

Andy Newkirk

From: april reid <aprilreid@live.com>
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 1:39 PM
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Cc: Jennifer Fullerton; kmaynard@cityofgolta.org; Anne Miller; Jason Chapman; aprilrid@live.com
Subject: Goleta, CA- Kenwood Village and misstatements by property owner

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PART 1

I WILL NEED TO SEND THIS E-MAIL IN PARTS SINCE IT IS TOO LONG FOR MY COMPUTER TO SEND IN ONE E-MAIL AND I CAN ALSO ONLY SEND A FEW ATTACHMENTS AT A TIME. I WILL SEND THE ATTACHMENTS AFTER THE ENTIRE E-MAIL SO THEY ARE KEPT IN ORDER.

Dear City Council and Planning Commission:

This e-mail is written in response to the inaccuracies in the November 16, 2023 letter from Fred Tan, Deputy Fire Marshal, as well as the misstatements/inaccuracies in both the written statements made by Ken Alder, the owner of Kenwood Village, in his letter dated November 9, 2023 and his verbal statements during the November 17, 2023 Planning Commission meeting. Please be advised that I was not able to write down everything Mr. Alker stated at the meeting, so please do not take the fact that I may have missed responding to some of his inaccurate statements as a sign that I agree with his comments, which I do not. Further, since this e-mail is getting long and I am still waiting for additional documentation, I will address some of the issues in my next e-mail. I am sorry it took so long to respond, but I was waiting for documentation and clarification from other people before I responded.

In the past, I have taken care to only refer to Mr. Alker as the “property owner” when making my truthful statements about him, his misstatements and his conduct. However, Mr. Alker recently had an article published in the Independent which states, “I’m writing to correct multiple false statements made about my project in a letter from my neighbor, Ms. April Reid.” Since he has defamed me and he used my actual name in public, I no longer feel the need to use the term “property owner”. I will now use Ken Alker’s full name in both verbal and written statements, including any articles published in the newspaper.

Further, Mr. Alker pretends that we are “neighbors.” We are NOT neighbors as far as I know. I live on Baker Lane next to the monstrosity he wants to build on Kenwood Village, which he named after himself. Mr. Alker lives a safe way away in Winchester Canyon, so he will not have to suffer the effects of what he is trying to force upon the actual people who live next to Kenwood Village.

In Mr. Alker’s July 20, 2023 e-mail, he states, “I’m very excited and appreciative that my land was selected for rezone to help Goleta meet its housing numbers set by the state and I’m just as ready today to get a project off the ground as I was 16 years ago.” I have repeatedly asked the staff to tell me who selected this property for rezoning and when it was selected for rezoning? It was clearly “chosen” and agreed to by Mr. Alker BEFORE the rezoning/upzoning was announced to the public on July 14, 2023 without any input from the public until after things were settled/resolved with the Mr. Alker. Councilmember Kasdin stated regarding any agreements with the property owners, “As for an agreement, all staff can do is encourage the landowners to

seek a project that is 20-30 units per acre. They needed to get letters from the landowner indicating that the landowner wanted the project.” I previously submitted a copy of Councilmember Kasdin’s e-mail. I did a FOIA request a long time ago for the letters/e-mails/communications that the City Council claims the HCD required of the property owners before the HCD would approve each property. To date, I have not received anything. Mr. Alker claims he never signed a “letter”. On November 16, 2023, I asked Councilmember Kasdin to clarify whether there were letters signed by the property owners. Councilmember Kasdin responded, “The quick answer is that I don’t know. My understanding is that HCD insisted on an expression of the willingness of property owners to develop the properties proposed for rezoning included in the housing element. However, I don’t know if a verbal expression was deemed adequate or if a written notice was needed. I don’t believe that there was anything formally signed, so any e-mail, for example, from a landowner would probably suffice for HCD.” I am submitting this e-mail from Councilmember Kasdin. I have again e-mailed the staff asking if there is anything signed by Mr. Alker reflecting his willingness/agreement to build 20-30 units per acre on the property. I still have not received a response. So, what is it, if anything, that HCD required from the property owners that the staff conveyed to the property owners and the property owners agreed to before the rezoning was announced to the public?

If Mr. Alker is allowed to build, at this point, he can only build on about 6 plus acres at this point anyway according to the City Council. If Mr. Alker really wants to be a good neighbor, as he pretends, he could plan to build his monstrosity up against Calle Real and the apartments on the other side of the Creek. He could have the decency to leave the people living peacefully on Baker Lane in suburban single family housing alone!! But, I do not see him looking out for the neighbors he pretends to be concerned about.

Also, regarding the article that was published under my name in The Independent on November 15, 2023, I do stand by my statements! However, the article that was published was sent by me to the Independent as bullet points so the Independent could investigate and write a second article about Kenwood Village with additional information. I felt the first article left written by the reporter left out a lot of information that the public should know. However, The Independent cut out my explanation of the bullet points I wrote and made it into an article with my name on it and then published it. If I had known they would do that, I would have written the article more clearly and I would have used examples and quotes, especially since the general public is not necessarily familiar with the issue. Also, regarding the article written by The Independent, there was a misquote. Originally, the article indicated I took pictures of the Monarch butterflies and found a Great Egret in my yard. However, it was my neighbor who took the pictures and found the Great Egret. When I brought this error to the attention of The Independent, they corrected the article. I do not want to take credit for someone else’s work.

PRIOR TO MR. ALKER PURCHASING THE PROPERTY

The previous owners of the property were wonderful and they looked out for our neighborhood. My house’s back yard is right next to the property that is now called Kenwood Village. I was born into my house 55 years ago. Please keep in mind that there were only three houses in the entire field at the time; one was my parents’ house and one was my great-grandmother’s house. Baker Lane, Daffodil and Violet did not exist back then. Ever since I can remember, the property owners voluntarily mowed the ENTIRE property without the need to have to check up on when the field needed to be cut, or what the Fire Department’s mowing patterns were for that year or how much of the field needed to be cut, as Mr. Alker claims he needs to do. The previous owners simply did the right thing and looked out for our neighborhood by cutting the entire field at least once a year without any complaints that I or my family ever heard. I do not recall the field ever having tall weeds in it, even on the interior of the property as I have almost constantly seen since Mr. Alker bought it.

The property has been zoned part single family housing and part agricultural. The property owner stated in a ridiculously inaccurate article in The Independent dated November 17, 2023 that, “[Z]oning on the majority of the parcel was residential with a strip of commercial along Calle Real since the 1950s.” He went on to say that, “in 2020, the strip along Calle Real was rezoned to Agriculture, although this area is not suitable for farming.” In fact, the City of Goleta’s Draft Environmental Impact Report of April 2016 states, “A GPA is requested to change the land use designations of the main project parcel from Single Family Residential and AGRICULTURE to Planned Residential.” (I am attaching the relevant section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report for Kenwood Village.) Further, In Mr. Alker’s e-mail of July 20, 2023, he admits regarding the previous owner, “John Lane told me that he farmed the property for about ten years but ceased operations October of 2004. So, clearly, the property was zoned and used for agricultural since long before 2020. I remember the land being used for farming when I was a child.

Also, Mr. Alker claims this area is “not suitable for farming.” In fact, there have been pumpkins and tomatoes successfully grown on the property. I have personally tasted them and they were very good.