

**REPORT OF COUNCILWOMAN JANICE HAHN'S CITIZENS ADVISORY
COMMITTEE ON PONTE VISTA
SUBMITTED AUGUST 21, 2007**

I. OVERVIEW & SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In August of 2006, Councilwoman Janice Hahn appointed a 14 member Citizens Advisory Committee to advise her on a proposed 2,300 unit mixed housing project proposed by Bisno Development Company (BDC) for development at the former San Pedro Navy Housing site in north San Pedro. The committee members represented various stakeholder interests in the San Pedro, Harbor City and Rancho Palos Verdes communities. The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) met over the next year (usually twice a month), holding workshops and a public forum to obtain background information, testimony, and data on the proposed project from BDC, city officials, community organizations and the public at-large. The CAC conducted field visits to other housing sites containing senior aged restricted housing, attached multiple-family condominiums, and single-family detached units. Also a visit was made to the City of Los Angeles Automatic Traffic Synchronization & Control computerized system facility in downtown Los Angeles. Subcommittee work focused on identifying traffic mitigation and community benefit issues associated with the proposed housing project by BDC.

The CAC completed its basic work on July 24, 2007 by passing two resolutions in regard to housing at the former San Pedro Navy site. The first resolution (supported by a vote of 10 to 1 with one abstention) focused on responding to a revised 1,950 unit mixed housing proposal presented by the developer to the CAC and then submitted by BDC to the City of Los Angeles on August 7, 2007. The CAC rejected the proposal. It found that a project of this size and density and in this location would subject the surrounding community to a significant traffic increase, and that even with the required mitigation it would seriously impact the quality of life in the area.

The second resolution (supported by a vote of 8 to 4) focused on the fact that neither BDC nor members of the CAC itself could in the end present an alternative housing project that could demonstrate a reasonable balance in regard to environmental issues (mainly traffic impacts on the immediate community) and economic issues (mainly housing needs for different segments of the community and an array of proposed amenities and community benefits suggested by BDC). The resolution notes that there was considerable mistrust by the CAC in the accuracy of assessment and forecasting data in regard to potential traffic impacts from the proposed housing project presented by BDC and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation reviewing this project. Therefore, in the absence of a viable housing project to support, the majority of the committee believes that at this time the density of the property should not exceed the number of units allowed under the current single-family zoning.

In addition, the CAC recommended that the City of Los Angeles consider relocating the project site from the current *Wilmington Harbor City Community Plan* area to the *San Pedro Community Plan* area so that a more timely planning review can be undertaken as a part of the current San Pedro Community Plan update. In addition, the CAC recommended that the City Council address the current methods the Los Angeles Department of Transportation uses to assess traffic impacts for the local

region, noting the lack of credibility that currently exists with this department's procedures for forecasting housing project traffic impacts.

II. PONTE VISTA COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for the Ponte Vista project in San Pedro was formed in the summer of 2006 by City of Los Angeles 15th District Councilwoman Janice Hahn. The CAC was created to facilitate discussion and understanding of the Ponte Vista project and to make comprehensive recommendations to the Councilwoman on what the project should include and how the project should proceed. The Councilwoman's office chose CAC members from the communities surrounding the project site who would be impacted by the Ponte Vista development. Councilwoman Hahn designated staff member Gordon Teuber, Director of Economic Development, to attend CAC meetings and to work with the City of Los Angeles Planning Department and Ponte Vista developer's team, BDC Ponte Vista Partners, LLC (BDC). The CAC and BDC choose an outside consultant to function as a facilitator for CAC meetings, and for the coordination of creating a process to provide recommendations to Councilwoman Hahn. Victor Griego of Diverse Strategies for Organizing, Inc. was chosen as the group facilitator.

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was created with fourteen community members, all volunteers. Eleven of these either live or work in the Councilwoman's district. Three of the members were selected by the City of Rancho Palos Verdes. Named below are the members of the CAC, with a brief reference as relates to their community connection:

1. John Greenwood (Chairman) – NWSP Neighborhood Council/SP bus./SP resident
2. Creasie Adams – Harbor City/Harbor Gateway Chamber Rep./Business Rep.
3. Jack Baric – San Pedro Chamber Rep. and SP business owner/ SP resident.
4. Richard Brunner –RPV City Rep./RPV resident
5. Al DiRocco – Mary Star HS Rep./RPV resident
6. Dan Dixon – NWSP Neighborhood Council/SP resident
7. Jerry Gaines – Chair of the Western Ave Corridor Task Force/SP resident
8. Chuck Hart – San Pedro Homeowners United HOA rep./SP resident
9. Leah Marinkovich – San Pedro business/RPV resident
10. Richard Schuler –Harbor City Neighborhood Council/Harbor City resident
11. Sal Sotomayor –Member of the Western Ave Corridor Task Force/Business Rep.
12. Lucie Thorsen – RPV City Rep./Rep. for Rolling Hills Rivera HOA
13. Mark Wells - RPV City Rep. – Resigned from the CAC in March 2007
14. Arlene Zimmer – RPV resident/SP business owner

The role of the CAC was to provide recommendations to Councilwoman Hahn on the Ponte Vista project that may include items such as the number of units, types of housing, road infrastructure within the project including ingress and egress and an access to Mary Star High School, recommendations for traffic mitigation, further project mitigation in the surrounding communities and specific project development (building, design and placement of buildings within the project site).

The CAC meeting process began in September of 2006. Initially, meetings were held approximately once a month for presentations and discussion on the topics chosen. Further into the process, it was agreed there were additional topics on which the CAC required information to provide knowledgeable and comprehensive recommendations to the Councilwoman. With this in mind, the group decided to meet approximately once every two weeks in order to cover all of the topics in a timely manner.

The meeting dates for the CAC were as follows: In 2006, September 14 and 21, November 9 and 30. In 2007, January 11 and 18, February 8 and 27, March 8, April 12 and 26, May 10 and 22, June 7 and 18 and July 24. The CAC also held closed session meetings that included just the CAC members, Victor Griego, Gordon Teuber and in some cases the Councilwoman to discuss internal CAC issues and logistics. The dates of these meetings were January 11, January 31 and June 28, 2007. Field visits to other home building sites to study various housing configurations were on October 28, December 9, May 17 and May 19.

Each meeting's agenda included a call to order by the CAC chairman, John Greenwood, approval of the previous meeting's minutes, one or more presentations on the evening's topics, a time for comments, questions and discussion by the CAC on the evening's topics, an opportunity for public comment, general announcements and adjournment. The meeting on January 18 was a public forum held by the CAC to hear comments from the community, based on the information available to that time. This meeting was held in non-typical meeting format as its specific purpose was to provide full opportunity for the public to comment on the project.

III. BACKGROUND

A. PONTE VISTA SITE

Description/History

The Ponte Vista site consists of approximately 61.5 acres of land and is located at 26900 South Western Avenue in the City of Los Angeles, approximately two miles from downtown San Pedro and 1.5 miles from the Port of Los Angeles. The site is the location of the former U.S. Navy San Pedro Housing complex and is bordered by Western Avenue (State Route 213) to the west, Fitness Drive and multi-family residential developments to the south, the U.S. Navy's Defense Fuel Support Point (DFSP) to the north, and the new campus for Mary Star of the Sea High School to the east.

Adjacent to the site on the south are two three-story multi-family residential buildings and a 136 unit four-story condominium building under construction. Just east of these buildings is a multi-family residential community known as "The Gardens," consisting of about 1100 townhomes and a nearby major shopping center. West of the site is a cemetery and a single-family detached residential

(R1 zoned) subdivision known as the Rolling Hills Riviera in the City of Rancho Palos Verdes consisting of 721 homes.

On the site itself are 122 attached residential structures (duplexes) and one detached residential single family structure. Two hundred and eight of the residential units are three-bedroom and thirty seven are four-bedroom units. All residences are single story. There is, also, a 2,161 square foot community center and a 3,454 square foot retail convenience store. All buildings are vacant.

The federal government acquired ownership of the site in 1942. In 1962, the Navy constructed 245 housing units (described above) for housing Navy personnel who were stationed at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard. The housing site was closed in 1999 when the Naval Shipyard was closed through the Base and Realignment and Closure process (BRAC). After various legal procedures outlined in BRAC, the Navy awarded some 17.5 acres of the property to Volunteers of America for homeless housing needs, and put out to auction the remaining 44 acres for sale to the public.

In 2005 Bisno Development Company (BDC) successfully purchased 41.95 acres of the site from the Navy at a cost of \$88 million, and then purchased the remaining 19.58 acres from Volunteers of America at a cost of \$34 million to complete ownership of the entire 61.53 acre site for residential development, for a total cost of \$122 million.

The planning designation for the Ponte Vista site (Low Residential—four to nine units per acre) was assigned when it was annexed from an unincorporated County of Los Angeles area to the City of Los Angeles in 1980. The Ponte Vista site is in the Wilmington-Harbor City Community Planning Area.

Ponte Vista Residential Project Proposal

After purchasing the Ponte Vista site from the Navy and Volunteers of America, BDC proposed to construct 2,300 residential units on the 61.5 acres (approximately 37 units per gross acre). The project description consisted of townhouses and condominiums, including some 10,000 square feet of ancillary retail uses. The original plan called for setting aside 575 of the residential units for senior housing (housing for those 55 years of age and above). These units would be located in a gated, separately designated area. The residential units would be designed in Mediterranean, Tuscan and contemporary-style buildings situated over subterranean parking garages. The units would have floor areas ranging from approximately 700 to 3,000 square feet. Along with residential housing, the project would consist of acreage for landscaped common areas (such as community clubhouses and pools, a waterscape concourse and a senior community park), gated private roadways, a publicly accessible six-acre park (originally including two baseball diamonds) and a public roadway connecting Mary Star of the Sea High School to Western Avenue.

On June 18, 2007, after several months of public input, BDC revised its original project proposal of 2,300 units with a reduction of 350 units to a new total of 1,950 residential units (approximately 32 units per acre) of which 43% would be designated for senior housing (850 units). There would now be 100 three-story townhouses added to the other housing products (1,100 units to be townhouse and condominium units and 850 units to be senior condominiums). Further modifications included public road access to the property, with the exception of those units designated

as senior housing. BDC plans to reduce building heights from the earlier proposal, especially along Western Ave., constructing no buildings above four stories on other portions of the property. The revised project was submitted to the City of Los Angeles on August 7, 2007.

B. COMMUNITY PLANS FOR SAN PEDRO AND WILMINGTON/HARBOR CITY COMMUNITIES

The committee understood early in its deliberations that zoning decisions should not be made in a vacuum. The Los Angeles City Planning Department has a General Plan for the City and works with communities to develop and periodically revise community plans for every area of the city. Although located in San Pedro, historically the Ponte Vista site has been situated within the *Wilmington-Harbor City Community Plan* boundaries. The *Wilmington-Harbor City Community Plan* identifies the issues, opportunities, policies and programs that are pertinent to the neighborhoods in the *Wilmington-Harbor City Community Plan* area. The CAC also reviewed policies in the San Pedro Community Plan document since the Ponte Vista site is directly adjacent to this Plan's area. The scale of the proposed project, and its potential associated impacts, also dictate that issues in San Pedro need to be considered.

The California State Government Code requires that each city and county prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan (Government Code Section 65300) and that the day-to-day decisions of a city follow logically from, and be consistent with, that general plan. More specifically, Government Code Sections 65860, 66473.5 and 656474 require that zoning ordinances and subdivision and parcel map approvals be consistent with the general plan.

The City of Los Angeles General Plan is a planning document containing purposes, polices and programs for the development of the City, in text and map form. Decisions by the City with regard to the use of its land, design and character of buildings, provision of new open space, housing and infrastructure and protection of environmental resources are guided by the General Plan.

The City's General Plan is comprised of twelve elements:

- General Plan Framework
- Air Quality
- Conservation
- Infrastructure Systems
- Housing
- Historic Preservation and Cultural Resources
- Noise
- Open Space
- Public Facilities and Services
- Safety
- Transportation
- Land Use

All of these twelve elements were discussed during the meetings of the CAC. The General Plan Framework Element is a strategy for long-term growth that sets a citywide context to guide the subsequent amendments of the City's community plans, zoning ordinances and other pertinent programs. Moreover, this element governs the citywide elements of the General Plan. As a result, it serves as the central framework for the entire Plan and is intended to integrate land use issues involving the various elements.

In the City of Los Angeles, the Land Use Element is comprised of 35 community plans. This Element has the broadest scope of the twelve State required General Plan elements since it regulates how land is to be utilized. It unifies many of the issues and policies contained in all other plan elements. All community plan elements must be reviewed by a developer in the Environmental Impact Report submitted as a part of the approval process for a project.

Some of the important residential land use policies put forward in the *Wilmington/Harbor City Community Plan* where the project site is located include the following:

Objective 1-1 To provide for the preservation of existing housing and for the development of new housing to meet the diverse economic and physical needs of the existing residents and projected population of the Plan area to the year 2010.

1-1.1 Designate specific lands to provide for adequate multi-family residential development.

1-1.2 Protect existing single-family residential neighborhoods from new out-of-scale development.

1-1.3 Protect existing stable single-family and low-density residential neighborhoods from encroachment by higher density residential and other incompatible uses.

1-1.4 Protect the quality of the residential environment through attention to the appearance of communities, including attention to building and site design.

1-1.5 Maintain at least 67% of designated residential lands for single-family uses.

1-1.6 The City should promote neighborhood preservation, particularly in existing single-family neighborhoods, as well as in areas with existing multiple family residences.

Objective 1-2. To locate new housing in a manner that reduces vehicular trips and makes it accessible to services and facilities.

1-2.1 Locate higher residential densities near commercial centers and major transit routes, where public service facilities, utilities and topography will accommodate this development.

Objective 1-3. To preserve and enhance the varied and distinct residential character and integrity of existing single- and multi-family neighborhoods.

1-3.1 Seek a high degree of architectural compatibility and landscaping for new infill development to protect the character and scale of existing residential neighborhoods.

1-3.2 Consider factors such as neighborhood character and identity, compatibility of land uses, impact on livability, impacts on services and public facilities, and impacts on traffic levels when changes in residential densities are proposed.

Objective 1-4. To preserve and enhance neighborhoods with a distinctive and significant historical character.

1-4.1 Protect distinctive residential neighborhoods, such as the Banning Park neighborhood.

Objective 1-5. To promote and insure the provision of adequate housing for all persons regardless of income, age, or ethnic background.

1-5.1 Promote greater individual choice in type, quality, price, and location of housing.

1-5.2 Promote housing in mixed-use projects, in transit corridors and in pedestrian oriented areas.

1-5.3 Provide for development of townhouses and other similar condominium type housing units to increase home ownership options.

*1-5.4 Provide for livable family housing at higher densities.**

*Sources: Chapter III Land Use Policies of the *Wilmington-Harbor City Community Plan Update* (97-0050 CPC and Council File Number 98-1619).

C. WESTERN AVENUE CORRIDOR TASK FORCE

Introduction

Following events where storm drains failed along Western Avenue during heavy rains at the end of 2004, the cities of Los Angeles and Rancho Palos Verdes formed the Western Avenue Corridor Task Force (WACTF) to address traffic circulation issues associated with this highway. There were ten citizen members making up the task force, with appointments coming from both cities. Two Task Force members were appointed to the CAC. Along with the citizen membership, there were ex-officio members from the city staffs of the two cities and traffic engineers from both cities and the State of California Transportation Department (Caltrans) District 7 (Los Angeles).

The mission statements for the task force were:

- *In cooperation with local jurisdictions, the state and regional transportation agencies, and the business and community stakeholders, seek to identify multi-modal strategies for improving the Western Corridor Transportation System.*
- *Facilitate coordination of corridor or area-specific traffic and transportation improvement planning, funding and implementation activities within the Western Avenue corridor to reduce the impact of traffic on the quality of life in communities and neighborhoods.*

The goal was to develop a Strategic Action Plan that:

- *Identifies the current and future deficiencies in the multi-modal transportation system with the corridor, and*
- *Recommends consensus-based solutions (including required strategies) to address the deficiencies.*

Several meetings were held in the spring of 2005 with citizen input being reviewed by traffic engineers. The WACTF also conducted field visits and reviewed historical data related to earlier studies and mitigation actions completed for the Western Avenue Corridor. Under the leadership of Caltrans, a comprehensive report was drafted and presented to the Cities of Los Angeles and Rancho Palos Verdes and to Caltrans on June 9, 2005.

Existing Conditions

Base line study of current traffic conditions showed that traffic volume data from Caltrans in 2003 was 35,000 vehicles per day at Avenida Aprenda and Western Avenue. Several intersections and roadway areas were measured for Level of Service (LOS) and Capacity during the afternoon peak hour. LOS was rated “F” in several locations during the afternoon peak hours. (Note: Updated traffic studies in 2005 cite the volume for vehicles per day at the Avenida Aprenda and Western Avenue location to be at a level of 37,500). Forecasting for future traffic circulation growth was done by the task force using the Metropolitan Transit Authority growth formula of 1% per year for the roadway. This formula is designed to anticipate unknown growth along the roadway within a range of about 1% each year.

Conclusions

After a review of existing conditions, proposed mitigation measures were identified and divided into three categories: Immediate Improvements, Short-Term Improvements and Long-Term Improvements.

Immediate Improvements focused on signal coordination between the signals supervised by Caltrans and those supervised by Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT).

Short-Term Improvements focused on updating traffic control devices, updating data collection in order to update traffic signal timing to correspond to current traffic flows, connecting traffic signals, and applying for and installing an Adaptive Signal Control System (ASCS) – a real-time computerized signal system. Also, attention is to be given to intersection geometric improvements (re-striping, and lengthening left-turn pockets where it is applicable), and parking restrictions during morning, afternoon and Saturday peak hours.

Long-Term Improvements included adding lanes to address increased capacity, widening intersection approaches and constructing transit bus bay areas. Also, the ASCS system would be upgraded to add components for Emergency Response & Evacuation, Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS) and Advanced Travel Information System (ATIS).

The task force noted that other mitigation tactics need to be studied, including finding ways to develop and construct exit lanes next to the large shopping center parking areas along Western Ave., and determining funding sources for long-term improvement needs identified in the conclusions listed in the report.

Installation of ATSAC System

A Western Avenue Corridor Improvement Project, focusing on installing an ATSAC (Automated Traffic Synchronization & Control) computerized system, was developed based on the final task force report, and submitted to Caltrans authorities in Sacramento in late June of 2005. One portion of the project focused on deploying an Adaptive Signal Control System along Western Avenue from Summerland Avenue to Palos Verdes Drive North. This system aims to mitigate existing traffic congestion and help Caltrans to manage existing and future traffic demand to meet the needs of the traveling public.

Caltrans officials approved the application for an ATSAC system in January of 2006. In March of 2007 construction began on installing the \$1,680,000 ATSAC system along Western Avenue. This work is slated to be completed by mid summer of 2007. This is the beginning of an important automated signaling element needed for traffic control along the entire length of Western Ave., where it intersects San Pedro and Rancho Palos Verdes. Because portions of Western Ave. are under the control of the City of Los Angeles, funding has not been fully identified for adding ATSAC in those areas.

The work of the Western Avenue Corridor Task Force was essentially completed prior to the submission of Ponte Vista's application to the City of Los Angeles. There was no action taken to factor in the Ponte Vista project since it was not formally introduced until after June of 2005. However, the research done on traffic circulation congestion for Western Avenue was timely for the CAC. Local traffic environmental conditions were validated and agreed to by traffic engineers serving the City of Los Angeles, City of Rancho Palos Verdes, and the State of California Transportation Department, Region 7 (Los Angeles), giving a good baseline for projections.

D. LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT'S INTEREST

During the summer of 2006, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) announced that it would select a portion of some 24 acres of the northwest portion of the Ponte Vista site as a preferred site to construct a new 2,200 seat high school to relieve overcrowding at two existing high schools in the area (San Pedro High School and Narbonne High School). In April of 2007, the LAUSD revised its proposal to seek only 8 acres of the northwest portion of the site for a smaller 810 seat high school to relieve enrollment at Narbonne High School. LAUSD land at the Upper Reservation (next to Angel's Gate Park in San Pedro) would be used to provide enrollment relief at San Pedro High School. The LAUSD is currently undertaking soil testing on the designated 8 acres at the Ponte Vista site. A decision to actually seek a portion of the Ponte Vista site for the LAUSD will depend on findings of the feasibility study, with final Board of Education action at a later date. If the LAUSD Board of Education decides in favor of seeking the Ponte Vista site for a small high school, legal issues pertaining to acquiring the acreage from BDC would need to be addressed, either through a negotiated sale or eminent domain proceedings.

E. CITY PLANNING DISCRETIONARY APPROVALS AND PROCESSES

1. General Plan Amendment/Zone Change

The goals and principles of the General Plan of the City of Los Angeles are implemented using various planning tools. One such tool is a zoning ordinance - a legislative act that is a set of parcel-specific regulations. Zoning prescribes what landowners can do with their property. It regulates the use, bulk and height for the development of a particular parcel. Additionally, zoning must be consistent with the General Plan and must be reasonably related to the public welfare. Any proposed zone changes are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Currently, the Ponte Vista site has a land use designation of Low Residential and is zoned R-1. This zoning designation allows a single-family dwelling unit to be built on a minimum lot area of 5,000 square feet. Both a change in land use designation (i.e., a General Plan Amendment) and a zone change would be required before any development other than R-1 can be approved on this site. Zone changes and General Plan Amendments are restricted to four times per year, and are usually processed together to avoid inconsistencies.

Notice and hearings are statutorily required where zoning ordinance amendments change property from one zone to another. Per Section 11.5.6 of the City of Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC), this includes separate public hearings by the City Planning Commission and City Council.

2. Specific Plan

In the case of the Ponte Vista site, a change in the zoning designation would be codified via a specific plan. A specific plan is a special set of development standards for the systematic implementation of the General Plan within a localized, defined area. Section 11.5.7 of the LAMC states that a specific plan “shall provide by ordinance regulatory controls or incentives for the systematic execution of the General Plan and shall provide for public needs, convenience and general welfare.”

Using a specific plan as a planning tool gives cities and developers the flexibility to create zoning standards that are appropriate for a site, and effectively establishes the link between implementing the policies of the General Plan and development proposals. A specific plan is a good tool for developing a “sense of place” and a creatively designed neighborhood.

The legal requirements for a specific plan are very general (Government Code Sections 65400 - 65457). A specific plan may be as detailed as defining every facet of development or as general as setting forth broad policy. However, it must ultimately be consistent with the General Plan. It should include text, diagrams and maps that detail the distribution, location and extent of land uses as well as development standards, and criteria by which the project may proceed.

3. Tract Map

Along with a zoning ordinance, the tract map is another tool that gives cities the power to regulate land use. The State of California Subdivision Map Act (Government Code Section 66410) grants cities the power to regulate and control the design and improvements of subdivisions within its boundaries – in short, to determine the physical layout for a project. Each city must adopt an ordinance regulating and controlling subdivisions for which the Map Act requires a tentative and final map or a parcel map (for less than five parcels). An application for a map is subject to hearing and notice requirements.

The Map Act's primary goals are to encourage orderly community development and ensure that areas dedicated for public purposes will be properly improved and not become an undue burden on the community. The Map Act forms the legal basis for any exaction required to mitigate a significant environmental effect that has been identified in an environmental impact report. Consequently, it specifically permits local governments to require that land be set aside for improvements, such as streets, bicycle paths and easements. However, these "exactions" must be directly related to the project in question.

For the Ponte Vista site, tentative and final tract maps will ultimately be required as part of the subdivision process, and will be required to be consistent with the Specific Plan.

4. Environmental Impact Report

The California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA) is the State law concerned with environmental protection. The intent of the law is to inform governmental decision makers and the public about potential, significant environmental impacts that would likely occur as the result of a proposed project, and to identify feasible mitigation measures or project alternatives that would reduce those impacts below a significant threshold.

Any project requiring one or more discretionary approvals from a government agency would be subject to the CEQA environmental review process. The governmental agency responsible for granting the discretionary approvals would act as the Lead Agency responsible for conducting the environmental review. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required when there is potential for at least one significant impact to remain significant even after the mitigation measures are applied. The EIR is an informational document and the adoption in itself does not grant the discretionary approvals that the applicant is seeking.

Due to several potential significant impacts that could remain significant after mitigation, a draft EIR has been prepared for the proposed Ponte Vista project by the developer's environmental consultant. The Planning Department (and the developer) received detailed comments from community groups, neighborhood councils and the Los Angeles Unified School District on the draft EIR. A final EIR will be produced by the Planning Department that incorporates the public comments and City responses to those comments. As the Lead Agency for this EIR, the City of Los Angeles will need to certify the document before any project may be approved.

IV. COMMITTEE MEETINGS & HEARINGS

The topics covered during the CAC process have included a wide array of issues involved in the development of the project. All of the topics have been presented in some manner by CAC members, City of Los Angeles staff (from the Planning and Transportation Departments), the developer and his staff and consultants, all with vigorous commentary and response from the public. City planning staff and the developer and/or his staff attended all the CAC meetings.

A. Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) – Review and Discussion

This topic included presentations by the firms which produced the EIR for the project with follow-up discussion by the CAC, community members and presentations by the City's Planning Department.

B. Housing Needs/ Regional and Community Planning Matters

This topic included discussion of the shortage of housing in the region and the types of housing needed in the Harbor area and in Southern California. It also covered such issues as what types of housing are currently offered and what the project's original plans would offer. Presentations included statistics on the types of housing offered statistics and regional planning matters for Southern California.

C. Fiscal and Economic Impacts of the Project on the Community

This topic included discussion of possible monetary benefits and drawbacks in building a large housing community on the Ponte Vista site. Issues involved with this topic included the anticipated income of residents who might reside at Ponte Vista and how/where that income would be spent in the community. Also discussed was the cost and financial benefits of this development to local government.

D. Traffic Patterns, Mitigation and Related Issues

This topic included multiple presentations by the traffic planner hired for the project by the developer, by CAC member Jerry Gaines (as related to a traffic study carried out in the area by the Western Avenue Corridor Task Force), by the Los Angeles City Planning Department and by the Los Angeles Department of Transportation. It covered issues such as the current traffic patterns for the area and mitigation measures that may be suitable to alleviate traffic, including the ATSAC program, additional lights, additional turning lanes, etc.

E. Community Plan Basics

This topic consisted of presentations by the Planning Department on the variety of issues that arise and are considered in Community/General Plans. It, also, included a brief background and discussion on Specific Plans; what they contain and how they are created.

F. Urban Design

This topic, presented by the Planning Department, covered the basic elements of urban design for the CAC members. In addition, Planning Department staff conducted an exercise created for the CAC to learn about design elements and help the members visualize what they would like the project to include. The exercise was carried out as a workshop designed to have the CAC focus on what they would like the project to look like physically. It offered an opportunity for groups of CAC members to create a physical representation of the property.

G. Existing Conditions in the Area

This topic included presentations by the Planning Department on the existing community and general plans for the area surrounding the Ponte Vista site, current land uses zoned for the project site and surrounding properties, physical characteristics of the site and defining characteristics of the community.

H. LAUSD

This topic covered the possibility of a school being built on a section of the property and how that might affect the project and the property. The discussion involved multiple scenarios in which LAUSD might use part of the Ponte Vista property for their needs. LAUSD staff attended several meetings and made a presentation to the CAC.

I. Public versus Private Community

This topic dealt with the scenarios of creating the Ponte Vista project as a gated, private residential development, or as a public, open development for use both by residents and community members. Discussion included possible consequences on various other issues including what the project offers the community (public park space, retail, etc.) and traffic issues.

J. Logistical Issues

This topic included scheduling of future meetings, roles of the involved parties in the CAC process (including BDC, the City Planning Department, the Councilwoman's office, Victor Griego and CAC members), creating a process for completing the CAC's duties and this report and creating a process for internal and external communication.

K. Public/Community Comments

Since its inception, the Ponte Vista CAC has encouraged public attendance and invited comments on the proposed housing development. Over the months of CAC meetings, the numbers of community members attending the CAC meetings has increased and their viewpoints have generally divided into supporters of R-1 zoning and supporters of the developer's plans. A general summary of the arguments heard during the public comment period of CAC meetings related to traffic, density, housing and economic issues follows:

Arguments for R-1:

- Traffic impacts cannot be fully mitigated. Traffic on Western Avenue has been studied over the years and the data clearly verifies it is currently over capacity. The new ATSAC system is needed just to deal with the current traffic. It has been approved and budgeted based on current conditions. Without any development at the former Navy property, any benefit realized by ATSAC under current conditions could be reduced as much as 25% by the Seaport Condominiums under construction now.
Adding to that, the impacts from other condominium projects on the peninsula which are currently being built or approved will further reduce any benefits. The comprehensive effect of a medium or high density development on this old Navy property would have impacts that could not be mitigated to satisfy the general planning guidelines, community planning guidelines or the new “Do Real Planning” objectives.
- The property is zoned R-1 and was advertised as such by the Navy. The developer was aware of the zoning when he bid on the property and he should be held to this requirement.
- The geographic location of this site is at the bottleneck of the peninsula. It services two cities and is the access point to the coast. There are two known fault lines to be concerned with on or near this property. This site is adjacent to underground gas lines operated by the Navy Supply Depot and extremely close to the ConocoPhillips refinery as well has the number one terrorist target in the nation, the Port of Los Angeles. There is tremendous risk to the community should any natural or terrorist disaster occur in this area, even without any new development on this site.
- This project as proposed by the developer would put additional stress on city services- schools, police, fire and public works.
- Most of the current construction of housing in San Pedro is medium to high density. Important areas that are targeted for redevelopment are in Central San Pedro, which desperately needs the revitalization. Including medium to high density in North San Pedro would draw buyers away from Central San Pedro, defeating the Community Planning Guidelines to improve this blighted area. Improving downtown San Pedro will bring additional revenue to Los Angeles, but congesting existing family neighborhoods in North San Pedro only costs the city more money for schools, police, fire and public works.
- The developer should not be awarded any change in zoning. Property in San Pedro was down-zoned several years ago to reduce congestion. Our infrastructure has not changed. It is currently inadequate.
- There are no alternate roads for this former Navy site, only Western Avenue. There are currently frequent road closures and slowdowns for road repair, sewer repair, and large funeral processions to Green Hills Cemetery located directly across the street from this site. There are daily interruptions of traffic flow due to pedestrian school children crossing Western Avenue during peak traffic hours and consumer traffic using inadequate entrance and egress lanes into the shopping areas.
- The size of this proposal is not in keeping with the surrounding neighborhoods. There are too many units, too many stories and too much loss of potential open space.
- More than 10,000 area resident have signed petitions supporting the current R-1 zoning.

- The public is being misled: The developer puts forward petitions to support the project that ask for community support of “affordable housing,” then claims these are Ponte Vista supporters. But the condos in the development will be sold at “market rate,” more costly than existing condos in town.
- The survey conducted by the developer also claims that the community supports the project. However, the survey incorrectly says that the project will include single-family homes. As proposed it does not.
- The draft E.I.R. is fatally flawed. It uses a procedure that understates the impact of the added traffic. We haven’t been provided reliable estimates of traffic numbers and cannot rely on the underestimated averages.

Arguments for the Proposal

- Ponte Vista will be a spectacular residential community with resort like open spaces, walking trails, bike paths pools, outdoor plazas and a two acre water concourse.
- The current zoning on the property is arbitrary. It was assigned several years ago without a study, since the usage at the time was for Naval Housing. The Specific Plan process is the best way to determine the appropriate zoning.
- Few if any developers are building R-1 housing in Los Angeles. The Ponte Vista proposal is more in line with current demand.
- There is a strong interest in senior housing and the developer has worked with residents and his advisory committees to discover what these individuals want. The project will include adult education and recreation classes and a shuttle bus system. Senior housing is an important part of this proposal.
- Seniors will take fewer trips and travel at non-rush hour times, so they will have less of an impact on the traffic.
- The builder has agreed to fund numerous mitigations and community benefits, on and off site, including ATSAC (traffic synchronization), additional turn lanes, a road to Mary Star, ball fields, parks and open space.
- Even using high estimates of additional demand, the proposed mitigations and community benefits will completely mitigate the increased traffic.
- Bob Bisno is a quality builder who cares about our community.
- There is a housing shortage and a demand for high quality housing at a reasonable price. This project will help meet that demand.
- Condos and townhomes generate fewer trips than single family homes. The condos will be more affordable than single family homes.
- The project has received approval from the Department of Transportation, the Southern California Association of Governments, and many local Chambers of Commerce.
- More than 10,000 people have signed petitions to support Ponte Vista. This demonstrates the demand for the project.
- Ponte Vista will create union jobs during construction and have a positive economic impact on San Pedro and the surrounding communities.
- The project will bring in needed funding to the City of Los Angeles.
- On site retail services will reduce the number of trips on Western Ave. required by residents.

- The proposed development will provide housing affordable for those in law enforcement, fire-fighting, education and medicine, individuals who must now commute long distances to serve San Pedro.

As can be seen from the above quotes, there were many responses from attending community members who are vigorously for or against the developer's proposal. There were also a few comments that suggested that the Committee's objective should be an examination of the up and downsides of the project (economically, environmentally and socially), followed by investigation and discussion of how to mitigate the negative effects. The CAC felt that its primary purpose was to give a recommendation to Councilwoman Hahn that reflected what the committee members felt was an appropriate project for the site.

V. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PONTE VISTA CAC PROCESS

Of the many issues that the Committee considered during the CAC deliberations, traffic emerged as the most consequential and also the most controversial. San Pedro residents have their own stories to tell about gridlock experiences on Western Ave. The majority do not just simply want to find ways to stop the increase in traffic, but to, in fact, reduce the traffic impacts on Western Ave. With the help of the studies done by Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council, the Committee analyzed and raised serious questions about the draft Environmental Impact Report submitted by the developer. To help with its deliberations, the Committee determined that it needed to accurately predict:

1. The current daily total traffic counts on Western Ave. and the counts at various busy times, including morning and evening rush hour, large funerals, school dismissal times, etc.
2. The potential increase in traffic that will occur from an increased population due to other planned and future projects and ambient growth.
3. The number of people who will reside in the project and the number of trips (both in and out) that will be added by the developer's plan.
4. The number of students added by the development and their impact on local schools.
5. The impact of various mitigation measures proposed for Western Avenue and for nearby streets and intersections.
6. Answers to questions 2 -5 using various other possible models for the project that propose differing numbers of units and varying sizes and types of housing and commercial construction, including the existing R-1 zoning.

One of the purposes of the CAC is to provide a local viewpoint that is reflective of the community at large. This "common sense" perspective allowed the CAC to review the developer's proposal, and other options suggested to the CAC for the Ponte Vista site. Common sense is needed in the complicated field of traffic prediction and control. Unfortunately, members of the CAC have discovered that even though the procedures followed by the developer were approved by the City of

Los Angeles Department of Transportation, the findings in the draft EIR appear to substantially underestimate the impact of the project on traffic and schools.

In the City of Los Angeles, the method used to predict traffic impacts is to apply the appropriate tables from an approved document, the ITE Trip Generation Handbook. The ITE tables compile studies done in various communities throughout the United States and Canada. The City of Los Angeles uses the average figure from these correlations. The best figure to use for any particular development can be larger or smaller than the average. In the draft EIR the developer used the High Rise Condo Land Use Designation (232) from the ITE Trip Generation Handbook to predict traffic impacts.

Here is an example of the difficulties faced in getting accurate predictions: While more than one ITE table fits the project, Table 232 was used by the developer to describe the traffic impacts of the Ponte Vista project, with its four story developments of more than 50 units in each building. Table 232 predicts that the developer's estimate of 4600 Ponte Vista residents will take only 322 one way trips during the busiest morning peak hour. This did not square with the common sense of the committee members. However, the Ponte Vista project also seems to the CAC members to qualify under the Residential Condominium/ Townhouse Designation (230). That designation predicts an average of 759 morning peak hour trips. Whether either of these tables or some other designation best applies to Ponte Vista is confusing and unclear.

Here are some of the lessons learned from the Committee deliberations:

1. The underlying question raised by the committee relates to the appropriateness of the ITE tables to San Pedro. During the period of CAC deliberations, Los Angeles Times columnist Steve Lopez published a series of articles on traffic in West Los Angeles. The newer projects in West Los Angeles presumably had all gone through a similar draft EIR process of prediction and mitigation that require that these new projects be fully mitigated. Despite these calculations and mitigations, rush hour traffic in West L. A. is always difficult and often in virtual gridlock. It caused the Committee to question the DOT approved process. Where did the numbers in these tables come from? Do they apply to Southern California and to the kind of individuals and families who would buy homes at Ponte Vista? The local project most similar to Ponte Vista is the Playa Vista development. The writers of the Environmental Impact Report for Playa Vista used tables and figures that appear to be more realistic. Was there a valid reason to use one table for one project and a different table for the other? As we explored the subject, no one seemed to have answers. The developer could only repeat the mantra that he had met the criteria demanded by the city, as though that should answer the CAC's concerns. At our urging, DOT staff attempted to find the original studies that underlie the ITE High Rise Condo Land Use Designation (232). It was determined that the desired data no longer exists. It would have been helpful to know the characteristics of the projects and the communities that were used to generate this table. Are they similar to Ponte Vista, or located in areas where residents often walk or use public transportation to get to work, shopping and recreation? Are these auto oriented communities, as Ponte Vista will have to be, since there will be very few services within walking distance for Ponte Vista residents? The CAC discussions raised important questions about the transportation planning process in Los Angeles. In the future, would DOT be willing to require the developer use a different designation if this appears more accurate? Additionally, would DOT consider requiring local data collection, as is encouraged by the ITE Trip Generation Handbook? As

an example, the City and County of San Diego have developed their own locally devised tables. Had those tables been applied to Ponte Vista, the predicted traffic impact would have been more substantial.

2. The Committee wants to prevent our community from ending up like West Los Angeles. The CAC members worry San Pedro and Harbor City can get to that point quickly if the City of Los Angeles accepts understated numbers in the EIR. In that regard, a most surprising assertion was made to the committee by Ponte Vista's traffic consultant. He claimed that, using the ITE tables and applying the required mitigation, the traffic from 429 single family homes would impact the same number of intersections as that from 1700 condominiums, half of which are limited to seniors. This, again, seems contrary to common sense. It implies that single family homes generate four times the number of peak hour trips that would come from Ponte Vista's condominiums. Traffic at intersections is rated by DOT from A to F depending upon the ratio of Volume to Capacity (V/C). According to the developer, both 429 homes and the 1700 condos will add about the same amount of traffic to intersections already rated F and both will take the same number of other intersections to an F level. Thus either option will have the same impact. The Committee rejected this thinking. Instead, one of the Committee members, Jerry Gaines, developed a template, using recognized expert sources which seemed to be a more accurate fit for our community. That template was used in CAC discussions and is described in **Section VII - Supplemental CAC Resource Documents – C. Trip Forecasting**.

3. The CAC learned that it is impossible to predict the impact of the Ponte Vista project, because the developer has not committed to the size of the homes he will be building. Because the project will be built in five phases, the developer will probably change what he builds, depending upon the market. In other projects that he has built, the developer has sold off portions of the project to other developers who may look for further changes in the number and size of units. If three and four bedroom condos are selling, that is what will be built. If the developer can get a better return on smaller units, he will do that. A report by USC demographer Dr. Julie Park, commissioned by Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council, suggests that the theory underlying the draft EIR is built on a false premise. According to her, the number of residents, and thus the number of automobile trips, can best be predicted by the number of bedrooms in the project. It is the size of the units, and not the number of floors, that will determine the traffic impact. Because the number of residents in Ponte Vista is very uncertain, the committee chose to assume the worst and reduce the size of the recommended project. If the CAC overestimates the resulting traffic, the community will benefit. If the CAC underestimates the resulting traffic, there is no way to fix it after the fact. No one wants to apologize later for underestimating the impact.

4. The Committee was given differing information as to how the ATSAC/ATCS system will be implemented and paid for. During the Committee's visit to DOT's downtown offices to learn about the system, members were told that the City had funded the system in San Pedro and that it would be implemented within the next two years. A couple of weeks later, the Committee was told that the system still needs \$9 million in funding before it can be implemented. Because portions of Western Avenue are under the jurisdiction of CalTrans, our committee is concerned about the working relationship between the City and CalTrans. Will a joint powers agreement be in place in time to complete the coordination of the two agencies prior to construction at Ponte Vista? Funds from local projects have already been contributed towards this system as part of the mitigation by those developers. The Committee, however, is unsure if they have been identified and preserved. The worst

possible conclusion would be to have the Ponte Vista project implemented without ATSAC/ATCS and the other mitigations. It is this fear that partially motivates the opposition to this project.

5. The Committee would like to participate in discussions of measures other than ATSAC/ATCS that could mitigate the traffic created by the project. Currently, the Department of Transportation seems to make decisions regarding this project without informing or discussing their proposed measures with the CAC. For example, at an early meeting of the Committee, many questions were asked about DOT's evaluation of the draft EIR. The Department's representatives had few answers. Yet the next day, a letter was released in which the Department approved the Draft EIR. There was no mention of the letter during the CAC meeting. This was extremely frustrating. The CAC would have preferred the Department work with the Committee and the developer to explore these mitigation options and to evaluate their impact. At the May CAC meeting, several Committee members were designated as a mitigation subcommittee to examine these issues. The report and recommendations of the subcommittee are described in **Section VII - Supplemental CAC Resource Documents - D. Mitigation Subcommittee Report.**

6. A strong majority of the committee (8-2) supports the following statement, slightly revised from statement signed by five members in **Section VII – Supplemental CAC Resource Documents – A. An Alternative Option for the Site.** The CAC was especially frustrated with policies of the Department of Planning and officials and policies of the Department of Transportation, whose lack of leadership, and in some cases unwillingness to offer much needed information, contributed to this lack of trust and left the CAC rudderless in a process that very much needed good direction.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PONTE VISTA SITE

At the CAC meeting on July 24, 2007 the committee approved two important resolutions.

Resolution One:

The resolution following focuses on responding to the developer's proposal to build 1,950 homes presented to the CAC on June 18, 2007. It passed on a 10 to 1 vote with one abstention:

RESOLUTION ON PONTE VISTA HOUSING PROPOSAL

Be it resolved that the Ponte Vista Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) cannot endorse a housing proposal that contains a total of 1,950 housing units.

Whereas in the judgment of the CAC a 1,950 unit housing project, which is defined as a density of 31.7 units per gross acre, is considerably higher in total housing units than what we believe can be reasonably integrated into the existing infrastructure, topography, and surrounding roadway network serving the current residences and businesses located in north San Pedro and eastern Rancho Palos Verdes.

Whereas the most critical issue for the CAC is the fact that there is only one major highway (Western Avenue) serving the Ponte Vista housing site. This highway is the key transportation route for numerous existing residents and businesses in the immediate surrounding area. There is limited public transportation service in the area. The CAC believes that the desired goals for new residents of a Ponte Vista housing project of 1,950 housing units will in effect be compromised as well as those existing goals and objectives such as “*locate higher densities near commercial centers and major transit routes “articulated in the Wilmington Harbor City and the San Pedro Community Plans* for land use planning and economic development in the region.

Whereas the City of Los Angeles just adopted 14 planning guidelines (*Do Real Planning*) focusing on future development of the city for the Planning Department. In regard to housing density, the guideline “*Require density around transit*” is noteworthy. The guideline states “*congregate additional density at train and rapid bus stops, and discourage new density where we anticipate no mass transit relief.*” The proposed Ponte Vista housing site will essentially be mostly dependent on private vehicles for transportation needs. Therefore, the CAC believes that any development of housing will require a more modest density than what is required to develop 1,950 housing units on 61.5 acres of the former San Pedro Navy Housing site.

Therefore, the CAC rejects the Bisno Development Company’s Ponte Vista housing project that calls for development of 1,950 housing units, believing that this project as presented is inappropriate for the former Navy housing site in San Pedro.

Resolution Two:

The resolution below focused on the subject of housing density as currently permitted through existing R1 zoning for the building site. It passed on a vote of 8 to 4.

RESOLUTION ON PONTE VISTA HOUSING DENSITY

Whereas, Councilwoman Hahn’s Community Advisory Committee (CAC) has determined that Bisno Development’s proposal to build 1,950 units at the Ponte Vista property is not appropriate for the site and not acceptable to the residents of the surrounding site, and

Whereas, the CAC has questioned the techniques used by both the Los Angeles Department of Transportation and the developer in assessing traffic and density resulting from the proposed development, and

Whereas, both the *Wilmington Harbor City* and *San Pedro Community* plans call for “protect(ing) existing single family residential neighborhood(s) from new out-of-scale development,” and “protect(ing) existing stable single family and low density residential neighborhoods from encroachment by higher density residential and other incompatible uses,” and

Whereas, in the committee's research into various other product mixes besides single-family detached housing that is permitted under current zoning for the development site, it was determined that in no case or scenario was there a level of confidence in the data from city departments or the developer in answering our fundamental concern about inflicting an insoluble traffic and density problem upon San Pedro and surrounding communities, so,

Therefore, in the absence of a proposed housing project from Bisno Development Company at this time that clearly addresses the concerns noted above, the CAC recommends that a low density residential development project which does not exceed the density of the current R-1 zoning is the appropriate land use for the former Navy housing property.

The Community Advisory Committee also recommends that the boundary be changed within the Planning Department so that the Ponte Vista property will be included in the *San Pedro Community Plan* area.

Thus, the Community Advisory Committee recommends that any changes in the zoning of the Ponte Vista property be considered as a part of the current *San Pedro Community Plan* update. During that time we urge the Department of Transportation to read the concerns expressed in our report and prepare a much more accurate and realistic method of predicting the traffic impacts from new development.

Observations from the CAC Resolutions

As shown by the vote of 10 to 1 with one abstention for the first resolution, the committee in effect rejects both the original project of 2,300 units and the revised project of 1,950 units put forward by the developer. Committee members expressed concerns about the traffic impact coming from these additional residents, even with required mitigations. Because there are few other north south streets available as an option to Western Ave., committee members also worry about the impact of the large number of additional residents trying to transport themselves during evacuations, funerals, street closures, etc. The concerns by the CAC members for potential traffic impacts from a project of a density of almost 32 units per gross acre clearly supersede the stated goals and proposed benefits the developer stated for the 1,950 unit proposal. The developer argues that he needs his proposed density to provide for the project's housing goals and added amenities/community benefits. However, his proposal does not recognize in the view of the CAC that there must be a balance between environmental issues and economic benefit issues in an area that has restricted traffic circulation options in order to sustain a responsible level of quality of life in the community.

The vote of 8 to 4 for the second resolution reflects the difficulty of presenting alternative housing options for the Ponte Vista site. During the committee's deliberations, several committee members suggested mixed housing options that included senior housing, condominiums and single family residents that totaled between 890 and 1200 units. Other members preferred that only single-family housing be built there within the existing zoning, which allows for an estimate of some 525 housing units. In fact, at a previous meeting, by a vote of 8 to 5, the members endorsed the concept of senior housing at the Ponte Vista site, along with shuttle bus service, by a vote of 10 to 3, for the senior aged residents. And the members discussed the need for a road to be constructed through the Ponte Vista housing site connecting Mary Star of the Sea High School just east of the site to Western

Avenue which is on the west of the proposed housing site. The CAC decided, with a unanimous 14-0 vote, that any project on the Ponte Vista site must include a road, acceptable to Mary Star of the Sea High School, from Western Avenue to the new campus of Mary Star of the Sea High School. It must be further noted that the proposals for the location of this road put forth by BDC during this process have been unsatisfactory to Mary Star of the Sea High School. In addition, other related issues were identified by the CAC that were associated with potential housing options. **(See Section VII – Supplemental CAC Resource Documents – B. Summary of Related CAC Issues)**

However, in the end a majority of eight of the committee members did not feel confident (after months of input from the developer and city officials) that they could predict the traffic impacts of any of the plans put forward, either by the developer or by committee members. Thus the majority decided that in the absence of any housing project that had consensus support, the current zoning should remain in place at this point in time. **(See Section V--Lessons Learned)**

The vote of the majority encouraged flexibility in developing the property under current zoning (a specific plan that provides for higher density in some portions of the property to provide more open space for other amenities such a green space, water features, a clubhouse and other features to reduce the lot size and change the configuration of the housing) so long as the total units remained the same.

Five of the committee members believe that the second resolution passed by the CAC does not reflect the best interests of the entire San Pedro community. They think that it resulted from the CAC's inability to find middle ground between the developer's 1,950 unit mixed use, multi-family density and the currently allowed single-family density of between 429 and 525 homes. They believe that lack of flexibility and mistrust of data and expert testimony played a role in dooming any chance of compromise. They are concerned that an opportunity may have been lost for obtaining high quality, reasonably priced housing for seniors, young people and middle-income families, as well as other community benefits proposed by the developer.

They further suggest that housing at the Ponte Vista site be a mixed-use, multi-family development (with the majority of the units restricted to seniors) and a final density to be agreed upon after deliberations by Councilwoman Janice Hahn, the City Planning Department and the Bisno Development Company. **(See their full statement in Section VII--Supplemental CAC Resource Documents – A. An Alternate Option for the Site).**

The committee spent several months over the past year exploring all aspects of the original 2,300 unit proposal. However, it is telling that never during any of the committee's meetings did any member suggest approving either of the developer's proposals. The CAC believes that this is a strong message to Bob Bisno to start over with a much more modest proposal.

The CAC is pleased that currently the Planning Department is updating the *San Pedro Community Plan*. While the Ponte Vista property is located in the *Wilmington/Harbor City Community Plan* area, the Committee believes that this more appropriately belongs in the *San Pedro Community Plan* area and recommends moving the property into this plan area. The land north of the property is open space while residential development and commercial development is adjacent to the southern end of the building site. This area is in the San Pedro 90732 Zip Code. What is most

important is that this change in Plan location would permit the Ponte Vista property to be analyzed in the near future using proper planning criteria and allowing additional community input.

Finally, this report should serve as a wake up call to the City of Los Angeles and in particular its Department of Transportation. As noted above, the current method used by the city to predict the traffic impact of new development does not pass the test of common sense, and has contributed to overdevelopment and gridlock. The Committee urges the City Council to work with the Department to change their policies so that communities like San Pedro will have a realistic understanding of the impacts of proposed housing projects. The City of Los Angeles has a need for housing at all levels. However, the current City and DOT policy leads residents to be skeptical of even the best proposals.

VII. SUPPLEMENTAL CAC RESOURCE DOCUMENTS

A. An Alternate Option for the Site

We, the undersigned, are extremely disappointed that our Ponte Vista CAC was unable to compromise on a Specific Plan recommendation for the project area. We do not believe that the *Resolution on Ponte Vista Housing Density* reflects the best interests of the entire San Pedro community. It resulted from the inability of the CAC to find a middle ground between the developer's proposed 1950 unit mixed-use, multi-family density and the currently allowed 525 single-family density.

Lack of flexibility and mistrust of data and expert testimony played a role in dooming any chance of compromise. We were especially frustrated with officials from the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation and City Planning whose lack of leadership, and in some cases unwillingness to offer much needed information, contributed to this lack of trust and left the CAC rudderless in a process that very much needed good direction.

Like most of Southern California, San Pedro is in need of high quality, reasonably priced housing for seniors, young people and middle-income families. Ponte Vista could supply this housing and also benefit the community in many other ways: new public amenities including open space and recreational facilities, new traffic mitigations for a broad area surrounding the project, an access road for Mary Star of the Sea High School, a San Pedro First preferential buyers program, mixed-use amenities within the project to reduce the need for auto trips, shuttle service to further reduce auto traffic, new tax revenues, new jobs and economic stimulus for the community.

Virtually all of these benefits will be eliminated, or severely reduced, if the current R1 zoning is maintained. Pricing will eliminate most seniors, young people and middle-income families. No developer of such a project will be able to include public amenities, parks, recreational facilities, non-project-related roads or mixed-use commercial resources. In short, by failing to suggest a reasonable compromise, we are missing an opportunity to improve traffic on Western Avenue and to provide needed housing for people to come to or remain in San Pedro. Opportunities such as this are unlikely to present themselves again.

Economic, environmental and social changes that have occurred since the *Wilmington/Harbor City and San Pedro Community Plans* were last updated (1997-98) have made it imperative that these plans be revised to reflect new realities. Scarce land and growing population demand have priced many

people out of home-ownership. Community development plans must look to the future, not continue to protect patterns that are no longer viable.

It is our recommendation, based on information received and analyzed, that the Ponte Vista project be a mixed-use, multi-family development with final density to be agreed upon after deliberations by Councilwoman Janice Hahn, the City Planning Department and Bisno Development. We further recommend that a majority of the units be restricted to seniors and that the development include all of the proposed traffic mitigation and public amenities. We strongly believe that this solution provides maximum benefit to the San Pedro Community and its potential residents, and is economically viable for the developer.

Creasie Adams Jack Baric Al DiRocco Sal Sotomayor Arlene Zimmer

B. SUMMARY OF RELATED CAC ISSUES

During some of the CAC meetings, members identified related issues that they believed should be considered in association with various housing options. These issues would have been explored more by CAC if a majority of the members were able to create a consensus for one or more housing options. A summary of some of the member's thoughts and comments from various meetings are noted below:

Housing Products, Design, Building Mass/Height

1. R-1 density invites a variety of configurations of single family residences, townhomes and/or condominiums, including:

- traditional single family homes on lots on conventional streets with front and backyards,
- clusters of homes with large common areas surrounding each cluster (patio homes)
- Connected townhomes fronted or backed by large common areas.
- Special exceptions to the strict R-1 density interpretation might be made. In theory, 100 R-1 homes might be replaced by 200 senior housing units for ages 62 and over, if traffic generation can shown to be no greater than the by the smaller number of standard single family homes.

2. Consistent design elements are important. Different housing types should be unified by common architectural themes. Southern California Mediterranean and California bungalow style are popular choices. Unified public amenities, signage and infrastructure appearance (such as pressed concrete patterns or aggregate at street intersections and sidewalks) should be stressed.

3. Buildings should be limited to three stories in height and no structure should be closer than 35 feet from Western Ave. or higher than 24 feet anywhere along Western Ave.

Open Space and Park Space

Although R-1 density may not permit the array of benefits which a larger development would demand, 30% open space (536,000 sq. ft.), not including streets or sidewalks should be included in the project.

Common areas and private yard areas would be included in the 30%, as well as a six acre public park. The public park may include athletic fields, a jog/walk park, a dog park or other public activities.

Roads

1. A road to the Mary Star campus is imperative.
2. All roads in the development (not including driveways or common driveways) should be public.
3. The exception to public access and roads is a gated entrance to senior housing, if any.

A road connecting Seaport Village to Western Ave. through the Navy property should be considered as a traffic mitigation. (The planning department approved this behemoth project without any consideration of additional access to Western).

Mixed Use

An R-1 development by itself will probably not sustain a retail component, and additional traffic generated by a retail component is considered undesirable.

Bio Swale

A “natural” feature at the south end of the property should be considered.

Land Use (Small High School)

As long as this property is “preferred” by LAUSD, a school must be calculated as part of the project.

The current LAUSD plan is to use a portion of the Ponte Vista site to relieve overcrowding at Narbonne High School. Any school on the site should be located at the north end of the property to be closer to the Narbonne High School attendance area and should use the intersection with the traffic signal at Green Hills as its access off of Western.

Off-Site Mitigations

See report by Mitigation Subcommittee previously submitted but tabled by committee.

Miscellaneous

Senior housing should be placed at the south end of the property so that residents can actually conveniently walk to shopping areas south of the development.

All utilities must be underground, and the location of satellite dishes restricted.

“Environmental Density” credits should be considered. Although this is not a formal position of the CAC, the Planning Department might consider permitting five to ten per cent additional units if all

residential units are built with solar power capabilities (solar systems generate energy to run the house and the utility will sell back excess energy), “tankless” water heating technology, etc.

C. TRIP FORECASTING

Forecasting of trips from planned projects is done using one or more established traffic engineering tables that are based on a number of studies done throughout the country. The most common tables used by local governments are developed by the International Traffic Engineers Association (ITE). The ITE tables are constantly updated with the most recent studies each year used to update project classification trip generation rates. These tables have a number of different project classifications where efforts are made to assign a project trip impact forecast to the description of a specific project.* Some local governments (Los Angeles County, San Diego County, and the City of San Diego) develop their own tables, assuming that local conditions are more accurately recognized by using these tables.

Most other comparable large projects have more than one highway serving the area or an extensive network of side streets. Because the Ponte Vista site is served by only one major highway without even side streets that can divert traffic, the CAC sought to weigh the higher City of San Diego trip generation rates along with the ITE data used by the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) in assessing housing site options. The most noted differences are where a single family detached average daily trip rating (ADT) for ITE is 9.57 where for San Diego it is 10 or a .63 trip difference. A condominium/townhouse ITE ADT rate is 5.68 where for San Diego it is 6 or a .72 trip difference. A senior retirement condominium ITE ADT rate is 3.48 where for San Diego it is 4 or a .52 trip difference. In other words, the CAC applied a more conservative assessment on the Ponte Vista project than what is done by LADOT using ITE tables. The rates in CAC discussions are as follows:

Trip Generation Rates**:	Average Daily Trips	PM Peak Hour Trips
Single Family Detached:	10	1.0
Residential Condominium/Townhouse	6	.5
Senior Retirement Condominium	4	.1

In the case of any application, a local government agency can require added traffic studies to focus on ITE ranges given for each classification. This would certainly be helpful. It is complex in that the added traffic studies would need to duplicate, as closely as possible, the planned project characteristics in the immediate region.

*In addition to concerns about limited major highway access, the CAC questioned the developer’s selected ADT and AM/PM DT rates used for assessment purposes by LADOT. The developer applied a high rise condominium ADT rate of 4.10 to the Ponte Vista condominiums rather than the Condominium/Townhouse rate of 5.68. That rate is more suitable for high density projects in downtown urban centers. In the opinion of the CAC, the rate did not reflect the true description of the proposed Ponte Vista project.

**Based on San Diego and ITE Tables

D. MITIGATION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Goal: To identify traffic mitigation and traffic related improvement needs off-site from the proposed project.

Findings:

Required Project Transportation Mitigations

The *Ponte Vista Draft Environmental Impact Report* for the original housing project identified some 30 transportation mitigation actions requiring funding and installation by the developer, and completion prior to the issuing of construction permits.

These transportation mitigation measures include funding and installation of an ATCS/ATSAC synchronization system at identified area intersections, and reconfiguring (and re-striping) selected intersections to improve traffic flow.

Additional Needed Transportation Improvements

The *Western Corridor Improvement Project* “Intersection Geometric Improvements on Western Avenue from 25th Street to Palos Verdes Dr. North” identifies traffic congestion points along the commercial corridor of Western Avenue (Crestwood Ave. to Avenida Aprenda) where realignment of lanes and creation of right turn deceleration lanes could improve through-traffic volume movement along Western Avenue.

Key right turn deceleration lanes are recommended for parking lot entrances along Western Ave. curb lines in some eight different area locations. Both improved traffic flow and reduced collisions are potential outcomes from implementing these mitigation measures.

Also, funding from the developer should be secured for ATCS/ATSAC for traffic signals south of First Street to 25th St., for a new traffic signal at Peninsula Verde Drive and Western Ave., and for a share of costs associated with redesigning the 5-points intersection northeast of the project site.

Traffic Mitigation and Improvement Transportation Trust Fund (Harbor Area Specific)

The City of Los Angeles (*through a City Council Motion*) should create a trust fund to be utilized for mitigations as the Community and LADOT jointly decide. (Called for in the Neighborhood Councils *Traffic Study Review—Ponte Vista Development Project*, February 2007)

The trust fund account shall be established in such a way that the funds are earmarked only for transportation projects in the harbor region.

Traffic Mitigation Monitoring Process*

The City of Los Angeles should develop, implement and fund a Mitigation Monitoring system which would:

- Monitor the impacted facilities to verify that operational enhancements are being achieved.
- The Developer should identify “alternate mitigations” that would be implemented should the proposed mitigations not offset the impacts.
- Place funds equal to those necessary to implement the “: alternate mitigations” in a trust fund or mitigation bank.

*Recommendation from Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council *Traffic Study Review, Ponte Vista Development Project* report.

NOTE: Subsequent discussions with Bisno Development Corporation resulted in the following concept being presented for addressing the mitigation monitoring process:

BDC will deposit a pre-determined amount of funds into a trust fund created for mitigation monitoring purposes. Upon completion of the project (all differing phases), a formal traffic study will be conducted. Depending on the results of the traffic study, funds will either be drawn for further traffic mitigation needs as determined by LADOT (study demonstrates greater impacts than forecast with ITE rates), or fund will be returned to the developer (study shows that there is less traffic impact than was forecasted).

An irrevocable letter of credit would have to be negotiated between BDC and the City of Los Angeles to give assurances that these funds would remain available for a minimum number of years, regardless of the future operations of BDC.