

Avila Valley Advisory Council (AVAC)

San Luis Obispo, CA

PO Box 65

Avila Beach, CA 93424

Date 5/13/2024

www.avac-avila.org

- **Call to Order:** by the chair, Denise Allen, for regular meeting at 18:02 PM, via Zoom.
Roll call (present): Denise Allen, Mary El Hansen, Mary Matakovich, Jim Hartig, Carol Hayden, Julia Hartzell, Ken Thompson, Steve Benedict, Bob Pusanik (alt), Michael Clayton, Mandi George, Sheri Robesky, Bradley Escobar. Percy Jones, John Janowicz, Judy Kaatz, and Rick Rowe.
Quorum was established.
- **Approval of Minutes:**
 - A motion was made by Mary Matakovich and seconded by Jim Hartig to approve minutes of the April 8, 2024 AVAC meeting as presented. The motion carried.
- **Chair's Comments:**
 - Thanks for members that attended the Community Advisory Council Meeting. Informative and fun. Handbooks are available from Denise for those interested in a copy. Denise state that all sub-committees use the provided comments form from the hand book when reviewing projects to accompany their cover letter.
- **Public Comment:**
- **Oral Comment:**
 - Matthew stated concern for traffic flow when one road is closed, as was the case with the accident on Avila Beach Drive. Denise Allen encouraged members to write letters to Public Works and the Planning Department expressing concerns.
- **Written reports:**
 - **Commentor: Kristen McKiernan**
May 13, 2024
As a concerned member of the Avila Valley community and neighbor to the Avila Valley Barn, I am compelled to write about a severe incident that occurred on May 12th at 12:43PM. The head-on collision reported by the California Highway Patrol at 560 Avila Beach Drive, directly in front of the Avila Valley Barn, had a profound impact. The accident necessitated the deployment of multiple emergency vehicles and led to the closure of Avila Beach Drive, causing significant delays for residents. This is not the first time our community has raised safety and traffic concerns related to the entrance of the Avila Barn on Avila Beach Drive. Despite our repeated warnings, the issues persist. Recently, the Avila Valley Barn proposed a permit (DRC2021-00015) to expand its facilities to include secondary and subordinate outdoor facilities for dancing and other entertainment for 70 gatherings annually with up to 200 people, increasing our concerns about the potential for even greater traffic and safety risks. This proposal seems ill-advised, especially in light of the recent tragic accident, which was witnessed by two young girls on their way to getting ready for a prom event at a neighboring residence. As a resident, mother, and neighbor, I urgently request that AVAC, the County of San Luis Obispo,

our District Supervisor, and County Public Works reevaluate any expansion plans for the Avila Valley Barn and prioritize addressing these longstanding safety issues. Ontario Road is seeing increased traffic and safety issues as well therefore that entrance and exit must also be addressed. I have included photos of the accident scene to highlight the severity of these incidents, and I urge you to consider these points seriously before supporting any expansion plans. Additionally, I would like to mention a loose animal involved in the accident, which, fortunately, was safely returned by quick-acting neighbors. It is time for our concerns to be acknowledged and acted upon.

- **Dean Hutton, General Manager, Sycamore Mineral Springs:**

After reading Ms. McKiernan's letter that will be reviewed and shared with tonight's meeting, I would like to add my concerns about the proposed expansion at Avila Valley Barn. As a neighboring business, we too are concerned about the traffic and safety impact this would have on Avila Beach Drive and Ontario Road. This area has had long-standing safety issues, especially during rainy weather, when it inevitably floods. Additionally, the new roundabout will bring its own issues with people unfamiliar with the area, increasing safety concerns.

I too agree that the AVAC, the County of San Luis Obispo, our District Supervisor, and County Public Works reevaluate any future expansion plans for The Avila Barn and find a permanent solution to the safety issues.

- **Treasurer's Report: Steve Benedict reports:**

- Balance of Checking Account: \$ 1,297.76.
- Expenses: \$ 15.99 in April for Zoom.

- **County and Local Agency Reports:**

- A. Sheriff: report read in absinthia:**

- 88 CFS in 2024, 88 in Avila proper. Compared to 118/32 in 2023. 2 suspicious circumstances, 5 disturbances and 6 enforcement stops, 2 thefts, 1 vandalism, 10 preventive patrol activities.
 - Question: **Ken Thompson** again asks about extra officer coverage for Avila Beach in summer peak season. Increased coverage is planned although officer shortage is recognized.
 - **Percy Jones** asks about the process for "sig Alert" response to incidents. Who calls sig alert and how is it transferred to citizens? CHP, but mostly for freeway issues, Not an alert for surface streets incidents.

- B. Highway Patrol: Cpt. Mike Brown reports:**

- 1 injury automobile accident on Avila Beach Drive.
- 1 DUI crash into a tree.
- 1 DUI arrest.
- Comments:
 - **Percy Jones and Matthew** expressed concerns about kids on electric bikes causing concerns in Avila Beach proper and side roads.
 - **Denise Allen** reports shooting of turkeys in See Canyon. Sheriff and CHP aware of incident.
 - **Julia Hartzell** requests a traffic monitor for Avila Beach Drive to make people aware of radar-monitored speed.

C. Cal Fire: Battalion Chief Paul Lee reports:

- 44 calls for service 29 were medically related.
- 1 injury automobile accident on Avila Beach Drive at the Avila Barn.
- 1 injury automobile accident on Avila beach Drive into a tree.
- The Firesafe Council grant for the Avila Valley will start using the \$500,000 grant in the canyons. A manager has been appointed. Crews will be coming in and multiple subdivisions will be affected.
- Brought in 9 additional engines into the County for the fire season, with 3 more engines in mid-June, one out of Shell Beach.
- We did additional mowing on Onterio Ridge and Cave Landing to better protect our important communication infrastructure.
- Maintain 100 feet of clearance around structures and 5 feet of no combustibles around home.
- Encourage mowing and trimming prior to 10 AM.
- Questions:
- **Percy Jones:** is new rig a three-person rig? Yes. Local Cal Fire sends engines wherever needed in the County and California, with replacement back up agreements.
- **Mandy George:** requests the fourth person on rig be a paramedic.

D. Planning: Nicole Ellis reports in absinthia: Kelley Abbas reporting:

The following projects have been updated:

AVILA VALLEY COMMITTEE PROJECT UPDATES

- **AMEND2023-00007 (item 3 on the May Active/In Process list)-** Project status updates include the following: “Tentative Planning Commission date August 8, 2024.”

DIABLO CANYON POWER PLANT COMMITTEE PROJECT UPDATES

- **DRC2021-00092 (item 5 on the May Active/In Process list)-** Project status updates include the following: “....It is anticipated that the Final EIR will be issued by the end of 2024. A Planning Commission Final EIR study session and hearings will be held after the Final EIR is released.”

LAND USE COMMITTEE PROJECT UPDATES

- **DRC2021-00015 Avila Valley Barn (item 6 on the May Active/In Process list)** Project status updates include the following: “On February 27, 2024, a revised re-referral was initiated and sent to the Building Division, Cal Fire, Environmental Health Department, Public Works Department, AVAC, Coastal Commission and the 3rd District Legislative Assistant.... On April 30, 2024, the County Planning Division prepared a V.2. Acceptance Letter for DRC2021-00015 – based on the revised Project Description and application materials. Next Steps: Agent response to Public Works information hold item is forthcoming (revised Traffic Study to account for reduced scope, etc.) and resubmit to Public Works to deem Study complete. Agent to coordinate with AVAC Land Use Committee for re-review and comments to then be presented to AVAC for consideration and recommendation to the County. County Planning follow-up email to Building and Environmental Health seeking re-referral response to Revised Project Description. County Planning re-initiating

Environmental Review/Determination and prepare Planning Commission hearing materials. Update to AVAC once Planning Commission hearing date is scheduled.” Project type column was updated to reflect “Amendment (DRC2021-00015) to a previously approved Development Plan/ Coastal Development Permit (D000200D)” and project description column was updated to reflect the revised Project Description submitted in February 2024.

HYBRID COMMITTEE PROJECT UPDATES

- **DRC2013-00080 Chevron Remediation (item 13 on the May Active/In Process list)** Project planner updated from Airlin Singewald to Dominic Dal Porto.

- **LRP2012-0003, DRC2012-00048, SUB2015-00008 Chevron General Plan Amendment and Development Plan (item 14 on the May Active/In Process list)** Project planner updated from Airlin Singewald to Eric Hughes.

The May 2024 Approved/ Denied/ Withdrawn Project Spreadsheet has been updated to reflect project status updates. Where updates were made, the various spreadsheet cells have been highlighted in yellow.

The following projects what are on extended long-term hold and which have remained inactive for at least a year have been temporarily relocated to the Approved/ Denied/ Withdrawn Project Spreadsheet:

SAN LUIS BAY ESTATES COMMITTEE PROJECT UPDATES

- **DRC2018-00033 (previously item 9 on the April Active/In Process list)-** for the Somera Capital Management project, Project status updates include the following: “May 2024 Update: Project moved to archive of approved/denied/withdrawn project list due to extended long-term hold/inactivity since 2020.”

HYBRID COMMITTEE PROJECT UPDATES

- **DRC2018-00182 (previously item 15 on the April Active/In Process list)-** for the PG&E Proposed communications facility on Diablo Canyon Road, Project status updates include the following: “May 2024 Update: March 2024 Application was withdrawn and unused fees were refunded. Project moved to archive of approved/denied/withdrawn project list.”

- **LRP2015-00018 (previously item 17 on the April Active/In Process list)-** for the Envision Avila Community Plan Update, Project status updates include the following: “May 2024 Update: The Board of Supervisors directed staff to stop work on this update. Project moved to archive of approved/denied/withdrawn project list.”

Susan Strachan:

No report.

E. Public Works: John Waddell reports:

- May 20, roundabout construction will begin.
- Letters concerning traffic issues at Avila Barn to be sent to Public Works.
- Questions: **Mandy George** concerned about traffic congestion on San Luis Bay Drive during Round About Construction. Avila Beach Drive will always remain open during construction.

F. County Parks: Tanya Richardson reports:

- No report.

G. Port San Luis: Mary Matakovich reports for Suzy Watkins :

- No report.

H. County Supervisor: Kelley Abbas reports for Supervisor Dawn Ortiz-Legg in absentia:

- **THANK YOU AVAC for 21st your participation at the 21st Annual Community Advisory Council Orientation.**
 - County staff worked to ensure valuable info was provided
 - Any Feedback?
- **Avila Beach Roundabout Groundbreaking:**
 - Phased approach over the next 18-24 months
 - Many professionals & agencies involved
 - Avila Beach Drive and Shell Beach Rd. will remain open during construction
 - Increased safety will be the outcome
 - Check out YouTube video:
https://youtube.be/uNBnII7HwJO?list=PLJgSAr_p_Wb_edI2vaP6tONWvNaVs53BG
- **Cave Landing Completed:**
 - Coastal Conservancy Recognizes SLO CO Parks efforts for coastal preservation and uses
 - YTT Chumash heritage site recognized in signage.
 - Access for all parking and viewing sites
- **Welcome Matt Pontes: SLO County CAO:**
 - Matt Pontes started April 30, after extensive western region search
 - Cal Poly alum; Shasta, Santa Barbara, and Kern Counties multi-department and administrative experience
 - Staff extremely excited about MP!
- **Upcoming Board Issues:**
 - **Budget Update 5/14**
 - Balanced, with cuts & savings
 - Final Budget Hearings 6/3-5
 - **Homeless Division Update – 5/21**
 - **Bob Jones Trail Update – 5/21**
 - Seeking BOS direction, need advocates
 - SLOCOG ½ cent tax measure will not be on 2024 ballot ...continue to engage for 2026?
- **Happy Birthday Shell Beach Library.** New Librarian appointed.
- **Office Hours and Dates:**
 - Time: 1:30-3:30
 - Date: June 11th
 - Date: July 11th
- **Comments:**
 - **Bob Pusanik** comments on inability to secure easement for Bob Jones Trail.

• **Old Business:**

- No report.

- **New Business:**
 - No report.

- **Community Liaisons:**
 - **Avila Beach Civic Association: Mary Matakovich reports:**
 - Encourage membership.
 - July 4, 2024 Pancake Breakfast and dog parade event. Please attend.
 - **Avila Beach Foundation: Rick Rowe reports:**
 - Pass Point will continue to manage beach clean-up projects in summer season. They attend 3 times a week in summer to clean walkways. Made possible from contributions from PG&E and others.
 - The Community Impact Grant will meet on Thursday night to the Board of Supervisors to make decisions of final award with announcement in the next 7-20 days.
 - **PG&E / Diablo Canyon: Eric Daniels reports:**
 - Unit #1 is refueling with maintenance outage.
 - Unit #2 is 100%.

- **AVAC Committees:**
 - **Land Use:** No report
 - **Diablo Canyon: Ken Thompson reports:**
 - Received permit application to demolish PG&E visitor overlook station. Will start process and report to council. Eric Daniels comments that this is not within the purview of AVAC.
 - The Decommissioning Panel is holding a public meeting on an update in repurposing of Diablo Lands on May 22nd at the Atascadero City Hall with zoom capabilities.
 - **Port: Mary Matakovich reports:**
 - No report.
 - **Avila Beach: Mary Matakovich reports:**
 - No report.
 - **San Luis Bay Estates: Curtis Cole reports:**
 - No report.
 - **Avila Valley: Julia Hartzell reports:**
 - No report.
 - **See Canyon: Denise Allen reports:**
 - Public Works monitoring road issues.
 - **Squire Canyon: Margaret Greenough reports:**
 - Response to use formatted text for Avila Barn permit.

- **Next Meeting Date:**
June 10, 2024 at 6:00 pm.

- **Adjourn:** 7:01 PM