

MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 5, 2003

The meeting of the El Cajon City Planning Commission is called to order at 7:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: TURNER, HANSON-COX, BURGERT, AGURS, AMBROSE

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: NONE

OTHERS PRESENT: RAMIREZ, Senior Planner
LOUGH, Assistant City Attorney
ODIORNE, City Engineer
SIMOS, Associate Planner
O'BRIANT, Admin. Secretary

MINUTES OF April 7, 2003 Motion by TURNER, seconded by AGURS to approve the Minutes of April 7, 2003 pro forma; carries 5-0

MINUTES OF April 21, 2003 None. All items were carried over to the May 5, 2003 meeting due to a power outage.

AMBROSE explains the mission of the Planning Commission to the audience, asks for proper decorum during the meeting and that all cell phones and pagers be turned off.

RAMIREZ states staff requests that agenda items #3 (CUP 1956) and #4 (Am. CUP 210) be switched.

AGURS was going to recommend that also. The other commissioners agree.

AMBROSE abstains from the first item(s) due to a financial conflict of interest and leaves the Chamber. AGURS assumes the Chair.

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT 2003-01 – East Main Street LLC

(continued public hearing) Continue to June 23, 2003

P. C. Meeting 5/5/03

The subject property is located on the east side of Ballantyne Street between Broadway and Hart Drive and addressed as 1055 Ballantyne Street; APN 483-110-19 & -21; General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential.

Request to change General Plan designation from Low Density Residential (3-10 du/ac) to Low Medium Density residential (10-18 du/ac). ***Continued from the meeting of March 10 and carried over from the meeting of April 21, 2003 due to a power outage.***

AND

ZONE RECLASSIFICATION 2225 – East Main Street LLC

(continued public hearing) Continue to June 23, 2003

P. C. Meeting 5/5/03

The subject property is located on the east side of Ballantyne Street between Broadway and Hart Drive and addressed as 1055 Ballantyne Street; APN 483-110-19 & -21; General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential.

Request to prezone property from County R-S-7 and R-V-15 to the City's Low-Medium zone. ***Continued from the meeting of March 10 and carried over from the meeting of April 21, 2003 due to a power outage.***

AND

PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT 56 – East Main Street LLC

(continued public hearing) Continue to June 23, 2003

P. C. Meeting 5/5/03

The subject property is located on the east side of Ballantyne Street between Broadway and Hart Drive and addressed as 1055 Ballantyne Street; APN 483-110-19 & -21; General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential.

Request a 36-unit planned residential development of single-family detached units in the pending PRD Low-Medium zone. ***Continued from the meeting of March 10 and carried over from the meeting of April 21, 2003 due to a power outage.***

AND

TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP 500 – East Main Street LLC

(continued public hearing) Continue to June 23, 2003

P. C. Meeting 5/5/03

The subject property is located on the east side of Ballantyne Street between Broadway and Hart Drive and addressed as 1055 Ballantyne Street; APN 483-110-19 & -21; General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential.

Request 43-lot subdivision in pending PRD Low-Medium zone. **Continued from the meeting of March 10 and carried over from the meeting of April 21, 2003 due to a power outage.**

RAMIREZ states these items were on the agenda for April 21, 2003, which was not held due to a power failure. The applicant has again requested that they be continued to June 23, 2003, as stated by the Chair Pro Tem. That is staff's recommendation.

The public hearings are still open.

AGURS asks anyone wishing to speak who cannot be here on June 23, 2003, to come forward.

No one comes forward.

Motion by TURNER, second by BURGERT to CONTINUE the public hearings on General Plan Amendment 2003-01, Zone Reclassification 2225, Planned Residential Development 56 and Tentative Subdivision Map 50 to the meeting of June 23, 2003; carries 4-0, AMBROSE abstaining.

AMBROSE returns to the Council Chamber and reassumes the Chair.

PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT 201 – Westone Management Consultants

(public hearing) Resolution No. 9785

P. C. Meeting 5/5/03

The subject property is located on the west side of Lincoln Avenue between East Main Street and East Lexington Avenue, and addressed as 188 S. Lincoln Avenue; APN 488-233-29; existing LUC 1142A, proposed LUC 1142B; General Plan Designation: High Density Residential. **Carried over from the meeting of April 21, 2003 due to a power outage.**

Request to convert an existing 24-unit apartment complex into a common interest subdivision in the R-P (residential professional) zone.

AND

TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP 512 – Westone Management Consultants

(public hearing) Resolution No. 9786

P. C. Meeting 5/5/03

The subject property is located on the west side of Lincoln Avenue between East Main Street and East Lexington Avenue, and addressed as 188 S. Lincoln Avenue; APN 488-

233-39; existing LUC 1142A, proposed LUC 1142B; General Plan Designation: High Density Residential.

Request for a one-lot subdivision in the R-P (residential professional) zone. **Carried over from the meeting of April 21, 2003 due to a power outage.**

RAMIREZ states Planned Unit Development 201 is a request to convert an existing 24-unit apartment complex to a common interest subdivision in the R-P (Residential Professional) zone. If this request is granted, the resulting common interest subdivision units will be air space units. A companion item, Tentative Subdivision Map 512, is a request for a one-lot subdivision of the subject property to convey title to the future purchasers. This proposal is consistent with the planned unit development ordinance for converting existing development into a common interest subdivision. Staff believes that the proposed conversion is consistent with the General Plan objectives, which provide for increased home ownership opportunities.

To date, the applicant has met the requirements for tenant notification. In addition, the individual tenants were also notified of this public hearing by staff as required by the Zoning Ordinance. If this request is approved, the applicant will also be required to give each tenant an exclusive right to contract for the purchase of his or her unit upon the same terms and conditions that such unit will be offered to the public, or on terms more favorable to the tenant.

Each of the following project features must be modified in response to the development standards for a conversion in the R-P zone: parking, common recreation area, building construction requirements, utility systems, landscaping and trash collection.

The recommended modifications are found in numerous conditions of approval.

With regard to parking, RAMIREZ says the recently approved amendment of the PUD ordinance reduces the parking requirement for a conversion project to the number of parking spaces existing on the property at the time a request for conversion is approved. In this case, there are 35 parking spaces, which equates to 1.45 spaces per unit. The existing common recreation area on the subject property is a swimming pool located at the rear of the property. The Planning Commission, with the concurrence of the City Council, must determine the adequacy of any proposed common recreational or open space area.

The Physical Elements Report was prepared by Joseph Wang, professional engineer, after conducting a property inspection in December 2002. The Planning Commission and City Council should use this information to determine the need to repair or replace any existing physical elements as a condition of approving the proposed conversion.

RAMIREZ states that Mr. Wang's report identifies features that need immediate attention and other replacements or repairs that are recommended for completion within a one- to three-year time frame.

In a memo dated April 14, 2003, Mr. Joseph Scarlatti, the lead consultant for Westone Management Consultants, notes the interior and exterior renovations that are planned by the applicant if this conversion is approved. Mr. Scarlatti informed staff that the repairs and replacements listed in both the Physical Elements Report and in his memo would be accomplished.

The intent of staff's recommendation is for all items to be completed prior to the sale of any unit. A correction is needed to conditions #7 a) and #7 b) to clarify the staff's intent. Those conditions are found on page 9 of the PUD (planned unit development) staff report. Conditional #7 a) should be renumbered to become #9 c) where it is made clear that these items need to be completed before the sale of the units. Similarly, condition #7 b) becomes #9 e), and all remaining conditions under #7 are redesignated as 7 (a through f).

The balance of the suggested conditions are fairly standard for a conversion proposal, except for condition #3, which addresses the location of an existing block wall near the property line, and condition #4, which calls for the immediate clearing of refuse from an unusable portion of the site.

RAMIREZ advises that staff supports the Planning Commission's action to recommend approval of both PUD 201 and TSM 512 subject to the conditions and reasons stated in the staff reports.

AGURS states a number of conversions have been approved. It is great that home ownership can be provided to many tenants and people that otherwise may have difficulty in obtaining home ownership. He asks the time line of some of the approved conversions that are near completion.

RAMIREZ replies the first one has not yet actually come to the point where units have been renovated and are on the market ready for sale. It will be a while. The first one had a particular problem, but the applicant is progressing.

HANSON-COX visited the site and noticed the trash enclosure is in the far corner by the alley. She doesn't recall seeing a light back there. Is there one there?

RAMIREZ doesn't recall seeing a light in that corner either.

HANSON-COX asks if a condition could be made to place a light in that area, for safety reasons for the tenants.

AMBROSE replies yes, that can be added as a condition of approval.

The public hearing is now open.

Lindsay ERICKSON, 710 Camino de la Reina, Suite 129, San Diego, CA 92108, is here on behalf of Joseph Scarlatti (Westone Management consultants) and Mitch McDonald Family Trust. In reply to AMBROSE, she states they agree with all the conditions in the staff report.

AMBROSE asks if that includes the lighting by the dumpster.

ERICKSON replies that is not a problem. She is available for questions.

HANSON-COX has been to the site about three times. There is a cement area in the parking lot between some of the units. One time she noticed children playing basketball there and she could see the ball going back and forth close to the windows. Another time she saw a car parked there, right on the cement. Is the applicant planning on removing that cement and perhaps putting some landscaping in there to break that up?

ERICKSON states she can recommend that to their client. She is aware of the area. It is something that they have inspected themselves. If the Planning Commission wants to make that a condition or something that they can look at; she can add it to the list.

HANSON-COX was shocked to see the car parked there between the units. She thought if it were broken up and landscaped, the children could **not* play there. She was visualizing a basketball going through one of the windows. **corrected at the meeting of May 19, 2003.*

ERICKSON reiterates that she can recommend it to their client. That is something that can be discussed to see what they can do about it.

Rev. Peter MOORE KOCHLAS, 1465 E. Madison Avenue, El Cajon CA 92020, is pastor of Chapel of the Valley United Methodist Church. He asks how green these projects are. Are they putting in EE [Energy Efficient] windows? Most of the windows in previous apartments are really trash. He wants to know about the nature of the utilities, and about the insulation on such structures. The walls in apartments are so thin that the noise can be heard through them. How has the real value of these places been increased?

RAMIREZ replies that the Zoning Ordinance prescribes the standards for condo conversions. The staff report evaluates them to a level of detail that staff feels is appropriate. Some backup material that the Planning Commission gets is not attached to every copy of the staff report that is made available to the public. She is referring specifically to the Physical Elements Report. As far as how the value of a unit is appraised for sale, in today's real estate market appraisers do that work. The financial or economic aspect of a proposal is not something that the Planning Commission or the Planning staff has the authority to look at.

KOCHLAS asks if staff is saying that it is not known whether EE windows are required, and increased insulation, any of these factors, to really bring up an apartment to homes

that would be really valuable for the nature of the goal of the City Council. Are they not evaluated on that basis?

RAMIREZ responds at this time that the City's requirements do not include replacing windows. Many of the applicants have offered to do that. In the Physical Elements Report for this property, she believes it notes approximately 16 units need to have their windows replaced.

KOCHLAS asks if they are double E.

RAMIREZ states there are no specifics given in the report as to what kind of replacement.

KOCHLAS says the environmental movement has been going on since 1970 and the City really needs to see itself as greening any buildings it would bring on line; perhaps even putting in solar panels on the roofs. Any failure to do so would really kind of be jeopardizing any improvement in a project that would be of value to homeowners and to the City. Until the City has such guidelines, he would recommend against approval of any conversions.

No one else comes forward to speak on this item.

Motion by AGURS, second by TURNER to close the public hearing; carries 5-0.

AMBROSE states this is another conversion. This developer has done a few others that are in the process. It is AMBROSE's understanding that they will remove all the interiors, replace all the floor coverings, bring the whole thing up to fire code, and meet all the standards that are required in the repair report.

TURNER thinks this project looks a lot better than a lot of others the Planning Commission has seen. She thinks the person doing a lot of the redevelopment has learned from the other public hearings what the Commission is looking for in a project. This is one of the better projects she has seen.

AGURS agrees. He knows Pastor KOCHLAS brought up some issues, but many of those issues are strictly market driven. A particular type of window, or something like that, is all part of the cost basis. Ownership improves and creates better communities.

No further comments are offered.

Motion by AGURS, second by HANSON-COX to RECOMMEND APPROVAL of Planned Unit Development 201 and Tentative Subdivision Map 512 in accordance with the staff reports, renumbering the conditions as recommended by staff and adding a condition for lighting over the dumpster; motion carries 5-0.

AMBROSE advises this is a recommendation to the City Council. There will be further noticed public hearings at that level.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 219 – St. Madeleine Sophie’s Center

(discussion) Resolution No. 9788

P. C. Meeting 5/5/03

The subject property is located on the south side of East Madison Avenue between Greenfield Drive and Camelot Parkway, and addressed as 2095, 2099 & 2119 E. Madison Avenue; APN 512-230-03, -04 & -13; General Plan Designation: Low-Low Density Residential.

Request extension of time for expansion of existing training and schooling facility in the R-E-20 (Residential Estates 20,000 sq. ft.) zone.

TURNER abstains from this item since the applicant is her employer, and leaves the Chamber.

RAMIREZ states this request for an extension of time is for the applicant to complete the conditions of approval of an amendment to their Conditional Use Permit 219. The amendment was granted by the Planning Commission on May 6, 2002, to allow an expansion of the existing special training and schooling facility in the R-E-20 zone.

Section 17.78.020 of the Zoning Ordinance gives the Planning Commission the authority to extend the initial one-year life to exercise a conditional use permit without a new public hearing and for up to one additional year.

As indicated in the April 21, 2003 letter, the applicant has had some difficulty in dealing with the owner of the adjacent property, which is being purchased by the applicant for the proposed expansion. It is recommended that the Commission grant a one-year extension of time to May 6, 2004, subject to the same conditions and reasons contained in the Planning Commission’s resolution #9639 adopted with the amendment.

AMBROSE invites comments from the audience on this discussion item.

Jane WALSTROM, 9652 Lakeview Road, Lakeside CA 92040, is an employee of St. Madeleine Sophie’s Center and is here to answer any questions. The president of their board is out of town and she has been asked to appear in his place.

AMBROSE thanks her for all the work St. Madeleine Sophie’s does.

No one has any questions. AMBROSE states this is pretty straightforward.

AGURS agrees. They got an underground tank removed, and now they need some additional time.

Motion by AGURS, second by BURGERT to GRANT an extension of time for Amendment of Conditional Use Permit 219 to May 6, 2004, in accordance with the staff report; motion carries 4-0, TURNER abstaining.

TURNER returns to the Council Chamber.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 1956 – Alpha Project

(public hearing) Resolution No. 9787

P. C. Meeting 5/5/03

The subject property is located on the east side of East Main Street between Second and Third Streets, and addressed as 1523-1527 E. Main Street; APN 507-310-28 & -29; existing LUC 9410, proposed LUC 6929; General Plan Designation: General Retail Commercial.

Request to operate a transition service center in an existing commercial development (motel & restaurant) in the C-2 (General Commercial) zone.

SIMOS goes to the mounted map and indicates the proposed location at 1523-1527 E. Main Street. The applicant wants to occupy a 101-unit motel that is currently on the site, addressed as 1527, and to occupy/use the restaurant at 1523 E. Main Street. The restaurant is currently vacant and the motel is used to a small degree. The clients for this program would have to be referred by a participating social service agency. No one will be allowed to just walk up to the doors and say they want to be part of the program. The subject property is about 4 ¼ acres. The first thing that will be done is to rehabilitate the motel. One of these rehabilitations will be to provide segregated areas for each of the different groups. How the segregation is going to occur is not known at this time, but one of the conditions in the staff report is for quarterly reports to come to the Commission so it can stay abreast of what is happening on this project.

The restaurant would be rehabilitated second and would first be used to prepare meals for the program participants who would be dining at the motel. The restaurant would then be open to the public and when it is open to the public, it would help to defray the cost of the program.

The landscaping will also be enhanced so it will have a nicer street side appearance.

This project is consistent with the General Plan. In the staff report, a specific General Plan objective and policies are cited to show how this is consistent.

SIMOS says this project is also consistent with the Zoning Ordinance with adherence to the conditions of approval.

AMBROSE asks the audience not to disrupt the proceedings. It is important to everyone.

SIMOS continues, staff is of the opinion that the proposed program would operate compatibly with the surrounding businesses. As background, staff did visit the applicant's facility in Vista (Casa Raphael). That is a men-only facility, which is different from what is being proposed tonight; but overall, staff came away from that visit with a positive reaction and of the opinion that a program that is as successful as that one could be operated here in El Cajon.

Several phone calls in opposition have been received, as well as two letters of opposition that are included as attachments to the staff report. One letter in opposition was received too late to be included in the staff report, but copies have been placed at each of the Commissioner's desks.

One letter in support was also received late this evening, so the Planning Commission doesn't have copies of it yet. Staff has the letters and will put them in the file.

Once the public hearing is opened, the applicant's representative is available to answer questions about the program. As a reminder, the Planning Commission's action is final unless it is appealed to the City Council.

AMBROSE noticed that a couple of the Police Dept. recommendations were not included as conditions of approval. One was their suggestion that 75% of all of the clients at Alpha Project be from the city of El Cajon and referred from recognized social service agencies within the city of El Cajon. Is there a reason why that wasn't included?

SIMOS replies regarding the 75%, the applicant has stated that a higher percentage than that would be coming from El Cajon. That comment and the next one were left out of the conditions as an oversight. She apologizes for that. They can be included.

TURNER doesn't know the process in which the Alpha group was picked for this. Normally where there is a service from a social agency, it usually goes out for bid. That is a question she may have to ask the applicant. She knows there are other agencies that do perform those services.

RAMIREZ replies that the City of El Cajon is not the proponent here. Alpha Project made themselves the applicant by filling out the form and meeting the requirements of the City of El Cajon's application to operate this facility at this property.

HANSON-COX thanks RAMIREZ and SIMOS for their thorough coverage on this item. One of the conditions is that any homeless person without a bona fide referral is transported to a recognized social service agency for screening and not be put out on

the street. Do these social service agencies for referrals for the screening have places to put these people? What do they do with them afterwards? Where are they taken so they are not put back on the street?

RAMIREZ states this question and others will arise where staff would want to direct them to the applicant for a response. There has been an ongoing network in El Cajon and in the East County of social service agencies who already are in the business of dealing with some of the same kinds of clients. These agencies make referrals, depending on what needs are assessed when they sit a person down and first talk to them. She would also like these questions to be responded to by the applicant's representative after the public hearing has been opened.

AMBROSE explains that the public hearing will be opened. He will ask the proponents to speak first, beginning with the applicant's representative's presentation. He assumes they have an organized presentation. Then he wants to take input from project opponents. He understands there is a presentation to be made there as well. Then, those people who want to voice their support or are opposed to the project should line up behind the proponents' speaker. If it gets to the point where the comments are repetitious and no new information is being heard, he asks people to simply say they agree with the previous speaker.

The public hearing is now open.

AMBROSE asks the project proponents (the applicant) to come to the podium first.

Tony PHILLIPS, director of administration for Alpha Project, 3737 Fifth Ave., Ste. 204, San Diego CA 92103, requests 15 minutes, in which time five speakers would speak. He would like to speak first and introduce the other speakers.

AMBROSE agrees.

PHILLIPS thanks the staff for their diligence on the staff report. Brenda Simos in particular undertook a Herculean task in following the Council's time frame to bring this issue forth. The project is being brought forth to accomplish two separate and distinct, and equally compelling, aims for the city. The first is to revitalize what is clearly an under-utilized parcel. They believe there is a much better use for the 4 ¼ acres of land on the corner of East Main and underneath I-8 than the state it is in today. Secondly, and equally important, they believe that the proposed use of the site will fill a critical gap in the City's existing continuum of housing. Notice that he didn't propose to put a "homeless shelter" on the site, because that is clearly not what they are proposing. They are proposing to create transitional housing opportunities for those who are homeless, at risk of being homeless, or otherwise on the verge of "houselessness" in the city of El Cajon, and to bridge the gap between the need and the demand.

It is really the leadership of the private and public sources, other providers in this community, the faith community and many of their proposed neighbors that have led

them to design a program that they think is both responsive to that need, but is reflective to the culture of values and the diversity and history of El Cajon.

PHILLIPS says the project will infuse 3.5 million dollars in private capital to a blighted property right off the bat with a commitment to up to another half million dollars in County funds, all at no cost to the City. They believe it will be a direct benefit to their neighbors and the city as a whole. They are proud to offer the project to the city and they believe that with their capacity and the support they have from other providers in this community and from other sources (county, state and federal) can make this a world-class project and address a need that is simply not going to go away for the City without a solution like this.

He asks John Gibson to speak next, followed by Steve Gronke, Teresa Adams and Bob McElroy. PHILLIPS will be available following those speakers if there are any further questions from the commissioners.

John GIBSON represents the Hamann Company, 1000 Pioneer Way, El Cajon CA 92020. They are here in response to a visible crisis that erupted at Farragut Circle last year, and also a long-term East County problem. The Mayor and several community leaders asked them to see if they could intervene and help solve the problem. They met with the El Cajon Collaborative in February and identified viable solutions to solve the crisis. Specifically, Councilman Santos identified the results of several years of study of a homeless task force that was done several years ago. He concluded that his support was predicated on four conclusions: private developer participation, a competent service provider, support from agencies in addition to El Cajon, and an appropriate location. With this info condensed from several years of research by active service providers in our city, Alpha Project identified the most logical site on which to locate it. Additionally, they solicited and received the support of Supervisor Diane Jacob, who has pledged over half a million dollars for an initial project renovation.

There is a component of society that has not gone away by ignoring it during the last 10 years. We must not miss an opportunity to build a quality transitional housing center. There is never going to be a perfect location absent of NIMBYs. The best example is 60 miles east in Campo where Father Joe Carroll fought for and was denied the opportunity for a boys' club. The people 60 miles east said they belonged somewhere else too. Testimony will be heard tonight as to the Alpha Project's ability to meet the challenge. They are completely in agreement with the staff and urge the Planning Commission's approval tonight.

Steve GRONKE, 600 Escondido Avenue, Vista CA 92084, is a Councilman in the City of Vista. He came tonight thinking he was going to be talking about a subject for Mr. McElroy, not realizing the contention he would find. He hopes that some of the things he has to say will alleviate some of the fears that others might have. He has been living in the city for over 20 years. Alpha has been there for 10 of those. He has never seen any problem with Alpha. In fact, he can recall when he got on the Council, he saw some gentlemen walking the streets picking up litter, wearing orange vests. He thought they

worked for the City. He talked to them and found they were from Alpha Project. He took the time and energy to go and see Mr. McElroy, Jason, Tony and the others at the Alpha Project, and discovered they had a wonderful program going on. They have taken in young men with substance abuse problems and tried to turn their lives around. Did they get everyone? No. But they have a very solid program, a program that keeps the area clean and neat. The gentlemen that go there are responsible to the City. They help the City and nonprofits. He was at the Cinco de Mayo event last Saturday. Alpha Project members were helping the nonprofits that were putting on that event. He talked to people in the city about this. There was a gentleman by the name of Sam who has a restaurant near where the project went in, and he asked him why he was so concerned and came out so strongly against the project initially and now speaks its praise. He said that Alpha Project took over an area ridden with crime, drugs and prostitution and cleaned it up. They turned it around. The area doesn't have the crime it had before, and is cleaner than it was before.

As he looks at this project, GRONKE looks at two concerns: crime and usage of the property. This is a land use issue. That is why the Planning Commission is here. Alpha Project is going to take this parcel and turn it around and make it an economically viable area in El Cajon; something the Commission should be happy to see happen with that parcel that has probably been sitting dormant for many years. GRONKE called another friend of his, Mr. Alfred Stumphouser from the "COPs" program in Vista's Sheriff's Dept., and asked him about Alpha. He said the same thing, that not only did things get better in town, but Alpha is a positive asset to their town. As he said before, they helped clean it up; they are the gentlemen selling papers. He asked Alfred if there was any problem with the sales of papers. He said the guys sometimes get a little aggressive, but the gentlemen at Alpha take them aside and straighten them out.

Alpha is a great program. He wouldn't be here right now if he didn't know that the gentlemen that go into the program will get the---if they are going to succeed, it is going to happen with Alpha. If young families are going to be put in there, and young men, he thinks Alpha will be the one to turn their lives around.

Teresa ADAMS, 325 S. Melrose Dr., Ste. 210, Vista CA 92083, is a deputy sheriff with the San Diego County Sheriff's Dept., currently assigned to the City of Vista. She has been there since 1988 and worked patrol and is currently assigned to community-oriented policing known as "COPs". She wasn't aware of the point of contention this proposed project was causing in El Cajon. As a new patrol deputy, when she was out on training phase and someone told her of Alpha Project, "Casa Raphael", she thought it would be a "great cherry patch" with some awesome arrests. She is here tonight to say she was completely wrong. As a deputy sheriff saying that, she thinks that is a true testimony to the fact that it has been a wonderful program and a great asset to the City of Vista. She never once made an arrest around Alpha Project/Casa Raphael in the six years she has been with the City of Vista. The area had very high crime with a lot of prostitutes and drugs. After Casa came in and she was assigned to the Vista station, she was shocked at the changes in that area. Crime was actually down, and FBI index crime rate and stats in that area had gone down. The area had been cleaned up. The

prostitution and blatant drug use and selling out in the street wasn't occurring as it was before. They take pride in their area; there is no trash lying around. Everyone that is there has the utmost respect and is courteous. The program has turned the guys around. She had arrested some of them on the street herself, then when she saw them they wanted to know if she remembered them and said they had been in Casa and Alpha Project, had made it through and graduated.

ADAMS states she is also on the North County Drug Court. Drug court is an intensive program. She sees very few people actually get through and those that do often end up using again or terminating. Casa Raphael and Alpha Project is a program that also deals with drug use. It is amazing how much more intensive this program is and how people have gone through and are not relapsing or going back to their old ways of life. She pulled some stats on her own when she was asked to come here to talk about Casa Raphael and Alpha Project. In 2002, which is amazing, there were only five reported arrests in related crime reports at Casa Raphael/Alpha Project, which is "pretty damn good" considering what it could be. As a deputy sheriff, in all her time in Vista, she has never once received a call for service at Alpha Project to take care of a disturbance, a fight, or anything. She asked some of her partners if they had ever been to Alpha Project on a call, and told them El Cajon was considering one and wanted to know what is going on. She talked to about 10 deputy sheriffs and not one of them had received a call for service at Alpha Project.

Last year, she became a member of the advisory committee because of the work she has done with them since being in community-oriented policing. She has used the men that are assigned there quite a lot to do clean-up projects and cut down trees; they have worked for eight hours in the hot blazing sun to beautify a city that they may not live in themselves. They don't ask for anything and don't want anything in return. Once when they had worked for eight hours cleaning the Amtrak railroad area of debris from a big storm, she bought all of them chocolate shakes. They were so grateful because of that one simple thing. One guy said that a deputy sheriff had never bought him anything, let alone talked to him this way (nicely). This is the type of thing that changes your life in working in a community. From that day on, she realized what an asset this program is to the community. Truly, from a police officer who deals with the drug society, she would not say that this program is a drug society, nor does it bring it into the community. She knows that El Cajon will benefit from this program as the City of Vista has. If the Commission has any qualms or questions, just go to Vista and see the program. It is an awesome experience and she hopes they will be invited into the community of El Cajon.

Bob McELROY, 12255 Wintergardens Dr., Lakeside CA 92040, represents Alpha Project. He says his house is only two miles away from the proposed site. Someone asked why Alpha Project was chosen to do this. They were asked to participate in this venture based on what they do. They have over 200 people, men and women, working throughout San Diego and San Diego County on a daily basis. As the Commission heard earlier, they clean up the cities in which they operate. They have 14 different programs in seven different cities all over Southern California. In every city where they have a facility, the crime has gone down if not been eliminated. They have homeless

outreach programs. They believe in taking the police out of the homeless business. They go into the river valleys and river beds, tramp encampments, and make contact with individuals to let them know that they can come in and be helped. They are a licensed general contractor and are building affordable housing in National City. There were 2000 people actively in the program on a daily basis.

All of their facilities have won national awards, and obviously local commendations and awards for community enhancement, being a good neighbor, and commendations from the Police Dept. in every city. All of their facilities are crime-free, drug-free zones. They work side-by-side with businesses and residents throughout the community. They have demolished over 52 crack houses. If the Commission watched Turko this week, they just did another one today; a nuisance property in San Diego. They turn people into assets who at one time were liabilities. They went to the rally on Saturday and had 10 men come down from Casa Raphael. They refer people there because it was a high crime motel at one time, in the middle of a residential area. There are 2000 children who live in direct proximity to that facility. Yet, the children sit on their lawn and do their homework. Before they moved into that site, not one parent would allow their children to go to the bus stop at the bottom of the hill. Now, hundreds of kids do that every day.

Their men have planted strawberries in their front hedge so the little kids can have something to munch on and “steal” on the way home. They deploy and employ people. Everybody in all their programs, men and women, work on a daily basis. They teach people how to work, how to live, and how to be sober. They have done this seven times in seven cities. There are always folks that are concerned, and he appreciates that. He would hope that if this project goes forward that as much energy as has been put into opposition of this project will be put into making it a world-class project.

McELROY says there was some misinformation. There was a quote that 58% of their people fail. That is not true. Forty-two percent of the people at Casa Raphael graduate, but there are different tiers to the program. About 20% on top of that go back to their families and into fulltime jobs. Some of their programs are designed for six months instead of 12 months. They still graduate but they don't hold them as their formal graduation. They have heard that they are going to be busing in 400 people. That is wrong; they are busing in no one. People will have to be referred. They have no food lines, and are not an advocate of shelters. This is not a shelter. That is not a word that is in their vocabulary. They have a direct commitment to the communities in which they operate.

TURNER asks what other cities are involved in Alpha Projects.

McELROY states they have a housing facility in Riverside; a senior housing complex in Escondido; the Vista facility; a 230-unit facility downtown for dual-diagnosed mentally ill; a housing complex in Chula Vista, which won the Best Practices award from HUD last year; a Heros program in the city of Ventura; and Anaheim Gardens in the city of Harbor City.

TURNER asks how big those facilities are. This proposal tonight is for 360 beds.

McELROY states the supportive housing program downtown has 230 severely mentally and dual-diagnosed; they have a 240-unit family complex in Sierra Woods and Riverside; 93 units of senior housing in Escondido.

TURNER asks if this is the first mixed use where there are families, single men and single women in one facility.

McELROY responds that they have men and women in Metro downtown with a 230 inventory.

TURNER asks if 360 beds is a step up.

McELROY says eventually, sure.

BURGERT asks the ratio of staff to people who are participating in the program. What does he suspect will be the staff-to-patron ratio?

PHILLIPS replies that is driven by the different types of programs. Typically, programs like the one in Vista that is transitional and requires negative reporting have an incredibly high staff-to-client ratio. He believes that project has roughly one staff person to every six clients in the project versus other programs that have a somewhat lower threshold in terms of risk. Those can go anywhere from 12 to 15 to one. A target case ratio should not exceed 15 to 20 cases per case manager. In addition, there are security personnel and other administrative personnel, support positions such as drivers and other coordinators. On this site, there probably should be, with just the transitional housing component along, 35 to 40 staff members on a fulltime equivalent basis.

AGURS asks if they are potentially looking at having clients from all over San Diego County.

PHILLIPS responds that the project is designed to address, first and foremost, the needs of El Cajon, only to the extent that it can address other outlying communities in immediately adjacent areas of the East County would that next become the target range. The first effort is to deal with those actually homeless, and at eminent risk of being homeless, in the city of El Cajon.

They have the capacity to do any number of things, but they believe very earnestly in putting forth the proposal and working with the staff in developing the proposal, that the City of El Cajon has come a long way. He thinks the City is doing a great deal more than its share in a regional sense in being willing to site a facility of this scope. He thinks the City is doing it with great vision. He thinks the staff has represented "you all" very well in making sure that it is done responsibly. It is clearly not the City's responsibility to solve the problems of downtown.

AGURS asks in having a facility like this, have they found that it has been a magnet to draw more people from outside the area.

PHILLIPS thinks that contrary to that, in many cases, absence of facilities is a real magnet to an area. Homelessness, particularly the most pernicious types of homelessness that an urban area wants to avoid, tends to follow the least resistance. When a city is inundated through a lack of housing options, with a whole spectrum of homeless people that flatly overwhelm law enforcement's ability to deal with it, that is where the problem is. To the contrary, he thinks well-run facilities tend to discourage homelessness.

AGURS asks if they have looked at any other site in El Cajon or East County.

GIBSON returns and says that was his responsibility. He has worked as a broker for 32 years in El Cajon. They aggressively searched out every logical possibility and this site was their first choice. They probably looked at 25 properties and felt that this was the least undesirable location for this use.

McELROY refers to AGURS' question about these facilities being a magnet and says that seven of the ten men who came down on Saturday, that are now in Vista, were from El Cajon. They don't decide where they come from or where they go, but they just happened to be from El Cajon. One of the gentlemen here tonight who was actively engaged in both those motels doing drugs and things is now in Vista.

AGURS asks clarification. Were those seven men residents of El Cajon or homeless in El Cajon?

McELROY states they were residents of El Cajon.

BURGERT asks if PHILLIPS has any documentation to show the statistics on the number of participants that are coming from San Diego County Probation or CDC Parole based in Escondido.

PHILLIPS asks if he is talking about the Vista program.

BURGERT replies yes.

PHILLIPS says they do have those records, but not here tonight. They can generate them at almost the push of a button.

BURGERT asks if PHILLIPS has any idea what the percentage might be.

PHILLIPS takes referral sources through each of the offices that were mentioned.

BURGERT says the question is dealing with the percentage of the total number of people participating at any time at the Vista program that might be probationers or

parolees. He is trying to establish what the relationship is like between the Casa Raphael/Alpha Project in Vista with the state and local probation parole programs.

McELROY replies Casa is a unique site in that regard. It is not only a transitional housing project; it is a state-licensed and certified residential treatment program. If anyone is familiar with the process, it is quite a burden to bear. As such, it is in a unique position with the County to be the single largest provider of residential treatment beds for participants in the Proposition 36 alternate sentencing program. That is not an immediate option available to use at the proposed site in El Cajon.

PHILLIPS says, to answer BURGERT's question in a brief way, a very large percentage of participants at Casa Raphael are probationers and parolees.

TURNER asks since they are calling this "transition housing", and she has heard the word "graduation" mentioned and people staying there for periods of time, what is the average stay of a person or family?

McELROY states all their family housing is permanent housing. That is the huge missing link in the transition point. They have graduates in their program and there is no place for them to move to. They have been very successful in finding graduate housing for their folks. The average stay is about nine months in the program. They would like them to stay as long as possible. They prefer that they graduate through the program, but they also have a lot of folks that get their families back together. They are working. They have a whole pool of employers that hire exclusively from their folks, men and women. It is just like a high school kid coming out of playing baseball out of high school; he circumvents college to get the pros to take care of his family. That happens about 20% of the time.

TURNER says since they are a new player in town, a lot of people don't know them in El Cajon. She heard the El Cajon Collaborative mentioned earlier. Are they [Alpha Project] already trying to set up services before and after their program with what is already in place in our community?

McELROY says they have a long-term relationship with Crisis House. They have a contract with them and provide case management service and medical. That is also what is missing in the report. They have medical service and a commodity center for senior citizens. This is not going to be restricted just to residents. Their Casa Raphael facility provides pastries and foodstuffs for the senior citizens in trailer parks all around the city of Vista. They have a relationship with VOA and the Salvation Army. Tony (PHILLIPS) has known the Collaborative for quite a while. They are going to sit down and have long-term meetings with everybody. They don't plan on trying to do this themselves. As he said, they were asked to do this.

TURNER says this is a community issue, as the applicants can tell. People are concerned that this is going to be put in their community. She wants to make sure that they are working with the agencies that are already in place here. She asks if the

standards that the staff has tried to put in the report are standards that the applicant can live up to.

McELROY states those standards don't come close to the standards they have at all their facilities now. These are easy benchmarks for them; they will be adding quite a bit more.

HANSON-COX thanks the speaker for giving the ratio of the staff. She asks what the ratio of participants versus case managers will be. They said they would be closely watched and monitored 24 hours a day.

PHILLIPS says it slightly exceeds industry standards, but Alpha Project strives to see that no more than 15 cases are assigned to any individual case manager.

HANSON-COX refers to their report where it says that the restaurant will be first used for training programs. When it is eventually turned into a restaurant, what are the plans for their training programs?

PHILLIPS returns and replies they are timed to be almost concurrent. He assumes that because of some of the start up costs with the retail business that they might have a site that is ready to be quasi operational before it is actually able to be fully open to the public. They intend that facility to serve as an entry-level on-the-job training site in food service and food handling, and all other aspects of retail operations throughout the life of the project.

HANSON-COX states some letters were received from some of the businesses in the area, and she had an opportunity to go down and speak to one of the business owners. Some of the concerns are with the drug dealing that is going on down there now. If their facility has a lot of participants that are being rehabilitated from drug addiction, and these dealers are outside and they know that those types of participants are there, how are they going to protect the participants' welfare from failing the program?

McELROY says they tell on them! He says they establish Neighborhood Watch programs at every one of their facilities. They are the founding member of the East Village Citizens' Patrol. They self-police. Obviously, there wouldn't be anybody at this motel that is actively engaged in any kind of drug use. In fact, in Vista, they allowed the Sheriff's Dept. to bring in their K-9 team to do training at their facility and go through all the rooms with their drug-sniffing dogs. Their facilities are open, but if they see somebody doing something bad in the neighborhood, they are going to tell on them. They like to see people go to jail because it gives them an opportunity to think over their priorities. They police the neighborhood.

AMBROSE has a couple of hypothetical questions. If this project is approved this evening and becomes operational, what happens when a guy in his fatigues and his shopping cart comes to their door and says he wants to get into the program and get off drugs?

McELROY states they put them up in one of their facilities, usually a day center or somewhere downtown in close proximity so they can be assessed the next day. Usually, if they come right off the street, they obviously have an issue. Before they can go into the program, they have to go through a detox program, usually with VOA or one of the other providers. Is AMBROSE talking about someone who comes to them in the middle of the night?

AMBROSE relies yes.

PHILLIPS says they have Alpha House in the Sherman area. They will find them a place to stay; they don't turn anybody away. The next morning they can be triaged, assessed, and directed to another facility until they are appropriate for Alpha Project.

AMBROSE asks what about mentally disturbed people. Will they be treating them? What happens when someone shows up and it is discovered that they are a disturbed person?

PHILLIPS says, for the sake of propriety, that mental illness is covered by every class of protection under the law. They could not, nor shall they, decline services to people who suffer from mental illness. They will say, however, that they are a program that is not designed, nor do they intend to operate this program in any way as a program that is aimed at mental health treatment. People who suffer from mental illness come in varying degrees. There are no doubt in the audience tonight, and perhaps speaking to the Commission now, those who have suffered from some degree of mental illness. In working with the homeless population, they have to admit that the conservative estimate that as many as one third suffer from mental illness probably is just that: conservative. Part of restoring most people's optimal mental health is to stabilize them in a transitional long-term setting to be able to replace some of the lost living skills that many of us take for granted. That is surely a design of the program. Nevertheless, they do operate 210 units with services designed specifically for chronically mentally ill treatment-resistant homeless adults. That is in downtown San Diego, where most of the people in El Cajon probably want it. That would be their primary referral source internally. They maintain relationships with every provider of out-patient care throughout the County, most especially Family Health Centers of San Diego, who operate a facility here in El Cajon and 21 others across the County and many of their partner agencies who have shown up tonight.

AGURS states there is obviously some unhappiness from the local businesses in the area of the proposed facility. Has the applicant tried to have any dialog with them or any meetings with the business owners in that specific area to address their concerns?

McELROY says he has invited Rick's RV on four separate occasions to tour their Vista facility, as well as anybody who has called their office. They want them to go see it first, and then come back. They have spent hours on the phone answering people's questions. They were out there on Saturday answering questions. They had the

opportunity to speak to some of the neighbors who refused to sign a petition without knowing both sides of the story. They had an opportunity to meet with some really neat folks. People can go downtown to see their facilities. They invited everybody to see them without them and their “dog-and-pony” show. Some people took them up on the offer and others didn’t.

HANSON-COX says being a small business, she is always looking out for the businessman, especially with some of the businesses in the area who have been in business for many, many years, since she was a little kid. Some of their concerns, even before this project is located there, is the homeless that sleep in their doorways. They urinate, they panhandle, they bother the customers and employees and cause problems. The staff report said that the applicant will work with the surrounding businesses and property owners to keep the homeless individuals from sleeping on their properties and harassing employees. Do they still stand behind this?

McELROY says they do that at every site throughout the county. They send out TBS (Take Back the Streets) crews three times a day in a five-mile radius just to pick up the neighborhoods.

AMBROSE says Council member GRONKE is coming forward.

GRONKE says he has done quite a bit of study on that because they have dealt with it in their city too. When it comes to the homeless and those with either mental or drug problems, people have to remember that everybody has a constitutional right to a life, and they can stay in the street if they choose to. Alpha Project is attempting to give them an opportunity to get off the street, whether they have a mental incapacity or some kind of substance abuse. Sometimes, as PHILLIPS says, they go hand in hand and it really can’t be deciphered that someone has a mental incapacity until after they get off the drugs. So they need to go to some facility to detox and get cleaned up before it can be determined if they have a drug problem that is treatable. Something like Alpha is needed that has that dual capacity to take someone off the street, if they choose to come off the street. In Vista they have a number of homeless that have been on the streets for as long as he has been there (20 years). The Sheriff’s Dept. knows them by name, and they choose to stay on the street.

Alpha Project goes out and tries to recruit and if someone doesn’t want to come in the program and have come into their city and are panhandling (they don’t have panhandlers in Vista), if they want to sit by the freeway and say they will work for food or whatever, people from Alpha go to them and ask what they are doing there and tell them they need to come into the program or move on. People in the city just don’t come up to the Alpha Project and knock on the door and want to come in.

HANSON-COX says so basically, they don’t wait for them to actually come to the project. She understands they take referrals, but they also go out, seek the homeless people, and take them to a referral agency to see if they are qualified candidates.

McELROY states they were contracted and paid by the Redevelopment Agency in downtown San Diego two years ago to clean up all the downtown parks. Some of that can be seen on TV; they have a ½ hour infomercial. The crews can actually be seen making contact in very heavily impacted parks in downtown San Diego. They cleaned them all up. That initiated the downtown partnerships “Clean and Safe” program. As Steve (GRONKE) was talking about, they actually went out to freeway off-ramps with their placards on espousing their constitutional rights that this individual who says he will work for food, they offer him a job and a place to stay, housing and treatment; he just wants to stay out and use the money for drugs and alcohol. That just dries up the income very quickly, and they leave. It is a very effective policy. They are not paid to do this; they just don’t want to see those people out there hurting themselves. As Steve said, they have a Constitutional right to be there, but they do not have a Constitutional right to defecate in public, urinate on people’s doorways, to sleep on private property, so Alpha Project goes out, many times with the Police Dept., and addresses the issues.

TURNER-COX says she has known some previous homeless people that were down on their luck and lost their jobs. Now they are model citizens. She thanks Alpha Project for everything that they do.

PHILLIPS says there are some former homeless people here tonight. At his request, about 10 or 12 people stand up.

The audience claps and AMBROSE reminds them not to.

McELROY states many of these men were locked in their addiction to heroin and crack cocaine, and doing robberies to support their habits and other things. Now they are assets to the community instead of liabilities. That is what Alpha Project is about.

AMBROSE asks McELROY to spell his last name, which he does.

AMBROSE asks for input from project supporters at this time. He asks them to line up to speak. After that, the Planning Commission will hear from the opposition.

Michael James RUSSELL, 993 Postal Way, Vista CA 92084, is currently a resident of the Alpha Project. Four and a half months ago, he was homeless in El Cajon after several years and many vain attempts to become clean and sober. He has a large past of wreckage in this city and he thought what better way to serve his city than to come back and do this with the Alpha Project, with the support of the Fabulous 7. He had no direction or purpose in his life. His life was towards the gates of Hell. Thanks to Bob McElroy and the Alpha Project, he has a purpose. Within 4 ½ months he has achieved 4 ½ months of sobriety, he is also on the security staff for the Alpha Project, and he has his family back in his life, which means the world to him.

Peter Moore KOCHLAS, is pastor of Chapel of the Valley United Methodist Church, 1465 E. Madison Avenue, El Cajon, CA 92019, near East Main in the community in which this project will be initiated, hopefully. They have at their church served food to

the homeless in years past. The City closed it down. Currently, because of the closing down of the temporary homeless shelter, informally they have taken folks on their campus and are looking after them. His trustees look forward to the Planning Commission providing some kind of transitional housing for the homeless so that the folks that they have given sanctuary to can find a positive place where they can learn skills and move back into the community.

Their church has a history of compassionate caring. They supported Father John in his efforts. They appreciate what the City has done recently, but that center is now closed down and something more and visionary is needed. The Alpha Project is offering that. He urges the Planning Commission to accept this proposal.

Pastor Byron GREEN, 18985 Highway 94, Dulzura CA, is with Set Free Ministries. He says they work with the homeless through the ministry through Jesus. They pick them up off the street and give them a place to stay. They take them out in the hills and bring them back into society to help at the local churches and get them back into a work-type environment. They support Alpha and will be working with Alpha projects. They will take the people in off the street that don't have a place to go, clean them up and bring them back into society. They will help the ones that don't have a social service to help them, and pick up the undesirables that the community doesn't want. They have a place for them. He was an ex-con, homeless, a drug addict, he has been through all that stuff. Through Jesus, he got his help, and through Alpha. That is what it is all about.

Sue CHRISTOPHER, Executive Director of Crisis House, 1034 N. Magnolia Ave, El Cajon CA 92020, says she has a unique perspective in terms of this particular project because many of the people that Crisis House works with every day are people that are appropriate for this facility. Their ongoing work with Alpha Project includes two current projects, one of which is a sub-contract of Crisis House to Alpha Project. As a result of that being a sub-contract, she sees their program reports and financial reports. They consistently exceed the requirements of their contract. They consistently provide a quality service. She really likes working with Alpha Project. They don't put up with a lot of "bull". The people they are working with are people who are in this community now. Crisis House completely supports this. We need this assistance. Regarding the ratio of clients to case managers, quite frankly, sometimes at Crisis House they have a 1:30 ratio. That is a really heavy case load. The clients are here and this type of project is needed. Alpha Project, with their current work in El Cajon, their current work in other cities, has a proven track record. They can accomplish this and clean up that area and be a great resource to this community.

Barry ERVIN, 991 Postal Way, Vista CA 92083, says about two years and four months ago he got out of prison for the ninth time. He finally decided he wanted to call it quits with the drugs. He didn't have one person on this planet that he could call and ask for help. Somebody in the prison suggested he try Casa Raphael/Alpha Project. He sent them a letter and they said he could come in there. He has learned how to be an employee, how to be a son and how to be a friend. He gets up and pays his way every day for society. He says he was a taker for a very long time and now it is time for him to

give back. He works a 12-step program. He has a sponsor and he sponsors people. That is how he gives back to his community. He can tell the Commission for a fact that every local business around Alpha Project Casa Raphael thrives from the community that lives at Casa Raphael. The only reason he could see anybody opposing this new project is that they are happy with the prostitutes and the drug dealers and defecation and urination that is going around their businesses. There is nothing but good things that will happen from this. He can't say everything will be great and peachy keen; not everybody is going to make it, but the percentages are pretty good. He owes his life to the Casa Raphael program. It has made all the difference for him.

Jason RODRIGUEZ, 6200 Edinger Avenue #104, Huntington Beach CA 92647, says over four years ago when he came to the Alpha Project, he had nowhere to go and was homeless. He was strung out on heroin. His family had almost abandoned him. Bob McElroy and the Alpha Project took him in when no one else did. Today he has a life because of the Alpha Project. He just finished four years of sobriety after ten years of heroin and other drugs and alcohol. He knows that this project in El Cajon will work and be a use to the community.

Jay BRECHTEL, 991 Postal Way #20, Vista CA 92083, says he took a little tour of the site this afternoon. It was the first time he had been up here. He saw a few people walking around that reminded him of where he came from. Seven years ago, he came to the Alpha Project and needed help, similar to the previous speaker. He was a heroin addict and an alcoholic. He lived on the streets in North County for a lot of years. Alpha Project gave him a chance, took him and showed him how to suit up and show up for work every day. They didn't give him anything; he worked for what he got. They gave him self-esteem and he kept going from there. Alpha Project put him through school and he is now a certified drug and alcohol counselor. He works in case management at Casa Raphael in Phase III. Phase III is where the guys transition into getting fulltime permanent work in the community. He has probably 35 to 40 employers that employ their guys. They are extremely pleased with them. They work, they show up on time, and they are clean and sober. They make a difference in the community. As Bob (McElroy) stated, the bus stop is right at the end of their street, and the kids are down there and feel safe. He lives across the street from Casa Raphael in an apartment complex that was overrun with dope addicts and alcoholics. Over seven years ago he used to go to Casa Raphael, when it was a motel similar to what he saw today, and he used to score his drugs there; so he knows what it was like. He also knows what it is like today, and the place across the street is all clean and sober living. Alpha Project has made a positive impact on the community, the businesses, and definitely his life.

Pastor Miles L. JOHNSON, 5556 Baja Drive, San Diego CA 92115, says he first met Bob (McElroy) in 1997 when he got out of prison. He has been with him tearing down crack houses; he has been with him cleaning up the community; he has been with him chasing the homeless and those that sleep in doorways away from the businesses in the community. He has seen Alpha Project work. His brother is currently employed by Alpha Project. His brother was a heroin addict for 20 years and has been clean for the last eight years, thanks to the hand up that Alpha Project gave him. He highly

recommends Alpha Project. He knows a lot of times people don't want these in their community, but he believes if the Commission will embrace the Alpha Project it will be glad it did.

Harold BROWN, 539 59th Street, San Diego CA 92114, is employed by Hamann Companies. About eight months ago, a friend of his, John Gibson, drove by a project they are working on, East County Ministry and Art Center, and said he wanted to show BROWN something. They drove over and saw 75 to 100 people sleeping in tents alongside a church. He told GIBSON that poor man had gotten himself into a place that he doesn't know how to get out of. GIBSON asked him what he thought they should do because BROWN spent 12 years at the San Diego Rescue Mission as a facilities director. BROWN suggested they call in the rest of the community and move these people away from the felonies that are going to occur, and put them into an organized environment. They did that with the help of Set Free Ministries and Servants for Christ who came down and moved the people in about four or five hours (something that others claimed couldn't be done) into a structure that Father Joe Carroll put up.

BROWN states John (Gibson) started looking around for places. What is the solution to this problem? The solution does not come from the government; it comes from agencies like Bob McElroy's—Alpha Project. When they found the subject location, they looked at what provider would be able to deal with such a location. Set Free Ministries is very small and couldn't deal with it, but Alpha Project could deal with it because they have the resources and the ability to do that. Set Free Ministries is willing to come in and help in any way they can. Servants for Christ will help them patrol the streets around that area and clean the area up. Right now, the subject location is a haven for drugs, alcohol and prostitution. It is going to become a place where people can get their lives back together. He asks the Planning Commission to please vote 'Yes'.

Eric KNOWLES, 1044 Pioneer Way, Ste. B, El Cajon CA 92020, states ARJIS Crime Statistics indicates that on Farragut Street, where Father John's St. Alban's Church is, for the 10 months ending December 2002, there were 95 reported incidents of crime. At the Budget Inn in the East Main area, in that same time frame, there were 114 incidences of crime. There is an invisible problem that exists on East Main Street that a lot of people don't want to recognize, but it is there and can be backed up with crime statistics. Anybody can get them from ARJIS Crime Statistics.

The other interesting statistic is that the Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) considers Farragut Street as an average alcohol-related area, and it considers East Main Street as a high crime-related area. Alpha Project will bring a solution to an existing problem area.

Gary CASS, 389 N. Magnolia Avenue #4, El Cajon CA 92020, is Pastor of West Hills Christian Fellowship that operates out of the East County Ministry and Arts Center. He commends Father John Conrad for initiating a true solution to a perpetual problem that has plagued El Cajon for a long time. He sees a great need, yet just having a big heart and seeing these people, who we all would rather pretend that we don't see, if you want

to see them just come and stand in front of his church. It will be an education to see the kids from the apartments around there selling crack cocaine and deals going down all around El Cajon. We don't like to talk about it, but that is the community we're in. A lot of people with good intentions have talked a long time and have done a lot of good things. The reason he is excited about bringing in the Alpha Project is that is the kind of practical solution that will put some substance to our good intentions. He doesn't think anyone in this room wants to see anybody suffer. Certainly, we are all concerned about crime and drug addiction. Yet, out of all the years he has been in touch with the people that are involved in the faith community and the social service community, they haven't really had a very viable constructive alternative. He believes Alpha Project should be given a chance to prove that what they have promised can actually be performed. If this were (McElroy's) first time in trying to do this, he would be very skeptical. He has seen a lot of people with a lot of passion try to engage this process and go home broken hearted. But Alpha Project has the resources, the experience, and the commitment to see this through. He encourages the Planning Commission to vote 'Yes'.

Jim KELLY, 9453 Debbie Court, El Cajon CA 92021, is the president of the Grossmont Union High School Board. A lot of the arguments he was prepared to make have been made by the other speakers. He can see how people would be concerned that this might encourage homelessness or the current activities of the homeless, but history has shown that they [Alpha Project] are a solution to a homeless problem. Their intentions are restorative and redemptive, and they want to deal with a problem that already exists here in El Cajon. They want to be part of the solution. Hearing the stories of all these people who have been changed by this, he thinks this is just what El Cajon needs. This is a major project and he is very excited. He hopes the Planning Commission will support it because he believes it will bring a very positive change to El Cajon.

Julie TUBERG, 610 S. Mollison Avenue, Unit E, El Cajon CA 92020, doesn't know if anybody has taken a walk lately at about eight o'clock at night. Every time she goes running, she sees a homeless person; not just one, but ten or more. A lot of these people are old. They don't have places to go. They need to go somewhere; it isn't going to get any better. Has anybody been to Lindo Lake lately? There are homeless there. East County is one of the counties that she has researched on the Internet. There is one shelter that she knows of that is an emergency shelter. It holds 14 beds right now. What are they going to do with two weeks? That is not enough time to get themselves together. She thinks the transitional center would be great for El Cajon. Maybe the businesses in the area should call other businesses that are next to the other (transitional) centers.

Shannon HUETER, 4602 Natalie Drive, San Diego CA 92115, states she is here on behalf of a program that developed out of the tent city on St. Alban's property. She is a parishioner at St. Alban's. One of their outreach offshoots has been the development of a homeless mentoring program that is kind of unknown in the community. She wants the Planning Commission to know that there are individual citizens from various faith-based communities in El Cajon who are actively participating on an individual level and making the commitment to mentor homeless people in the community. This effort is in

collaboration with the social service agencies that work within the El Cajon Collaborative, specifically Debbie Comstock at Little House, Terri Richardson at Crisis House and Paula Guerra Lynch at Home Start. All of their mentors are matched with case managers and work on an individual ongoing basis with homeless people. Most of their mentors are here tonight.

This [mentoring] program has a lot of promise and already some significant work has been done, although it is embryonic at this point. There is a real commitment on the basis of these people and the faith community is growing in awareness of this. Four churches are represented in this program: Community Covenant, First Presbyterian, Foothills Bible Church and St. Alban's. They intend to have this program grow and support the social service efforts and the civic efforts of the community. She wanted the Commission to know that this exists and is on an individual citizen level; not just social services or people that are paid to do this. It has been very difficult for them to offer their services and individual help to people since the temporary shelter has shut down, because there is nowhere to connect with them. These people are not going anywhere without some help. They are just going to hover in our doorways and urinate on our steps. They would really like to make a difference but need help to do it.

Mike KURDZIEL, 898 Jackman Street, El Cajon CA 92020, is a residential real estate agent in El Cajon. From what he has seen and heard tonight and in conversations with many people in El Cajon, he thinks there is a good heart for this type of project in El Cajon. With Alpha Project's track record, he can't see any reason why it wouldn't increase the safety in this area of the city and also potentially improve the property values.

Geoff HUETER, 4602 Natalie Drive, San Diego CA 92115, the senior warden at St. Alban's Church in El Cajon, says it is rare to see a project that serves both the moral and the economic needs of a community. Not only are we going to see the joy of taking discarded lives and restoring them to a useful function, but the economic activity in El Cajon will benefit in two important ways. One is that a blighted property will be turned into a revitalized property that is being used and generating revenue in the city. Second, there is the savings to the City of El Cajon by using a facility like this rather than jails and hospitals to administer to the homeless. They are very enthusiastic about this project and hope it can go forward. He knows the fear of uncertainty hovers around this project, but there has been a lot of testimony to show what a positive force this can be in a neighborhood.

Pastor Robert WEBB, 6557 Tait Street, San Diego CA 92111, says that until drugs and alcohol hits you in your own living room, when you think you are safe and comfortable with your children, you will wish the Alpha Project was in El Cajon. He did 25 years dallying in drugs and thinks it is important to have resources to bring men and women back into society to become family members in a community and to give our children a chance. Alpha Project would give our children and grandchildren a chance.

Scott PINKERTON, 3727 Bancroft St. #5, San Diego, CA 92104, also works for Set Free Ministries. The homeless situation is not going to go away. People can be taken off the street and given a new life. It doesn't do any good just to have a shelter built because all that does is enable somebody. When they feel better, they go out and do the same thing again. There has to be a program. He grew up in North County and went through CRASH and Alpha Project Casa Raphael and it didn't work for him; he wasn't ready. You cannot make somebody want to not be homeless. They have to be ready to change their life and then it will work. He praises God that it was available when he was ready. It needs to be available right here in El Cajon. There has to be something to give these people when they do make the decision to change their lives.

Father John CONRAD, 490 Farragut Circle, El Cajon CA 92020, Director of St. Alban's Church in El Cajon, has some experience with homeless people in El Cajon. He strongly endorses this project. He can't say enough about Bob McElroy and what he does. What he does works. It is proven. It is credible. He will do what he says in the neighborhood. CONRAD will do everything he can to support McELROY, and he knows there is a substantial part of the faith community that will join him in doing that.

He thinks that some people are going to talk in opposition, and will largely speak from their fears. That is the opposite of love. The opposite of love isn't hate.

JEERS from the audience prompts AMBROSE to call for order.

CONRAD says the opposite of love is fear. It is fear that causes a lot of anger and anxiety. After the speakers in opposition are finished, CONRAD may be able to tell the Planning Commission some things from his experience that may help lower the Commission's fears and theirs. He asks the Planning Commission to vote in favor of this project. In the name of God.

BREAK: 9:00 - 9:10 PM

AMBROSE says it looks like a speaker wishes to come to the microphone.

Larry HALL, 1538 E. Main Street, El Cajon CA 92021, is the closest property owner to this project, at least across the street.

AMBROSE asks if he represents a group. HALL says he has organized a number of people and it has snowballed. Every business owner on Main Street has responded. They have a large number of petitions to submit tonight. In his letter, he asked for 20 minutes to speak. He will try to cut his comments back because a number of people wish to speak. This is the only chance they have had to talk; the Mayor promised them lots of public hearings and this is the only one. AMBROSE agrees to extra time for his comments.

HALL states this was first mentioned to them about three weeks ago when the City Council called a meeting to present their spin on this. That is very unusual. He knows

most of the Planning Commission was not involved in that. He would like to commend all of the gentlemen who spoke that are drug free, recovering alcoholics, and Bob McElroy. He believes he is a force for good. He has some differences of opinion that he will go into. He also commends Commissioner Ambrose for his work in trying to find a facility. But he would like to say that he thinks, from the time he started working to the time we find ourselves here tonight, there has been a loss of goal. Last winter the city wanted to put the homeless into a temporary housing facility, a tent or whatever, to keep them out of the weather and the cold. He somewhat supports that. He doesn't want to see people going through our mild winters in the three months that it is pretty "crappy" here. However, that goal has changed. Now we are looking at a 360-bed permanent facility. If it draws additional homeless to El Cajon, like the Alpha Project in their statement says maybe it will, there will be the same problem next year. When it gets cold, this is a facility full of people, so where will the 200 that are on the street next year be put? There will be the same problem again.

HALL submits a handout to the City Attorney for the Planning Commission. He brought six copies for the Commission and the file. He would like to skip the first page; he will talk about that in a few minutes. At the Budget Inn motel, he and several associated businesses--he has been there for 13 years--their calls for police assistance at the Budget Inn has gone down every single year for 13 years. They have certain issues with the Police Dept., which he will only touch on. In the packet he just submitted, there is a letter, written in 1993, from the Chief of Police, Jack Smith. It was written at HALL's request, and commends the improvements they made at the motel. They asked for the police's input on how to solve certain problems.

In 1997, with the next Police Chief, Bob Moreau, they did the same thing. The letter again said that the purpose of the letter was to inform them that that they are extremely pleased with the management efforts, significantly reducing calls for police services. They have been working with the Police since 1993 and the results have been very commendable. He is not the only guy out on East Main. The 'Ha Penny has done that, and the other motels to a greater or lesser degree. But they have a problem. They have to play with the cards that the City deals them. They have a certain clientele to rent to and have gone through at least six upgrades of the people that they will rent to at his facility. He knows the 'Ha Penny has done the same thing. Unfortunately, the Fab 7 has been poorly managed and poorly run and it is a problem. HALL's facility has been full for five years with about 60% weeklies and 40% nightly or daily type people. As the percentage of dailies goes up, it is an indication of what kind of clientele there is. The longer-term people aren't necessarily the ones you strive for, but you have a mortgage to make so they fill it with weeklies. He has people who have been there for five years. They don't allow anything on their property. Unfortunately, they rarely get police backup. They have done it themselves.

They have worked with the neighbors—the people who want to speak after him. Ideal Manufactured Homes is their neighbor on one side. Rick's RV is on the other side. They have worked together for most of those 13 years. Dave Penny is here from the 'Ha Penny (his last name is coincidental, it doesn't have anything to do with the facility).

Dave might be here to answer some questions. He knows that Rick's and Ideal both have things to say.

HALL offers the two letters he mentioned as his résumé. He has five points. He wants to comment on the staff report very quickly. On page 8, it says the staff is concerned about potential clients who arrive at the location without first having been referred by one of the social service agencies. Their responses have been heard tonight. The mural on the wall is El Cajon. The homeless come over to just about the center to the foothills. He wants to know if the ones who are not available for intake at that point and haven't met the requirements are going to be taken out of El Cajon or just brought across the valley. He doesn't does want to speak about "I don't want it in my back yard". The people that wash out of their program, the people that don't get in first, are the ones they won't put up with either. The ones that won't follow the rules, are violent and sneak drugs into the facility are the ones they kick out. Any of those people that come into our community and don't choose to take their ride back to wherever they came from, are in our community.

The issue is not how nice the Vista project is. The issue is what happened in Vista away from the project. The CASA project up there was put in the worst place in Vista—Twecker Hill, with the highest crime rate. They cleaned up the hill. Great!! However, the people went to the other side of town. He will give some numbers later, not ones that he imagined. Bob McElroy mentioned HALL's number of 58% of the people that don't complete the program. It is from their published literature, which he had about three days to read, that indicates that 42% of their people graduate. HALL is concerned about the 58% that don't. The Planning Commission should be concerned about that. The Fabulous 7 Motel operates at about less than a quarter of the number of people they are talking about putting in there. Where are all the other people going to go? Where are the traffic studies like the one that was done for Home Depot, to show how it will impact the neighborhood, or an environmental impact report for this? A Negative Declaration was offered. He suggests there are two endangered species on that side of town that the Commission should consider. One is the people that live there, get up and go to work every day; and the other group are the truckers that have stayed there and supported that facility and this city for 40 years. There is not another truck stop between here and Yuma except the new casino. Those guys have to stay in Yuma or El Centro if they are going to bring goods into our community on Interstate 8. Nobody has said a thing about those guys.

HALL's motel and the 'Ha Penny run full. It is not a community problem. It could be, but it is not the result of the homeless or anything else that the Fabulous 7 property does that it does not function well. It is because of current poor management. He and the owner of the 'Ha Penny will buy the Fabulous 7 at market price. They have made that offer. Get them a legitimate appraisal and they will buy that property. There doesn't have to be a homeless center there. His name is Larry Hall; the Commission has his word on it. He has been in El Cajon for 40 years. He moved here before he graduated from college. He lives on Peach Avenue now, six blocks from the subject property.

HALL states Alpha Project claims it will work the surrounding businesses and properties to keep the homeless individuals from sleeping on those properties, harassing employees and customers and causing other problems. How are they going to do that and by what right? Right now, people call the police and they come out tell them what they can't do. That is the first litany the people get. That is the way they are trained. They skip telling them what they can do in proactive policing. It is very sad. It has gotten harder and harder to deal with the Police Dept. for the 13 years he has had his business here. There are some excellent police officers on the police force. A lot of them have been promoted and are now on the inside. Over 50% of our police staff have been on the street less than two years. People don't get the same service they used to. It is harder and harder to get the Police Dept. to accomplish things that they are supposed to take care of.

The Alpha Project doesn't have the authority to do these things. The police can move people to the sidewalk, and there they stay. The Alpha Project does not have any more authority than the Police Dept., so he questions their promises, at least how they can do that legally, because the homeless have civil rights.

There was a homeless guy in El Cajon, at the corner of Shady Lane and Madison, for over nine months. He was not removed until about four weeks ago. The police took over 20 bags of rotten food away. He was the fellow with the shopping cart with the things all the way down the side. Clearly he was a schizophrenic. Thanks to the American Civil Liberties Union, nobody could help him until he couldn't converse with the evaluating officer who was there. That is a problem and Alpha Project can't solve that, and we haven't solved it.

He has concerns about the micro-enterprise zone, most specifically recycling activities. Recycling is not allowed in that zone, to his knowledge. Furthermore, if recycling is done on that side of town, where are they going to take it? The rest of the recycling centers are across town. Are they going to take it in shopping carts? He knows that is facetious, but this is a motel and a restaurant. That is not a compatible use.

HALL says that the off-ramp coming into El Cajon is the first view people get when coming into El Cajon. If anything is out of place in that motel, in its high visibility state, it will ruin his business. If people see homeless, the contractors will not stay where the homeless are. The homeless take their tools and sell them for beer or drugs. Then, the contractors would have no tools to go to work with; they cannot stay in that area. Does he have to hire a security guard on his payroll? In 13 years, he has provided over \$400,000 to the City of El Cajon's treasury via room taxes (TOT taxes). This facility should produce two times what he does. Right now it is around \$3,000 a month. Properly operated, it should do \$6,000. If it were a franchise facility, fixed up to that level, it should do \$10,000 a month. If the Planning Commission turns this into the Alpha Project, it is voting to support this project forever to the tune of \$30,000, \$60,000, \$100,000 a year. That money comes directly out of the City treasury by its absence.

In the February 7-13 issue of the Daily Californian, it says the Friendship Festival was cut. We don't have the funds for that. On top of that, the El Cajon Chamber of Commerce budget was cut. On top of that, the El Cajon resident Sunshine Horton's annual charity walk was cut. El Cajon's performing arts center funds were cut, and a large portion of the budget for the Mother Goose Parade was cut. These are things that the city of El Cajon either needs or enjoys. So, on one hand with this proposal, \$60,00 to \$100,000 a year is being taken away, and the Commission is telling us that the City can't afford these things now. He apologizes; the Planning Commission isn't, the City Council is.

HALL says in good business there is a business plan and the finances are considered. They have elections in this state every year, and on every proposal there is a financial analysis that has been prepared. We don't have one for this. We don't know where the money is coming from or where it is going. He does know that all of the money they talked about is not going into the City treasury like TOT taxes. Most of these people aren't leaving the facility. They will eat in the restaurant, so they won't add any money to the rest of the businesses in town. He has a problem with that. So, we have budget cuts on one hand; we have counseling cuts and teachers' wages threatened, and yet the County of San Diego, Diane Jacob, says she can bring \$500,000 to El Cajon. That doesn't make up for five years worth of the room taxes and as reliable as the County is at keeping their word, what are they going to do next year? We are on our own if we have accepted this money one time and it doesn't come back. Are we going to have more services in El Cajon cut because we can't afford them for the good citizens that do work here and do pay taxes?

He questions whether there are 360 people in El Cajon that are homeless right now that could be identified and be eligible for this facility. He doesn't know, but they are not on that section of Main Street because they have dealt with them. They maintain a computer record on everybody's ID that they have ever taken at the Budget Inn. It was referenced in one of the Police Chief's letters. They were doing that before anybody was doing it out here. Their database is available for the police when there are investigations. If they have had trouble with people, they cross-reference who they were there with. He reiterates that he doesn't know that there are 360 people that can be put into this facility. Alpha has indicated they are going to take some people to San Diego and other people somewhere else, and they have other projects they can take people to. Isn't there some reciprocity? Don't they have some people somewhere else that they are going to bring to El Cajon when they are not full? They are not going to sit there empty; they get paid \$700 a month or more per person that they put in a bed. That facility collects a lot of money; at least, that is the stat he has heard. McELROY can correct him if he is absolutely wrong.

HALL asks to display an enlarged copy of the handout that was given to the Planning Commission. In deference to Bob McElroy and other speakers on published crime statistics, the right side of the chart in highlighted areas shows serious crimes rise slight in San Diego and the County. It says crime rose %1 in 2002. These aren't his numbers; it is the FBI index, California Dept. of Finance, the 2002 US Census, and SANDAG, all

respected organizations. He refers to #2. El Cajon had the third highest number of serious crimes reported per 1000 in San Diego County in the year 2001. The third highest of the 15 communities that are there. In 2002, El Cajon moved up a notch to second place with the second highest number of crimes. Our increase between the two years was 14%. He asks if it might have had anything to do with the tent city that was in our city for six months. Of El Cajon, Santee, Lakeside and La Mesa, El Cajon's crime rate is nearly 200% of Santee and Lakeside per this chart. We have 49 ½ crimes per 1000; Santee had 25.7; Lakeside had 24.2. Maybe we ought to check and see what they are doing right that we don't understand. La Mesa had 42.4. We beat them by 7.1, so we are at least ahead of our neighbors. But, the real zinger is item #5, showing Vista's crime rate, shown in orange, went up a whopping 24% last year, higher than anywhere in San Diego County. They led almost by a factor of 21 and 24 times the County's average over all. In fact, in the previous four years they had shown a 14% decrease. And they went from there to a 24% increase. That is a 600% swing in one year. He doesn't have an explanation for it. These statistics are outside the realm of abnormalities or anomalies in statistical interpretation. This is trying to tell you something.

Alpha Project admits that 58% of their addicted unemployed high-risk parolees and transients don't complete the program. Again, he commends the ones that do. Those are the good guys. Maybe it won't be across the street from him, but he has been here for 40 years and cares about the other people in El Cajon, the whole city. If they come across to this side of town, that hasn't served El Cajon and he doesn't think it has served him. If these numbers are available for a traveler, they aren't going to stay at his motel. They aren't going to go to Rick's RV. They are not going to shop in El Cajon.

HALL says the community wants the City to demonstrate that they can solve our existing homeless problems before rolling out the red carpet for high-risk parolees and homeless from San Diego and other areas. The city and the police must take back our streets and parks instead of adding to the problem. He presents some petitions. Since he has lived in El Cajon for 40 years, there has never been this much opposition to a project. He has 41 pages of signatures, totaling 984 signatures. More will be presented to the Commission. He gives it to the City Attorney. He has another petition that includes 30 of the business owners on East Main primarily. They include: De la Fuente Cadillac, Ideal Manufactured Homes, Green Acres, 'Ha Penny Inn, University Cleaners, one of the outlet stores, N & K Liquor, Shaver Bookkeeping, one of the smoke shops, Poor Tailor shop, Budget Signs, El Burrito--this is virtually every merchant on the east side of town--E & M Auto, East County Pawn Shop, Sam's Garage. There are approximately 30 names on that page. He has one from the Board of Realtors, who just dropped it off. They got seven signatures from people there, including Joe Garzanelli, who is a member of the Chamber of Commerce and is here to speak if he gets a chance. Then, in the 11th hour, they started contacting the Chamber of Commerce. He doesn't have copies but can get some for the City. He has 13 that were received today after 8 AM from the Chamber of Commerce members that include MPM Realty, Tri Supply, Century 21 All Service Realty (Joe Garzanelli), Buffo Insurance, Wells Fargo Bank (that is very unusual; corporations don't like their managers to sign these types of

things but there are enough problems out here that these people said 'to heck with corporate', it's a problem we need to solve), 7-Eleven, Circle RV Ranch, New World, Dimensions in Real Estate, Law Offices of Dan Conaway (these were signed either by the business owner or manager), Aerosmith Printing, SavMart Pharmacy, Staples, Kennedy & Schaefer.

AMBROSE asks HALL to deliver the petitions to the City Attorney that he doesn't have copies of and return tomorrow to pick up copies.

HALL says that is fine. A few more showed up tonight. In closing, there were a couple of letters from people who would like this item postponed. All of these people came down with less than 10 days notice. In fact, 95% of these people didn't get any notice if it wasn't for the four businesses he mentioned, and his staff. This is the biggest turnout the City has ever had in opposition, and it was done in less than 10 days. He would like more time to discuss it and to get opposition because everybody they have talked to is against it. He would like to give Alpha Project more time to defend their position. He suggests that the way to do that, on a matter that is this big and this impactful and potentially hurtful to the city of El Cajon, is to put it on the ballot.

The audience cheers. AMBROSE asks them not to applaud.

Pat RILEY, general manager of Rick's RV Center, 1546 E. Main Street, El Cajon CA, speaks in opposition as well. He also has petitions with 235 signatures to go along with the 984 that HALL turned in. These are from citizens in El Cajon that are concerned and angry enough to want this to be put to a vote, or ask for a 180-day delay so they will have more time to research and get more information out to the people of El Cajon, who will ultimately be the ones to bear the brunt of this when the rest of these folks go back to their homes in other cities.

He refers to the truck parking out there. If this project is approved, where are those trucks going? Back in 1998, there was a CUP by the City to paint those curbs red in conjunction with California Highway Patrol who claimed that looking at those trucks that were over six feet tall impeded vision and caused accidents.

It is no secret that this is a drug-infested area. Is this a positive thing to put recuperating recovering alcoholics and drug addicts in that type of area? He doesn't think that is a positive influence for anybody, especially the school children who go through there on a daily basis.

(Cheers from the audience. AMBROSE says if they continue to clap it will just prolong the hearing and they will sit here longer. He wants to hear what the speaker has to say. Persistent booing and cheering is not going to help us get done this evening. He knows everyone is tired. He is too. He worked a full day and is here this evening, like you. Let's give this speaker an opportunity to say what he has to say, and the next person and the next person. He will give people a chance to speak, but please refrain from clapping. He will stay here as long as it takes to get this done.)

RILEY continues. There are five schools located within less than a two-mile radius of this proposed facility. These children and school buses are there in front of the 'Ha Penny and their business and in front of the Ambassador on a daily basis. These children walk by this facility every day on a daily basis. Yes, there is still a prostitute problem out there. Yes, there is still a drug problem out there. These children have to go by that every day. There is police response out there almost on a daily basis for the drug activity and the other illicit activities that are going on. There is also a lack of public transportation there. When these people are out and not in their classrooms being rehabilitated, they will have no place to go. He suggests that the City, Alpha and the Hamann Corporation look at other viable solutions to this. Gillespie Field was one of the original areas proposed for this. Why that changed, they don't know. Why put it in a residential area when people out there are trying their darnedest to help themselves and their children.

In the report that was released recently by the East County Chamber of Commerce, they put a lot of statistics out. One that is very interesting is that the City of Santee has the most undeveloped property in all of San Diego (County). Five hundred thousand dollars from Diane Jacob, the contribution from Hamann Corporation...what is the reason for not putting something in Santee where there is space to do it, and it would have the least amount of impact on the residents of El Cajon city?

There will be a loss of income to the surrounding businesses. There is no doubt about that, when their customers start coming in with their high-end motor homes and recreational vehicles into an area with a regional homeless shelter.

RILEY asks who is going to be there to lock them down at nighttime. Who is going to supply the guards to take care of these people at nighttime? As we all know, the police can't remove people off public property now. What gives Alpha Project the authority and the above-the-law attitude that they can take care of these problems? Extra law enforcement and the fire department services with budget cuts, there is going to be a lot more law enforcement and emergency medical services being summoned to that facility. With budget cuts looming, that means the rest of the citizens of El Cajon are going to be subjected to a longer response time, or no response time at all, and these are the people that are paying taxes to support this. They have to put security around their facility; they have razor wire, motion detectors, and a guard dog, and that is just to take care of the problem that exists right now. The Main Street Community Center is going to offer short-term and long-term service and rent shelter to very low-income homeless singles and families in El Cajon. Councilman Ramos, at the last Council meeting, stated that 30% of the population of El Cajon make less than \$20,000. Do we want to bring more very low-income people into El Cajon? He doesn't think so.

Of the roughly 250 homeless persons in El Cajon that have been identified by Alpha Project, there will be 350. Where are the other 110 coming from? The services at the center will also be available to homeless clients on a walk-in basis through aggressive outreach and engagement forces. He is not making this up; it is coming right out of the

Alpha Project letterhead that they have addressed to the City of El Cajon. They also want to include a multi-service center housed in the current restaurant building and a transitional living facility. It is also going to be a multi-service center with full bathroom and shower facilities for men and women, and an industrial kitchen. What that means is that they have a facility downtown that is just a day center. It attracts 15,000 people a month there for showers, message boards and locker facilities. This is on top of what is being proposed here for a bed and breakfast, basically, and there will be more people out here on a daily transient basis. This is not good for the children of El Cajon or the citizens of El Cajon.

RILEY again suggests that this item be delayed for 180 days so the citizens can get more information and the City can be better prepared to answer the citizens' questions. Failing to do so, they suggest that it get on the ballot for the citizens to vote on.

Teresa HILL comes forward. She is homeless and her last known address was 1140 Merritt Drive. She thanks the Alpha Project for their commitment and the time they are willing to put in to change the problem. Right now, in El Cajon, being homeless since Thanksgiving she slept on Main Street for a week with blankets she got out of a U-Haul truck. Now it isn't safe because people are coming in from Riverside. It is nothing racial, but people are coming in from Riverside that are bringing African American girls down here that are bringing in prostitution from other counties.

She is a licensed nurse assistant and home health aide. Right now she is paying about \$1500 a month in a cycle she cannot get out of for hotel rooms because she refuses to go to El Cajon Lodge, Fab 7, to Motel 6 and some others on the west side of El Cajon. She wants to be on the east side of Main Street. She has seen people urinating on the side of businesses late at night. She asked one woman if she was homeless or trash. She, herself, will walk an extra three blocks to an open bathroom so she can go to the bathroom properly. She does not steal from businesses. She does not go and sleep in the back of U-Haul trucks because when she did, she was locked in the back of a U-Haul truck for 12 hours. She then proceeded to have breakfast at the Antique Row Café in the morning and cried through her whole meal from the traumatic experience she just went through in not being able to get out of the back of a U-Haul truck. She was 70¢ short for her meal and was kicked out of there permanently because the manager didn't have any compassion.

HILL states there is no shelter in El Cajon to help her get out of her situation. She is a licensed nurse assistant and is not working on the streets of Main Street, and she is prostituting, but she is not disrespecting the neighborhoods. She might get picked up out there, but she is in a situation where she can get out of her cycle. She went to school for a year to get her nursing license and she may be risking her license by telling the Commission. There is a problem with the homeless and they don't have any place to go. She could save a lot if she just had a place to live but she has to have the money all at once. There is a problem here. There is McAlister Institute to help with the drug problem that is already here in El Cajon. She is not for this proposal because she

doesn't think it will give the homeless people an opportunity to get out of her situation. She looks out for businesses when she sees criminal activity.

AMBROSE asks if she is opposed to the project.

HILL replies yes.

Jennifer NEUMUELLER, 523 Durham Street, El Cajon CA 92019, says she didn't get a notice and didn't know about this until last Wednesday. She is a homeowner in the area of Madison and Durham. She has a four-year-old son and an 11-year-old daughter. She is a licensed RN and also a public health nurse in the state of California. As both a mother and a professional in the health field, she is greatly alarmed at the proposed prospect of a resource center being located in any area that is densely populated with families and children. She can appreciate the fact that the Fab 7 motel is already in place and it will be real easy financially to get in there. It appears to be a good location for such a facility, but thousands of families with children are also already in place in the very same neighborhood. She challenges the wisdom of placing a resource center in close proximity to many schools that are near the Fab 7 motel. She hasn't had time to do her research, but El Cajon has at least 14 preschools, 19 private schools, 21 elementary schools, five middle schools, and two high schools, one at which there has already been a shooting, and she thinks there has been enough trouble over there. These are all within five miles of the proposed project. Almost all of those schools are dangerously close to the proposed site. Any decision to place our children in harm's way is recklessly irresponsible.

While she applauds the efforts of the City of El Cajon and the City Council to provide services to a certain needy portion of our population, and she does understand and very much commends drug rehab, we have to remember that drugs are just a by-product of mental illness, pedophilia--it could be a lot of things. Maybe they were just having a hard time and didn't have proper counseling available to them. She agrees that they need a facility in El Cajon, regardless of whether her neighbors agree with her or not, but it should be in an industrial area with a trolley located so they can get to where they need to go. In case there is no room in that facility, they should be able to get to some place where there is room for them and their children and their family members. Whether they are homeless or on drugs, they need a facility. Any possible convenience or monetary savings that might be derived from the conversion of the Fab 7 to the resource is far outweighed by the risks the children would be exposed to. The idea is a tragedy waiting to happen. Use the Fab 7 as a senior center or a home for the elderly, like it once was. At least that is what she heard from her 40-year neighbors. Find a safe and responsible location for the resource center. It needs to be near the resources such as the trolley and business district so they can get jobs, so they can take care of themselves, and not in a major residential area or near as many schools as she listed. The City has worked to educate our children about the dangers of substance abuse and irresponsible actions, homelessness or whatever. Will we now throw all that training away and subject them to compromising situations such as putting this facility in our home? On behalf of

the children of El Cajon, she begs the Planning Commission to not open a resource center at the Fab 7 motel.

Paul DYKE, El Cajon Ford, 1595 E. Main Street, El Cajon CA 92021, states they are one business down from this proposed site. They oppose it. They would also like to have a 180-day continuance. He thinks that should be mandatory. One thing that offends him is that Mr. Hamann said this is the most undesirable area. He doesn't know what the residents think of that, or the business owners who have poured their whole life or time into making this area profitable and a place to raise families. He doesn't think that is a statement that represents that whole area. There are some tough things going on in that area, but it is still a decent area to have a business in. He thinks the proposed project would affect the businesses in that area. He doesn't want a guy that is 4 ½ months off of heroin patrolling our streets to solve all the problems. He doesn't think that is the answer. There are policemen that do it, and they have a hard time doing it. He also doesn't want parolees giving our kids strawberries. It doesn't make sense. And he doesn't want them bringing our seniors pastries. That is not the place for parolees. He doesn't think El Cajon and this area needs it.

John KAPELLA, 698 Waterloo Ave., El Cajon CA 92019, says he has been sitting here for a good three hours and has been very patient. The one thing that comes to his mind is that a lot of questions need to be asked. He knows the Planning Commission is all elected officials - - -

AMBROSE states the Planning Commissioners are not elected. They are appointed.

KAPELLA says they are here to make a decision. Where is the plan? They are talking about redoing this facility. There have been questions about ratio of employees to people that are coming in; questions about what kind of condition these people are going to be in. One of his concerns, like the last speaker, is if these people are going to be screened. Are they going to be certain types of people with drug problems only? What if they have child endangerment history?

AMBROSE understands that those kinds of people will not be allowed in this type of facility.

KAPELLA says so it is drug people only?

AMBROSE replies yes, drugs and alcohol; substance abuse.

KAPELLA thinks when a person has one problem there are usually some other issues. He is concerned because he lives right down the street and has a seven-year-old. What potential problems does he have? He is very sympathetic to this situation. He was very close to being homeless himself because he had put himself in a bad predicament. His main issue is if people should be put in an environment where they are an endangerment to someone else.

KAPELLA asks if this property is for sale, or did they just see the property and that it was run down and had an idea? Do we know the answer to that?

AMBROSE doesn't have an answer for that.

KAPELLA says if it wasn't for sale, he likes what another speaker said. Can't we contact the owners and see if they want to put it up for sale and make a decision on how the City wants to use this property or if somebody privately wants to buy it?

AMBROSE responds that is out of the Planning Commission's purview this evening.

KAPELLA says his last issue is how this information got out. He found out about it yesterday. He looked on the web site and there was no agenda posted for this meeting or the City Council (sic, Planning Commission) meeting today. According to the heading it is supposed to be posted the Friday before.

RAMIREZ advises that she is told that the agenda was posted on the City's website on Thursday.

KAPELLA says it is not there. The one that is there now is for April 22. The minutes are from April 9. He wanted to know how many items were going to be on tonight and what kind of time he would have to take off for his family to be here. He has his seven-year-old with him because he had to bring him.

LOUGH states the dates KAPELLA gave were City Council meeting agenda and minutes.

KAPELLA asks if minutes are posted for the agenda for this meeting here. (The minutes cannot be posted before the meeting is held!)

He is told the agenda for the Planning Commission is posted also. He asks if it is the same website, and insists they are not there.

[NOTE: The dates KAPELLA indicated that were on the website were City Council meetings. Staff checked the website for the Planning Commission on Tuesday after tonight's meeting and found that the Planning Commission agenda for May 5, 2003 had been posted. Apparently KAPELLA checked the City Council page instead of the Planning Commission.]

Richard MAGARGAL, 566 Macon Street, El Cajon CA 92019, lives 700 feet from the proposed site. He very much appreciates the efforts of the Alpha Project. It sounds like it must be a very exciting project to work for and he appreciates the productivity of it. He says that he, like many other people, didn't know anything about this until three days ago. That concerns him. He reiterates that he lives 700 feet from the project, and he got no notification of any kind. A few of the people around the area, commercial establishments, were notified. He made a little map - - -

AMBROSE states, before MAGARGAL proceeds, the requirements are to notify all property owners within 300 ft.

MAGARGAL is familiar with that, simply because he called today and spoke with Mrs. Ramirez and asked that question. That concerns him because this is by no means a commercial environment. There is a very small strip, as can be seen on the map he has with him, shown in orange. The entire white area is residential. That is by means a demographic of that particular area. He thinks the people in their particular area need to be notified and educated. He may be willing to go up and visit Alpha Project, but if this is approved tonight he will never have that opportunity unless they go through an appeal process. He thinks the people who live in that area have been, quite frankly, "gypped" by not having an opportunity to properly prepare themselves. Mr. Hall has done a terrific job in three weeks. He was very impressed. He himself is a contractor and doesn't know very much about these types of endeavors. He asks for a 180-day continuance so the people would have an opportunity to prepare themselves properly to fully understand what is being proposed.

Erin WILLIAMS, 768 Grape Street, El Cajon CA 92021, states she is a mother, a wife, and owns a house in this area. She opposes this proposal, and will give her solution to the location of the Alpha Project. At first glance the proposal for the El Cajon resource center seems like a great idea. This is a much needed transition center, but in a horrible location. Is there a homeless problem in El Cajon? Yes. Will the problem be solved by building a resource center? Yes. Will they be solving the homeless problem by putting the center in a residential neighborhood away from the resources and transportation that these individuals need? No.

She moved to El Cajon over two years ago and lives on Grape Street near the Fab 7. After she and her husband bought their house, they discovered that a homeless person had been living under their home when it was vacant. This is clearly an indication of a homeless problem. Over the last few years their neighborhood has been fighting a problem that has plagued El Cajon for decades. Not long after they moved in, people started dealing drugs right in front of their house. After several calls to the Police Dept., the problem ceased. Since 2001, a drug house on their block has been eliminated due to the efforts of our Police Dept. They also eliminated a transient issue with another house on their block where the owner was allowing random homeless to stay at his home. She can only guess at the number of times she saw the police at his house.

But wait, it gets better. When she was about six months pregnant last year, she and her husband came home one evening around 7 PM to find a homeless man sleeping on their porch. He was incoherent and drunk and attempted to enter their house several times. They eventually called the police, who promptly responded to their call.

WILLIAMS asks the Commission to put themselves in their shoes. Would they want to raise their children in this environment? She can't tell the numbers, but she knows the police frequently respond to incidents involving drugs and violence at the motels

surrounding this neighborhood. Putting this center for people overcoming drug habits and a violent history in an area where any type of illegal drug is readily accessible is perhaps the most illogical idea she has ever heard. This is just pure temptation for those individuals who are trying to turn their lives around. Not only that, but there are absolutely no services nearby except a grocery store.

She just learned of this proposal last week. In one week's time, she cannot solve the issue of homelessness. However, she can offer realistic and reasonable solutions, which can be investigated, and she gladly offers her services in this search. Has anyone entertained the idea of working with the people who want to build the year around shelter near the El Cajon Transit Center? What about a more industrial area of town near Gillespie Field, as has already been mentioned?

She came up with several questions about the Alpha Project after reviewing their proposal. She is asking the Planning Commission to consider these same issues. On any proposal from an organization, there is automatically skepticism and distrust by those whose lives will be affected. This skepticism and distrust has brought her here. The neighborhood has not been given a fair chance to voice their concerns until now. Her questions include an exit program for the 40% who fail the program, or even the new construction in the proposal states the possibility of adding an emergency shelter, which is opposed in the police report. She asks the Planning Commission to please thoroughly review that. The second to the last page of the police report says that no one can just show up; however, there is the possibility of this in the new construction.

WILLIAMS states the drugs and violence are slowly being eliminated in their neighborhood. She invites the Commission to take a tour of their neighborhood, take a drive down Grape Street or Peach Street or Naranca, and see how people are starting to take ownership of their homes. On the drive, take note of the kids walking about the neighborhood and playing basketball with friends.

She asks the Commission, before it votes, to more thoroughly review the Alpha Project proposal, as there are several issues that have not yet been addressed. When voting tonight, she asks the Commission to resist playing the political game and do what is right in their hearts. If it can honestly say it would want the El Cajon transition center in their neighborhoods, then by all means, vote yes.

As a member of the neighborhood directly affected, she strongly urges the Commission to vote 'No' to CUP 1956.

Viky BAKER, 1586 Jade Avenue, El Cajon CA 92019, states as a home owner, business owner and shopper in El Cajon, she is here to express her concern regarding the pending decision of Conditional Use Permit 1956. While Alpha Project has claimed many wonderful things in their Vista facility, she asks the Planning Commission to keep in mind that is a 30-bed facility for single men only in their Casa base, and a 90-bed facility in their Casa Raphael. It is just one-twelfth and one-quarter of the size respectively of what they propose for El Cajon.

Alpha Project has never embarked on a center of this magnitude. The single co-ed facility that they currently have in their portfolio is 18 rooms at 1479 Jay Street. She has pictures of that facility.

BAKER feels the conditions proposed by the Planning Division are not spelled out enough. One of the concerns is on page 9 (*sic*, 10), under 1. e). According to Alpha's newsletter, activities that could take place in the "Micro-Enterprise Zone" include public showers, a message center and storage lockers. As Pat Riley mentioned, that currently services 15,000 homeless each month. She drove by that facility yesterday and today and she welcomes the offer to visit the other facility but, again, she has not had enough notification to schedule that. She has pictures of that particular day facility as well. She feels that the conditional use permit should not start with a 30-year term. They have never entered into a project like this and she feels that committing to 30 years could be a mistake if there is a problem with the community and it not benefiting it.

She says that County Supervisor Diane Jacob said that the community would have the opportunity to shape and mold this final product. The community has not been made aware of this project, let alone had a voice in the final decision. She asks the Planning Commission to delay any decision for 180 days so that concerns can be addressed and the community can make a knowledgeable and informed decision.

She submits pictures to the City Attorney before leaving the podium.

Joe GARZANELLI, 1776 Naranca Ave., El Cajon CA 92021, is a 30-year resident of El Cajon. He has had a business in El Cajon for approximately 30 years; he has two businesses. He thinks most of the people here this evening are not really opposed to the Alpha Project, they are opposed for the same reason the group that wants to put it there doesn't want it in their neighborhood. He has been involved in the community for quite a long time, along with the Chamber and Rotary. He started the D.A.R.E. program with Stoney and Jim Davis and a group years ago to try to make things better in the community. They found that there are a lot of things the need to be considered when trying to make decision in the best interest of the community. This project in this location is not in the best interest of the community.

He thinks if the Planning Commission would listen to the people and the vast majority, and he would bet that over 90% of the people that live in that neighborhood strongly oppose this project. He was involved several years ago with a problem in El Cajon, and the City of El Cajon and the contiguous area of the County had FEMA rezone the flood area of El Cajon. It caused tremendous financial hardship on many of the owners and forced them to pay very expensive insurance to keep their homes. One party lost their home in foreclosure.

GARZANELLI says one person asked him how much notice he got and he said no notice at all. Three hundred feet is nothing for a project of this magnitude that will have this kind of impact on a community. He has a real estate company and they sell nearly

1,000 homes a year. People ask to be near parks, good schools, freeways, and good medical facilities, but they never ask to be close to a homeless center. This will have a negative effect on everyone's property. He doesn't think any of the Commission would like to live by it and if the truth were known, he doesn't think any of them (the applicants) would. They wouldn't want it in Gibson Highlands, he is sure.

He says this is something that takes serious consideration from a lot of people. He is appealing to the Commission to consider the goodwill of the city and vote 'no'. A mistake was made back in the '70s and the City Council and Planning Commission strongly supported a lot of cheap apartment projects. The Commission knows what that led to, what a disaster it was for our city. Today, a lot of conversions are being done and trying to get home ownership and trying to get people that are proud of their neighborhoods to save some money to buy a place. They don't need things like this tearing the value down. It is not good for the City, the neighbors or the businesses nearby. He strongly encourages the Planning Commission to say 'No'.

P. J. MIKOLAJEWSKI, 1500 E. Main Street, El Cajon CA, is from Ideal Manufactured Homes, which is directly across from the RU Hungry restaurant. Many of the speakers have said they definitely want more time instead of having this ramrodded at the last minute.

He thinks there definitely is an issue with the homeless. He doesn't think anyone here doesn't want to do anything about it. The Gillespie Field industrial area has been mentioned. Even the staff report says the Zoning Ordinance, section 17.60.510, provides for industrial zoning. He thinks in the Gillespie Field and the industrial area is where they were talking about doing it. He knows that Hamann had found a place out here and wonders if there is some self-interest involved because Hamann owns a lot of properties in the industrial area. He wonders if that is why they are trying to move it over here, when the City already made a conscious decision to try to put it in an industrial area next to the transit areas where they can get transportation.

He urges the Planning Commission to consider giving time to research this before making any irrational decisions. He thinks it would be in everybody's best interest.

AMBROSE advises that there was a time when they tried to get the temporary facility located near Gillespie Field but the FAA said no. That was why that facility was not located in the Gillespie Field area.

Gary HEINZ, 650 Verdin St., El Cajon CA 92019, has lived in El Cajon for close to 40 years and has raised his family here: four children, eight grandkids, two great grandkids, so he knows a lot about our community. He thinks the problem is the unknown. The Pastor said fear and love are opposition. He doesn't think that is it; he thinks it is what we don't know about this project. He is sure these are good people and they have done a lot of good work. But they said these people are going to be there and are not going to be on drugs. How does he know that? No drug testing is mentioned. He is sorry to say, and he has had it in his own family, that drug people lie. There are too many unknown

factors here. It is too big of a project to come up in the neighborhood and say 'here it is, this is what we're going to put in'. He has never gone around knocking on doors, but he did on this project. He must have gone to 100 homes. Out of those 100 homes, people were just flabbergasted. They had not heard about this and didn't understand it. Out of those people, maybe two or three said they didn't want to sign (a petition). He thinks more time is needed to let people know about this proposal and give a little more thought to it. He doesn't know if he is totally against it. He thinks his neighbors and family don't know either. He thinks the community are good people, and there has been talk tonight that makes it seem like they are on 'the other side'. He thinks he is a good Christian. He likes to help people. He has worked hard all his life, helped his family and contributed to the community; but he doesn't know about this project and neither do any of his neighbors or the people of El Cajon.

Cleda RODRIGUEZ, 1581 Green Grove Ave., El Cajon CA 92021, says she is a native Californian and has lived in El Cajon since 1971. She had four children at Cajon Valley Hospital and had one child that was killed in front of Bostonia Elementary 13 years ago. Even though she has suffered a tragedy, she has remained in El Cajon and cares very much about her community. She is also a residential real estate agent in El Cajon.

She went door to door asking her neighbors and people what they thought about this program. A lot of people are uneducated. A lot of people do not know about this program. From what she hears, it sounds like a really great program. She is not opposed to programs to help people. She thinks it is wonderful for people to help other people. She has to say she is opposed to this location. It is an area of residential and of public businesses. The site is right by the school, and we should be very concerned about our children; they are going to be the future of El Cajon. How do we want our future of El Cajon to be?

She submits a petition with 102 signatures to the City Attorney. She hopes a lot of great thought will be put into this. Again, she is not opposed to the program but is opposed to the location.

Ken RODRIGUEZ, 1581 Green Grove Ave., El Cajon CA 92021, states he has been a resident of El Cajon since 1976. They have raised their children in El Cajon and have a tremendous interest in El Cajon. He is a 23-year veteran of the fire service. He is a Fire Captain for the City of San Diego. Fifteen of those years he spent working downtown San Diego in the heart of the homeless district. Eighth and J is his station. He is very familiar with the homeless needs and demands on the city structure that the homeless do require. He has been in the facilities in downtown San Diego numerous times in dealing with the homeless: the Rescue Mission, the Neil Good Center, the Joan Kroc center, 1111 Island Avenue, which is the detox. The homeless have alcoholic seizures, DTs and they overdose. He thinks the idea that people want to help them is awesome. He was out there helping them for 15 years. Does he think this proposed location is the place to help them in El Cajon? Absolutely not. The San Diego Rescue Mission is across the street from a police car yard. Across from the Joan Kroc center downtown is a transit yard where there are buses. These places downtown are where 4000

homeless are on the street tonight, just like there was 10 years ago. Has San Diego City solved their homeless problem? Absolutely not. Will Alpha Project solve our homeless problem? No. If a person is homeless and doesn't want to be a part of a one-year program that is very hard to get through, they don't have to. They simply say no and remain homeless, ill and on the street. Has Alpha Project helped people? Yes. There needs to be the right location for it, like San Diego did in nonresidential areas. Quite honestly, when they built those facilities, they were seedy areas, totally devoid of family residences. Now a ball park is moving in and they are trying to figure out what to do with those 4000 homeless. Why are there 4000 homeless in an eight-block area? Because that is where they put the facilities. Do we have a tremendous homeless problem? Absolutely not, compared to the city of San Diego. If facilities are put here, we may have a homeless problem. It may draw them in. We need to worry about the 58% that was mentioned. Is the project good? Yes. Is it the right location? No. There are houses across the street where children, mothers, fathers, grandmas and grandpas live.

Jomonica ZEEK, 1801 Lavala Lane, El Cajon CA 92021, says she is 26 years old, lives with her parents and is helping restore a home that they bought in El Cajon four years ago. They are trying to make their neighborhood a better place and a safer place. Unfortunately, she has encountered transients and such in her neighborhood. She lives on a corner near East Main Street, not too far from the proposed project. A lot of the people in the neighborhood are military families. There are a lot of women and children right now that are home praying and they have their minds on other things. Her family just got notice of this last night, so they were not prepared. It is just another thing to worry about. Yes, there is definitely a problem in El Cajon but she doesn't think more homeless people should be attracted to El Cajon, especially to that area. We need to deal with the problem that is there now.

She says the neighborhood needs to be more informed. She is appalled that the neighbors didn't receive any kind of notice. It is scary for her as a young adult college student thinking about buying a house. She wouldn't buy one here in El Cajon anywhere near a site like this. She would go somewhere else, to another city. It is a shame because El Cajon is a pretty nice place to live. There are a lot of great people here and a lot of great businesses. People were very friendly when they moved into the area. She is really nervous for all the children that live near her home because she sees transients every once in a while and if something were to happen, if these people don't go through the program and pass whatever test they are given, where are they going to go? They could go up the street to her house. Are they going to see her pulling weeds and think she is a little girl (she looks pretty young)? That scares her. How is she supposed to protect herself? The women and children whose husbands and boyfriends are overseas don't know what to do. It is a definite concern. She hopes the Commission will keep that in their minds and hearts. She thinks we all agree this is a very bad place to put this project. It is a good idea, but not where they want to put it.

Linda HIBBERT, 486 S. Anza, El Cajon CA 92021, has lived in El Cajon for 30 years and is a property owner. She resides very close to East Main and Pepper. She is definitely opposed to this project. She feels the studies haven't been done that need to

be done to protect their community. She feels El Cajon is being used as a dumping ground for other communities' problems, and that if El Cajon is going to have a facility like this, it should be something that addresses the people that are residing here now and not the ones that are brought in by buses to El Cajon.

She also feels additional time, at least 180 days, is needed to look it over. This should be put on a ballot. They were not given notice. She didn't find out about it until the other day when she was shopping on East Main Street. She is very opposed and reiterates that more studies should be done. She doesn't think it should be a long-term commitment that the City can't back out of, that just has to be accepted once we get into it. The fact that it will bring in people from other areas to just be dumped on the streets—the 50% or whatever that don't make it. It is a large amount of population that will be brought into an area that is not supporting that. She is definitely opposed to it.

Brenda ASARO, 1185 E. Main Street, El Cajon CA, is the owner of the fine restaurant that was mentioned. She is the police at that restaurant when homeless people come in. She has had many problems. She is very opposed to bringing the Alpha Project into our town. She feels it will bring more homeless people. She is probably known among the homeless as someone who doesn't allow them to come and use her bathroom and use her restaurant as their place to 'do their stuff'. If the commissioners had to clean her bathroom one time or go on her roof and clean that off, they might understand why she is very afraid of more homeless people coming to our town and remaining here.

She is not as close as the other businesses to the project, but she still has a concern. She has talked with many other business owners during the past week who feel the same way. Her personal opinion is that this needs to be looked into a lot further. She really feels that it does not belong in El Cajon.

BURGERT asks the name of her business.

ASARO replies the Antique Row Café.

Warren PARKER, 10176 Riverford Road, Lakeside CA 92040, is a businessman in Lakeside. He moved to El Cajon in 1958 and lived on Peach Street. He was in the transportation business and hauled a lot of hay out of the Valley at one time. He moved to Lakeside and got into it in a bigger way, with diesels. He doesn't mean to be sarcastic to the homeless; he understands they have hard problems. He appreciates hearing how the administrators handled them and took care of them like they did (in Vista). Nobody in our country should have to live like that, but there is nothing we can do about it.

As he started to say, sometimes he ran his rigs for three trips a day. The drivers stayed in the motels we are talking about, and ate in those very cafés. They needed them or they couldn't work in this area. Since then, the dairy industries and what have you have moved out of this area, but there has been construction work many times greater now than there was then. A lot of them come out of LA for three or four days work, and they have to have a place to stay. They need that area to live in and live out of. San Diego

also needs it. San Diego doesn't have any place for these guys to park. They have to drive to the border for truck stops. A lot of people don't want to come here to work because of this very situation. They can't park their machinery on the road. Lakeside has already put up weight limits on the street. He can't park over there. The subject address is a big solution for that kind of business.

Janet CARLSON, 1500 Delight Street, El Cajon CA 92021, has lived in the Olive Hills area since 1958. A few weeks back she happened to see a little notice in the paper about the Alpha Project wanting to get a waiver in fees for the researching to be done on this project. So she came down and the Mayor said it wasn't going to be discussed, it was going to be postponed. During open discussion, she was allowed to find out when people could discuss this. She was told by the Mayor that there was plenty of notice. Olive Hills area is rather large and a lot of people didn't know about it. She doesn't care if the Mayor does live near there. He should know about it, he conducted the meeting. That is how she felt about it, because she raised enough Cain.

She has worked from time to time with the mentally ill homeless in the San Diego area. It is something that needs to be addressed, but this is not the place for it. The city of El Cajon and this area is not the place for it. As Mr. Garzanelli said, the City made the biggest mistake it ever did back in '70s when it wanted to increase the tax base and have more people. More people were brought in and more apartments were built. Then they had to hire more police to take care of the problems. You can't go backwards. You can't undo something that is done that causes a problem. The conversion of apartments was discussed tonight so people can now own them. There is still the same population density, and standards are not being put on these places that are being converted. Why jump into putting this place where it does not really belong, even the Mayor says it is a designated site? You can't go back. Once it is there, it won't be appealed or bulldozed. Just like you can't just say you screwed up by putting so many apartments in El Cajon. This is no longer a horse and cow town; it is now a city with a large crime rate, and a city where the poor police are overtaxed and it takes six weeks for them to come out and find an abandoned car. Or it takes 10 minutes to get to the call of a shooting. Why create more problems? Let's fix what we have and do it the right way and not screw it up, because it can't be unscrewed afterwards.

Candy ATTKISSON, 1621 Zephyr Avenue, El Cajon CA 92021, lives in the Olive Hills area of El Cajon. She has heard a lot tonight about second chances. She wants to talk about first chances, about 5308 students within less than a mile radius of this project. There is an elementary school, which is .03 miles away and houses 330 students. There is Bostonia Elementary, which is 0.88 miles away and houses 750 students. Madison Elementary is 0.74 miles away and houses 554 students. That is 1634 students from the ages of K through sixth grade. Then there is Montgomery Middle School that houses 1070 students and is 0.93 miles away. Granite Hills High School is 9-12 and has 2604 students and is 0.72 miles away. This is a total of 5308 students all within less than one mile of where this project is proposed. She is all for second chances, but she is for first chances. She has two kids and she wants to give them a

good, safe first chance. She worked hard to buy her house in El Cajon and she doesn't want this project here.

Tim MORMAN has property at 748 N. Third St. in El Cajon. He moved to this community in 1954 and has seen a lot of changes. He thinks what Alpha Project wants to do is probably an absolutely fantastic project. He thinks it has its place. He is not sure if it has its place where it is planned. He has heard people mention several times tonight that there are too many apartments. He would guess in that area the population of apartments is probably much greater than that of the homeowners. Apartment tenants get no communication on this whatsoever; and these are all families, young families trying to make a living, and they have absolutely no idea of what is going on tonight or any other time. It is a shame that these families are not notified properly. When he went to his project (he has 17 units on Third Street), not a one of them had any idea that this was taking place; and these are all families that have a concern for this community and want to make this community better. It is a shame that they are not notified in some way. They are probably 60% of the population where this is taking place. He hopes that subject will be addressed somehow and let them know too because they are not being notified of what is taking place.

Emilio DIAZ, 1562 E. Main Street, Unit #114, El Cajon CA 92021, lives just down the street from the subject property. He thinks the Alpha Project is an excellent project and he hopes the Lord will continue to bless them. He opposes the location and not the project. Everything has pretty much been said. The problem to him does not seem commensurate with what is seen in El Cajon. This project is huge compared to what he can see as the problem in El Cajon. However, it is commensurate with what is in the County. He is asking the Planning Commission to exercise the most wisdom that it ever had in their professional capacity and not allow people with other advantages politically, to bamboozle it into something that is really injurious to El Cajon in the long run and beneficial to someone else. The Commission may be asked to look at a broad county picture of this issue. In that context, this may look good. The neighbors are asking the Commission to look at it in the context of an El Cajon issue. He thinks this is the Commission's responsibility and that is what it was commissioned to do.

AMBROSE replies DIAZ doesn't have to tell the Planning Commission what its responsibility is. The Planning Commissioners are citizens of the city of El Cajon like the speaker is. If he thinks this is just a done deal, why doesn't he just leave? He is here because he wants to persuade the Commission to consider not approving this tonight. The Commission is in the same boat with DIAZ. They want a good city. They want to make it better. Please work with them. The Planning Commission is not against the speakers.

DIAZ wants to appeal to the expression AMBROSE just made to everyone. The appeal is that it needs to be looked at as an El Cajon issue and make a decision that is best for El Cajon. He is somewhat appalled by the fact that he just found out about this on Sunday. He understands there is a rule that there is only---the rule was articulated a minute ago, he doesn't know exactly what it was. The City is only obligated to

communicate the issues to some. Maybe that should be looked at because that is utterly unfair and absolutely un-American.

AMBROSE replies not every project has the same scope as this. There may be a restaurant, for example, that comes and needs a CUP (conditional use permit) so they can have beer and wine sales. He doesn't think that the whole city of El Cajon needs to be noticed about that.

DIAZ agrees, but this project is a project of a great magnitude and that little rule was applied. He is offended by that.

AMBROSE says that is his prerogative.

William BRASWELL, 1581 E. Main Street, El Cajon CA, says he couldn't be more than 1000 feet away from the proposed site. He commends the efforts of the Alpha Project. Everybody agrees that this type of program is needed. His problem is that on the northwest border there is a common fence. He lives in the travel trailer park and nothing separates that site except a chain-link fence. There are roughly 170 spaces there, and these are elderly people and retired people who live in RVs. There is very low security. He doesn't see any of his neighbors tonight, which indicates they were not notified properly. He found out about this yesterday. He is not opposed to the project per se, just this location.

Kim SABALA, 650 Balsam Drive, El Cajon CA 92019, asks the Planning Commission to give a 180-day extension to review the project. If it looks so good now, when all the facts are out won't it look even better in 180 days? She has raised her children here and has gotten involved in the city, community, schools, etc. She thinks the residents deserve a little more time to get a lot of information to know if this is the best project to put there. What about investment in our community? Upgrade that hotel and put in a new restaurant, and bring an influx of business into the community. She asks the Planning Commission to think about it and give the people the extra time to look at all the facts.

No one else comes forward to speak on this item.

AMBROSE thinks the Planning Commission has a pretty good flavor of both sides of the issue. He asks if anyone from Alpha Project would like to respond to any of the issues. Then he will give also give a couple of minutes to Mr. Hall if he wants it.

McELROY comes forward and says he appreciates the kind words and recognition of their good work. There never is a right place for any organization that deals with this population and many others that are under the umbrella of a social service agency. As he said, they were invited to do this project because many in this community that were the prime movers behind doing something proactive for the situation here in El Cajon felt they were the best organization to do it, based on their tough love program.

One gentleman talked about drug and alcohol testing from the top down. He goes in a cup like everybody else. There is comprehensive drug and alcohol testing. They don't take any individuals that have a sexual crime, or arson, in any of their programs. It can't be any more comprehensive than what they do, but he understands. He is a neighbor too. He lives 1.3 miles away from the site.

McELROY states the speakers obviously can't know what he knows. They have seen the same reaction in seven other different cities and all he can say is that the facts are that a year after taking control of the sites---they had a councilman here, and a police officer. He can bring in a councilman from San Diego and police officers from San Diego and Chula Vista and everywhere else---a year after they take control of a site, it is a different place for the better. It is up to the Planning Commission to make a decision. Most of the commission visited the [Vista] site and talked to City officials and neighbors. It has been in the newspaper several times here. He didn't have any control over notifying the neighbors. He wishes there had been more time so they could have sat down and talked about things. He invites everybody to visit any of their sites on their volition; they don't need him to take them there. Casa Raphael was a drug motel in the middle of a residential neighborhood. The Neil Good Center downtown is the City of San Diego's homeless day center, night and day. There are 500 people a day there times 30 days.

He appreciates the kind words and the recognition for the good hard work of the men and women that make their programs work.

AMBROSE asks if HALL has any concluding remarks.

HALL comes forward. He was very happy to hear Bob (McElroy) say something just now because we are all in agreement on one thing. He said it would be nice to have more time, and that is what he is asking for. He asks the Planning Commission to give them 180 days if it doesn't vote against this project tonight. It depends on how strongly the Commission feels. This is so deserving of more than 300 ft. notice or 500 ft. notice. He looked at Ramirez' list and there were 30 people that were notified according to it. That is more people than shown in the circle, but it is way less than admitted that they got notice. This was one of El Cajon's best-kept secrets until about three weeks ago. The hearings that the Mayor promised three weeks ago at the commission (*sic*, council) spin session. The neighborhood wasn't invited. It hasn't occurred. He doesn't think the Planning Commission should have to go through this kind of thing. This is what, in the Senate, the send the subcommittees to talk about. We shouldn't have to be here for four hours to educate the handful of people they got together.

He reiterates that this is the biggest negative turnout that he is aware of in El Cajon's history. At this point, they are very, very much against this project. Educate them and give them a fair chance. They pay the taxes and the freight. It is only fair to put this on the shelf for a little while and call some big meetings. Let's get some people from their neighborhood involved. He doesn't think the proposed location is a good one. He personally doesn't think it is good for El Cajon anywhere in El Cajon. That is a fragile

eco system over there. There are some businesses that have struggled to improve themselves and there are neighbors doing the same thing. They don't have federal grants and they don't have the county giving them money. He did not hear anybody address the 24% increase in crime in Vista. He didn't hear anybody address the 14% increase in El Cajon. Is it a coincidence? It is not all what they have said it is.

HALL commends the applicant, particularly their successes. He would like to shake the hand of every guy here who is drug free. Just don't break his arm because he opposes this.

No one else comes forward to speak on this item.

Motion by AGURS, second by HANSON-COX to close the public hearing; carries 5-0.

AMBROSE says testimony has been heard from both sides. This is probably a longer meeting than most of the commissioners are accustomed to on one item. Starting with TURNER, what does she think and where does she think the Commission should go?

TURNER states since she works for a social service agency and has been put in some of the positions like the Alpha group and does have services that are sometimes not favorably looked upon by the community; she has appreciation for that. At the same time, she has lived in this community 22 years and she hears the voices of her community out there saying they need more time for questions and answers so they would feel comfortable with a decision that would affect our community.

She says we have had a task force and there are a lot of community services that can help in this process. She thinks the term "shape and mold" was a term that was used by Diane Jacob. She thinks Diane Jacob would want more time to gain the knowledge and understanding of this project. There are a lot of great things that the Alpha group is bringing to the table, and this is a community problem. It is not going to go away. She tried to find out herself today about statistics from the winter tent scenario, which is a different project that what is being recommended here. She couldn't get the information about how many people were served and if there were incidents. That information was not given to the Planning Commission either, even though it is a different kind of situation.

She did find out that a lot of people that were in that situation did find temporary housing already. Her question is how many people are we looking to service with this particular agency in our own community, since some of those issues have already been worked out with the people that wanted services, wanted help, and had a need? She appreciates Hamann Construction coming to the plate and finding the property, and trying to work through this process, and Father Conrad too. This is a big community and they have brought it to the table. She still feels that more time is needed. She suggests a continuance.

HANSON-COX states there is already a problem in the area and in El Cajon as a whole. She thinks the community needs to rally together and work together to try to help reduce the crime rate and the homelessness in this area. As TURNER said, it is not going to go away. They are not even here yet, and look at the problem we have right now. However, we need to protect the small businesses in that area that have been there. We need to protect the residents and the community as a whole. From her research and everything that was given to the Commission by staff (they provided a wealth of information) she thinks this is a great project; however, listening to the community, she agrees with the residents in that area that they need to have the opportunity to be more educated on what this program is about. Maybe it is not the right area, but we all need to rally together and discuss it as a group. Everybody gave their concerns, but there are really no solutions. One solution was to bus them out. That is not the solution. We need to work together, especially in these economic times. Next year, El Cajon's services will probably be reduced by 30%; that is the Police and Fire Departments. We need to work together as a community to try to make a resolution. If it is to bring in the Alpha Project or if it is not to bring it in, we need to work together and not just expect all our services to solve the problem for us.

She really liked seeing everyone here tonight because to her, that is the beginning of the community working together. Once again, she thinks a lot of people are not aware and they have a lot of concerns. She would like to see a continuance to give them a chance to get educated.

BURGERT states he likewise would ask for a continuance based on being an appointed official he is supposed to listen, consider, and weigh the facts. It is obvious, based on all the statements, that on the opposition side that there has been a lack of notification. There is consent for a continuance. At the same time, on the applicant's side, they have done an excellent job of explaining what is available. In his position, he wears many hats. He is a planning commissioner. In his professional life, he is a state parole agent. He takes advantage of using such services that are available within the community to help these people, whatever their problems are. He can see the pluses and minuses, but 'you guys' are his neighbors. He lives in the community. He is also a husband and a father. He says 5308 reasons (students) were given. These factors need to be considered. One hundred days is worth it. He is not for making a quick decision tonight. He does want to have further discussion. This is not a yes, and it is not a no. He wants further information and he wants the residents around this area to have a clear understanding. He encourages them to ask questions. Go to the Planning Division, or talk to the City Council. Talk to whomever they need to and get as much information as possible. Please go visit the Alpha Project. They do have an exemplary program. We are going to have to rely on community-based organizations because the budget situation the City is facing in the next two fiscal years is going to be really horrible. The 30% cut across the board that the City of El Cajon is going to see, the County is going to see, it is going to get really bad so we are going to have to look towards these other resources. This year we struggled and found a temporary tent city type of thing for the homeless people, but who knows what the resources are going to be?

He asks for a continuance. He encourages everybody to get very well educated on this subject.

AGURS states unfortunately for most of the people who live in the area, if they don't live within 300 ft. or are not the property owner, they won't get notified next time anyway, because tenants don't get notified. The gentleman talked about knocking on 16 or 17 of his tenants' doors. That is the only notification they are going to get, because the property owner got the notice.

From visiting the property several times, he knows there are a couple of different owners over there, the RV place, Ideal Homes and the vacation RV park around the corner, Pernicano's in the area. That property just didn't go bad overnight. As business owners, if they owned one of the motels they were probably excited that they were getting the business and they weren't. This idea that Alpha Project wants to put in there is now kind of galvanizing that area of the community. The businesses may have to look at their resources and see if they can buy that property. That might be a viable option for the business owners, making a business decision. Obviously, the owner of the property has private property rights on who he chooses to sell the property to.

AGURS likes the applicant's project. It is a needed project. There is not going to be a temporary solution. If it is put off six months, that's November and we are back into the winter homeless shelter stuff again. Alpha Project does some great things. He doesn't like the location. He thinks other options need to be looked into. It will be up to the neighborhood, and the answer is not 'just saying no'. That will not solve the problem. Just saying no is not going to make the Planning Commission vote 'no' either now or six months from now. Just saying no and pushing it into some other place is not going to work either. The community has to be galvanized to either a) work together with the Alpha Project or whoever comes next; or b) the community will have to decide what's going to happen with that property, and it may impact the pocketbooks of the business owners.

There is a lot of residential in the area, and a lot of children. From what the Commission has heard from the citizens in that community, each and every one of you have to knock on 10 doors to let their neighbors know. There are at least 75 of you out there. You have to knock on 10 doors, or 20 doors, if you want your fellow tenants to know. You have to take action like you are doing tonight. The Commission has listened to what you have to say. His business is in East County too, and they do have the homeless problem of people sleeping right in their doorways and vandalizing their mailboxes. We are all in the same boat. Something has to be done. Is the answer going to come tonight? He doesn't think so. Like his fellow commissioners, they all applaud the Alpha Project and what it does. He spent a lot of years in downtown San Diego in the late '70s and early '80s as a police officer, so he knows exactly what it looked like then and what it looks like now. It is still overrun with homeless because the Rescue Mission is there. Sticking a transitional housing shelter in a residential community, in his belief, is going to be more of a magnet, regardless of what has been said tonight. He too has first-hand

experience on the law enforcement side. Based on that, he is prepared to make a motion to issue a continuance.

AMBROSE wants to talk about the potential for a continuance. If this is to be continued, what is it going to be continued for? Is the applicant going to be encouraged to hold some workshops and have some additional meetings with the community? If that isn't done, there is really no point in continuing this. Unfortunately, people get busy with their lives and they are not going to take the time to find out what this is all about. He personally visited Alpha Project in Vista. He took the time, spent his time up there to see what is going on and see exactly how they run their operation. He was impressed. He thinks it is basically a very sound project and a very well run organization. Talking to some of the people in the facility there, he was very impressed with what they have gone through and how they have gotten their lives straightened out. Unfortunately, there are a lot of homeless in El Cajon. Just because they are not seen every day doesn't mean they are not here. They are here, and in greater numbers than any of us really want to know. When you talk about evil being out there, and some of these people being evil, he thinks the David Westerfield case proves that evil can be right in your own yard. You don't even know it. He thinks just to point out that those people are the evil ones is not the answer. We are all in the same boat and are rowing in the same direction, he hopes, because this problem is going to have to be solved. Alpha Project is one way to solve that big problem.

Based on what he has heard this evening, he thinks a continuance is the direction the Commission is going, but he thinks direction needs to be given to the applicant and the residents as to what the Planning Commission wants to accomplish with a continuance.

AGURS would like to see a couple of things happen. Sure, the opportunity for the community to go to Vista to look at the facilities is fine. He certainly would like to see the applicant in that community hold some forums to educate the people. He can give them the information and solve some issues and concerns in that community and not necessarily have to have 10,000 people have to go outside of El Cajon to look at it. There may be select people from the community who will do that.

The other direction, a continuance of 180 days, he thinks would also give the business owners and members in that community time to decide what they want to try to do with that particular piece of real estate. The community itself might want to have some time to put together some plans and put forward some options they would like to see happen with that project as well, whether it becomes a viable motel again, a truck stop, a battered women's shelter, or an elderly senior's home.

AMBROSE thinks 180 days may be a little too long. That is six months.

Assistant City Attorney LOUGH advises 180 days is unprecedented. A point has been made for having a continuance. This is a private project, not a public project sponsored by the City of El Cajon where a six-month continuance might be justified. We are treading on some pretty thin ice by going that long. The issues of having community

meetings can be accomplished much quicker than that. He suggests a shorter time period be considered if there is to be a continuance. Typically, with a private project and there is private financing at stake, the Commission and Council have traditionally asked the applicant whether they agree to the continuance. Oftentimes an applicant will ask that the matter just be denied and let it be taken up on appeal. He asks, because this is a private project, that the same types of rights be given to this project as to any other. He knows it is a public type use and it is being looked at from that perspective. But he is concerned about the legality of continuing it for that long a period in this particular circumstance. The Planning Commission started to make findings about why it might continue it, and that is very good. However, the time period is extremely long and that gives him a little bit of heartburn.

BURGERT, in regard to the private matter, says he would like for Mr. McElroy to come back and hear what he has to say.

AMBROSE says the public hearing will have to be reopened.

Motion by BURGERT, second by AGURS to reopen the public hearing; carries 5-0.

LOUGH advises the other issues the Planning Commission might want to consider would also be, if there is a continued public hearing, the scope of that public hearing. Do you start from scratch? Do you only take new issues? Do you limit it to certain issues because you have already had everyone who is available speak? It has been noticed according to California law for 300 ft. In that perspective, it has been noticed according to law. It is not unusual to continue to allow for more notice. He is not disagreeing with the Commission on that. He is just trying to get some of the issues out before the applicant speaks.

AGURS, before the applicant speaks, would like to limit it to finding out if he just wants the Commission to go forward and deny it so he can take it through the appeal process rather than open the whole thing back up.

AMBROSE and BURGERT agree.

GIBSON comes to the podium and respectfully requests that the Planning Commission deny the project. Because of the time frame of seeking federal dollars and the dates they have to comply with, a continuance would effectively kill the project. Please vote yes or no and they can accept either.

Motion by AGURS, second by BURGERT to close the public hearing; carries 5-0.

TURNER thinks the public needs to know what the appeal process is if this is denied tonight.

AMBROSE responds that the applicant has the right to appeal this to the City Council and there will be a separate noticed hearing at that level. He doesn't know when that will be, but probably within 30 to 45 days from now, if they appeal.

TURNER asks if the Planning Commission has the option of continuing this at this time.

AMBROSE states it could be continued, but the applicant has asked for either an up or down vote, one way or the other.

TURNER asks if that means the Commission has to go that way.

AMBROSE says no, but that is what the applicant has requested.

TURNER says that is not what the community is requesting.

AMBROSE thinks the community has soundly said no. If the Commission is thinking about approving it, they want a continuance.

TURNER states even denying it, the community is still saying no.

AGURS is ready to make a motion.

Motion by AGURS, second by AMBROSE to GRANT Conditional Use Permit 1956 in accordance with the staff report; motion fails *2-3 1-4 HANSON-COX, TURNER & BURGERT voting 'No'. HANSON-COX, AGURS, BURGERT & TURNER voting 'No'.

*As corrected at the meeting of May 19, 2003.

LOUD CHEERS FROM THE AUDIENCE.

AMBROSE says since that motion did not carry, another motion will have to be made.

Motion by TURNER to reopen the public hearing and continue it for a time that the City Attorney feels is legal for this project. She is asking for a continuance for the community.

LOUGH says the question is what the Commission wants to be done and in a reasonable time to do it. Our next Commission date that is free is the second meeting in July (July 14). That would be more than 60 days.

Amended motion by TURNER for a continuance to July 14, 2003. She would hope that in that process that some public hearings or brown bags would be held to get the information out to the public, for the public to have the opportunity to visit the Vista site, and any other sites that might be a reasonable site for this facility to be in. [There was no second to this motion; therefore, the motion dies for lack of a second.]

LOUGH understands she wants an opportunity for a workshop, possibly held at City Hall.

TURNER replies yes, and any other alternative sites that might be possible.

BURGERT asks if that would preclude the applicant from appealing.

LOUGH states it would because there isn't a final decision from the Planning Commission.

AGURS, for clarification, states the motion was made and defeated to grant. This gives the applicant an opportunity to appeal.

LOUGH advises that motion actually failed. Normally, at this point there would be a motion to deny the project and to not approve the Negative Declaration. The other option is to adopt the proposed Negative Declaration and disapprove the project.

AGURS states it is pretty clear to him, after hearing from the applicant, that the applicant wants an up or down vote, and at the same time the community wants an up or down vote. If the Commission votes to approve it, the community has the opportunity to appeal to the City Council. If the Commission denies it, the applicant has the opportunity to appeal to the City Council.

TURNER thinks it would proceed at a quicker pace than if it were continued. She was trying to make sure there was enough time for the community to get the answers to their questions and build some knowledge in the community.

LOUGH advises the City Council could also decide if further workshops were needed. He states, as a housekeeping matter, the Planning Commission should approve the Negative Declaration.

Motion by AGURS, second by TURNER to adopt the proposed Negative Declaration for Conditional Use Permit 1956; carries 5-0.

TURNER states she still had a motion on the table for a continuance.

AGURS says there was no second.

TURNER thought we were still under discussion.

~~*AMBROSE~~ AGURS states the motion died for lack of a second.

*As corrected at the meeting of May 19, 2003.

AMBROSE asks for a vote on the project itself.

Motion by AGURS, second by BURGERT to DENY Conditional Use Permit 1956 because the City provided notice of the public hearing in accordance with the California Government Code, Section 65091; however, many citizens who were not required to be notified by the City spoke in opposition to the project and stated that they need

additional time to gather more information about the project, and because the Planning Commission considered the opponents' request for a 180-day continuance of the public hearing and concluded that this would be an unreasonable delay of its consideration; carries 3-2, TURNER and AMBROSE voting 'No'.

AMBROSE states this item has been officially denied. It can be appealed up until May 19 and there will be a noticed public hearing at the City Council level.

RAMIREZ, for the benefit of the audience, states a meeting of this length takes a horrific amount of time for the clerical staff to transcribe. The minutes will not be available this week. They may not be available by next week. The City Clerk will not schedule an appeal hearing until the minutes have been adopted by this decision making body.

The staff has knowledge that the El Cajon Collaborative has been working on arranging a community meeting to discuss the Alpha Project at Bostonia Elementary School. Staff knew while the staff report was being prepared that the meeting date could not be firmed up before the Planning Commission meeting. She would like to say she knows when it will be, but is sorry she doesn't. If there is someone in the audience with the Collaborative, perhaps they could talk with her after the meeting. Staff can work with someone at the newspaper so that this meeting might be of benefit to the community before an appeal is scheduled to the City Council.

HANSON-COX stresses that it is the community's responsibility to find out the information about the Alpha Project and what they are proposing. She says don't wait for it to come to them. They have made the first step, now continue with it.

AMBROSE asks the audience to leave the chambers. The Planning Commission still has some business to take care of.

PREDRAFTED RESOLUTIONS

To reflect the actions of the Planning Commission on tonight's agenda items.

Motion by TURNER, seconded by HANSON-COX to adopt Resolution Nos. 9785, 9786, 9787 & 9788 pro forma; carries 5-0.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

There is none.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the El Cajon City Planning Commission adjourned at 11:25 PM this 5th day of May 2003.

Anthony AMBROSE, Chair

ATTEST:

James S. GRIFFIN, Secretary