



GREEN VALLEY LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION

"Committed to the preservation and enhancement of Green Valley's rural character"

July 2021 Newsletter

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President's Message:

Happy Summer! It's been six months since our last newsletter and my first six months as GVLA President. I'm honored to have my new "job" – and Rick and I continue to be delighted to be a part of this wonderful, lively, caring community. Also, thanks to all our neighbors for your work hardening your homes, yards and hillsides to help protect Green Valley from what could be a difficult fire season.

There are a couple of important items scheduled to be reviewed by the Board of Supervisors in the coming months, and we want to make sure the entire Green Valley community is aware of these issues. One topic is Short-Term Rentals, which are discussed in greater detail starting on Page #2. The second topic is redistricting – a process required every 10 years following a national census. While the outcome is unknown, these discussions (held by a panel of local citizens nominated by the current five county supervisors) could change our representative on the Solano County Board of Supervisors. At this time, this is a matter over which the GVLA and valley residents can give little input, but we will keep our members apprised of conversations held on this matter in the coming months.

For now, we hope everyone in Green Valley enjoys our lovely warm weather, the cool nights, the views and bounty of our agricultural landscapes, and a fire-free and fire-safe summer season.

Best Regards,
Mary Burczyk,
President, GVLA

Short-Term Rentals:

You may or may not be aware, but this past April the Board of Supervisors voted to deny a permit for a home in the Green Valley Highlands being offered on Airbnb, VRBO and other websites for unhosted short term rentals (STRs).

The permit denial came after nine months of letters and testimonies before county agencies as the nearby neighbors experienced problems with the groups of unhosted renters. The house was being rented without a legal permit and did not meet the County's requirements.

The majority of the comments by Green Valley neighbors discussed how the rental of the home – for weekend parties with up to ten renters – essentially constituted a commercial “hotel” and had negative impacts on the peace, privacy and safety of the surrounding residents' homes. Concerns were also raised about increased vehicular traffic on the Highland's narrow two-lane roads, trespassing on nearby properties, and the potential for fires by transient renters unaware of our areas' high fire risk.

To better evaluate this phenomenon, the Board of Supervisors put in place a two-year moratorium on new permits for STRs in the Rural Residential 10, 5 and 2.5-acre zone areas of Green Valley. These zones are at the top of the hillsides on the West and East sides of the valley. Almost all other homes in Green Valley are in Agriculture or Residential Traditional Community zones.

The GVLA Board is aware there are homeowners in our area who rent parts of their homes, do home swaps, or have other creative tenancies in their homes. This is not what this is about.

Due to Green Valley's beautiful landscapes and proximity to Napa, we have concerns that Green Valley could become a target for investors looking to turn homes in neighborhoods into these types of “hotels” and have a significant impact on our valley's quiet, rural character.

There are many business owners in the wine-growing areas of the County who wish to operate these kinds of STR properties. GVLA is in full support of these types of uses in the areas which the County already has designated for “agro-tourism” – a concept started in Italy to encourage tourists in its under-populated, wine-growing regions.

We believe the Board of Supervisors needs to be made aware that our community's safety and security are of critical importance to existing taxpaying residents.

Short-Term Rentals, cont'd:

The investors who originally bought the house in the Green Valley Highlands are reporting that they conducted a survey that says most Solano County homeowners are in favor of these kinds of STRs. In the next few weeks, the GVLA will send an email poll to our membership and area residents to assess the attitudes of Green Valley residents on this issue – to make sure our voices and opinions are heard by our elected officials. If you are not currently a GVLA member and would like to receive a survey, please send an email to gvla1972@gmail.com.

Cordelia Fire Protection District:

The 2020-21 Solano County civil grand jury recently issued a report entitled “Wildfires On The Horizon, Solano Homes At Risk!” The report found local fire protection districts were understaffed, under-equipped, and underfunded for their mission to protect rural communities and adjacent cities from potential wildfires. It also reiterated the importance of sufficient funding for the rural fire districts as the first line of defense against wildfires. The full report can be found at: <https://solano.courts.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/FINAL-210624-Wildfires.pdf>

As a result, Cordelia, Vacaville and the Suisun Fire Protection Districts have been working diligently with Solano County and the Solano County’s Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to find solutions to the challenges outlined in both the LAFCO and Grand Jury reports. On June 22, 2021, the Board of Supervisors voted to approve the submittal of a Resolution of Application with LAFCO for the reorganization of these three separate Fire Districts.

In advance of any reorganization, the Cordelia Fire Protection District (CFPD) recently entered into a “Contract for Services” agreement with the Vacaville Fire Protection District (VFPD). Under that agreement, VFPD will provide a Fire Chief and administrative, maintenance, and prevention services. CFPD and VFPD have been working together for the past six months sharing resources and building a common culture to better serve all their constituents.

Also, in advance of any reorganization, Solano County recently announced its purchase of the former Falls School site to ensure that location for Station #29 and any future Fire District needs. We are grateful for the County’s swift action in this matter.

Finally, the GVLA Board wishes to acknowledge and thank Chief Dave Carpenter for his dedication, service, and commitment to the CFPD. Chief Carpenter will remain on staff as a volunteer overseeing the daily duties of our district.

Green Valley FireSafe Council:

Since our last newsletter, the Green Valley FireSafe Council (GVFSC) has been busy educating residents on reducing wildfire risk and creating defensible space around our homes, as well as providing support and guidance to other folks in Solano County wanting to start their own firesafe councils.

In December 2020 and January 2021, GVFSC used a \$15,000 grant to conduct a “chipping” program, to encourage residents to remove ladder fuels and thin dense vegetation. Seventy-seven residents participated, removing 13,500 cubic feet of hazardous fuels. During the Spring, the GVFSC conducted two webinars, one on Home Hardening and the other on Surviving A Wildfire. A recording of both webinars can be found on the GVFSC’s website: <http://gvfsc.org>

On May 1st the GVFSC dedicated a new Fire Safety Bulletin Board located at the intersection of Green Valley and Rockville Roads. That event kicked off three Green Waste Days helping residents harden their homes by creating defensible space and resulting in the removal of an additional 7,560 cubic feet of hazardous fuels. Thanks are due to Republic Services for donating the bins and Potrero Hills for waving the dump fees for this effort.

GVFSC and the Cordelia Fire Protection District (CFPD) also are working in partnership to address the wildfire risks in our area. GVFSC President Rochelle Sherlock and CFPD Chief Dave Carpenter met with Solano County Public Works to discuss safe evacuation routes. As a result of their advocacy, the Solano County Road Maintenance crews began clearing heavy brush and shrubs along Rockville Rd. and Green Valley Rd. to improve road conditions for safer evacuations.

Finally, in partnership with CFPD, GVFSC wrote and submitted a CAL FIRE grant proposal to reduce Green Valley’s wildfire risk by creating a shaded fuel break along the western and northern edges of the valley. A shaded fuel break is a forest management strategy used to mitigate the threat of wildfire in areas where there is a dangerous buildup of combustible vegetation. Constructing a shaded fuel break selectively thins and removes flammable underlayers of vegetation, leaving the majority of larger, more fire tolerant tree species in place. The shaded fuel break will provide a control line for future fire suppression efforts and is considered one of the most critical steps in helping protect Green Valley from wildfire spread from outside the area.

Please visit <http://gvfsc.org> for more information and updates, including Defensible Space Ambassador Training to be conducted August 1st, 2021 from 8:30 AM - 1:00 PM. You can also e-mail Rochelle Sherlock, GVFSC President at rochelle@potentiatellc.com.

Falls School Site:

In our January newsletter, we wrote that the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District (FSUSD) was putting this 10-acre property out for public bid. We viewed this as both as an opportunity for a potential community use, but also a cause for concern given the location of Fire Station #29 on the property. At this time, we are happy to report that Solano County purchased the property in order to preserve the options for a fire station at this location, as well as for potential regional fire district purposes. With the purchase completed, we hope and expect the County will open discussions with GVLA about potential community uses for some portion of the property.

Middle Green Valley:

Middle Green Valley (MGV) is the development plan for 1,905 acres in the middle of unincorporated Green Valley, bounded primarily by Green Valley Rd., Rockville Rd., Terminal/Reservoir Rd. and the western foothills. Envisioned as a collection of small neighborhoods nestled along the base of the oak-wooded foothills, MGV is planned as a community that respects & celebrates its rural character and agricultural heritage.

GVLA and area experts worked extensively with the development teams on the original MGV Specific Plan and provided full support during the County review process in 2016 and 2017. As of July 2021, the MGV landowners requested some minor amendments to the original plan. The requested amendments must be reviewed and approved by the County Planning Department, the County Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. GVLA remains in full support of this project.

The MGV Specific Plan, as adopted in 2017, can be found at:

<https://www.solanocounty.com/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?blobid=28750>

GVLA Annual Community Meeting:

Please plan to join us for our Annual Community Meeting on Tuesday, October 19th at 7:00 PM in the Green Valley Country Club ballroom. Topics to be discussed are to be determined. Admission is free for all members and GV residents. This is also a great opportunity to pay your \$75 annual GVLA dues to support our work for and in the GV community.

Contact Us:

- Website : www.gvla.com
- E-Mail : gvla1972@gmail.com
- US Mail : 4160 Suisun Valley Rd., #E240, Fairfield, CA 94534-4027

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If you would like to be added to our mailing list, correct an error in your address or indicate area(s) of interest, please send us an e-mail or fill out this form and mail it to: GVLA, 4160 Suisun Valley Rd., #E240, Fairfield, CA 94534-4027

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