

January 20, 2014

Pima County Planning and Zoning Commission  
210 N Stone Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Tucson, AZ 85701

Re: Protest of Tanque Verde Road Rezoning Request  
Co9-13-09

Ladies and Gentlemen:

As an owner of a property in La Cebadilla Estates, east of the proposed Tanque Verde Road Rezoning Request, I wish to protest this rezoning.

The property in question is on the north side of Tanque Verde Road, west of Tanque Verde Loop Road. More precisely, it is west of Willow Ranch Road, and extending west up to the eastern edge of the Agua Caliente Wash. As I understand it, the property is presently zoned Suburban Ranch, which would generally permit minimum lot sizes of 3.3 acres. The owners are requesting a change in zoning for a portion of the parcel to CR-1, which would permit lot sizes less than an acre. If this were approved, that would mean a significant increase in the number of homes that could be built on this parcel, almost four times as many (depending, of course, on specific configuration and the total amount of land that is re-zoned).

There are several reasons why I oppose this rezoning request. One reason is the increased traffic on Tanque Verde Road. As you may know, Tanque Verde Road changes its name to Redington Road east of Wentworth. Tanque Verde Road is the primary driving route by which many residents already travel to areas of Tucson, as well as to areas outside of Tucson by means of Interstate 10 or other highways. While we can go south on Wentworth to Speedway, and south on Tanque Verde Loop Road to Speedway and Broadway, those roads are not well structured for a high volume of traffic like Tanque Verde Road, and both Wentworth and Tanque Verde Loop Road cross the Tanque Verde Wash, which at times is impassable. (A portion of Wentworth is dirt where it crosses the wash, and many drivers avoid using Wentworth because of the dirt and dust.) Thus, the great majority of traffic from all neighborhoods at the eastern portion of Tanque Verde Road and Redington Road travel along Tanque Verde Road, immediately past the property that is the subject of the rezoning request. Permitting a higher density of zoning on this parcel would increase the traffic along Tanque Verde Road, and create a hazard for ingress and egress to the neighborhood that might be created on the parcel. Tanque Verde Road is already congested by the middle school that was built at the southeast corner of Tanque Verde Road and Tanque Verde Loop Road. When parents are dropping off or picking up their kids, this portion of Tanque Verde Road is very congested. Rezoning the parcel to permit a greater number of homes would only exacerbate the traffic issues.

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Another reason is the water use that would be affected. All of Pima County (in fact, all of Arizona) is tempting fate by permitting increased development that taxes a dwindling water supply. The Colorado River drainage basin continues to experience severe droughts, with both Lake Powell and Lake Mead approaching record low levels. If current rainfall patterns continue, severe shortages of water for Arizona through the CAP system will occur. If CAP water is reduced, pumping of groundwater will increase. Pumping of groundwater drastically affects the beauty of this portion of the Sonoran desert, which still has large trees along the wash areas. Increased pumping will lower the water table in this area for all vegetation and users. The situation at Agua Caliente Park, very close to this parcel, is instructive. The level of water in the ponds at that park has drastically diminished in the last few years. The park is pumping groundwater into the ponds in an attempt to keep water in them, but is barely able to keep up. Groundwater affects the ability of native plants to grow, sometimes in ways we can't fully appreciate until it is too late. Increased pumping of groundwater is a dangerous solution that may cause problems that we cannot foresee, and perhaps cannot rectify. Permitting increased numbers of houses in an area suffering from an impending water crisis is not a responsible action for a government office to take.

The character of this specific parcel also begs one not to change the zoning. The parcel borders the east bank of the Agua Caliente Wash. Areas next to washes should not be developed at all, which is partially why there are restrictions against development in riparian areas. Not only can these areas be affected by flooding which cannot be accurately predicted, but development and building in riparian areas permanently affects the ecology and biodiversity of an area that is by its nature very unique. A riparian area in a desert, a seeming oxymoron, is a precious natural commodity that cannot be replaced or moved elsewhere. Such areas exist by virtue of being adjacent to natural washes, and provide support for vegetation and desert animals that might not thrive elsewhere. I believe that such areas should be maintained in their natural state as much as possible, and rezoning to allow increased housing is diametrically opposed to such concept.

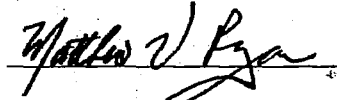
In addition to the foregoing, the area was once designated as Suburban Ranch by County officials for good reason, and it does not appear appropriate to change that designation now. This entire Tanque Verde Valley was always rural in nature. Many properties, such as this one, have been left vacant for many years, allowing the natural desert environment to persevere. Many of the properties along Tanque Verde Road are larger individual properties, mostly undeveloped, and some involving horse properties or other agricultural activities. The neighborhoods that are present in the Tanque Verde Valley, such as ours, primarily consist of larger, rural lots, many with horse corrals. Single family lots of less than one acre are the exception in this area, not the norm. The original zoning designation recognized that. The original zoning designation should be continued so as to maintain the cultural and ecological history and attributes of the area.

I, and my neighbors, invested in a home in this area because of the unique rural beauty and character of the area. There are many areas in Tucson, Marana and Pima County which allow for the kind of development being proposed for this area. To allow this kind of development in this corner of Pima County will begin to change its character forever and we oppose that. We believe that the original designation for this parcel should not be changed.

Any request to change the zoning should be carefully considered given the uniqueness of this particular area of Pima County, and the uniqueness of this particular parcel bordering the Agua Caliente Wash. In addition, I believe that the trend for development, both in Pima County and nationally, appears to favor infill development in urban cores, as opposed to increasing congestion in suburban and rural areas. I believe that maintaining the original zoning category will help to observe that trend. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Owner:

By: Matthew V Ryan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew V Ryan", written over a horizontal line. There is a small mark to the right of the signature.

Address: 12825 E Cape Horn Dr

Tucson, AZ 85749