

ANOTHER SOUTH VISTA DREAM COME TRUE

For years, South Vista residents and South Vista Communities have been concerned about the detrimental effect of the fan palm trees growing in the Buena Creek streambed as it runs through the Shadowridge Plaza area.

* The palms themselves were unkempt, their fronds were a fire danger, and their presence made attempts to clean up and control the undergrowth very difficult.

* The denseness of the palms and other undergrowth provided too convenient a habitat for homeless transients, a concern for residents, Plaza shoppers, and parents of children at La Petite Academy.

Efforts to deal with the palms and vegetation were frustrated for years due to environmental regulations and the number of Plaza property owners.

NOW, thanks to Senior Code Enforcement Officer Jessica Barman, our dream has come true:



This success was the result of Ms. Barman's long-term attention, for which we are grateful. To quote her:

Many plant species in the creek area are protected. Since the palm trees are not native to the region, no approvals were required for the removal of the palm trees. The only necessary requirement for removal was that such trees be stumped and not rooted as it

Cont. →

COUNCIL MEMBER RIGBY SPEAKS AT COMMUNITY MEETING



South Vista Communities and Vistans for a Livable Community co-sponsored a meet-and-greet with Council Member Amanda Rigby on March 16 at the Shadowridge Golf Club. Council Member Joe Green was scheduled to attend and had to cancel at the last minute due to a family illness.

Council Member Rigby's Current Focus

- New memorial dog park in South Buena Vista dog park – there is an opportunity to create the bridge at no cost to the city, being built by a volunteer.
- Cedar Park at Olive Avenue – Ms. Rigby has been rallying SDG&E about using the land as a *Cont.* →



FOR YOUR CALENDAR

South Vista Communities'
Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 22

7:00 p.m.

Shadowridge Golf Club

SOUTH VISTA DREAM (cont.)

Several meetings were held with numerous entities and city officials to include the City Manager’s office, Community Development, City Attorney’s office, the state, and outside contractors. Prior to the issuance of notices in 2015, the matter of plant species allowed for removal was discussed and determined during meetings among the city’s biologist, a contractor with Dudek, and Fish & Wildlife.

At the conclusion of nesting season, notices were issued and sent for the first time in 2015 and again in 2016, which was around August every year.

Once notices were issued, discussions began with individual parcel owners, business tenants, and property managers as to the requirements for correction. Since this was a costly endeavor for property owners, in many cases tens of thousands of dollars, extensions were granted dependent upon efforts and/or progress made toward complying.



SVC has consulted with Sheriff’s deputies over the years about the palm tree problems and, following the tree removal, Deputy Alexander Martinez said the creek area has long been a “hot spot” for transients to camp. Dep. Martinez physically patrols the area every week. Now members of the public can walk along the creek trail or look into the creek area as they drive by and let the Sheriff’s office know if anything is amiss.

Cont. →

COUNCIL MEMBER RIGBY (cont.)

- passive park; they own the land but have no plans for the land – stay tuned
- Potholes are an issue – the city is getting to them as quickly as possible with the rains; there are some places in Vista not getting attention as quickly as they would like.
- Traffic management – the city needs to do more to improve infrastructure and public safety as the population continues grow with all the new development and people arriving in the city.
- There is a petition to legalize medicinal marijuana dispensaries in the city – the problem with the initiative it does not regulate them in any way, which is not something the city would like to see happen. There are a lot of dangers associated with it and they need to be regulated for public safety. If we don't act, how are we putting the city in jeopardy? Marijuana is a Federal 1 narcotic and thus the pot distributors can't deposit the money into a bank. There have been prior incidents that have created crime in Vista.
- Ambulance for Fire Station #4 is on her vision board.

Questions and Answers

Q: What is your position on the proposed drive-through chicken restaurant that wants to tear down Famous Dave's?

A: The chicken drive-through restaurant, Raising Cane, where you get chicken strips, coleslaw, pink lemonade and that’s all you get. Seems like a great organization and 1% of sales will go back to the community. It is outside the scope of the downtown specific plan; Famous Dave's closed down due to the property

Cont. p.3

TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Join us in keeping Vista a special place to live. Visit our website www.southvistacommunities.org to find our membership form or simply to sign up for our email information and updates.

SOUTH VISTA COMMUNITIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President -
Vice President -
Treasurer -
At Large -

Stephanie Jackel
Kathy Bagwell
Nicki Hobson
Val Brown

Creekside
Shadowridge
Montaire/Casielos
Breeze Hill

South Vista Communities is on Facebook.

[Sign Up](#)[Log In](#)

COUNCIL MEMBER RIGBY (cont.)

owner, not business. The owner says he can't lease it out because it is so big. Raising Cane is not going to take over the building, they are going to demolish it.

The City says it can't get anyone to open a sit-down restaurant, so the rest of the council is going with the chicken restaurant. The vote was 4-1 (Rigby against) in favor of the restaurant. Council Member Rigby feels that, while it's a nice concept, that's not the right place – it's not going to bring people in to walk through the park and be a part of the community.

Q: What about traffic from the drive-through backing up into the street? And trash?

A: The city is convinced that the way they are directing parking into the parking lot, it will not be a problem; it remains to be seen if that is the case.



*Council member Amanda Rigby,
SVC Board members Stephanie Jackel and Kathy Bagwell*

Q: Why is the city still subsidizing the WAVE and Moonlight?

A: The city feels they are a valuable asset to the city. However, the support to Moonlight is less by about half than a few years ago, and losses for the Wave are going down. Moonlight is becoming a draw – they are looking at what the cost increases are with more elaborate productions.

Q: What is the expansion of Palomar Airport going to do to the quality of life in Vista?

A: Council Member Rigby feels it will be detrimental to the quality of life. Her issue is not the expansion as much as the flight path, and on the weekends there will be flights every 3-4 minutes and the planes will be larger. The flights are now going over our residential neighborhoods. When asked if Congressman Issa has been contacted to help with this, the answer was he knows about it, and he has not responded.

Cont. →

COUNCIL MEMBER RIGBY (cont.)

Q: Could the Vista City Council put some energy behind stopping the airport expansion?

A: Theoretically yes, they could, although 3-4 years ago the Council was asked to do so and they declined as they say it will help business.

There is a difference between the flight path issue and the airport expansion. Other Council members think the new flight path is necessary for the expansion. A very frustrating situation – we are being lied to by the FAA about the changes to the flight path.

Budget is coming up in April. Aug. 1 – July 30 is the city fiscal year – if you have ideas, now is the time to share them!

Q: What would it take to open and update the General Plan?

A: It has to be updated in order to get monies from SANDAG and the state – we are at 14% vacancy in Vista for the past two years. Just because the state says we have to have more housing doesn't mean we have to build it all in Vista; we have neighboring cities that refuse to take higher housing densities.

It impacts our infrastructure: we can't keep adding thousands of people to Vista without updating infrastructure and adding more public safety personnel. We keep adding residents, but they say the crime numbers are lower. Council Member Rigby has some issue with how the numbers are being reported.

We are being threatened by developers: if they don't get what they want, they will increase densities by 20% and there is nothing the city can do about it.

Previous City Councils did not have a plan, and now this City Council is saying yes to everything because there is an empty lot someone wants to develop; we are not leaving any options for the future.

Ms. Rigby has no problem with green space. The General Plan is being changed at every whim, it's breaking a promise we made to the people that was "this is our vision, this is our long-range plan."

Q: Is there a traffic plan to synchronize the traffic lights?

A: The system has been implemented but the computer stopped working, so they are working to synchronize on Melrose Santa Fe and Vista village.

Q: Why are the City Council Members so reticent to lower the densities in projects?

A: Council Member Rigby said she can't speak to their motivations – some is revenue, don't want law suits, some are "if you own it, you can do what you want." She looks at it from the standpoint that when you bought the land, this was the zoning you agreed to.

Cont. →

COUNCIL MEMBER RIGBY *(cont.)*

Because the cost of land in California is so high, when you talk about affordable housing, what they don't talk about is how much regulation has made land so expensive. Regulations can add 40% to the price of a house.

Comments from the audience

- The downtown specific plan is no longer being followed and not honoring the vision created by the community; speaker feels the document is no longer valid.
- It feels as if, when we come down to speak at Council meetings, the items have already been decided.
- How do we as the public gain back trust in the system so we can affect change and stop getting a 4-1 vote that is building out Vista piece by piece and not honoring the General Plan?
- How do we stay engaged – can the Mayor move the public comment up to the beginning of the meetings? Seems placement at the end of the meetings is trying to discourage public input instead of wanting to hear public concerns.
- Council Member Rigby said, “Vista is worth fighting for.” Some people may not want to divert money from other areas to re-do the General Plan, but she feels it's worth fighting for. She encouraged the audience to stay engaged, write the letters, and fill out a speakers slip with your opposition or support. Ask the right questions at candidate forums to find out their voting records, vision.

Council Member Rigby's Closing Comments

- It's important to hear your thoughts, ideas, suggestions, and complaints, otherwise the Council won't know what is the most important thing to you in the community. She is asking that we stay engaged, and call her. Her number is: 760-639-6130.
 - When you are learning about issues in the city, you have to read all the text all the way to the end.
 - You have to elect Council members who are committed to the job. She works for us.
 - It makes a difference when the City Council and City Manager hear from us; stay engaged and be specific.
 - When asked if she was running for Mayor, Ms. Rigby replied it was her understanding that Mayor Judy Ritter is running for Mayor in 2018.
 - Don't give up on us – we won't give up on Vista!!
-