

Pojoaque Valley Planning Committee Meeting Summary
Thursday, February 9th, 2006 6:30pm – 8:30pm
Sammy Quintana Community Board Room

(Note: This is a meeting summary and is not intended to give the meeting contents in its entirety. If you would like to get more details about the meeting, please contact another committee member that was present at the meeting, or the SF County Planning staff.)

David Dogruel chaired the meeting, starting the meeting at 6:30pm and asking for reports from community members.

Committee Member Reports

Upcoming Aamodt Public Hearings

David announced that the next public hearings for the Aamodt settlement will be held on February 13th in Tesuque, and the next is to be held in Pojoaque on Monday, February 27th from 5:00pm to 8:00pm at the Pablo Roybal Multi-Purpose Room. The State Engineers will have a different format for these meetings; there will be speakers, but there will also be booths set up for people to go to for additional information.

Other Information

Don Wilson is still working on tracking down contacts to see what options the Valley has for high speed Internet access. He invited the committee to look at a report he put together with the various options during the break.

David D. stressed the importance of taking precautionary measures when burning in the area. The fire department has had a number of close calls because of the dry winter. He added to make sure to get burning permits if you think you will need to burn. Narciso Quintana mentioned that some of the acequia associations will start cleaning out the ditches and asked if they would need a permit. David said yes.

Jacona Land Grant Boundary Discussion

Jack gave a summary of how the traditional community status was determined in the 1980 General Code. The basic premise is that a community must have been in existence over 75 years, there must be evidence of mixed use, there should be a central plaza or central identifiable place, and there must be historic buildings or structures that still exist.

In regards to traditional communities that have created plans, but have had to amend their boundaries, Jack thought of three. Areas in the Chimayo, Cerrillos and La Cienega areas all had their boundaries extended for various reasons. Jack also stressed that within the boundaries of the traditional communities, this does not guarantee that the area density will go to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre; it will depend on the traditional pattern and also will weight on environmental issues and water availability.

Jack said that in the last meeting there were discussions about including in parts of the Jacona Land Grant (JLG) and the southern part of Cuyamungue. The points that Jack made about why some areas of the JLG should be included in the traditional community boundary were:

- The school area, which is located on the part of the JLG, should be included in the traditional boundary
- The proposed multi-use trail system mostly lies on the JLG.
- The proposed community center would also be located on JLG land.

Dave added that as a committee we represent a sampling of people from the Valley, but we are not the voice for everyone. Ultimately it is the stakeholders that have to decide what they would like and the committee then will see if the ideas align with the idea and goals of the community plan.

There are always options for amendments to be included in the traditional boundary, but it is important to get input now, before the plan goes to the Board of County Commissioners. Jack added that the other option is to have people from the JLG to petition to be included in the boundary during the public hearing process.

Jack said there are two things that need to be accomplished in order to get the JLG in the boundaries. The JLG members need to give their proposed ideas as to what part of the land grant would be added to the traditional boundary. There would also have to be community input about these additions. Jack asked JLG heirs present at the meeting what their sentiments were about being included.

Steve Duran said that the JLG would have to look at their options. He added that in the original General Plan the idea of including the area where Ponce's and the school property are located was discussed, but never included. He said it was a no-brainer to include these areas because of their contiguous nature to the traditional community boundary.

Wil Roybal added that the JLG was designated by the King of Spain with the intention of a community purpose – for the future of the heirs, for the animals, and the protection of the land. In reality, this land should be included in the traditional boundary for these reasons. It should not be looked at as an outside community within the Valley because really this is the only land in the Valley available for future growth. This is not to say that this area density should be reduced to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre, so we would have to think about those options. Ben Gomez agreed that the JLG is the only future that Pojoaque has.

David D. said that until Wil started coming regularly to the meetings, the committee did not have a clear picture of the land grant options. However now he sees it as making sense to include at least parts of it, especially because it aligns with what the plan vision and goals: affordable housing options; flexibility of lot size – not necessarily $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre, but the area has an option of having a variety of densities; connectivity for the trail system and to the school; and the possibility of preservation of agricultural practices.

David added that the issues that we need to also consider are geographical issues concerning drainage and terrain; sensitivity of natural areas; water and its availability; conservation measures also need to be taken into consideration. Also, as Jack had mentioned, areas to be included need a proposal stating what they are considering.

Robert stated that the idea of inclusion of the JLG into the traditional boundary is a good one and it will take appropriate planning like the group is doing now. However he mentioned a few questions that have remained unanswered that would probably need a legal opinion. The main question he thinks needs to be answered is: How does the County view the JLG in regards to: 1. jurisdiction, 2. water availability, 3. and designation into the traditional community boundary. Because they are considered a private land grant and owned by the heirs who act as shareholders, there is an undefined status under State law. If we do include the JLG in the boundary, then does the legal status change? What is the JLG's liability if they move forward with this idea? There are a lot of unknowns that need to be investigated further. The land grant board has to act in the best interest of the majority of the heirs. Therefore they need to proceed with caution.

Don asked about the properties that are now part of the traditional boundary that lie on the JLG. Why were these properties included in the boundary, but not the rest of the land grant? Wil said that historically, squatters claimed those areas and because they occupied the land for a period

of time, they became permanent residents that did not get approval from the land grant stakeholders. Wil also added that the grant used to make up 90,000 acres that included all mineral, water and timber rights. Now they only have 6,500 acres, and none of the rights just mentioned.

Jack said that the committee did not have to make the decision right now, especially because there is still research to be done. However they could agree that language be included in the planning document stating that a boundary extension be considered for portions the JLG to be included in the traditional community boundary. In this way boundary lines would not need to be drawn today, but that this will be a consideration for future planning areas.

Mary Louise Williams added that we must emphasize the elements of plan that align with the JLG ideas. We need areas to expand in order to preserve the rural character and existing agricultural land, and the JLG provides just that.

Robert offered a word of caution that it would be wise to wait to see what final Aamodt settlement proposal comes forth. We are going to have to wait to see what our options are until then. Raymond Roybal suggested that this topic be brought up at the next general meeting for the land grant board in April. They would need to get back to us about what how to proceed. Jack also added that we would speak with the County attorneys and try to get some of these legal questions answered in the interim.

Cuyamungue Discussion

The issues discussed concerning the southern portion of Cuyamungue:

1. Doesn't have close proximity to the rest of the traditional boundary like the rest of the other communities.
2. What is the difference in the settlement patterns between northern Cuyamungue and southern Cuyamungue?
3. Under the guidelines expressed earlier concerning traditional communities designated by the Land Use Code, the southern part of Cuyamungue does not qualify.
4. Most of the area has transformed to already include commercial, and most properties are already as small as 1-acre lots.

David asked those Cuyamungue residents present if Cuyamungue Land Grant has a similar structure like the JLG. Neel Glass said that most of the pieces have been divided out and there are lots of legal issues to address. There are remnants of the Valdez Grant, originally making up 5000 acres. Neel added that the commonalities that this area shares with the traditional communities in the Valley is that they share the same school district, the same watershed, to name a few. A committee member asked how many stakeholders would need to be contacted in order to have this discussion about inclusion into the traditional boundary. A mailing might work to reach these people, but a committee member pointed out that most of these people just want to be left alone. Mary Lou said then maybe we should leave them alone and if they want to petition inclusion, then they have the option to do so. Jack said that as the plan moves forward, they still have the option to make an appearance at the BCC to propose the inclusion issue. It can also be an educational process so that the board and the committee can be aware of what the people outside of the traditional community boundaries are dealing with and how can we be informed for future issues.

The committee discussed how the next focus groups should be held; should we have the 502, 285 and Cuyamungue focus groups all together at a regular Thursday meeting, or should we have a separate meeting to discuss these issues. No specific dates or format for the focus groups were decided. The next meeting on February 23rd, the committee will be going over the proposed Land Use Table. Please look it over and be prepared to discuss. Notes by R.V.