

Maureen Tamuri

From: Bob Burris
Sent: Thursday, March 4, 2021 12:50 PM
To: Maricela Hernandez; Maureen Tamuri; Glenn Michitsch; Tom Bartlett; Don Penman; Elizabeth Parker; Matthew Summers
Cc: Michael Russo; Arvin Petros; Rachel Biety
Subject: Fw: LVHF - STORY POLE COMMENTS FOR PC MEETING TONIGHT MARCH 4

Bcc'd to Commissioners

From: Kim Lamorie <kimlamorie1@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 4, 2021 12:30 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: LVHF - STORY POLE COMMENTS FOR PC MEETING TONIGHT MARCH 4

Thank you for distributing this to the Calabasas Planning Commission for tonight's hearing.



Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation, Inc.

Post Office Box 353, Agoura Hills, California 91301

The voice and conscience of the Santa Monica Mountains since 1968

March 3, 2021

Calabasas Planning Commission
City of Calabasas
100 Civic Center Way
Calabasas, CA

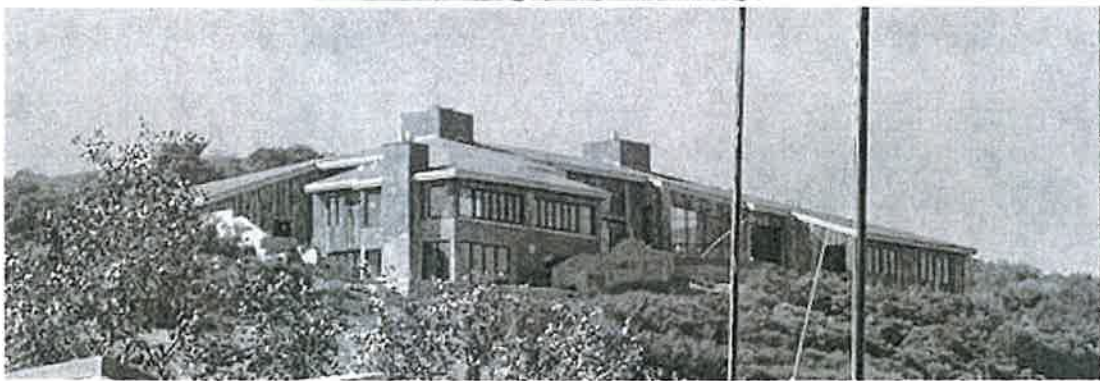
**Re: Agenda Item #2 - Review of Recommended Planning Commission
Amendments to the City's Story Pole Procedures**

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the story pole procedure discussion update. Briefly and in general we strongly support mandatory, strict and consistent implementation of story pole regulations for all new development except single family home additions (outside of the scenic overlays). This is the only way the public can adequately assess the viewshed impacts of Projects -- including for very large homes.

Case in point below is one of several large homes former Architectural Review Panelist and developer, Mark Handel, constructed on one of the city's scenic corridors -- Mulholland Highway. Despite story poles being required for this project at the time, this more than 12,500 foot behemoth that sits perched above Mulholland Highway clearly and negatively impacting the scenic corridor viewshed somehow found its way to being exempted from the story pole requirement.

The second photo depicts a more than 10,000 square foot house that sits perched on top of a designated significant ridgeline - which is visible from two scenic corridors -- Mulholland Hwy and Old Topanga Canyon. Our understanding is that when the initial poles were installed, the developer claimed he had been vandalised and was not required to put them back up -- once again, depriving the public of being able to actually see the true impacts of new development on a significant ridgeline.



While photo simulations or renderings cannot replace story pole implementation, we agree with the staff recommendation to support amending the City's story pole

procedures to require placement of signs that include a photo simulation or rendering on every project with story poles.

Implementation Authority

As per the staff report, the City's current story pole procedures split the decision making authority between the Director and the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission's role must be cemented in this process and not be reduced -- this affords the public the only opportunity for a public hearing when there otherwise would not be one. For example, "The Planning Commission shall also be the body to determine if story poles should be re-established in instances when vandalism has rendered the story poles no longer effective." It is imperative that the public be able to weigh in on this as above -- otherwise any applicant or developer could simply say their poles were vandalized and not be required to put them back up.

We do not concur with staff that the following statement is an issue or problem for the Commission in any regard, "For projects having to be reviewed and considered by the Planning Commission, it is best for the Commission to not involve itself in story pole matters in order to not introduce any perception that one or more members of the Commission lack sufficient open-mindedness and impartiality when the project is later considered at the public hearing."

And, we strongly disagree that the following factor be considered in any regard as to the feasibility of an applicant to install story poles at any project site including a single family home: "Potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact of designing, installing and maintaining story poles for the subject project."

If an applicant cannot afford to abide by the city's story pole requirements, they should not be applying to build.

Otherwise, many of the redline language modifications are good and clear.

Sincerely,
Kim Lamorie
President
LVHF



From: Jolie Willett <joliewillett@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 4, 2021 8:17 AM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Planning Commission

Dear Planning Commissioners:

The following comments are for your consideration regarding the Story Pole Procedures and the proposed changes.

I support the use of bright orange mesh netting to silhouette building mass and dimension. This is preferable to the flags currently being used because it provides a clearer "picture" by enhancing visibility. There are a number of cities that use 1" to 3" bright orange mesh netting already. The City should adopt that as a standard.

I object to the proposed language regarding "potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact" to the developer. This is a purely subjective determination. Developers building multimillion-dollar projects should include these costs in their cost of construction, a cost of doing business.

The City must ensure that the people which will be affected by a proposed development have the ability to see the potential impact before the project is approved and built.

Many of the proposed changes to the story pole procedures are simply wrong. Story poles should continue to be overseen and approved by the Planning Commission. The process has worked for the last five or six years. Don't change something that's been working.

I urge you to keep the Calabasas Story Pole Procedures citizen-friendly. They should not degenerate into a benefit for developers.

Best regards,

Jolie Willett
26003 Redbluff Dr.
Calabasas

From: Susan Ellis <srellis8@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 3, 2021 5:28 PM

To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>

Subject: Please forward to Planning Commission for Thursday Meeting on Story Poles

Dear Planning Commissioners,

First and foremost, there should be no reason why any commercial or residential development is exempt from putting up story poles. If, as is suggested by staff it is a financial burden, then the development should not take place at all. Anyone who has the money to build whether it is a developer or an individual needs to include the cost as part of doing business. If they are given a loophole and there is a way to get out of it, you can bet they all will. The only way the public can really understand the size of a development is by seeing a visual representation with story poles on the property.

Secondly, the Planning Commission should absolutely be involved in the implementation so there is a public hearing. If it is solely the Director, it is done behind closed doors and the public is shut out, which is not acceptable.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,
Susan Ellis
26329 W Plata Lane
Calabasas 91302

Maureen Tamuri

From: Bob Burris
Sent: Wednesday, March 3, 2021 5:29 PM
To: Maureen Tamuri; Elizabeth Parker; Glenn Michitsch; Tom Bartlett; Matthew Summers; Don Penman; Maricela Hernandez
Cc: Michael Russo; Arvin Petros; Rachel Biety
Subject: Resident Comment

Bcc'd to Commissioners

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: John Suwara <johsuwa@yahoo.com>
To: City of Calabasas <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 2, 2021, 01:09:13 PM PST
Subject: To: City Manager, Planning Commission March 4th meeting. Item 2 on the Agenda: Review of Story Pole Procedures.

To: Honorable Members of the Planning Commission

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments regarding Story Pole Procedures..

The Staff Report has recommendations to the Planning Commission about modifications to the story pole procedure and more seriously not involving the Planning Commission in the story pole process. Couldn't help but think how easy we forget! The Staff Report is recommending going back to pre-2015 when story poles were rarely installed and all story pole decisions were made by the Community Development Director. The staff report was not impartial and strongly biased in favor of the Community Development Director.

The 2018/2019 West Village story pole process is a perfect example of why it is important that the Planning Commission be involved in the story pole process. The Planning Commission consists of Calabasas residents that live in the city. They represent the community and put balance in the process.

As background, prior to 2015 installation of story poles was the exception in Calabasas. The Community Development Director made all the decisions regarding story poles and reasons were found to not install them.

In early 2015, a long time Calabasas resident sent a short email to the Planning Department asking when will Story Poles be put up for the Canyon Oaks Project? The Planning Department responded with a long email giving multiple reasons including terrain as to why story poles would not be put up. The "no story pole" conclusion was presented by the resident to the City Council. The City Council quickly put story poles on the agenda and at the Public hearing the City Council decided that a new story pole procedure was needed. They asked the Planning Commission to draft a new procedure for the city. The draft was then refined by the City Council. In approximately four months in mid-year 2015 a new procedure was developed and adopted.

The procedure included a provision for oversight by the Planning Commission. If the story pole plan for a project had less than 50% of the story poles review was required by the Planning Commission. Responsibility for story poles was now shared by the Planning Commission and the Community Development Director. The result, story poles were erected for both the Canyon Oaks and Rondell Oasis Hotel projects that were being proposed on Las Virgenes Road.

After the story pole procedure was adopted there were few exceptions until West Village. West Village is on the same property as the former Canyon Oaks project. Canyon Oaks was

overwhelmingly rejected in the 2016 election when it went before the voters as Measure F. The developer then proposed the West Village project for the property.

The developer presented to staff a story pole plan for the West Village that had less than 50% of the required story poles implemented. Per the Story Pole Procedure that triggered a review by the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission review determined that more story pole could be installed and sent the plan back for modification. The new plan returned with more than double the number of story poles. Bottom line, the procedure worked because of the involvement of the Planning Commission. It is therefore important that the Planning Commission stay involved and provide oversight in the process. Orange Mesh that is one foot in width is more visible than the current requirement to use flags to depict the roof outlines. One foot mesh working for many cities some of which are located along windy coastlines that also have moisture than Calabasas because of wetter weather caused by rain, fog and cloudiness.

The current story poles on the West Village site outlining the 15 3-story residential buildings and one commercial building have now been up almost 2 full years. They appear to be in pretty good shape. But it is difficult to see the roof outline of buildings that are further back in the project. Mesh would have been better for seeing roof outlines.

Neither of our neighboring cities, Agoura Hills or Malibu, have a clause to consider the cost installing story poles in their story pole procedure. We are the only one and it is a very subjective clause. What is too expensive? It was thrown into the procedure at the end of a very long City Council Meeting when the procedure was adopted in 2015. It provides wiggle room to not install story poles. Please remove it. It is part of the cost of doing business in Calabasas.

The story pole procedure may need some clarification in some places but it does not need a major overhaul. It certainly does not need removal of Planning Commission oversight. Keep the existing story pole procedure and please work on making it stronger and better. It works!

Thank You for your efforts.

John Suwara

City of Calabasas Resident

From: Joyce Greenberg <greenberg.joyce@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 3:35 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Planning commission

Re: story poles

Dear members of the Calabasas planning commission.

I am requesting that you keep the current policy with regards to Story Pole and add the orange netting so that citizens of Calabasas can get a true view of what each and every project will look like.

Please remove the edits relating to "Potentially excessive costs or unreasonable financial impact". It's vital that you continue to put the interests of the citizens above the builders.

With the varied topography in our city it's imperative that we get a true vision of the impact of projects.

Thank you for putting the story pole requirement in effect , as it has made a huge difference for those of us in the community.

Thank you for all your hard work.

Joyce Greenberg
26918 Deer Trail Ct.
(31 year resident)

From: ncitron <ncitron@pacbell.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 3:00 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Response to Item 3 on the September 10, 2020 Agenda

TO: Commissioners Washburn, Kraut, Fassberg, Harrison, Mueller and Alternate Sikand

We appreciate the opportunity to respond to the proposed amendments to the Story Pole Procedures.

- While we understand that Commissioner Mueller wanted to "clean up some unclear language" we have to respectfully say that there is the elevation of the Community Development Director (CDD) to the level of the ultimate decision maker. It is never a good idea to have one person making unilateral decisions.
- Under the **Plan Components** section, we would like to see the first sentence changed to reflect to whom the story pole plan must be submitted. In the three places where the word "staff" or "City staff" is used, it would be better understood if the applicable titles were used: Staff Planner or CDD or if both are to be involved, use the term "both the Staff Planner and the CDD."

- Under the **Purpose** section the sentence that begins “Story poles are intended to help decision makers . . .” and there is a list that follows which includes “decision makers.” I believe that group should be defined. To which group of decision makers are you referring?
- Under **Story Pole Determination** it is stated that the CDD “at the CDD’s sole discretion” would “seek advice from the Architectural Review Panel.” If the CDD needs assistance with story poles, solutions should **only** be provided by a professional story pole installer. Additional assistance for items a) through f) should be requested by the CDD in writing to the Planning Commission for direction, stating the reason for additional decision-making assistance. Story poles are of vital importance to the citizens. Decisions regarding story poles should be transparent and reflect that importance.
- Additionally, under the **Story Pole Determination** category, item f) states “Potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact . . .” which, again, illustrates the ongoing protection offered developers. At a recent Planning Commission meeting, to paraphrase a comment made by a Commissioner, he stated that he “was concerned that the cost to the developer would be too expensive.” There should never be a time when consideration of the developer’s financial interest would supersede the citizens’ right to know. The key is to ensure the citizens’ ability to easily visualize the proposed project.

In conclusion, the suggested revision has added some uncalled-for changes. One of the suggestions is the CDD is being handed sole discretion rather than given the opportunity to act as a partner with the Planning Commission and the citizens in the decision making process.

Thank you,
 Norma and Mark Citron
 24668 Via Tecolote

From: John Suwara <johsuwa@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2020 7:52 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Planning Commission 9/10/2020 Item 3: Modification of Story Pole Policy

Please give a copy to the Planning Commission and put in the Public Record.

Re: Item 3 on the Agenda. Modification of the Story Pole Policy.

First, I would like to Thank the Planning Commission for agreeing in 2019 that the original story pole plan proposed for West Village was inadequate and sent it back to the developer for a better plan. The new plan, which is currently installed, approximately doubled the number of story poles from what was originally proposed.

It makes the point that the current story pole policy is working. The recommendation to use netting instead of flags to improve visibility is a good one. Anything that makes a proposed development easier to see including its impact on the view is a plus.

When I read the blue, green and red line version of the proposed story pole policy in the staff report I was expecting to see some changes. But I was surprised at the number of changes proposed. Some are major and change the intent of the current policy. It makes the policy less transparent, more developer oriented, more concerned about developer costs and less concerned about the residents who have to live with these projects.

In March 2015, the City Council decided to develop a new more transparent story pole policy for Calabasas. It came about because residents of Calabasas were not happy about the existing story pole policy. Decisions to not install story poles were being made by the Community Development Director and the process was not transparent.

Planning Commission and City Council Meetings were all well attended. The City Council reviewed the policy in detail and after much discussion many compromises were agreed upon and included in the policy. Is all that work going to be undone by this proposed new policy? I hope not!

I am against making any substantial change to the current story pole policy. It works.

Thank You,

John Suwara

From: tamiko fuote <tfuote@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 7, 2020 5:34 PM

To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>

Subject: Story Pole Procedures

I can only say that I second the following :

Story Pole Procedures. The City's Story Pole Procedures policy is applicable to projects meeting certain characteristics. Such projects have a potentially significant impact on the view shed where they are located. Given those considerations, I suggest and submit that the following comments be given appropriate consideration. Duration IF the story poles are not replaced in sufficient time to permit a significant period of viewing before the Planning Commission ("PC") hearing, the hearing should be postponed to allow such a significant period of viewing. Construction Method and Material Wherever and whenever possible, materials used in the construction of story poles should be standardized, and not left to the likes of dislikes of the planner, staff or Community Development Director ("CDD"). In this regard, the CDD should prepare and submit to the PC for it's approval a "tool box" to be used in determining the appropriate materials. Story Pole Determination The Architectural Review Panel has not demonstrated expertise in the area and should not be used to determine pole installation feasibility. The PC should review and approve "professional story pole installers" which the CDD can use in assisting in this determination. In no way should this be left to the CDD's sole determination. Planning Commission Review It is the developer's responsibility to protect the story poles from vandalism, no less than it is their responsibility to protect the project itself from vandalism. Vandalism is to easy an "out" which can be used to prevent the public from viewing the potential view shed impact of a project. The poles should be replaced and guarded where necessary. Notification The photo simulation referenced in this section should be made available "online" so as to permit a wider viewing by the public. The above is taken from a post on Nextdoor. Hope it's ok to second this.

Tamiko Fuote

To: Commissioners Washburn, Kraut, Fassberg, Harrison, Mueller and Alternate Sikand

Re: Item #3 on September 10, 2020 Agenda

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in regarding the latest proposed amendments to the City's Story Pole Procedures.

According to the staff report the two areas that the Commission should be reviewing at this time are (1) requiring netting or other visible material and (2) placing renderings to help the public understand the full scope of a proposed project.

Additionally, it was noted that Commissioner Mueller would forward some suggested amendments to "clean up some unclear language". In reading his proposed edits I am distressed to see that the essence of transparency that was an important part of the process in revising the old policy in 2015 is being diluted.

In particular, I find several disturbing changes under Story Pole Determination. In the introduction to the section the original text reads "The Director shall evaluate the following factors in their determination of whether or not a site is suitable for poles." Now it has been edited to read "...whether it is feasible for the project applicant to install story poles at the project site."

Determining the feasibility of a site is totally different than determining the feasibility for a project applicant to install story poles. If a site is feasible then the applicant is required to install story poles. Period! This re-wording shifts the feasibility determination from the site itself to the developer, who may be more than happy to find some reasons for not putting up story poles. The City should be strong in its efforts to be as transparent as possible during the entire application process.

In (f) of this same section which originally read "Excessive cost or financial impact." It now reads Potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact of designing, installing and manufacturing story poles for the subject project. This is not "cleaning up some unclear language." This is changing the whole meaning and does not fall into the directive given to the Commission.

The entire statement is subjective. What constitutes unreasonable financial impact? Any answer is based solely on opinion, not fact. It opens the door for developers of big projects to try to opt out of the obligation to put up story poles. I strongly feel that the public's right to see in person what is being proposed outweighs any cost incurred by the developer.

The existing policy has been in place since 2015. It has worked. Developers have followed the rules and the people have seen what is being proposed. It took a lot of work to get where we are now. With limited parcels left to build on we need to make sure every effort is made to keep the public informed. There is no better public notification than those very visible story poles!

In addition, the last paragraph in this section originally read "The Director MAY seek advice from the ARP and/or professional story pole installer. It now reads "The CDD, SHALL, at the CDD's sole discretion, seek advice from the ARP and/or a professional story pole installer. If you are going to use the word "shall", which is much stronger than "may", it leaves open whether to include the ARP in this decision-making process. The ARP, comprised mainly of architects, does not have the experience or expertise that a professional story pole installer has. If it's advice the CDD needs then going to someone who does it every day makes the most sense.

Last, but not least, this edit regarding “sole discretion” puts too much power in the hands of the CDD and treats the decision as being ministerial when it is not. This kind of decision-making was a big part of the problem with story pole policy prior to 2015. Having public hearings about plans for story poles and having story poles visible for all to see during the application process has made a difference. Let’s keep going in that direction.

Thank you.

Joanne Suwara

From: Samuelsohn-Pofsky, Karin <Karin.Pofsky@fox.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2020 4:30 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Story Poll policy

Good Evening,

I’m writing to express my opinion that the Calabasas Story Poll policy should remain in tact, with no exceptions. This policy is integral to our community’s development process and provides much need clarity to the community. Developers should be required to adhere to this policy without exception. I’m a Calabasas resident AND voter.

Thank you.

Karin Pofsky

From: jaycee64@aol.com <jaycee64@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2020 11:42 AM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: To Planning Commission, RE: Agenda item #3, 9/10/2020 Meeting

Dear Calabasas Planning Commission,

At your upcoming Planning Commission meeting, you will be considering changes to the existing Story Pole Policy with agenda item #3.

I am genuinely concerned that the City is considering unraveling the Story Pole Policy that has been in place since 2015, especially as it is working for the community.

You are all fully aware that here in the west portion of our City, we have been under siege by development since 2015 and it is far from over. I drive past those poles at the proposed development at Agoura Road and Las Virgenes Road and I’m reminded that I, as a Community member, can participate in the discussion on future development in our City. Story Poles are for the Community and not the developer, which is why the current policy must stay in place and even be strengthened to support transparency where appropriate.

These are the main reasons why the current Story Pole Policy works:

- * Policy regulations are clearly outlined for developers.

* Policy alleviates the burden to the City to have to judge a developer's reasons not putting up story poles.

* Enforcement is unbiased and the City does not take on liability for decisions that would hinder transparency for the community.

There has never been a more important time for our City Council, Commissioners and Staff to make transparency of decisions made in Calabasas a priority. I urge you to keep the City's Story Pole Policy in place and do not spend time and effort dismantling something that is working.

Sincerely,

Jacy Shillan

President, Stonecreek HOA

Long Time Calabasas Resident

From: Robert Lia <robertlia@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 7, 2020 9:53 AM

To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>

Subject: Story Pole Procedures

Dear Planning Commissioners,

The City's Story Pole Procedures policy is applicable to projects meeting certain characteristics. Such projects have a potentially significant impact on the view shed where they are located. Given those considerations, I suggest and submit that the following comments be given appropriate consideration.

Duration

If the story poles are not replaced in sufficient time to permit a significant period of viewing before the Planning Commission ("PC") hearing, the hearing should be postponed to allow such a significant period of viewing.

Construction Method and Material

Wherever and whenever possible, materials used in the construction of story poles should be standardized, and not left to the likes or dislikes of the planner, staff or Community Development Director ("CDD"). In this regard, the CDD should prepare and submit to the PC for its approval a "tool box" to be used in determining the appropriate materials.

Story Pole Determination

The Architectural Review Panel has not demonstrated expertise in the area and should not be used to determine pole installation feasibility. The PC should review and approve "professional story pole installers" which the CDD can use in assisting in this determination. In no way should this be left to the CDD's sole determination.

Planning Commission Review

It is the developer's responsibility to protect the story poles from vandalism, no less than it is their responsibility to protect the project itself from vandalism. Vandalism is too easy an "out" which can be used to prevent the public from viewing the potential view shed impact of a project. The poles should be replaced and guarded where necessary.

Notification

The photo simulation referenced in this section should be made available "online" so as to permit a wider viewing by the public.

Sincerely,

Robert J Lia
27096 Esward Drive, Calabasas

From: Priscilla Lee <ratatatboom@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2020 1:50 AM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Story Pole policy changes

Dear Planning Commissioners,

We are writing to request that you make an addition to the existing Story Pole Policy. That is, we would like to have orange netting added to the poles to make it easier to see the indication of where the final project will be built and how tall they will be. In addition, please do not change the policy and reject the developer's wish to add the phrases saying "potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact". That would give all developers a way to escape having to place story poles and negate the existing Story Pole policy. The residents of the City of Calabasas have indicated in the past that we want Story Poles.

Thank you in advance for attending to these 2 issues: 1. request for orange netting and 2. remove requested edit of adding the phrase "potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact".

Kind regards,

Priscilla, Mel & Celene Lee
Calabasas residents

From: Susan Ellis <srellis8@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 8:27 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Please forward to the Planning Commission re Story Poles

Dear Planning Commissioners,

Please add orange netting to the Story Pole policy. It is an improvement.

And please remove the addition of the ability of developers to not use Story Poles due to "potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact". If that is in the policy, you can bet every developer will use it.

The community needs as much information as possible regarding development and Story Poles are an important part of the information.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan Ellis
26329 W Plata Lane
Calabasas, CA 91302

From: mini kacker <minikacker@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 7:21 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Story Poles

Hello there,

I am a resident in Calabasas. I live on Las Virgenes.

I would like to see the orange netting on the story poles on the proposed developments.

Also please remove the edits regarding excessive cost or unreasonable financial burden. These developers have deep pockets.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best

Mini Kacker

From: Jolie Willett <joliwillett@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 4:38 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Story Pole Procedure

Dear Planning Commissioners:

I am requesting that the Commission keep the current policy regarding the story poles and add the orange netting that improves visually the size and scope of the project.

I am also requesting that the edits regarding "potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact" be removed.

is a cost of doing business for the developer. This is our community and we, as citizens, have the right to know and fully see what the proposed development(s) will look like.

Regards,

Jolie Willett

26003 Redbluff Dr.
Calabasas
310-488-4510

From: McGinnis, James F. (HSC) <James-McGinnis@ouhsc.edu>
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 1:06 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Cc: Tina McGinnis <tina1angel@aol.com>; James Bozajian - External <jrbozajian@earthlink.net>
Subject: Story Poles

Dear Councilmembers, please keep the story pole policy and add the orange netting that improves it. Please remove the statement "potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact". The netting gives a much more visual representation of proposed projects. This dollar amount for the netting/poles is simply the cost of doing business in Calabasas.

Thank you very much,

James F. McGinnis
26071 Adamor RD
Calabasas, CA 91302

From: Joe Chilco <joe.chilco@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 10:16 AM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Planning Commission 9-10-20 meeting - agenda item#3 - Public Comments

With regard to agenda item #3, please consider the following comments:

"Story poles are intended to help decision makers, staff, neighbors and other interested parties visualize the location, mass and/or height of a proposed building(s), as part of the review of the project's relationship to its surroundings."

In the proposed changes/redline document, there's one word in particular of concern. It's in the factors that the Community Development Director ("CDD") would cite in support of any recommendation.

The word "Possible" is proposed to be inserted before the words "excessive cost...".

Either there is excessive cost or there isn't. Anything could be "possible". That's a subjective measurement and decision. I suggest the word "possible" be deleted.

There is nothing in the Story Pole Procedures on what expected costs might be, providing some sort of means to determine a baseline. It's dependent on the size and scope of the proposed project. I get that.

However, the applicant should expect a certain level of cost pertaining to compliance with the Story Pole Procedures. They must have budgeted for that. Let them make their case for costs being excessive with real dollar figures compared to their verifiable budgeted costs.

I don't want this to become "wiggle room" for an applicant to be excused from having to meet the requirements.

In the last paragraph of the Story Pole Determination section the proposed change reads: "The CDD shall, at the CDD's sole discretion, seek advice from the Architectural Review Panel and/or a professional story pole installer in arriving at a determination of pole installation feasibility."

"Shall" means "must" but to include "at the CDD's sole discretion" is to make it voluntary. If "must" is the intent, then delete "at the CDD's sole discretion".

In addition, the "and/or" in that text should be changed to "and". If the intent is to arrive "at a determination of pole installation feasibility", which includes excessive cost, then the Architectural Review Panel may not have expertise in determining that but a professional story pole installer would.

Should the developer's costs outweigh the right of citizens to know and see what development is being proposed? I think not.

The CDD/applicant should have to provide proof of such excessive cost in the form of actual dollar figures that are confirmed by the company/individual responsible for erection of the story poles, considering accepted industry standards.

As written, there is far too much power in the hands of the Community Development Director. The determination of whether or not story poles should be/can be erected is being treated as a ministerial decision. It is not, nor should it be.

There should be a Public Hearing if the Planning Commission is considering adopting any recommendation of the CDD that includes modifications to the Story Pole Procedures requirements.

Also, there's a typo in the first paragraph of the Applicability section - it currently has "story poles stall" when it should be "story poles shall". This is in the current Procedures document and it needs to be corrected.

The concerned residents of Calabasas have fought hard to have the Story Pole Procedures enacted. All residents have a right to be informed on development projects. It is the Planning Commission's duty to protect the interests of those residents.

I ask that the Planning Commissioners please take all of these comments into consideration when making their recommendation to the City Council.

Thank you.

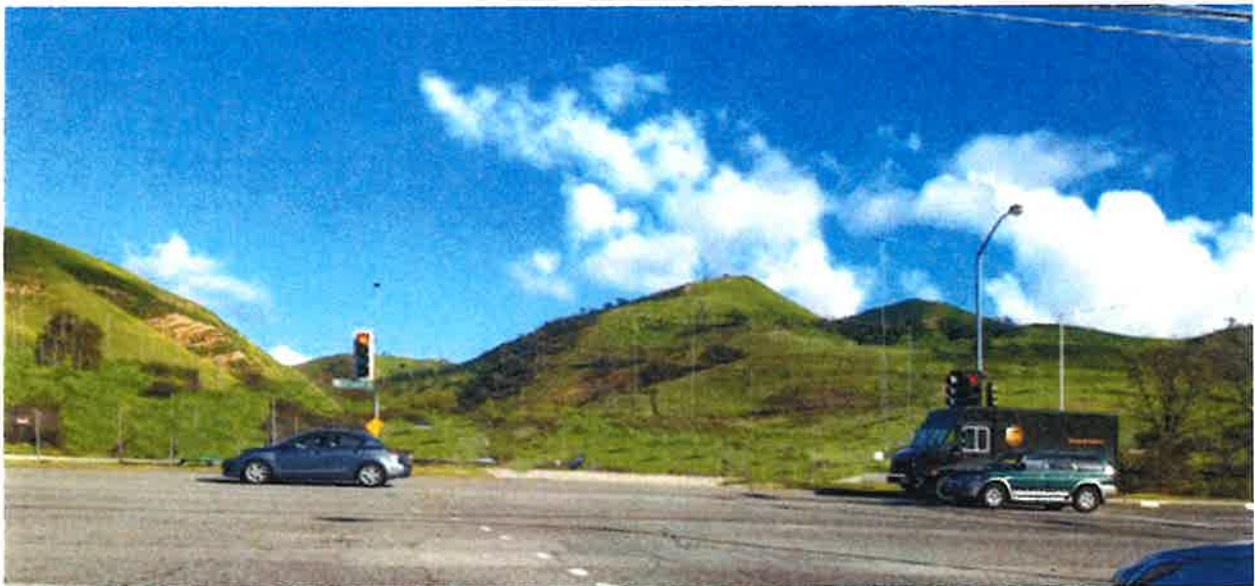
Joe Chilco
Calabasas resident
(address on file)

To: Members of the City Planning Commission:

Re: Item 3 on the Agenda. Modification of the Story Pole Policy.

From what I've seen as submitted by the voting public regarding the proposed changes to the current Story Pole policy, the consensus seems to be on the side of NOT making many of the changes to the policy as proposed. I whole heartedly agree. With one exception, those proposed changes are too much in favor of the developers and not reflecting the interests of the public. The policy is working as is and shouldn't be changed.

The one exception consists of the use of orange netting between the poles to increase visibility of the proposed construction. By "between the poles" I mean the vertical area from the ground to the roof lines. This will greatly increase the true visibility of the bulk and mass of the proposed building(s) and also highlight the resulting view scape of the finished project. A before and after example is shown below. Note that the poles are barely visible in the first image.



One can easily see what an improvement in visual impact this approach would yield, even to the casual passers-by, as opposed to a combination of skinny poles and small roofline flags.

Carl Ehrlich, Calabasas

From: ncitron <ncitron@pacbell.net>

Sent: Tuesday, March 2, 2021 2:18 PM

To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>

Subject: Planning Commission Consideration of Amendments to Story Pole Procedure March 4, 2021

TO: Honorable Planning Commissioners

RE: Consideration of Amendments to the City's Story Pole Procedures Adopted June 24, 2015

DATE: March 2, 2021

We are concerned that previous letters sent to the Commission directly related to this ongoing effort to amend the Story Pole Procedures were not carried forward. We have consolidated our previous responses and included them here with our new concerns:

We appreciate this opportunity to respond to the proposed amendments to the Story Pole Procedures.

While we understand that Commissioner Mueller wanted to "clean up some unclear language" we have to respectfully say it appears that there is now the elevation of the Community Development Director (CDD) to the level of the ultimate decision maker. It is never a good idea to have one person making unilateral decisions. If this change were to be made, there would be an astonishing lack of transparency and the public would never know why a decision by the CDD was made. Transparency is key to a democratic process.

On the first page under the **Purpose** section the sentence that begins "Story poles are intended to help decision makers . . . ". It would be better to define the list that follows which includes "decision makers." I believe that group should be defined. To which group of decision makers are you referring?

On the first page under **Applicability** there is a misspelling of the word "shall" it appears as "stall"

On pages 2 and 3, under the **Duration** section, who will determine when and if the story poles become unsafe?

On the third page, under the **Plan Components** section, we would like to see the first sentence changed to reflect to whom the story pole plan must be submitted. In the

three places where the word "staff" or "City staff" is used, it would be better understood if the applicable titles were used: Staff Planner or CDD or if both are to be involved use the term "both the Staff Planner and the CDD."

On page four, **Construction Materials and Methods**, mid-paragraph, the word "Director" is used. Is "Director" referring to the CDD? If the CDD determines that the "use of the bright orange mesh netting poses a safety risk or lacks . . ." we propose this change that the CDD must notify the Planning Commission of a request for any change, providing a reason for the requested change. Again, this promotes transparency as discussion would be part of an open meeting.

Under **Story Pole Determination** it is stated that the CDD "at the CDD's sole discretion" would "seek advice from the Architectural Review Panel." If the CDD needs assistance with story poles, solutions should **only** be provided by a professional story pole installer who consistently uses orange mesh (there are plenty of these professionals in our area). The Planning Commission should be consulted for assistance, **not** the ARP. Additional assistance for items a) through e) should be requested by the CDD in writing to the Planning Commission, stating the reason for additional decision-making assistance. Story poles are of vital importance to the citizens. Decisions regarding story poles should be **transparent** and reflect that importance.

Additionally, under **Story Pole Feasibility Determination**, item f) states "Potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact . . ." which again illustrates the ongoing protection offered the developer. At a recent Planning Commission meeting, to paraphrase a comment made by a commissioner that he was "concerned that the cost to the developer would be too expensive." There should never be a time when consideration of the developer's financial interest supersedes the citizens right to know - transparency. The key is to ensure the public's ability to easily visualize the proposed project. Item f) should **not** be included in this Procedure.

On page 8 **Notification** please include the definition of "Required City notices" with the code cited.

In conclusion, the suggested revision has added some uncalled-for changes. One of the suggestions is the CDD is being handed sole discretion rather than given the opportunity to act as a partner with the Planning Commission and the citizens in the decision making. Otherwise, what began as a strong, transparent procedure is relegated to a ministerial task with total lack of transparency.

The proposed changes in the Amendment to the City's Story Pole Procedures allows decisions to be made under cover of darkness rather than in daylight. These proposed changes should not be supported.

Regards,

Norma and Mark Citron

Calabasas Residents

Dear Planning Commissioners:

I won't be able to attend this week's meeting, but wanted to submit the following comments for your consideration regarding the Story Pole Procedures and the proposed changes.

I support the use of orange mesh netting to indicate building mass and dimension. In my opinion, this is preferable to the flags currently being used because it provides a clearer "picture" by enhancing visibility. There are a number of cities that use orange mesh netting already, including Burbank, Los Gatos, Monterey and Carmel-by-the-Sea, to name a few.

I object to the proposed language regarding "potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact" to the developer. This is a purely subjective determination. This is a loophole that neighboring cities do not provide. This is a cost that should be included in the developer's overall budget. If the cost of story poles is going to be a burden to a developer, how are they going to complete a proposed project that will cost millions? The overriding consideration should be informing the public of a proposed development. Nothing achieves that goal better than story poles.

I also object to the proposed change of removing story poles from the purview of the Planning Commission. Story poles should continue to be overseen by the Commission. This falls into the category of "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." The process has worked for the last five or six years. Don't change something that's been working.

I urge you to keep the Calabasas Story Pole Procedures strong.

Best regards,

Frances Alet

Calabasas

From: Justice Family <cgourmet@roadrunner.com>
Sent: Monday, March 1, 2021 5:40 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Planning Commission

Dear Commission,

I strongly believe that all developments in Calabasas should require story poles and nets. If a developer can afford the tens of millions of dollars required to build, they can certainly afford story poles!

The intersection at Agoura Road and Las Virgenes is so packed already, and with a hotel opening in the not too distant future - we cannot handle any additional traffic.

I would also like to see the EIR!

As soon as restrictions are lifted and students return to Pepperdine, the intersection will again become gridlocked. It sometimes has taken me 30 minutes to make a left turn onto Las Virgenes between 3PM and 6PM. We simply cannot handle additional cars at this intersection.

I believe you already know this, and understand why it is important to minimize impact on those who already live in the community.

Please require story poles, nets and continue to keep our city beautiful.

William Justice

From: Kelly Spadoni <kspud0313@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 1, 2021 3:51 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Planning Commission

Dear Planning Commissioners,

We're writing regarding the amendments to Calabasas' Story Pole Procedures being finalized at this Thursday's (3/4/21) meeting.

- We support the use of orange netting to better visualize the height, mass and scope of what is being proposed.
- We support the Planning Commission's oversight on reviewing story pole plans. The Planning Commission represents us, the public! We do not want to go back to the days when one person made all the decisions about story poles.
- We do NOT support including the following loophole as a reason for developers to avoid putting up story poles: "Potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact of designing, installing and maintaining story poles for the subject project." If a developer can afford to spend tens of millions of dollars building in our city they can certainly afford to put up story poles. Our neighboring cities, Malibu and Agoura, have no mention of financial feasibility in their story pole policies.

With new developments in the pipeline, story poles are the most visible way to inform the public. We need a strong policy in place now more than ever.

Sincerely,

Kelly & Jim Spadoni and family
Calabasas residents

From: Joanne Suwara <joasuw42@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, March 1, 2021 3:33 PM

To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>

Subject: Planning Commission Meeting March 4, 2021. To: Planning Commissioners

Re: Item #2 Story Pole Procedures

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing regarding the proposed amendments to the City's Story Pole Procedures that were last discussed at the September 17, 2020 Planning Commission meeting and are now again on this week's agenda. Public interest in the September meeting was high and the Public submitted excellent correspondence. That correspondence was not included in the packet for this meeting. That correspondence still relates to the matters now at hand. I've attached a copy of his correspondence to this email

In addition, please consider the following comments regarding the most recent redline Amendments in the most recent Staff Report:

(1) In the Certification section change the last sentence to read “The height of each pole should be clearly marked on the story pole plan.”

(2) In the Story Pole Feasibility Determination section eliminate (f) completely. It reads “Potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact of designing, installing and maintaining story poles for the subject property” This is totally subjective! What amount of money is “potentially excessive”? What constitutes “unreasonable financial impact”?

Our neighboring cities, Malibu and Agoura, have no mention of financial feasibility in their story pole policies. They don’t leave a loophole for the developer to use to avoid putting up story poles and neither should we. If a developer can afford to spend tens of millions of dollars on building in our city then they can certainly afford to put up story poles.

(3) I am pleased to see orange netting added to materials to be used to better show height, mass and scope of proposed development. I was disappointed, however, to read the staff’s rather negative analysis of the use of orange netting based only on one contractor’s opinion. A quick search on the Internet shows more than several contractors and pictures of orange netting installations. Since only one contractor was contacted by staff I feel we just heard only one side of the story.

(4) As a long-time resident I remember when story poles were the exception and not the rule - something rarely seen before 2015. I am concerned that staff saying that story pole implementation may put the City at risk of not meeting deadlines due to a “multi-faceted and lengthy development review process” is laying the groundwork for giving developers a “pass”.

(5) The Planning Commission has an important role to play in implementing the Story Pole Procedures. They represent the Public.

The Staff Report says “for projects having to be reviewed and considered by the Planning Commission it is best for the Commission to not involve itself in story pole matters in order to not introduce any perception that one or more members of the Commission lack sufficient open-mindedness and impartiality when the project is later considered at the public hearing” raises a big, red flag!

This statement is contradictory to what is required in the Procedures. For over 5 years the decision-making authority, which was approved by the City Council, has been shared and it works. The Commissioners swore an oath when they began their term and to infer that they cannot be ethical, fair -minded and impartial is insulting to the residents that serve on the Planning Commission.

(6) There have been instances where the Planning Commissioners has stepped in requiring installation of more story poles than where proposed by staff and the

developer. The result has been a truer representation of the project improving transparency of what is being proposed.

There will inevitably be more development and redevelopment in Calabasas. Story poles are the most visible way to inform the public about what is being planned. The Story Pole Procedures should be strengthened, loopholes eliminated, and the role of the Commission solidified to be a counter-balance to staff bias. Anything less erodes the goal of being transparent.

Joanne Suwara,
Calabasas

From: jaycee64@aol.com <jaycee64@aol.com>

Sent: Monday, March 1, 2021 1:34 PM

To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>

Subject: To Planning Commission, RE: Review of Recommended Planning Commission Amendments to the City's Story Pole Procedures

Dear Calabasas Planning Commission,

At your March 4th, 2021 Planning Commission meeting there is an item under New Business, Review of Recommended Planning Commission Amendments to the City's Story Pole Procedures. This is related to an item that I sent a letter about back in September 2020. The previous correspondence was not included on the official agenda, so I'm writing once again to stress my concerns about changes being discussed.

The Story Pole Policy, as I noted in my previous letter (copied below), is working. The story poles installed at the West Village project continue to inform the public that there is a project under consideration. Additionally, they have remained in place there by the property owner even when the last project was denied by your Commission. I support even more representation of proposed development/redevelopments by adding orange netting as a requirement. This was discussed at that September 2020 meeting. Please recommend and support this requirement and transparency in our Community.

There has been mention of financial hardship for developers with relation to their multi-million dollar projects. Our City should expect the developer to spend whatever is required to meet and exceed our City policies. Please when you consider this matter, recommend enhancing our Story Pole Policy by adding orange netting as a requirement, requiring full compliance with all policies, regardless of the cost, and require that any deviation from the Policy be a matter brought before the Planning Commission for review and recommendation.

I appreciate your consideration.
Jacy Shillan
Calabasas Environmental Commissioner
Long Time Calabasas Resident

From: McGinnis, James F. (HSC) <James-McGinnis@ouhsc.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 1, 2021 8:31 AM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Cc: Tina McGinnis <tina1angel@aol.com>
Subject: Planning commission

Dear Committee: I fully support the requirement for story poles and the orange netting in construction developments in Calabasas. I don't think they should be required for single family home modifications unless the modifications include adding a second story to a one story building.

Sincerely,

James F. McGinnis

From: Theresa Chaides <theresachaides@me.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 28, 2021 5:38 PM
To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>
Subject: Planning commission

I support the use of orange netting to better visualize the height, mass and scope of what is being proposed.

I support the Planning Commission's oversight on reviewing story pole plans. They represent us, the public! We do not want to go back to the days when one person made all the decisions about story poles.

I do NOT support including the following loophole as a reason for developers to avoid putting up story poles. "Potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact of designing, installing and maintaining story poles for the subject project."

Just in from Chai-T

From: tamiko fuote <tfuote@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 28, 2021 3:15 PM

To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>

Subject: Planning Commission - Re. Story Poles

We support the use of orange netting to better visualize the height, mass and scope of what is being proposed. We support the Planning Commission's oversight on reviewing story pole plans. They represent us, the public! We do not want to go back to the days when one person made all the decisions about story poles. We do NOT support including the following loophole as a reason for developers to avoid putting up story poles. "Potentially excessive cost or unreasonable financial impact of designing, installing and maintaining story poles for the subject project." Our neighboring cities, Malibu and Agoura, have no mention of financial feasibility in their story pole policies. If a developer can afford to spend tens of millions of dollars building in our city they can certainly afford to put up story poles.

I am quoting some of the many reasons why the community needs to have a complete installation of story poles if we are to get the story right! We have the right to know exactly the extent of any project that will affect our neighborhood.

Respectfully,

Tamiko Fuote
Calabasas Resident

From: Joe Chilco <joe.chilco@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, February 28, 2021 1:58 PM

To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>

Cc: Don Penman <dpenman@cityofcalabasas.com>

Subject: Planning Commission 3-4-21 meeting - agenda Item #2 - Public Comments

The Story Poles Procedures are a requirement of the City's development process. They protect the residents' right to be properly and effectively informed of proposed development projects in the City.

The concerned residents of Calabasas have fought hard to have the Story Pole Procedures enacted. It is the Planning Commission's duty to act in the best interests of the residents.

The possibility of future redevelopment of land parcels with existing structures within the city of Calabasas is extremely likely given that very few open lots remain undeveloped.

I support the use of orange mesh, a method that is used and is part of the Story Pole Procedures for the cities of Burbank, Carmel-by-the-Sea, Los Gatos, and Monterey, to name just a few. The Planning Commission is right to include it in the Calabasas Story Pole Procedures requirements.

The Story Pole Procedures should also be modified to include provisions to specify increased public noticing and project visualization requirements in the event that story poles cannot be erected.

The staff report recommends changes that change the intent of the current Story Pole Procedures. They make the process less transparent, more concerned with a developer's costs and less concerned with the residents' best interests, which include their right to participate in the development process.

The developer's costs shouldn't outweigh the residents' right to know and see what development is being proposed.

The Community Development Director (CDD) or applicant should have to provide proof of excessive cost - actual dollar figures that are confirmed by the company responsible for erecting the story poles, considering accepted industry standards. The applicant should expect a certain level of cost pertaining to compliance with the Story Pole Procedures. This should not be determined arbitrarily.

The staff report includes the following justification for recommending the proposed change to the CDD's authority:

"Also, for projects having to be reviewed and considered by the Planning Commission, it is best for the Commission to not involve itself in story pole matters in order to not introduce any perception that one or more members of the Commission lack sufficient open-mindedness and impartiality when the project is later considered at the public hearing."

This argument is not supported with facts. It questions the credibility of the Planning Commissioners, suggesting they are incapable of doing what they have sworn to do. You can't avoid "perception", which is a completely subjective point of view. You can avoid doing things you've sworn not to, and so far, that's exactly what the Planning Commissioners have done. This purports to fix a problem that doesn't exist.

The proposed changes put too much power in the hands of the CDD as a decision maker. The determination of whether or not story poles can be erected is being treated as a ministerial decision. It is not, nor should it be. There should be a Public Hearing if the Planning Commission is considering adopting any recommendation of the CDD that includes modifications to the Story Pole Procedures requirements. The public should have the opportunity to comment and have input.

I ask that the Planning Commissioners reject the proposed changes regarding the CDD's increase in authority that impacts the Story Pole Procedures required determinations.

Also, there's a typo in the following section: "Applicability: Unless determined otherwise by the Community Development Director ("CDD") or his/her designee, story poles **stall**..." This needs to be corrected to "**shall**".

Thank you for your consideration of the above when making your deliberations.

Joe Chilco

Calabasas resident
(address on file)

From: John Suwara <johsuwa@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 2, 2021 5:15 PM

To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>

Subject: Comments off the Agenda: March 4th Planning Commission Meeting and March 10th City Council Meeting.



Re: Signs for upcoming West Village Planning Commission and City Council Meetings.

Planning Commission Meetings: April 15 and 21

City Council: May 12.

(Dates provided by Maureen Tamuri at February 18th Planning Commission meeting.)

I asked about signs at the previous Planning Commission and City Council meeting, I haven't heard back. The West Village Public hearing is now 6 weeks away and time is growing short. Public access to city hall, the community center, library and other public indoor areas in the city are not limited because of the Pandemic.

To help get the word out, this is to request that Calabasas use the same method it successfully uses to get the word out for other city events such as the Pumpkin Festival and July 4th Fireworks Celebration. Place a large 4ft x 8ft banner on the fence bordering the West Village property at Agoura Road and Las Virgenes Road intersection. Place a second large 4ft x 8ft banner at the Southbound 101 Freeway exit ramp for Valley Circle. As with other signs at that location position it on the southside of Calabasas Road facing the 101 Freeway exit ramp.

PUBLIC HEARING

WEST VILLAGE AT CALABASAS PROPOSED HEARING

DATE TIME: APRIL 15 & 21 AT 6 PM

ZOOM HEARING INFO: cityofcalabasas.com website

Please put this on the agenda so banners can be approved with adequate time to allow for making and installing the banners.

Attached is the sample of a banner made for the last Planning Commission Meeting by a resident. It is installed on another resident's van. It is easy to see and read. Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,
John Suwara