CALL TO ORDER

A special meeting of the Development Review Committee of the City of Aliso Viejo was called to order by Chair Garcia at 6:05 p.m. on Tuesday, November 9, 2004 at the Aliso Viejo City Hall Council Chamber, 12 Journey, Aliso Viejo, California.

A complete copy of the agenda for the special meeting containing all items as shown herein was posted by 3:00 p.m. on November 8, 2004, on the outdoor bulletin board at City Hall. Copies were also posted at the Aliso Viejo Library, 1 Journey, and the Aliso Viejo Sheriff’s Substation, 11 Journey.

Assistant to the City Manager / City Clerk Robinson introduced Stewart Winkler, the new DRC Member completing former Committee Member Wade Kloos’s term. Committee Member Winkler was sworn into office.

ROLL CALL

Present: Committee Members: Mark Hiller; Lt. Rich Paddock; Lori Trottier; John Whitman; Stewart Winkler; and Chair Eugenia Garcia.

Absent: Committee Member: Kevin Bass and Julie Fitch.

ITEM 1: APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 4, 2004 MINUTES

Committee Member Trottier clarified her comment on the need for more outdoor restaurant patio seating in Aliso Viejo.

A MOTION was made by Committee Member Winkler and seconded by Committee Member Hiller, that the Committee approve the Minutes of October 4, 2004 as amended. There being no objections, the motion was carried through acclamation.

ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 11, 2004 MINUTES

A MOTION was made by Committee Member Whitman and seconded by Committee Member Paddock, that the Committee approve the Minutes of October 11, 2004 as submitted. There being no objections, the motion was carried through acclamation with Committee Member Hiller abstaining due to his absence at that meeting.

ITEM 3: SPECIFIC PLAN SP-01

Review of a Specific Plan SP-01 for a Development Agreement between Shea Properties and the City of Aliso Viejo for the Vantis residential development for 515,000 square feet of professional office uses including 10,000 square feet of retail commercial uses; 20,000 square feet of commercial use within 45 live/work; 300 single family attached homes; and 90 to 180 single family attached “podium” condominiums.
Chair Garcia opened the item with an overview of the proposed project.

Applicant Bradley Pontius, representing Shea Properties, gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the development, safety, and environmental and conservation goals for the project. The presentation also included visual depictions of the proposed project and an outline of the details in the Specific Plan.

Committee Member Paddock asked about the length of the staircase connecting the Vantis site to Town Center. Applicant Pontius stated that there was a 50-foot difference in elevation between the site and the Town Center, and that the staircase would be approximately 100 stairs. Committee Member Paddock was worried about the potential of skateboarders sliding the rails on the staircase. Applicant Pontius ensured the Committee that Shea Properties would do their best to prevent the use of the rails by skateboarders.

Committee Member Winkler asked if the buildings at the corner of Aliso Viejo Parkway and Enterprise would be the tallest structures, with the exception of the parking structure. He also asked if there would be any subterranean parking. Applicant Pontius verified that those were the tallest set of buildings and that all parking was above ground.

Committee Member Winkler asked for more detail on the live/work units. Applicant Pontius stated that the units were geared for small, home-based businesses and would allow residents to live where they work. Chair Garcia stated that the project site was located in a Community Benefit Overlay area and explained the process of developing these areas. She stated that the incorporation of the residential instead of all office spaces would create a less intense use than what was entitled. Committee Member Whitman mentioned that the original plan for office use was about a 5% higher traffic impact than the current proposed project. He also stated that since the original approval, the City’s General Plan had shown a higher Level of Service (LOS) for that intersection and that the project had adequately addressed traffic.

Committee Member Hiller referenced the Conceptual Site Plan, and asked if the parking for the live/work units would be all along the front of the building. Applicant Pontius responded that there would be 90 degree parking in front of the live/work units, dedicating one space per working unit. In the garage there would be two spaces per unit. He stated that there would also be spaces in the back for overflow/guest parking. Passageways would allow access to the front of the building. The parking structure would be available for the live/work units after 5 p.m. He explained that they were trying not to mix the parking for the commercial and live/work uses. Signage would be used to designate which spaces were “For live/work units.” Extra clientele beyond the designated one space per live/work unit would be able to park in the back. Committee Member Hiller asked how it had worked for the Ladera Ranch development. Applicant Pontius stated that there had been no parking problems so far.
Committee Member Hiller was concerned that there were only two ways ingress/egress for the development. He asked if a traffic signal would be installed at those points. He also asked whether the street configuration would meet the demand for 300 units of single-family attached homes. Applicant Pontius deferred to Bob Kahn of RK Engineering. Mr. Kahn explained that they completed the traffic study and that the amount of traffic generated from the residential did meet the demand and should not be a problem. He stated that the intersections had been studied and no problem was foreseen. Committee Member Hiller asked what kind of parking would be on the internal street. Applicant Pontius explained that one side would be parallel parking and the other, 90 degree parking. There would be designated residential parking in the garage for the 300 residential units.

Committee Member Hiller asked how the development would impact AVCA property. Applicant Pontius stated that there would be sharing of a slope side with AVCA. Committee Member Hiller asked that landscaping of the shared slope be designed as not to obstruct views once the trees had reached their full growth.

Committee Member Hiller asked what concept would be implemented to down slow traffic in the roundabout. Applicant Pontius stated that the new design would alleviate illegal turn movements.

Committee Member Trottier asked which seven intersections were mitigated. Mr. Kahn responded that the intersections were as follows: Aliso Creek Road & Aliso Viejo Parkway; Wood Canyon Road & Pacific Park Drive; La Paz Road & Pacific Park Drive; La Paz Road & SR-73 Eastbound Ramp; Moulton Parkway & Aliso Viejo Parkway; Pacific Park Drive & Peppertree; and Aliso Creek Road & Pacific Park Drive. Mr. Kahn also stated that total improvement cost estimated by the City Engineer would be slightly over $2.6 million.

Committee Member Trottier asked if the interior streets would have bike lanes. She also asked if there was a visual of the flat roofs. Applicant Pontius stated that vehicles and bicycles would share on internal streets and that there were no designated bike lanes. In response to the picture of the flat roofs, he showed a slide in the presentation titled “Residential (right) at Office Interface.” Committee Member Trottier also mentioned that there was no reference to roll-up garage doors and that they would be required. Applicant Pontius stated that they would be implemented and that the Ladera Ranch development used this type of garage door.

Committee Member Whitman commented that the storm drains on the Safeco building were currently private and per the Specific Plan, the project’s storm drain system would be public, thereby converting public to private, back to public. He stated that this plan did not seem workable and that the drain system should be private since the streets were private. Applicant Pontius deferred to Paul Rothenberg of Canyon Consulting, who stated that a correction to the Specific Plan was needed. He said storm drains would be a private system and would only connect to the public streets at major intersections.
Committee Member Whitman mentioned the proposed traffic signal at the entry to Aliso Viejo Parkway across from the hotel. He was concerned about this resulting in increased U-turn movements at the main Vantis entrance. He also stated that the entry was a key pedestrian connection and would be much less desirable to pedestrians without signalization. Applicant Pontius stated that they are currently not anticipating a traffic signal being installed and that the pedestrian corridor would feed through the public plaza area. He also mentioned that the Development Agreement Negotiation Team (DANT) had been straying away from a straightaway connection to the hotel and wanted the pedestrian access pushed down to the intersection of Aliso Viejo Parkway and Enterprise instead.

Committee Member Whitman commented that he wanted a stronger bikeway connection from the hotel down to Town Center and felt this would enhance the project. He mentioned that he would like the specimen tree in the center of the traffic circle to be saved. He also asked how the lot line adjustment would be made. Mr. Rothenberg stated that their intention was to do a Lot Line Adjustment for the initial phases of the project, including the commercial, and pursue a Subdivision Map of the entire property to create the residential if needed. Committee Member Whitman clarified that a lot line adjustment would be pursued for 130 Vantis only. Applicant Pontius confirmed this information.

Committee Member Whitman asked if the median improvements in front of the project could include the City's recommended landscape pallet. Applicant Pontius stated that they were considering some drought tolerant landscaping and that in the parkway they would be augmenting existing landscaping with drought tolerant plants. Committee Member Whitman mentioned that it was important to incorporate the City landscape pallet. He also asked about signage. Applicant Pontius stated that signage would continue the existing design with the addition of residential aspects, including color and materials.

Committee Member Whitman commented on the live/work units and the ability for the work units to be leased. He was concerned with this option and stated that he preferred for them to not be leased. Applicant Pontius stated that they are still working with the DANT and no definitive decision had been made.

Committee Member Whitman asked for clarification on permitted uses being able to have up to six students, participant, or employees in the live/work buildings. Susan Hori of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips Law Firm, representing Shea Properties, explained that the Specific Plan includes the following types of uses that could be incorporated: 1) Owners of the live/work units could have up to two employees; 2) For the commercial area, six participants/students or non-employees could be allowed.

Committee Member Whitman asked if the stairway connecting the site to the Town Center met ADA requirements. Applicant Pontius said they were still working on ADA compliance issues. Committee Member Whitman also asked if there would be a height difference between the Safeco building and 90 Vantis. Applicant Pontius explained that
there would be a difference of three stories, which would be about a 10-foot difference starting at the first floor. Committee Member Whitman asked Applicant Pontius to explain the agreement signed by surrounding residents acknowledging development would occur up to a certain height. Applicant Pontius explained that an agreement was signed acknowledging that up to eight stories would be built, however, no height limit was specified.

Committee Member Paddock mentioned that two crossing guards would be contracted for a period of 10 years. He asked if there were any controlled intersections planned North of Grand Avenue. Applicant Pontius replied that there would be one controlled intersection North of Grand. Committee Member Paddock asked about crossing guards at that intersection. Applicant Pontius was unsure. Committee Member Paddock asked what the surface would be along that walking path. Applicant Pontius answered that they aimed to provide a clear pedestrian connection. On the street parallel to the live/work units they aimed to provide a separation from the curb with landscaping on both sides, creating a separation between pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Narrowing the driveways would also provide a traffic-calming element. A textured walkway would be installed at Grand Avenue with a dedicated crossing guard. Applicant Pontius stated the concern was noted with wider, dual sidewalks, textured streets, etc. to provide pedestrian safety. There was further discussion concerning barriers for pedestrians between Grand Ave. and the elementary school.

Committee Member Paddock asked if there were any speed bumps or other traffic calming devices planned for the interior streets of the residential areas. Applicant Pontius stated that they were not at that stage yet. Committee Member Paddock requested that when they get to that point that they consult with OCFA and OCSD to ensure ease of emergency vehicles in crossing. He informed Applicant Pontius that CPTED Design requirements should be incorporated into the site development. Committee Member Paddock gave some examples of CPTED requirements including clearly visible addressing, see-through elevators for the parking structure, the first floor of the parking structure painted bright and well lit, a designated motorcycle parking area with an attractive lit cage near an area of high pedestrian traffic, etc. He also recommended review with CPTED Specialist Beauchamp for the parking garage. There was further discussion on CPTED requirements. Chair Garcia stated that CPTED requirements for the Summit development could be provided to Applicant Pontius to clarify the City’s expectations.

Committee Member Hiller asked why they were considering prohibiting the usage of flat roofs for recreational use or living area. Applicant Pontius stated that the DANT's preference was to prohibit use due to the inability to control aesthetics on the rooftops. Chair Garcia stated that the City’s preference was clean rooftops.

Committee Member Hiller requested Applicant Pontius consider mitigation of heavy traffic causing blockage for the ingress/egress during rush hour. Applicant Pontius noted the request.
Committee Member Trottier requested Applicant Pontius consider having trees placed on the pedestrian side of the corridor instead of the automobile side to help create an unobstructed pedestrian pathway. Applicant Pontius stated they would continue efforts to maximize the pedestrian area.

Chair Garcia opened the floor for public comment on the item. Seeing none, she thanked the Committee for their comments. She asked if a four-way stop would solve the foreseen congestion problem. Committee Member Whitman stated that it probably would not warrant stop signs with the anticipated traffic volumes. He suggested further review of internal circulation to ensure that problems could be mitigated.

City Consulting Planner Wayne Loftus stated that it was important to note that comments may not be embodied in the Specific Plan, but would be outlined in the conditions and/or on subdivision maps.

Committee Member Paddock requested infrastructure be put in place for Bi-Directional Amplifiers (BDAs) so they could be easily installed to reduce interference. This would ensure emergency radio reception would be clear, allowing for easier response in emergency situations.

A MOTION was made by Committee Member Whitman and seconded by Committee Member Paddock, that the Development Review Committee make the recommendation for approval for the Specific Plan SP-01 for a Development Agreement between Shea Properties and the City of Aliso Viejo for the Vantis residential development for 515,000 square feet of professional office uses including 10,000 square feet of retail commercial uses; 20,000 square feet of commercial use within 45 live/work; 300 single family attached homes; and 90 to 180 single family attached “podium” condominiums with the following conditions:

1. That the project undergoes CPTED Review with Specialist Beauchamp to ensure all requirements are implemented;
2. That AVCA shared slopes be landscaped so as to prevent obstruction of views at full growth of trees;
3. That the Applicant make all efforts to mitigate traffic congestion at points of ingress/egress to the project site;
4. That the Applicant makes efforts to create unobstructed pedestrian corridors;
5. That the Applicant implement drought tolerant landscaping and use the City's landscaping pallet into the project’s landscape plan.

Motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

COMMUNITY INPUT:
None.
ADJOURNMENT at 7:36 p.m.

Submitted By:    Approved By:

Serenity N. Ajawara  Eugenia Garcia, AICP
Planning Staff Assistant  Chair