



# CVAAction

The Newsletter of the Carpinteria Valley Association

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Spring 2005

**CVA is very concerned with the massive size of the buildings.**

## Harley-Davidson Expansion Plans

The Santa Barbara Harley Davidson retail operation at 3501 Via Real, on the north side of Via Real and Padaro, plans to expand. Currently the building is 16 feet 9 inches tall, and the owner would like to increase the retail and the storage and service areas at either end to two stories. There have been story poles in place indicating the height of these additional buildings. They are planning to build two 2-story buildings, one at the east end (22 feet 4 inches high) and another at the west end (28 feet 7 inches high). There would be loss of some parking, but they're planning to replace this by buying some land from Caltrans at the west end. After five conceptual meetings with the Santa Barbara County Board of Architectural Review, the board decided that they couldn't



*Rendering of Harley-Davidson west addition based on story poles. This view is across Via Real. (Rendering excludes proposed 2750 sq. ft. canopy that wasn't indicated by story poles.)*

(see "Harley-Davidson" on pg. 3)

## Toro Canyon Plan Update

The Board of Supervisors took final action on the Toro Canyon Plan, November 9, 2004, and the plan is now finalized and adopted. The first public hearing on the plan was held March 19, 1998 followed by a great many others. Opposition was intense, well financed, and at times unethical. For example the statement in opposition literature, "If your lot is downzoned and becomes non-conforming, this will prevent you from ever building on your property." was completely false, but it caused widespread panic among property owners. This type of activity, along with other less egregious but still "heavily-spun" statements, created an atmosphere of distrust of the county planners and lengthened the hearing process.

(see "Toro Canyon" on pg. 2)



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## Venoco's New Project

Venoco recently resubmitted an application to the State Lands Commission (SLC) for its "Paredon Project". This project application was previously submitted in 2001, but was declared incomplete by the SLC. Since three years have passed and Venoco had not completed the application, the SLC asked them to start over again and make a new application by August 13, 2004. Venoco complied and submitted a new application by the deadline. However it was incomplete again, so now they have another deadline to complete it.

The Paredon Project consists of slant drilling

from the Venoco property in the City of Carpinteria. Venoco will erect a 15 story-high derrick (yes, the height of a 15-story building!), which will slide along a track to enable Venoco to drill up to 35 wells, if they choose. Fortunately, the City of Carpinteria has contracted with the Santa Barbara County Energy Division to help the City with risk assessments and technical details associated with the oil industry in Carpinteria.

CVA, in collaboration with the EDC's Environmental Coalition, will be closely evaluating potential adverse effect of this project. The most obvious effect is the noise and other impacts of construction of up to seven years in duration. But a more serious effect is the unlikely, but possible, blow-out of a sour gas (natural gas with high hydrogen sulfide content) well head only several hundred feet from a residential neighborhood.

This is a very serious project for our community. If you are interested in keeping updated on the progress of the project proposal, return the form on the last page of this newsletter so CVA can keep you informed about the project, and when and where you can provide your input. ❖

*We're on the web!*  
[www.silcom.com/~cva/](http://www.silcom.com/~cva/)

*On our website, you can find a full-color version of this newsletter, as well as past editions!*

## Toro Canyon

*(from pg. 1)*

The plan downzoned property. Before the plan, zoning allowed a buildout of 613 units. The Toro Canyon Plan allows 305 units. There was legitimate disappointment among people who could no longer subdivide property. But the county planning professionals judged that the steep slopes, poor road access, and high fire hazard made higher densities inappropriate for Toro Canyon. On this, the Carpinteria Valley Association agreed.

The Board of Supervisors passed the plan on February 25, 2002 and sent it to the California Coastal Commission for approval of the coastal portion. The Coastal Commission staff recommended approval only if the county made 172 changes. This started another lengthy process of contentious hearings. In general, the Coastal

Commission wanted less wiggle room. Phrases such as "to the extent possible" were struck out. Coastal Commission approval of a compromise plan was finally achieved at the October 15, 2004 meeting.

The project manager, Greg Mohr, is to be commended for successfully completing this project. Throughout the whole process he maintained an atmosphere of polite respect even when confronted with hostility. CVA is pleased with the Toro Canyon Plan as finally adopted. While the process was more lengthy than it could have and should have been, extensive public participation, combined with solid technical analysis resulted in policy that is good for our community. ❖

## Harley-Davidson

(from pg. 1)

make a recommendation and were sending the proposal to the Planning Commission to determine if this expansion and renovation is suitable for this relatively small parcel.

CVA has just recently learned that Harley Davidson was granted an “as-built permit” by Planning and Development June 19, 2003 with virtually no public input. The property is zoned “Highway Commercial”, which is supposed to be for serving visitors to the area. Since then, there have been numerous ongoing violations – outdoor sales, having numerous events there, moving the service department across the street, among others. CVA is very concerned with the massive size of the buildings with no greenbelt around, and the lack of compatibility with the rural, 1-story buildings nearby. The Toro Canyon plan lists parts of Highway 101 as a scenic corridor and the story poles show that mountain views would be lost in two places – from Padaro Lane, and from the freeway. The Visual Resources Policies in the Toro Canyon Plan require structures to be compatible with the existing community and protect areas of high scenic value and scenic corridors. The visual and aesthetic goal of the Toro Canyon Plan is to protect the rural and semi-rural character and natural features of the area,

particularly public views of the foothills and Santa Ynez mountains. There’s also the question of noise, since motorcycles are sold at 75 decibels, but many modify theirs to 92 decibels. The sight distance in turning from Padaro Lane onto Via Real is extremely dangerous, as is the traffic and parking of motorcycles on the street/bike lanes during events. CVA also has concerns about excessive night lighting of signs.

The planner on this project is Eric Englebart. He can be reached at 568-2011 and/or at the email address [eengelb@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:eengelb@co.santa-barbara.ca.us). His mailing address is Planning and Development, 123 E. Anapamu St., Santa Barbara, CA 93101-2058. Contact him if you want to be notified about when this issue will be before the Planning Commission. Additional comments regarding the impacts of the existing and expanded business, the appropriateness of having a motorcycle sales business in a Highway Commercial district, and lack of enforcement of zoning violations should be addressed to the planner and Salud Carbaljal, 1st District Supervisor. His email is [SupervisorCarbaljal@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:SupervisorCarbaljal@co.santa-barbara.ca.us). ❖



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### ***Carpinteria Valley Association***

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The *Carpinteria Valley Association (CVA)* was founded in 1964, and continues its mission of providing education and advocacy on issues related to land use planning, development, natural resources, and the environment in the Carpinteria Valley and the surrounding South Coast region.

## CVA Bungalow Tour

The Carpinteria Valley Association celebrated our 40th anniversary last June. The celebration included a walking tour of the bungalows in the core of the city, lunch at the Community Church, and a look at the houses that Joe Hendy built. Several of attendees made it to the French Bulldog in Summerland for a wine, hors d'oeuvres and a long discussion about preserving the character and integrity of our neighborhoods. Included with the tour was a copy of our beautiful and informative book "Carpinteria

Bungalows and Distinctive Houses", which sparked the discussion. Hopefully this will generate pride in our town's heritage. The day was enjoyed by all!

Since the event, our "bungalow book" has been the talk of the town. We have published a second edition, and copies are available for purchase (see below). But even more importantly, this book is already being used as an important historical resource. For example, our book was used by the Carpinteria City Manager as part of his presentation to the City's Architectural Review Board relating to a bungalow featured in our book.

You can still purchase your own copy of the bungalow book. The cost is \$25, and you can purchase one at the Carpinteria Valley Museum of History (956 Maple Ave. in Carpinteria). Or you can contact us by email or by using the form on the last page of this newsletter, and we'll arrange to get you a book. Get 'em while they last! ❖



A Big *Thank-You* to

**Carpinteria Valley Historical Society**

956 Maple Avenue

&

**Hallmark Cards & Party Goods**

Casitas Plaza Shopping Center

for their generous help last summer and fall  
in handling sales of our self-published book:

***Carpinteria Bungalows and Distinctive Houses***

There are still copies of the book available  
for \$25 at the Historical Society and directly from CVA.

## Questions Remain Regarding RMA Proposal

In recent months, there has been relatively extensive news coverage and a few public meetings discussing the proposed development at Rancho Monte Alegre (RMA), the 3,100-acre ranch above Foothill at Santa Monica Road. Tad Buchanan and his co-owners of RMA, the Montecito-based “RMA Six”, are working with the Trust for Public Land and the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County to place a conservation easement on the entire property.

The plan as presented has excellent potential, but there are many unanswered questions that need to be resolved. CVA is cautiously optimistic about the plan, and will continue to monitor it closely and participate in public discussions to ensure the best plan possible proceeds. So here we provide a short summary of the plan, and a list of some of the top questions that require answers.

The RMA plan would entail restricting development to 24 of the ranch’s 40 legal parcels, and conserving the remaining 2,800 acres as open space. Existing agricultural operations (250 acres) will be kept intact, and attempts may be made to revitalize the historic olive grove on the upper ranch, visible throughout the Carpinteria Valley.

The conservation easement would restrict development to designated building envelopes on the 24 lots. On the lower ranch, the 15-16 lots range from 10-20 acres. Eight new lots will be developed on the upper ranch, where building envelopes will be set back from the ridge line, and structures limited to single-story. No development envelope would exceed 2 acres, resulting in a total estimated 40 acres of residential development scattered over the ranch.

The conservation easement is a contract entered into between the landowners and the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County. It creates permanent deed restrictions that limit development, and gives the Land Trust the right to monitor and enforce the terms of the easement. It does not grant any rights of access to the general public. However, the ranch’s new owners are willing to grant a public trail easement over segments of the upper ranch, as part of the county’s larger effort to reopen the historic Franklin Trail over to the Santa Ynez River. Access would be behind Carpinteria High School. Completion of the trail is contingent on the cooperation of other landowners along the route.

Those familiar with the former Fithian ranch are concerned over the fate of the historic buildings, most of which date from the 1880s. The previous owners had let them fall into

disrepair, especially the picturesque red barn with its bell tower. Tad Buchanan reported that the new owner of the parcel containing the “Lemon House” and the original ranch house is committed to restoring them. One problem lies in the current clustering of numerous buildings on smaller parcels. Current county guidelines allow only one principal residence per parcel, so the other buildings would “have to be something else.”

The inaccessible back country of the ranch will be donated to the Trust for Public Land.

The new owners will be meeting with county planning staff on their proposal, after which there will be public comment on the project.

CVA would like nothing better than to assure you that the development planned for Rancho Monte Alegre is going to protect our valley’s mountain backdrop and benefit for our community. After the workshop presented by the developer, Tad Buchanan and his planner, Marc Lloyd on February 9, 2005, we are still left with some fears even though these two professionals did a fine job answering our questions. We are afraid we will have to wait until the conservation easement is written before we will know for sure if:

1. All of the building envelopes will be situated in places where there won’t be visible from Carpinteria Valley.
2. The buildings will be one story in height.
3. The trail will be dedicated for public use.
4. There will be only 24 parcels.
5. All the backcountry will not be developed.
6. The roads will be 22 feet wide or less and will be at a minimum!
7. All water storage tanks will be buried.
8. Indian relics will not be disturbed.

Concerns that will not be answered until it is too late are:

1. Will this development affect the traffic on Foothill Road negatively?
2. Will this development affect our water bills and our water supply?
3. Will this development add to our fire danger?

If you are interested in helping monitor this RMA proposal, or if you have other concerns that we didn’t mention here, return the form on the last page of this newsletter. We want to hear from you! ❖

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## CVA's Proactive Priorities for the City of Carpinteria

At the beginning of the year, CVA sent a letter to the City of Carpinteria outlining a few specific items and encouraging the city to take a proactive role in addressing them. These are issues that have arisen due to past planning decisions, and that would likely not otherwise be addressed until they reach crisis proportions. Here are the issues we outlined:

1. We would like the city to introduce a night lighting ordinance.
2. We would like the city to terminate the old EIR and application for the "Lagunitas" project.  
The EIR for the "Lagunitas Project" was first done in 1997. When the project was changed, the same EIR was used, was called the "Subsequent EIR" and was finalized in July 2002. That data is now obsolete. Traffic increased 10% at the Ventura County line after that data was shown in the EIR and now has increased much more. Cal Trans has turned down the city twice in relation to building the traffic mitigation roundabout. Why is the city pushing this development? If Venoco's application for the "Paradon Project" was considered obsolete after 2 years, why is the city leaving the community hanging on this project? We believe that the project has to start over with new data or be denied.
3. We would like the city to introduce a Downtown Historic District Ordinance.
4. We would like the city to ask the County Energy Division for help with any oil-related issues.
5. We would like the city to review the parking ordinance.  
There are many cars parked on city streets overnight. The city at one time was so concerned with on street parking that they would not let citizens convert their garages unless they built another place to park the car. Now, particularly in condos, the garage is used for a room or storage and the car is parked on the street. This is very evident on Via Real in eastern Carpinteria. Many cars are parked on the street and in the bicycle lane in front of the condos. However, a little farther east in front of the Mobile Home Park, there are no cars parked on Via Real. They have a parking slot next to the mobile home and it is not enclosed, so it can't be used for a room or much storage.
6. We would like the city to investigate the installation of the tall, ugly utility poles installed by the Edison Company. These are a visual blight to our valley.  
Edison must not be allowed to install the metal utility poles in the city. They are a blight on our community. We should try undergrounding as many utility lines as possible.
7. We would like the city to promote tertiary treatment of our sewer water. We recognize that this the Carpinteria Sanitary District has direct control over all sewer service, but the City can assert significance influence in this area.  
At one time (we think it was in the '80) the sewer district had planned to treat the sewage with a tertiary treatment. All of a sudden, the board and the director were changed and the project was deleted. We believe that tertiary treatment would be very beneficial since that water could be used for irrigation. It would be particularly beneficial on the playing fields on the bluffs. ❖

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## Serena Soundwall

CVA has been monitoring a project proposed by Caltrans to construct a 1400-foot long soundwall along Highway 101 behind the residences on Via Real near Toro Canyon Road. At this time, CVA has no objections to the project or the analysis that has been done, and we will continue to monitor the project as it proceeds. Here we provide some background and details on the project.

On Sept 20, 2004, Caltrans issued a mitigated negative declaration for the Serena Soundwall. The soundwall will consist of thirteen 4.8 meter (16 feet) high overlapping panels and a continuous metal beam guardrail. Caltrans notes that the visible height of the barrier above the level

of the freeway will be about 10-12 feet.

According to the negative declaration, the proposed project would have no effect on the following: agricultural resources, cultural resources, geology, soils, hazards, hazardous material, land use, planning, mineral resources, public services, recreation, transportation, traffic, utilities or service systems. Additionally, there would be no significant effect on air quality, biological resources, hydrology, water quality, or noise. The project would have no significantly adverse effect on visual or aesthetic resources because the following mitigation measures would reduce potential ef-

*(see "Soundwall" on pg. 7)*

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## CVA's Proactive Priorities for the Santa Barbara County

At the beginning of the year, CVA sent a letter to the Santa Barbara County outlining a few specific items and encouraging the county to take a proactive role in addressing them. These are issues that have arisen in the County's First District due to past planning decisions, and that would likely not otherwise be addressed until they reach crisis proportions. Here are the issues we outlined:

1. We would like the county to introduce a night lighting ordinance.  
Greenhouses and even bare light bulbs in open agricultural fields are a growing issue. The sight of the stars on a dark night belongs to all of us, and is jeopardized by light pollution.
2. We would like the county to encourage the County Energy Division to work with the City of Carpinteria with any oil-related issue and help with a public forum if the "Paradon Project" progresses.  
We feel that the city may be reluctant to ask for help even though they have a contract with the Division for help. The CVA has asked the City of Carpinteria to work more closely with the county.
3. We would like the county to consider the character and integrity of Summerland architecture and establish a Historic Preservation District with the help of the community.  
The town of Summerland has quite an inheritance of historic buildings. We would like the county to establish some of these building "Historic". The community is active in this endeavor.
4. We would like the county to help with the historic preservation and environmental concerns of "Rancho Monte Alegre" and the environmental preservation of the foothills behind the Carpinteria Valley.
5. We would like the county to join citizens and CVA in complaining to Edison about the tall, metal electrical poles installed by the Edison Company last fall along Casitas Pass Road and in the Shepard Mesa area.  
Edison should have obtained permits and solicited public input. Unless Edison is called to account, they will feel free to do the same in other parts of the valley. These are a visual and industrial blight to our agricultural valley. ❖

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## Soundwall

(from pg. 6)

fects to an insignificant level: the replacement of all trees removed by the project at a ratio of approximately 3:1 and landscaping the project with vines, native shrubs, other perennials and annuals.

This project has been on the Community Noise Abatement Project List since 1975. In response to complaints by homeowners, sound level readings taken in 1975, 1980, and 1988 were 4-7 decibels (72 dBA) above standards set for the Federal Highway Administration Noise Abatement Criteria (67 dBA). Due to lack of funding during the 1990's, this project was delayed. There are currently 18 residences next to the freeway, and seven of these pre-date the existence of the freeway (built in 1953). The primary purpose of the soundwall is to reduce the freeway's noise impact, especially on these houses. The soundwall is predicted to lower the current decibel reading by 10-12 decibels.

The biggest complaints have been the potential loss of mountain views. But visual simulations demonstrate that the houses and neighborhood directly behind the proposed wall already hide these views. There have also been ques-

tions from Padaro Lane residents as to why the south side of the freeway wasn't included in the soundwall project, and as to the effect of added concentrations of noise and air pollution.

Caltrans is currently seeking approval from Santa Barbara County for this project. Possible construction of the Serena Soundwall might begin as early as July 15, 2005, and continue for 130 working days. An additional 250 days will be needed for plant establishment after the wall is completed. Most of the work would take place during the day. There will be no closures during daylight hours during the week, or during the weekends or on legal holidays. Lane closures are not anticipated, but if any are required, they would likely be for a couple of weeks at most (only Sunday night through Friday morning from 10 pm to 6 am). The northbound Padaro Lane offramp may need to be closed a couple of times during the project.

If you have questions or concerns about this project, return the form on the last page of this newsletter so CVA can keep you informed about the project, and when and where you can provide your input. ❖

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# Carpinteria Valley Association

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## I want to join CVA!

- I want to join CVA! I am enclosing \$5 for my annual membership  
(Our annual renewal date is June 1, so it's time to renew!)

*Note: Contributions to Carpinteria Valley Association are not deductible as a charitable donation for tax purposes.*

**Additionally, I want to support the public education efforts of the Carpinteria Valley Foundation.  
Enclosed is my donation:**

- \$20 Individual     \$25 Family     \$50 Supporter     \$100 Benefactor     Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: Contributions to Carpinteria Valley Foundation are deductible as charitable donations for tax purposes.*

### I am interested in the following issues:

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|---|--|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Carpinteria City planning issues                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Water issues  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City of Carpinteria General Plan                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable housing issues   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Venoco's facility / general oil development & monitoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning enforcement  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use of lands owned by the Carpinteria School District    | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental impacts of development<br>(e.g., traffic, parking, air quality,<br>biological issues, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouses  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rancho Monte Alegre                                      |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harley Davidson expansion                                |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific development proposal: _____                     |  |

### I want to help! I will help on:

- Technical analysis of environmental documents  
 Attending public meetings  
 Telephoning and/or mailing  
 Database maintenance  
 Website development and maintenance

**Thanks!**

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Mail this form to us at: Carpinteria Valley Association, P.O. Box 27, Carpinteria, CA 93014**