MONTEREY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting: December 10, 2008 Time: 1:30 PM Agenda Item No.: 6

Project Description: Conduct a workshop on the following project:

- 1) Lot Line Adjustment of 3.47 acres between two parcels reducing APN167-061-032-000 (Riehl) from 52.0 acres to 48.53 acres and increasing APN167-061-033-000 (Mohsin) from 245.51 acres to 249.0 acres;
- Amend General Plan and Toro Area Plan land use maps for two parcels: a) change 17-acre parcel (APN 167-061-029-000/Samoske) from Farmland/40 acre minimum (F/40) to Low Density Residential with a Special Treatment Area (STA) Overlay; and b) change a 55-acre portion of a 249-acre parcel (APN 167-061-033-000/Mohsin) from Permanent Grazing/40 acre minimum (PG/40) to Low Density Residential with a STA Overlay. The STA would allow 14 single-family residential lots and a Permanent Grazing remainder parcel and would require an agricultural buffer as part of any subdivision within the STA.
- 3) Zone Changes for two parcels: a) change 17 acre parcel (APN 167-061-029-000/Samoske) from F/40-D to LDR/5-VS; and b) change 55 acres of a 249-acre parcel (APN 167-061-033-000/Mohsin) from PG/40-D to LDR/5-VS with 194 acres remaining PG/40;
- Combined Development Permit consisting of: a) Standard Subdivision to subdivide one 17-acre parcel (APN 167-061-029-000/Samoske into three parcels consisting of 7.0 acres (Parcel A), 5.0 acres (Parcel B) and 5 acres (Parcel C) and subdivide one 249.0 acre parcel (APN 167-061-033-000/Mohsin) into 11, 5-acre parcels (LDR/5) plus one remainder parcel totaling 194 acres (PG/40). The proposed subdivision will require agricultural buffer plans for a buffer of at least 75 feet for Parcels B and C of the Samoske portion of the subdivision, and a buffer of at least 100 feet for 11 residential parcels on the Mohsin portion of the subdivision. b) Administrative Permit pursuant to Section 21.14.040.G to allow a small water system with 14 connections.

Project Location : 874, 884 & 870 River Road	APN: 167-061-029-000, 167-061-032-000 & 167-061-033-000			
	Name:			
Planning File Number: PLN980516	Mused and Terry Mohsin,			
	Joseph and Sandra Samoske and			
	Robert and Nancy Riehl			
Plan Area: Toro Area Plan	Flagged and staked: No			
Zoning Designation : F/40-D [Farmlands/40 acre minimum-Design Control] and PG/40-D				
[Permanent Grazing/40 acre minimum-Design Control]				

CEQA Action: Draft EIR and Recirculated Portion of Draft EIR

Department: RMA - Planning Department

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission conduct a workshop on the project, receive public testimony, and continue the public hearing to January 14, 2009. We anticipate completing the FEIR and coming forward with a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors on at that hearing date.

PROJECT OVERVIEW:

The purpose of this workshop is for staff to present the Commission with an overview of the environmental analysis and the proposed project.

On February 15, 2005, the Board of Supervisors approved a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Combined Development Permit for this project (**Exhibits J and K**) These actions were challenged and the County subsequently went back to prepare an Environmental Impact Report for the proposed project. The current proposed project is generally the same, but with a change to the General Plan

designation to establish a Special Treatment Area (STA) overlay with specific criteria for future development of the subject site. The general development concept and underlying zoning (LDR) would remain the same as previously considered.

A Draft EIR (DEIR) was prepared that addresses potential impacts to aesthetic resources, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, population and housing, public services, traffic and transportation and utilities and service systems. The DEIR was circulated for comment from February 8 to March 24, 2008. A Recirculated Portion of the Draft EIR was prepared to address revisions to the project description (STA designation). The comment period for this revised portion of the EIR document was from September 26 to November 10, 2008.

Background

On February 15, 2005, the Board of Supervisors:

On October 30, 2008, the Subdivision Committee considered the Draft EIR and the recirculated portion of the Draft EIR with the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. The Committee expressed concerns regarding the proposed reduction in the agricultural buffers but decided to move the project along to the Planning Commission to address the impacts of the project and recommended (5-1 vote) that the Planning Commission approves the Staff Proposed reduced Density Alternative (see **Exhibit I**).

See Exhibit B for a more detailed discussion of the proposed project.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT: The following checked agencies and departments reviewed the subject project and CEQA documents.

- ✓ Water Resources Agency
- ✓ Housing and Redevelopment Agency
- ✓ Environmental Health Division
- ✓ Salinas Rural Fire Protection District
- ✓ Public Works Department
- ✓ Monterey County Sheriff's Office

✓ Parks Department

✓ Agricultural Commissioner

Conditions recommended by the Planning Department, Water Resources Agency, Housing and Redevelopment Agency, Environmental Health Division, Sheriff's Office, Parks Department, Agricultural Commissioner and Salinas Rural Fire Protection District have been incorporated into the Condition Compliance and Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Plan.

The project was referred to the Toro Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) for review. On October 13, 1998, the Toro LUAC voted 3-1-1-0 to recommend denial of the project (see **Exhibit F**). On July 8, 2002, the Toro LUAC reviewed a Property Owner Request from the applicants to change the land use designation of the site and rezone the property (see **Exhibit G**). The Committee voted to recommend approval (3-2 vote) of the proposed change in the General Plan land use designation and rezoning. On November 10, 2008, the Toro LUAC voted to recommend approval of the Lot Line Adjustment (7-1 vote) and denial (8-0 vote) of the General Plan Amendment, Rezoning and Combined Development Permit (see **Exhibit H**).

The project is scheduled for review by the Agricultural Advisory Committee on December 4, 2008. The recommendations of the Agricultural Advisory Committee will be presented at the Planning Commission meeting.

Bob Schubert, AICP, Senior Planner (831) 755-5183 or schubertbj@co.monterey.ca.us December 2, 2008

cc: Front Counter Copy; Planning Commission; Public Works; Water Resources Agency; Environmental Health; Parks Department; Housing and Redevelopment; Agricultural Commissioner; Salinas Rural Fire Protection District; Sheriff's Office; Carl Holm; Alana Knaster, Wendy Stremling, Bob Schubert, Sheri Damon, Owners; Project File PLN980516.

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This report was reviewed by Carl Holm, AICP, Assistant Planning Director

Exhibit A Project Data Sheet

EXHIBIT B PROJECT OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND

An Initial Study prepared in March 2004 indicated that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment and that an EIR would be required to more fully evaluate potential adverse environmental impacts that may result from development of the proposed project. A subsequent Initial Study prepared by the County in June 2004 indicated that because revisions in the project were made or agreed to by the project proponent, the project would not have a significant effect on the environment and concluded that a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) would be prepared for the proposed project.

On February 15, 2005, a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Combined Development Permit for Mohsin, Riehl, and Samoske consisting of a Lot Line Adjustment, General Plan/Toro Area Plan amendment, Zoning Amendments, a Tentative Subdivision map for 14 lots, and a Variance for reducing required agricultural buffer set backs. The Mitigated Negative Declaration and Combined Development Permit for: Lot Line Adjustment, 14-lot subdivision, and Variance from Agricultural Buffer zones were approved under Resolution 05-024 (**Exhibit I**), and the General Plan/Toro Area Plan amendments under Resolution 05-071 (**Exhibit J**). General Plan and Zoning amendments consist of

- Samoske (APN: 167-061-029-000): Change 17 acres from Farmland to Low Density Residential in order to allow subdivision into three parcel of five acres and seven acres.
- Mohsin (APN: 167-061-033-000): Change 55 acres from Permanent Grazing to Low Density Residential in order to allow subdivision into 11, 5-acre parcels with a remainder parcel of 186.7 acres.

On September 19, 2005, Land Watch Monterey County and River Road Ranchers for Responsible Growth filed a Petition with the Superior Court of California objecting to the proposed project on the grounds that it violated the County General Plan, the Toro Area Plan, and Monterey County Code. Petitioners were also concerned with the failure of the County to comply with CEQA by failing to prepare an EIR for the proposed project. The Superior Court of California ruled that an EIR must be prepared for the proposed project. As a result, a Draft EIR was prepared in accordance with CEQA.

On October 30, 2008, the Subdivision Committee considered the Draft EIR and the recirculated portion of the Draft EIR with the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and recommended (5-1 vote) that the Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Evidence and Conditions of Approval (see **Exhibit I**). The Committee expressed concerns regarding the proposed reduction in the agricultural buffers but decided to move the project along to the Planning Commission to address the impacts of the project.

The project was referred to the Toro Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) for review. Based on the LUAC Procedure guidelines adopted by the Monterey County Board of Supervisors per Resolution No. 08-338, this application did warrant referral to the LUAC because it involves a General Plan Amendment, Rezoning, Combined Development Permit, Standard Subdivision and a Lot Line Adjustment.

On October 13, 1998, the Toro LUAC voted 3-1-1-0 to recommend denial of the project (see **Exhibit F**). The minutes of the meeting indicate that the "aye" votes were based on inconsistencies between the project and the Toro Area Plan. The rationale for the "no" vote was because denial of the project would deprive the property owners from subdividing land that is used for neither row crops nor grazing.

On July 8, 2002, the Toro LUAC reviewed a Property Owner Request from the applicants to change the land use designation of the site and rezone the property (see **Exhibit G**). The Committee voted to recommend approval (3-2 vote) of the proposed change in the General Plan land use designation and rezoning.

On November 10, 2008, the Toro LUAC voted to recommend approval of the Lot Line Adjustment (7-1 vote) and denial (8-0 vote) of the General Plan Amendment, Rezoning and Combined Development Permit (see **Exhibit H**). Members of the public expressed concerns regarding traffic impacts on River Road, agricultural viability, agricultural buffers, drainage water, lack of emergency services, jobs/housing balance and workforce housing. The Committee expressed concerns regarding the proposed reduction in the agricultural buffers and the loss of viable farmland. One Committee member suggested that residential development should stop at Pine Canyon Road in order to preserve agricultural land.

The project is scheduled for review by the Agricultural Advisory Committee on December 4, 2008. The recommendations of the Agricultural Advisory Committee will be presented at the Planning Commission meeting.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project area consists of three parcels totaling approximately 266 acres of grazing land, open space hilly terrain with two existing residences and stables west of River Road:

- 1. 17-acre parcel (APN 167-061-029) zoned as Farmland (F/40-D) and owned by Joseph and Sandra Samoske,
- 2. 245.51-acre parcel (APN 167-061-033) zoned as Permanent Grazing (PG/40-D) and owned by Mused and Terry Mohsin, and
- 3. 52-acre parcel (APN 167-061-032) zoned as Permanent Grazing (PG/40-D) and owned by Robert and Nancy Riehl.

A Lot Line Adjustment was required as part of a purchase and sales agreement between Robert and Nancy Riehl's property (APN 167-061-032) and the Mohsin property (APN 167-061-033). This Lot Line Adjustment would transfer 3.47 acres from the Riehl property to the 245.51 acre Mohsin parcel increasing the size of the Mohsin parcel to 249 acres.

The proposed project includes an amendment to the General Plan and the Toro Area Plan to designate the entire 266 acres of land as a Special Treatment Area ("STA") with reference to a new policy in the Toro Area Plan as Policy 30.1.1.2(T). The following specific policies will regulate uses within the STA:

- 1. Development shall be limited to the creation of a clustered, rural density, residential subdivision consistent with the surrounding residential development.
- 2. No more than 13 new residential lots may be created and shall be clustered on the lower 72 acres of land closest to River Road. The lots shall be a minimum of 5 acres.
- 3. Agricultural buffers shall be established where applicable taking into account conditions such as the type of adjacent agriculture use, topography, and climate (e.g., prevailing winds) with the intent to protect agricultural operations from impacts of non-agricultural uses. An Agricultural Buffer Plan, to be approved by the Agricultural Commissioner, shall be required for any proposed subdivision within the STA.
- 4. Development of the residential properties shall be required to comply with visual sensitivity policies of the Toro Area Plan.

- 5. The upper 194 acres shall remain as permanent grazing with a habitat and scenic conservation easement over at least 150 acres, including areas where slopes exceed 30%.
- 6. Any subdivision within the STA must comply with the inclusionary housing ordinance in effect as of 1998.
- 7. Neither an infrastructure study nor a rural center plan is required for the development of the Mohsin-Samoske STA.

Underlying zoning of the Samoske's 17 acre parcel would be changed from Farmland/40 acre minimum (F/40-D) to Low Density Residential/5 acres per unit (LDR/5-VS) and the lower 55 acres of the Mohsin's 249 acre parcel would be changed from Permanent Grazing/40 acre minimum (PG/40-D) to Low Density Residential/5 acres per unit (LDR/5-VS). The remaining 194 acres of the Mohsin property will remain Permanent Grazing/40 acres minimum (PG/40-D) with approximately 157.7 acres deeded as a Conservation and Scenic Easement to County to preserve viewshed, habitat and open space.

Parcel	Owner	General Plan		Zoning	
		Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
167-061-029	Samoske	Farmlands, 40 acres min.	17 acres: Special Treatment Area (Toro AP Policy 30.1.1.2)	F/40-D	LDR/5-VS
167-061-032	Riehl	Permanent Grazing, 40 acres min.	3.47 Acres (Mohsin): Special Treatment Area (Toro AP Policy 30.1.1.2)	PG/40-D	3.47 acres LDR/5-VS; Remainder No Change
167-061-033	Mohsin	Permanent Grazing, 40 acres min.	245.51 acres: Special Treatment Area (Toro AP Policy 30.1.1.2)	PG/40-D	55 acres LDR/5-VS 194 acres: PG/40-VS

F/40-D = Farmlands, 40 acres minimum lot size, Design Control; PG = Permanent Grazing; LDR = Low Density Residential, VS = Visual Sensitivity District

A Standard Subdivision would create 11 new 5-acre parcels from Mused and Terry Mohsin's 245.51 acre parcel (APN 167-061-033), and three parcels (7 acres, 5 acre, and 5 acre) from Joseph and Sandra Samoske's 17-acre property (APN 167-061-029). An Administrative Permit is included to develop a small water system with 14 connections for the new lots. Agricultural buffer plans propose to reduce the required buffer from 200 feet to 75 feet for Parcels B and C of the Samoske portion of the subdivision and reduce the required buffer from 200 feet to 100 feet for 11 residential parcels for the Mohsin portion of the subdivision.

Parcel	Subd	ivision	Lot Line Adjustment		
	Proposed # Lots	Proposed Size	Existing Lot Size	Proposed Lot Size	
167-061-029	3	1 @ 6.5 acres	17 acres		
(Samoske)		2 @ 5 acres			
167-061-032			52 acres	48.53 acres	
(Riehl)					
167-061-033	12	11 lots, 5 acres	245.51 acres	55 acres sub;	
(Mohsin)		each 1 lot 194 acres (remainder)		194 acre remainder	

EXISTING AND PROPOSED (DASHED) LOT CONFIGURATION:



CEQA

A Draft EIR was prepared to assess the potential adverse environmental impacts from the project and was circulated starting on February 8, 2008. The public review period ended on March 24, 2008. A Recirculated Portion of the Draft EIR was prepared and was circulated starting on September 26, 2008. The public review period on the Recirculated Portion of the Draft EIR ended on November 10, 2008. The issues that were analyzed in the Draft EIR and Recirculated Portion of the Draft EIR include aesthetic resources, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, population and housing, public services, traffic and transportation and utilities and service systems.

Mitigation measures are proposed to mitigate project impacts. However, the potential development pressure to neighbor agricultural lands is determined to be growth inducing and therefore a significant unavoidable impact. As such overriding considerations must be made by the Board of Supervisors for this project. The Final EIR is being prepared in response to comments and will be scheduled for consideration by the Planning Commission on January 13, 2008.

<u>Lot Line Adjustment</u>: Parcel sizes are consistent with the existing land use designations of the Monterey County General Plan and the Toro Area Plan and also conform to the current PG/40-D zoning designating and the amendments and reclassification as proposed. The Lot Line Adjustment includes two lots and two lots will exist after completion of the lot line adjustment.

<u>Land Use:</u> The General Plan Amendments would create a Special Treatment Area (STA) that would allow 14 single-family residential lots and a Permanent Grazing remainder parcel and would require an agricultural buffer as part of any subdivision within the STA. Finding 1g of the resolution adopted by the Subdivision Committee (**Exhibit I**) provides justification how the proposed project is consistent with General Plan policies. Finding 1h (**Exhibit I**) concludes the project is consistent with Toro Area Plan goals.

The project is consistent with the Lot Design Standards of Section 19.10.030 Monterey County (Subdivision) Code. Underlying zoning for the lower 62 acres would change LDR/5-VS with 194 acres remaining PG/40 and the proposed subdivision is clustered such that the overall density does not exceed 5 acres/unit on the lower portion of the project area. No residential development is proposed at this time and future residential development is subject to project specific review.

The design and improvement of the subdivision complies with applicable provisions of the Subdivision Ordinance (Title 19), Zoning Ordinance, General Plan, as amended and Toro Area Plan, as amended. The conditions of approval require the applicants to assure long-term maintenance of the improvements by use of a homeowners association. Lots, building sites and improvements have been designed to meet the standards of the Subdivision Ordinance (Title 19).

<u>Agriculture</u>: The Samoske property contains a large stable/residence combination, a number of paddocks with pole barn-type horse shelters, and an equestrian riding ring. This property was occasionally used for dry farming in the past but is not currently in agricultural production and currently is used for equestrian-related activities. Some portions of the Mohsin property were used for dry farming in the past but have not been in production for more than 20 years. The Mohsin property is currently leased for grazing and it has been utilized as grazing land for many years.

The Toro Area Plan designates the Mohsin and Samoske parcels as Farmlands of Local Importance. The General Plan, however, classifies the Mohsin and Samoske parcels based on the DOC's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program described above. The DOC classifies the site as primarily "Other Lands" with a small portion of the Mohsin property classified as "Grazing Land". To guide its land use decisions regarding the proposed project, the County is relying on the categories and classifications of the DOC (Meeting of Monterey County Board of Supervisors, Reporter's Partial Transcript of Proceedings, February 15, 2005, pg. 69).

The agricultural viability report prepared for the project concluded the Mohsin and Samoske properties are not prime farmland and have low suitability for farming use. Further, the agricultural viability report indicates that abutting properties share the same soil characteristics as the property proposed for development, which also makes them unsuitable for agricultural use. Some of the adjacent properties are developed with single-family homes.

Criteria set forth as part of the STA requires an Agricultural Buffer Plan for the areas where residential development would abut lands remaining in agriculture. A 100-foot buffer would be created on the eastern, western and southern boundaries of the Mohsin portion of the project. The eastern boundary of the property is bordered by a 60-foot right-of-way, which results in an effective buffer of the same width. The western boundary of the property is bordered by a steep drainage, which in addition to the 100-foot buffer provides a natural topographic buffer with the property to the west. The southern boundary of the property is bordered by open space. A 75-foot buffer would be established on the eastern, western, and northern boundaries of the Samoske property. The Draft EIR concludes that this Plan would ensure that impacts related to agricultural buffer requirements would remain less than significant.

<u>Inclusionary Housing</u>: The project consists of a subdivision creating 14 new residential lots. Two existing residences are currently located on the project site. The application was deemed complete in November of 1999, which was prior to the effective date of the County's current Inclusionary Ordinance (#04185) and is therefore subject to the prior Ordinance #3419. Ordinance #3419, requires that all development resulting in residential units or lots contribute to the Inclusionary Housing Program, in an amount equal to 15% of the total number of lots/units being created, (that are not determined to be

exempt). The Ordinance further allows the developer to select the form of compliance including the payment of an in-lieu fee instead of supplying Inclusionary units.

The in-lieu fee shall be based on the adopted Inclusionary In-Lieu Fee Schedule in effect at the time that the project application was deemed complete by the County. This project will result in total of 14 lots, however the two existing residences are exempt. The project is therefore subject to compliance for 12 lots/units, which equals 1.8 Inclusionary units. The project application indicates that the applicant is electing to pay an In-Lieu fee for compliance. The In-Lieu fee is calculated based on the fee schedule that was in effect at the time that the application was deemed complete (1994 In-Lieu Fee Schedule).

<u>Water</u>: An existing water supply well (State Well #16S/4E-8C2) provides domestic water to one rural residential property. Domestic water demand for this parcel is estimated to be 375 gallons per day (gpd) or approximately 0.42 acre-feet per year (af/year). The Samoske parcel currently maintains approximately 9.5 acres of horse pasture and approximately one acre of ornamental landscaping around the rural residential property. Existing irrigation demand for the property is estimated to be approximately 64.4 af/year.

The proposed subdivision would include 13 new single-family dwellings. Each parcel would be a minimum of 5 acres in area. Under the proposed project, the domestic water demand would increase to approximately 5,025 gpd or 5.88 ac-ft per year.

As part of the development of the Mohsin portion of the subdivision, the existing Small Water System serving the Samoske parcel would be expanded to serve the additional lots through completion of the following:

- A new well would be drilled and added to the system on a well lot easement on Parcel C of the Samoske portion of the subdivision.
- Water storage tanks would be added in accordance with the requirements of the Salinas Rural Fire Department and Monterey County Department of Health, Division of Environmental Health.
- Underground pipelines would be expanded, and the permitted Small Water System would be replaced with a mutual water company to be licensed by the State of California, Department of Corporations.
- Both phases would include the placement of new fire hydrants in accordance with the requirements of the Salinas Rural Fire Department.
- The project includes an Administrative Permit to allow a small water system with 14 connections.

<u>Traffic</u>: The proposed single-family homes would generate approximately 124 daily trips, 10 trips during the a.m. peak hour (3 in, 7 out), and 13 trips during the p.m. peak hour. The Draft EIR concludes that traffic impacts will be less than significant after implementation of all standard procedures and mitigation measures.

<u>Biology</u>: The Draft EIR (page IV-80) states that potential impacts to biological resources from the proposed project will be mitigated to levels that are less than significant with implementation of the proposed mitigation measures. Therefore, no significant impacts associated with biological resources will remain after implementation of all standard procedures and mitigation measures.

<u>Mitigation</u>: Mitigation measures, starting at Condition 47, are incorporated into the matrix attached as **Exhibit I.** The EIR concludes that most impacts can be reduced to a less than significant level with

mitigation. However, potential growth inducing development pressure to neighboring agriculture lands cannot be fully mitigated and therefore remains a significant unavoidable impact. As such overriding considerations must be made by the Board of Supervisors for this project. Staff has considered the following possible overriding circumstances to recommend to the Board of Supervisor:

- As conditioned, the project would construct improvements to River Road that will relieve existing traffic deficiencies.
- The upper 194 acres of the site will remain as permanent grazing with a habitat and scenic conservation easement over at least 150 acres, including areas where slopes exceed 50%.
- The project includes development of a large water storage tank that will improve fire suppression capabilities for the existing homes in this area as well as the proposed subdivision.
- The draft 2007 General Plan Update, if adopted, includes added protection from pressure to convert to development for the neighboring agricultural lands.

Comments Letters: The review period for the DEIR ended on March 24, 2008 and we received seven letters that generally address the following issues: traffic impacts, scenic impacts to River Road, biological impacts, suitability of the site for agricultural uses, conversion of farmland to residential use, adequacy of the proposed agricultural buffers, growth inducing impacts and impacts on greenhouse gas emissions. The EIR consultant is preparing responses to these comments for the Final EIR. The review period for the Recirculated Portion of the Draft EIR ended on November 10, 2008. Responses to these comments will be developed after the review period is closed. Comments relative to the Recirculated Portion of the DEIR received as part of this hearing will be addressed in the Final EIR. This project will be set for hearing at the Planning Commission once the Final EIR is completed.