



# MISSION VIEJO BUZZ

Keeping the California Promise

Week of January 12, 2006

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## The Patriot Post Founders' Quote Daily

"We must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt."

-- Thomas Jefferson (letter to Samuel Kercheval, 7/12/1816)

Reference: Jefferson: Writings, Peterson ed., Library of America (1400)

### STAFF EDITORIAL

#### The Case Against Aliso Ridge Mixed-use Development - Part 3 by Dale Tyler ([edt@missionviejoca.org](mailto:edt@missionviejoca.org)).

It seems to me that rezoning should almost never occur in a master-planned community, as the primary purpose of having a master plan is to provide certainty for property owners that the uses for parcels surrounding theirs are known in advance and will not change.

Thus, one can build and improve a house with no concern that an apartment complex will be built next door unless it is already zoned for such. Unfortunately, past planning commissions and councils have ignored the zoning and put 700 apartments where there were to be office buildings.

The resulting traffic and crime mess should be evidence enough of the folly of such changes.

However, let's say for the sake of argument that changes might be good under certain circumstances. What should the factors be that would permit rezoning a property? First, consent by adjacent property owners. In my mind, there is some doubt that this is the case with the Steadfast property. Second, a net positive to the city as a whole. Here, the Steadfast proposal does not



even come close. We should be comparing \$480K/year of sales tax revenue, plus property tax revenue of \$30,000 (\$20M assessed), totaling \$510K against \$30K of sales tax (\$20K \* 154 units) plus \$151K (\$100.4M assessed) of property tax revenue totaling \$181K. Add to the residential side costs for parks, library use and schools, and we see no economic benefit to the city.

Now, some might say, "But this will fix our affordable housing problem." But, of course it does not even come close. In fact, there is no way we can satisfy the low-income requirement unless we build a tenement just for them, as there is not enough open space in the city to build enough units at the 15 percent burden imposed here.

I urge the city to not rezone this property. It will do nothing to improve our city or its finances.



**DON'T RE-ZONE!**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



### SWATTING FLIES WITH CONFETTI

Item 27 on the Jan. 3 Mission Viejo council agenda was the appointment of the

Ad Hoc Committee of

the City Council regarding the City's General Plan Housing Element and Affordable Housing Goals. The action was to disband the Planning and Transportation Commission's Housing Element and Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee.

The item passed 3-2 with the majority of Kelly, MacLean and Ury for and Reavis and Ledesma against. Why would our council do the job better than their own appointees on the Planning Commission? A council member argued that housing issues and transportation issues were not resolved quickly enough, and that certain council members want to take the bull by the horns and get it done faster.

The only problem is that the majority chose to attempt to swat flies by throwing confetti. The job wasn't done fast enough because proper goals were not communicated to staff members. The problem is not a structural one on the commission or the council. The problem is a lack of communication.

James Edward Woodin  
Mission Viejo

### READER RESPONDS TO KLEIN'S DEC. 31 LETTER

This response is for Bo Klein, regarding your post, "The Infamous Lunch." Last time I checked, Bo, the Elephant Bar was in Laguna Hills. It has now closed, to be replaced by a, hopefully, better establishment. My question, however, is why did you not meet at an establishment in Mission Viejo? While I say this somewhat "tongue-in-cheek," I think you will get my point.

Bill Faulds  
Mission Viejo



## ANOTHER READER RESPONDS TO DEC. 31 EDITORIAL

Having read the year-end edition of the blog, let me start with some words of wisdom for you and others engaging in the debate as to who led the revolution in the city of Mission Viejo. As an aside, in meeting with numerous



state, county and local elected officials, I am constantly reminded of the remarkable achievement in our "blowout" removal of a sitting mayor and

mayor pro tem in the 2002 election.

Former President Ronald Reagan said it best. "We can accomplish anything together, if we do not concern ourselves with the question of who might receive the credit." There were many players involved in the changes which occurred in the last four city council elections. No individual deserves personal credit. The focus for all residents should be to look forward to November 2006 and not in the rear view mirror. We deserve better leadership and all efforts should be to address that issue before next November.

Happy New Year to all.  
Larry Gilbert  
Mission Viejo

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING DILEMMA

According to our "illustrious" new mayor, Mission Viejo needs many more units of low-income housing. Is anyone wondering where these units – more than 100 – will be built?

Is the mayor planning to use eminent domain? Will it be your home or mine? Maybe your business? What about your church? Does this mayor worry or scare you?

Beverly Cruse  
Mission Viejo



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### A COMMISSIONER MS. KROUT IS NOT

How much longer do we have to endure Commissioner Krout's childishly fidgeting with her hair, purse, fingernails, hair and hair? It has become a joke watching her roll her eyes at the speakers, other Commissioners and speaking out of turn. Is it not obvious that Ms. Krout is bored with the whole proceedings? It makes one wonder why she is still a sitting commissioner.



Kathy Miramontes  
Mission Viejo

### JAN. 9 PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission on Jan. 9 concluded the hearing for Steadfast's proposed project next to Unisys. Two separate uses were proposed – a Target store on 13.4 acres and high-density housing on the remaining 10 acres. The vote was 3-1 for approval, with Commissioner Brad Morton dissenting. Commissioners Neil Lonsinger, Richard Schweinberg and Chandra Krout voted for the project. Mary Binning resigned from the commission in December and has not been replaced.

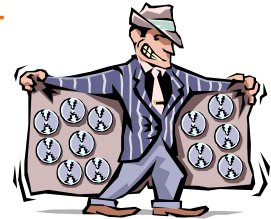
Steadfast's representative seemed unprepared for the meeting. He said he didn't anticipate that members of the audience would be allowed to speak. Thus, he hadn't "arranged for any of the project's supporters" to attend. His statement raised a question as to the number of genuine supporters the project has. On Jan. 9, 14 residents either spoke against or submitted written comments against the project, with negative remarks focused on the housing element. No resident spoke in favor of the project. By contrast, Steadfast "arranged" for 15 supporters to attend the December meeting. Steadfast's campaign of offering residents a free lunch for listening to a one-sided sales pitch apparently didn't generate long-term interest.



From the dais, Chandra Krout, who is Frank Ury's commissioner, said residents shouldn't

be allowed to make public comments because the hearing had been continued from December. Some residents asked before the meeting began if they could speak during the hearing. The clerk said all speakers who wanted to comment about Steadfast's project would be called up to the microphone when the item was heard. Krout was overruled in her attempt to prevent residents from commenting about the project.

Steadfast will present its proposal to the council on Feb. 20.



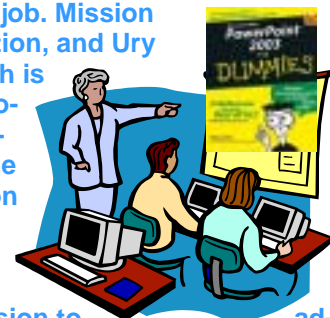
### COUNCIL BUSINESS AS USUAL

The current council has been seated for more than a year. After Council Member Frank Ury on Jan. 3 dressed down the Planning Commission, isn't the council overdue for review?



Individual council members have made deliberate choices not to work together. Standard fare includes personal attacks and outbursts. While the council is supposed to direct city staff, the opposite is often true. Staff members – who were neither hired nor elected by residents – make decisions and direct the council. Is this anyone's idea of representative or open government?

At the Jan. 3 meeting, Councilman Ury took it upon himself to outline the council's 2006 goals, using the big screen for a PowerPoint presentation as if he were speaking to his underlings at his sales job. Mission Viejo isn't a corporation, and Ury isn't the boss – which is obvious when his motions don't get a second. Ury criticized the Planning Commission for lack of accomplishment and complained he has "no one" on the commission to advise him on traffic matters. Whose fault is that? Why doesn't Ury replace his "green building" appointee with a knowledgeable person who actually adds value to the commission?



A recurring voting pattern followed MacLean's

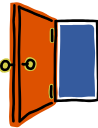
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proposal to form an ad hoc committee regarding the city's affordable housing goals. The Planning Commission had been directed by the council to work on affordable housing, which it has done for 2 1/2 years. In a rare lucid moment, Council Member Trish Kelley suggested on Jan. 3 that the ad hoc committee should include representatives of both the Planning Commission and the council. Council Members John Paul Ledesma and Gail Reavis indicated their support for Kelley's concept – at least not to cut out the Planning Commission altogether. Kelley next voted against her own idea, as if to distance herself from Reavis at any cost. MacLean's proposal passed 3-2, with MacLean, Ury and Kelley voting yes and Ledesma and Reavis voting no.

Here's the rub. MacLean and Ury have revealed their intent to bring a large affordable-apartment project into the Technology Center, which is along the freeway and south of Oso. While Kelley has promoted herself as an advocate of Capistrano USD schools, her vote on Jan. 3 opened the door to more apartments, more low-achieving students and more overcrowding of classrooms in the Capo district. Kelley is willing to sacrifice the quality of education in Capo schools just to avoid voting with Reavis. Before running for office in 2002, Kelley fought against apartment complexes in the same part of town. Things have changed.



# The Buzz



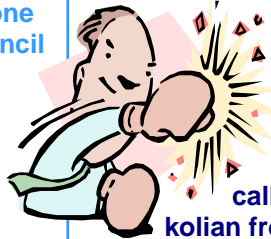
Mayor Lance MacLean, during the Jan. 3 meeting said he'd like entertainment in council chambers prior to the meetings. If the council circus needs a warm-up act, a food-fight would be a nice touch.

On the big screen, show news clips of the real professionals – the North Korean parliament –



where fistfights and massive brawls break out between votes.

Remember Nancy Howell, the 2004 council candidate who seemed to have a campaign sign on every corner? Nancy and her husband, Hamid Tavakolian, have been mixing it up with their homeowners association, Oso Valley Greenbelt Association.



During one of the HOA meetings last year, police were called to remove Howell and Tavakolian from the meeting, at which time the pair were hauled out, and Tavakolian allegedly threw a punch at a policeman. In the most recent folderol, the HOA claims Howell and Tavakolian challenged the results of a board election and attempted to form a separate board of directors (HOA document). HOA assets have been frozen until lawyers sort it out. (SEE PAGE 5)

Councilman Frank Ury's attempt to upstage MacLean with a PowerPoint presentation at the Jan. 3 meeting went flat. During Ury's first year on the council, he neither led nor built consensus. His attempted takeover is not unlike that of MacLean shortly after the 2002 election, when MacLean proclaimed that he was "the city's unofficial mayor." Does it not bother Ury's supporters to see him aligning with MacLean in bringing yet another large apartment complex to south Mission Viejo?

One of Ury's ideas – straight from the Anaheim playbook – was to provide a wireless-fidelity network (Wi-Fi) in City Hall "for the benefit of residents" who attend meetings. When has Ury been concerned with anything to benefit residents? His votes align remarkably with either self-interest or special interest. The Orange County Register on Jan. 9 published a relevant editorial asking "What is the compelling societal need requiring government involvement in this burgeoning [Internet] industry?" Did any resident actually complain about being disenfranchised for lack of Internet access while sitting in a meeting?

Taxpayers are treating their elected officials to a "free" weekend at Lake Arrowhead from Jan. 13-15. Cost of the Orange County Leadership Symposium: \$375 to \$535 per VIP. Mayor Lance MacLean will be the only one attending from

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**Mission Viejo. Steve Greenhut in the Jan. 8 Register commented about the weekend of nonsense: "... navel-gazing of public officials, a loss of focus on the taxpayers and a willingness to squander public dollars ... ."**

*Oso Valley Greenbelt Association  
December 28, 2005*

Dear Neighbors:

This letter is intended to inform you of a conflict within our association. The situation is important and affects our services to you, the homeowner.

As you may recall the result of the election in May 2005, our membership voted in 8 separate increment elections. William Quinton #1, Jeannie Ultimo #2, Jennifer Stonebarger #3, Grace Hayes #4, Andy Mordy #5, Dan Stone #6, Theresa Clark #7, and Tom Hunter #8. There was a tremendous turnout for this election as all 8 increments exceeded quorum requirements and 8 candidates won by overwhelming majorities.

As customary, those delegates elected a new Board of Directors which included the following five people: Tom Hunter, President from Increment 8; Gary Lenzner, Vice-President from Increment 4; Andy Mordy, Treasurer from Increment 5; Jennifer Stonebarger from Increment 3; and Jim Farber from Increment 7. However, Nancy Howell, who lost in this year's election and her husband Hamid Tavakolian, have allegedly formed a Board of Directors which has filed a lawsuit to overturn the 2005 election. He had previously challenged the 2004 election and lost the lawsuit. We expect the same result with the current lawsuit. This year they are claiming that she and her husband hold seats on the current board. They have presented themselves to our financial institutions as board members. As a result, association assets have been frozen.

What this means for us homeowners is that all efforts to beautify and improve our neighborhoods must be reduced until funds can be released. We had sent out notices that we would be trimming trees beginning in October, but this can no longer proceed. Coastal Mirage Landscape is currently performing our landscaping with their own funds and have reduced crews to minimize expenses. We have negotiated with the water company and other service providers to keep service active until funds become available.

The only way we know to get through this crisis is to proceed legally arguing this case in court. We are hoping for a resolution in January 2006.

Please believe us when we say that we are just as, if not more, frustrated as you are. We are asking for

We are asking for your patience and understanding in this time of crisis. Please remember that we are simply concerned homeowners like you who have volunteered our time to serve on the Board of Directors to help improve our community. In return we have all been personally named in the lawsuits. We have been summoned to depositions, which we have completed by giving up work and personal time. We are not being compensated in any way for our time or service. We have jobs and families and responsibilities just like you.

Be assured that we are doing as much as possible legally to rectify this situation. You will be updated as soon as a judge decides this case or if some other event occurs.

Tom Hunter Gary Lenzner Andy Mordy  
Jennifer Stonebarger Jim Farber

Oso Valley Greenbelt Association  
Board of Directors

Picture and verbiage Submitted  
by Joe Holtzman, Mission Viejo



OOOHHH--we need a talent show --to start out each council meeting !!

McMayor and his clown act in Mission Viejo

~ ~ The End ~ ~