an opinion from a concerned party, and distribute it to the Board members prior to the hearing on 04-15-2003.

I am the immediate neighbor to the east of the above property. My address is 82-425 Avenue 55, Thermal. A change of zoning as applied for will significantly affect the character of the neighborhood, the lifestyles of those of us who live there, and the value of adjacent properties. My wife and I are, therefore, opposing this application for the following reasons:

Conflict with Existing Land Use Allocation:

In fact, this high-density development does not fit into the existing structure and land use allocation for this area. The property for which the application has been made is surrounded on the south-east and north side by 20 and 40 acre parcels which are all used agriculturally, some of them being in agriculture preserve. The area to the west is in the city of La Quinta and is designated low-density residential/golf course with an equestrian overlay. This application for change of zoning is inconsistent with surrounding land use designations.

No Buffering or Transitions:

The subject property is currently zoned light agricultural with a 20 acre minimum lot size. If the zoning is changed as applied, the parcel will be an island of different use without internal or external buffer to its surrounding neighbors.

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Scenic Value:

The parcel in itself and its neighborhood have a scenic value. The view on the mountain ranges is unique and the proposed development will deteriorate such views. Vistas will be obstructed or partially obstructed, particularly those from the east of the property, as ours. Large surrounding berms and walls as proposed are aesthetically offensive to the public view.

Avenue 55 Issue:

The project calls for a portion of Avenue 55 to be developed. The development of this section of Avenue 55 will dead end between agricultural land with no apparent usefulness. Neighbors do not need the development of Avenue 55 since they have access from Airport, Oasis, Avenue 54, Monroe and Jackson Streets. It would be preferable not to develop Avenue 55 and instead abandon it to preserve the rural character with lesser incidental traffic.

Equestrian Trail:

Equestrian trails have been projected to be on Avenue 55 and Monroe Street. The argument that horse traffic along busy two and four lane roads and highways poses a problem has not been acknowledged. At the last Planning Commission meeting, Commissioner Jim Porras categorically denied the fact that horses next to busy road traffic could in any way cause a safety problem for riders, cars and the public. The neighborhood has proposed to place these horse trails away from traffic and roads deep to the property in between this 40 acre parcel and its east side neighbors. A lane is present in this location at the present time used frequently by horsemen in the area for their recreation.

Creation of Neighborhood Conflicts:

A housing development of two to three units per acre will attract people who are less likely supporters of a rural lifestyle. Over and over, we have seen in the past such developments cause conflicts among neighbors since those in the denser population do not understand or accept the side effects of farming or rural living, including odors, dust, insects, etc. Commonly such conflicts will amount to litigations among neighbors.

Decrease of Value of Existing Properties:

A two to three-unit per acre development will set the stage for future developments in this area. It will also influence the future property value in the area. People who seek a rural lifestyle will not be attracted anymore. Potential developers will not be interested in smaller than 40 acre parcel sizes since development at two to three units per acre is not economically feasible. Thus, this development will depress property prices in the area for the existing owners of parcels 20 acres and less.

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On A More General Note:

I regret that on prior Vista Santa Rosa neighborhood community meetings, we were told by Commissioner Jim Porras and others that this is a decided blueprint for the area and that local inhabitants of the area will have no say in the process. I regret that the same Commissioner Jim Porras has bullied the Planning Commission for approval without taking the arguments of the neighbors into consideration.

I also regret that Monroe Partners have been encouraged to proceed with this project by Commissioner Porras and other parties prior to any discussion or preapproval by committees or the Board. This led to the response by Mr. Turner, one of the Monroe Partners, to the Planning Commission when asked why one acre parcels could not be considered that, "too much money had been spent already."

At the same time Susan Harvey, one of the Monroe partners and a real estate agent with Pacific Properties, has and is marketing her listings in the area as equestrian estates without disclosing the existence or her involvement in this partnership, which is adverse and incompatible with equestrian use of the land her clients are seeking.

The neighborhood has sought a compromise with Monroe Partners to restrict development to not more than one unit per acre. In private discussion at least two of the Monroe Partners have stated that the application for two to three units per acre was only placed with the goal to end up with a one unit per acre lot size which would have reflected their initial business plan. Since they were successful with the helping influence of Commissioner Jim Porras in obtaining approval from the Planning Commission for two to three units per acre, they stayed with that concept because it obviously will increase their profit margin. By the way, Commissioner Porras happens to be a close friend of Susan Harvey, one of the Monroe Partners.

I may conclude that we neighbors are very disappointed with such developments to be pushed through in our area. We intend to fight this as far as we can with our means and within democratic and legal avenues. I hope this Board understands our reasons and supports us. Although three to five acre lots per housing unit are more desirable, this neighborhood has put forward a compromise proposal of one unit per acre to the developers, without response. Therefore, we again would like to propose the following:

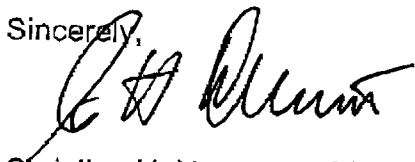
1. Zoning may not be less than one unit per acre in this development.
2. Only single story houses to be allowed for preservation of scenic vistas.
3. Zoning should allow limited equestrian use for the properties to be developed (1-2 horses/acre).

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4. Horse trails presently already in existence are to be preserved and developed away from the main traffic throughways deep to the property.
5. Avenue 55 is to be abandoned and not developed for this project.
6. This Monroe Partner project may not be the blueprint for future developments in this area of Vista Santa Rosa in the Coachella Valley since it remains in conflict with existing land use and the character of the community.

Sincerely,



Christian H. Neumann, M.D.
Christine M. Landry-Neumann

CHN/CMN:pfn