

MEETING DATE: 07/14/2008

AGENDA ITEM: Discussion of the Draft Environmental Impact Report, dated June 2008, for the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District.

ATTACHMENTS

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1. July 1, 2008, letter from Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke to Mayor Malsin	1-2
2. Response to Kenneth L. Kutcher 12-Point Memorandum Received by City Council on June 23, 2008	3-6
2. Public Draft Environmental Impact Report Baldwin Hills Community Standards District – delivered to City Council On 6/23/08	



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
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July 1, 2008

The Honorable D. Scott Malsin
Mayor of Culver City
9770 Culver Boulevard
Culver City, California 90232

**RE: COMMENT PERIOD FOR DRAFT EIR FOR BALDWIN HILLS
COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT**

Dear Mayor Malsin:

This letter responds to your correspondence to me dated June 26, 2008 requesting an extension on the comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") for the applicant-proposed Baldwin Hills Community Standards District ("CSD"). The County recognizes that the EIR is a technical document for an important project. For that reason, the County established the initial review period at 60 days, which is 15 days more than required by the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") and its Guidelines. In cases such as this one in which the EIR is sent to the State Clearinghouse, under CEQA Guideline 15105, the minimum review period is 45 days. The CEQA Guidelines also provide that, in most cases, the review period should not exceed 60 days. [CEQA Guideline 15105.]

In consultation with the Department of Regional Planning, the County believes that 60 days is enough time to review the Draft EIR and provide cogent thoughtful comments. With respect to your concern about the summer holidays, the only holiday during the review period is the Fourth of July. Almost any 60-day period will include a holiday, yet CEQA still establishes 60 days as exceeding the norm for an EIR review period.

Moreover, we believe extending the deadline is not only unnecessary but counterproductive. As you indicated, a Baldwin Hills CSD, which will establish regulations and controls for the Baldwin Hills oilfields, is a very important project. It is critical to put such controls in place as soon as possible. The urgency ordinance which prohibited drilling of new wells expired on June 26, 2008 and, under state law, cannot be further extended. As a result, I want to keep the project on track and moving forward. Additionally, PXP has agreed that they will not file any new drilling applications before October 21, 2008. Therefore, the County plans to stay with its 60-day review period.

With respect to your concerns about attendance at the Regional Planning Commission ("Commission") meeting scheduled for August 27 at the Commission's usual meeting time and place downtown, the County is taking extra steps to ensure community input. In addition to the August 27 date, a hearing is already scheduled in the community for August 2, which is a

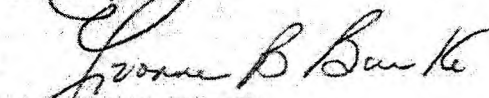
The Honorable D. Scott Malsin
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Page Two

Saturday. Also, at its next meeting, the Commission plans to consider scheduling a third hearing in the community. As indicated above, the County wants to keep this project moving forward. Accordingly, we plan to maintain the August 27th Commission hearing date. We believe there will be sufficient opportunity for all who wish to provide input on the proposed CSD and comment on the Draft EIR to do so.

I want to stress that the County placed high priority on public participation in this process as reflected by past outreach efforts to the community and those planned in the future. We have taken numerous steps to keep community groups and community residents advised and updated. In 2007, County planning staff attended or coordinated nine or ten meetings or presentations in the community to, among other things, present background information on the CSD and EIR process and focus on concerns and issues raised by community residents associated with oil field operations. Four additional meetings were held earlier this year with several community-based organizations. Four more neighborhood meetings hosted by resident volunteers are scheduled this month with planning department staff and the EIR consultant to facilitate detailed discussion about the proposed CSD and the Draft EIR. Those meetings will be held in Culver City, Ladera Heights, Windsor Hills and the last hosted by the Community Health Councils. Two additional community workshops are scheduled in July at Culver City Veteran's Hall and Knox Church, again to hear comments and answer questions about the proposed CSD and the Draft EIR. Various mailers throughout the process have been sent and input solicited.

All of these efforts are outside of the upcoming public hearings in August before the Commission. In sum, in my view, the County's public outreach efforts on this project have been, and continue to be, extraordinary. To develop the best and most appropriate CSD, we appreciate the input from the communities surrounding the oil field and look forward to continue working with those in the community, including Culver City, to facilitate the process.

Sincerely,



YVONNE B. BURKE
Chair of the Board

YBB:MSB:nra

- c: Assembly Speaker Karen Bass
Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas
Each Culver City Council Member
City Manager, City of Culver City
City Attorney, City of Culver City

Attachment No. 2

**CULVER CITY - CITY COUNCIL
JUNE 23, 2008
AGENDA ITEM A-3
INGLEWOOD OIL FIELD EIR & REGULATIONS**

1. The City should prepare and submit written comments on the Draft EIR
 - a. City Council should approve hiring one of the recommended consultants to assist City Staff in preparing the comment letter
 - b. Direct City Staff to make sure that the consultants are strategically informed of the purpose of the comment letter -- i.e., to achieve a CSD that is protective of the community and the natural environment
2. The City should prepare and submit written comments on PXP's draft CSD
3. The City should review and support GBHA draft CSD -- either in whole or in concept
4. The City Council should direct its staff to contact County Planning Staff and engage in substantive discussions about contents of the County's CSD before the County releases its recommended CSD
5. The City Council should plan to attend the public hearings on the CSD/EIR
 - a. County Planning Commission hearings:
 - i. Sat., August 2 @ West LA College (12 noon)
 - ii. Wed., Aug. 27 @ County offices in downtown LA (9 am)
 - b. Board of Supervisors hearing
6. The City should assume the County will not be active in community outreach in Culver City and should therefore publicize in various forms of media -- including cable tv, city website, newspaper ads, and direct mail -- the upcoming public forums and encourage community participation:
 - a. July 17 workshop @ 7 pm at Veterans Hall
 - b. Aug 2 Planning Commission hearing @ West LA College at 12 noon
 - c. Aug 19 close of public comments on EIR
 - d. Aug 27 Planning Commission hearing in downtown LA at 9 am
 - e. Board of Supervisors hearing(s) [TBD]

KENNETH L. KUTCHER

7. The City should join our request to extend the EIR comment period to September 8 (i.e., after the end of summer vacations)
 - a. The EIR is 1400 pages long
 - b. The EIR is full of technical data and analysis.
8. The City should join our request to re-schedule the August 27 Planning Commission hearing
 - a. Aug 27th is the worst possible date this summer to hold such a hearing
 - b. At this hearing, the Planning Commission will adopt its official recommendation to the Board of Supervisors concerning the draft CSD
 - c. This hearing should be postponed to September
 - d. This hearing should be held locally like the August 2 hearing
9. If there will only be one local hearing, the 2 County Planning Commission hearing now scheduled for Aug 2 should be moved to a date and time when more than three Commissioners are available
 - a. Only 3 of the 5 Planning Commissioners are planning to attend the Aug 2 hearing
 - b. Aug 2 is the only hearing scheduled in the impacted neighborhood
 - c. If the hearing is re-scheduled, it needs to be moved to a weekend or evening when residents have a reasonable opportunity to attend
10. The City Council should adopt a resolution urging PXP to voluntarily abide by the County moratorium that will be expiring on June 29th until a new CSD has been adopted
 - a. The County's two year moratorium is expiring
 - b. State law prevents the County from extending the moratorium beyond two years
 - c. Prior to the moratorium the County had insufficient regulations to control new drilling
 - d. PXP wants to drill more than 1000 new wells over the next 20 years
 - e. PXP should wait until the new regulations are in place
11. Consider immediately forming an Inglewood Oil Field Residents Task Force to make recommendations to the City Council concerning the CSD and EIR
12. Appoint a City Councilmember to communicate with individual County Supervisors on these issues

KENNETH L. KUTCHER

RESPONSE TO KENNETH L. KUTHCER 12-POINT MEMORANDUM RECEIVED BY
CITY COUNCIL ON JUNE 23, 2008

The following numbered responses refer directly to the numbered items in the memorandum.

1. Staff is preparing written comments on the Draft EIR and will transmit them to Council for the August 13th Council meeting. On June 23rd the Council approved a professional services agreement with Aspen Environmental Group to assist staff in reviewing the Draft EIR and preparing a response. Aspen Environmental Group has been informed that the goal of a Community Standard District (CSD) is to protect the surrounding community and natural environment.
2. Staff will be presenting comments on the proposed CSD along with the comments on the Draft DIR.
3. Staff is reviewing the Greater Baldwin Hills Alliance's draft CSD and will make recommendations to the City Council.
4. Staff is in contact with County staff and will be meeting to discuss the County's final recommendations on the proposed CSD.
5. The dates of the County workshops and Planning Commission hearings have been transmitted to the Council. Staff will inform the Council as additional dates are established.
6. Information on the Draft EIR and upcoming public meetings have been publicized by Culver City in the following manner: City web page, mailed notices to various public agencies, Culver City property owners and residents, and interested parties, emailed to the Master Notification list, published in the Culver City news, and run on the cable channel crawler.
7. On June 26th the Mayor sent a letter to Supervisor Burke requesting a 30-day extension of the Draft EIR review period. On July 1st the Supervisor responded with a letter explaining that the review period would not be extended.
8. The June 26th letter to Supervisor Burke also expressed concern about the August 27th County Planning Commission hearing. The Supervisor's July 1st letter explained that there is scheduled a meeting for August 2nd in Culver City and that the Planning Commission is considering have a third hearing in the community. Consideration of this additional meeting is on the July 16th County Planning Commission meeting.

9. As stated above the County Planning Commission will consider scheduling a third meeting at their July 16th meeting.
10. In a letter dated July 1, 2008, to Supervisor Burke, Plains Exploration and Production Company (PXP) state that they will not make any new applications for new drilling through October 21, 2008. At the meeting of July 7th the Council will consider a resolution urging PXP to voluntarily abide by the terms of the expired Los Angeles County moratorium on the drilling of new oil wells or the deepening of existing oil wells.
11. Staff is not recommending that the Council establish a citizen's task force. With the limited amount of time that the city has to analyze and respond to the Draft EIR and proposed CSD, we feel that it would be more productive for the community to use the multiple opportunities available to submit comments to the County.
12. The Council has established a subcommittee to specifically address PXP's proposal and oil drilling. Councilmen Silbiger and Weissman meet with staff regularly. Staff is setting up meetings as directed by the subcommittee.