



RANCHO MISSION VIEJO

April 19, 2024; Updated October 21, 2024

Bea Bea Jiménez
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Land Development
OC Public Works
601 North Ross Street
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SUBJECT:

Planning Application for a Site Development Permit PA24-0009 within Rancho Mission Viejo (Ranch Plan) Planning Area 3, Subarea 3.4 for the Lennar Homes AQ22 project **with a request for a Site Specific Alternative Development Standard to allow “direct and convenient access” for project open space through Lot N of VTTM19306.**

Dear Ms. Jiménez,

PROPOSAL:

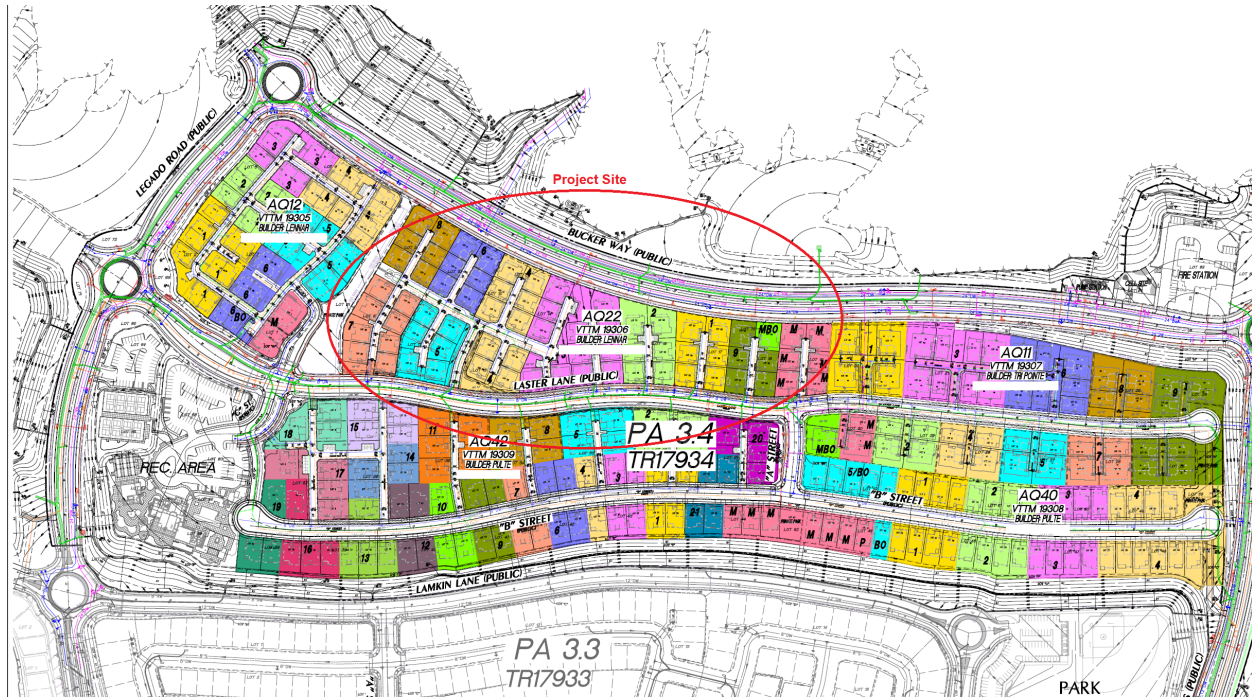
Rancho Mission Viejo and Lennar Homes request approval of Site Development Permit PA24-0009 to allow 72 Planned Concept Detached Dwellings on 72 numbered residential lots and 15 lettered lost for private courts and landscaped open space. “B” Vesting Tentative Tract Map TT19306 is being processed concurrently. **A Site Specific Alternative Development Standard is also being requested to allow “direct and convenient access” for project open space through Lot N of VTTM 19306.**

ZONING:

Ranch Plan Planned Community (PC) – Subarea Plan 3.4 Planned Concept Detached Dwellings (PC Text Section III.A.2.A.3)

LOCATION:

The Lennar Homes AQ22 project site is located northerly of Gavilan Ridge and easterly of Legado Road within the Ranch Plan Planned Community - Planning Area 3 (PA3), Subarea 3.4 and Vesting Tentative Tract Map 17934, Lots 8-19 in unincorporated Orange County, California.



LANDOWNER/SUBDIVIDER:

The specific land ownership entity for the proposed project site is RMV PA3 Development LLC (referred to as Rancho Mission Viejo, or “RMV”). The site will eventually be owned by, and homes built by Lennar Homes, a neighborhood builder company.

SURROUNDING LAND USE:

Land uses immediately surrounding the project site include the following:

- Westerly: AQ12 VTTM19305 - Residential
- Southerly: AQ42 Pulte VTTM19309 - Residential
- Easterly: AQ11 Tri Pointe VTTM19307 - Residential
- Northerly: Subarea 3.11 – future residential and recreational

BACKGROUND AND EXISTING CONDITIONS:

In November 2004, the County of Orange approved the Ranch Plan Planned Community, which encompasses approximately 22,815 acres located east of I-5, north and south of Ortega Highway, within the Fifth Supervisorial District. As approved, the Ranch Plan Planned Community encompasses 75 percent permanent open space, with development of 14,000 dwelling units and 5,200,000 square feet (SF) of non-residential uses allowed within the remaining 25 percent. It is regulated by the Ranch Plan PC Program Text which addresses the unique characteristics of the property and a development plan for the transition to suburban/urban uses occurring over a 25- to 30-year period.

The Master Area Plan and Subarea Plans for Planning Area 3 were approved on October 27, 2022 including Subarea Plan 3.3 (PA22-0067). VTTM 17933 for Subarea Plan 3.3 and VTTM 17934 for Subarea Plan 3.4 were approved by the OC Subdivision Committee on December 6, 2023. Grading for Subareas 3.3 and 3.4 are currently in progress under GRD22-0136 and GRD23-0059.

PROPOSED PROJECT:

The applicant, RMV (along with and on behalf of the eventual owner Lennar Homes), requests approval of Site Development Permit PA24-0009 to allow 72 Planned Concept Duplex and Detached dwelling units on 72 numbered residential lots and 15 lettered lots for private court and landscaped purposes, all within the proposed 9.88-acre project site. The project will also include internal accessways, parking lots and infrastructure improvements, landscaping, and minor precise grading.

The project proposes a site design with motor court layout with dwellings having garages accessible via private motor courts. This design reduces driveway approaches on Gavilan Ridge, enhancing the streetscape by reducing the visual impact of garages, resulting in a street scene with a traditional neighborhood feel.

A model home complex is also proposed as part of this site development permit.

The site has a net residential acreage of 7.89 acres (excluding streets, motorcourts, alleys and HOA slopes) for a net residential density of 8.87 dwelling units per acre.

Ranch Plan PC Text Section III.A.2.A.8.a) requires 10% of the net residential area of each Planned Concept project to be reserved as convenient, accessible, and usable open space. If the project is located adjacent to a local public park and has direct, convenient access thereto, the useable project open space may be reduced to five percent (5%). PA24-0009 provides a total of 0.53 acres of Usable Project Open Space, along with being directly adjacent to a public park, which equals 6.7% of the site's net acreage of 7.89 acres, more than the required 5% net acreage standard.

A Site Specific Alternative Development Standard is being requested to allow "direct and convenient access" for project open space through Lot N of VTTM19306. While the proposed project meets the five percent (5%) reduction in project open space, homeowners on the eastside of the project would access project open space via the public sidewalk up to Lot N of VTTM19306.



The proposal includes the following plan types, with square footages ranging from 1,560 to 2,358 square feet. A summary of the different plan types is provided in the table below.

Plan Type Summary

| Plan Type | Square Footage | Bedroom Count | Total DUs |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|-----------|
| 1 | 1560 | 2 | 25 |
| 2 | 1709 | 2 | 15 |
| 2x | 2061 | 2 | 16 |
| 3 | 1861 | 2 | 8 |
| 3x | 2358 | 3 | 8 |
| TOTAL | | | 72 |

REFERRAL FOR COMMENT AND PUBLIC NOTICE:

The applicant understands that copies of the site development permit submittal will be distributed for review and comment to County staff and consultants, including Land Development, OC Infrastructure Programs, Inspection Services, Building & Safety OC Survey, and Orange County Fire Authority. The applicant also understands that if no hearing is required (i.e., OC staff agrees that the project complies with all applicable requirements of the Ranch Plan PC Text), then no public notice of a Zoning Administrator hearing is required.

CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS:

PA24-0009 Lennar Homes AQ22 is consistent with the Ranch Plan PC Program Text Use Regulations & Development Standards (PC Program Text, Section III), as described below:

- a. General Plan – The OC General Plan Land Use Element designates Subarea 3.4 of Ranch Plan as “1B, Suburban Residential (0.5 to 18 du/ac)”, per GPA 01-01. The proposed SDP is consistent with the 1B “Suburban Residential designation.
- b. Zoning – The proposed SDP is consistent with the Ranch Plan Planned Community zoning, including all applicable requirements of the PC Program Text Use Regulations & Development Standards (PC Section III).
- c. Area Plans – The proposed SDP is consistent with land uses and other details of PA3&4 Master Area Plan and Subarea Plan 3.2 (PA190030 and PA22-0067) – see table below.
- d. CEQA – The proposed SDP is consistent with Final EIR 589, previously certified on November 8, 2004; Addendum 1.0 (PA060023) approved July 26, 2006; Addendum 1.1 (PA110003-06) approved February 24, 2011; the Planning Area 2 Addendum (PA130001-06) approved March 27, 2013; and Addendum 3.1 (PA140072-81) approved February 25, 2015.
- e. Alternative Development Standards – All Alternative Development Standards incorporated into this project have been previously approved by the appropriate decision maker per the Ranch Plan Planned Community Program Text, General Regulation 25.
- f. Regulation Compliance Matrix – Clearance of all applicable conditions of approval have been confirmed per the Ranch Plan Regulation Compliance Matrix.

AREA PLAN CONSISTENCY:

The table below summarizes how this Site Development Permit PA24-0009 application by RMV proposing to allow 72 Planned Concept dwellings (as highlighted below) is in compliance with the September 11, 2019 Planning Commission approval of the Subarea Area Plan 3.2 (PA180030) and Area Plan amendment PA22-0067.

PARKING:

Per the requirements of ADS D3-a the PA24-0009 project is required to provide 144 spaces to serve the residents and 14.4 spaces to serve guests, for a total of 158.4 required spaces. 185 parking spaces are provided, all within the required 200 foot walking distance.

SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS:

The following matrix is a summary of the proposed project’s compliance with the Site Development Standards contained in the Ranch Plan Planned Community Program Text Section III.A.2 (Planned Concept Detached Dwellings), which are the Site Development Standards applicable for the proposal.

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1) Building Site Area | No minimum | √ |
| 2) Net Density | Greater than 8.0 units/acre, and lots less than 3,000 square feet (s.f.). If lots are greater than 3,000 s.f., ADS D-8 shall apply | √ |
| 3) Building Site Width | No minimum | √ |
| 4) Building Site Coverage | 60% maximum for each development unit if there is more than one d.u. per lot. No maximum for individual lots. | √ |
| 5) Building Height | 35’ maximum (+ architectural features) | 25’-5.5’ |
| 6) Building setbacks – Planned Concept Detached Dwelling Setbacks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Front: 12’ min. from back of street curb or 3’ from p/l, whichever is greater. b) Rear: 5’ min from p/l if rear setback is adjacent to alley then 3’ min to p/l or 14’ to centerline c) Side: 10’ min. one side, or 10’ aggregate; Building separation shall be 10’ or can be 8’ provided certain criteria is met (see 1-5 on page 32 of PC Text) d) Side abutting street: 5’ e) Patios: 3’ (5’ adjacent to street) f) Projections: 4’, or 1’ from property line | √ |
| 7) Access | Shall either: a) abut a public street having recorded right of access for min width of 10’ b) have recorded right of access for min width of 20’ | Access provided by public street (Gavilan Ridge) |
| 8.a) Usable Project Open Space | 10% min. of the net residential area of project; may be reduced to 5% min. if project located adjacent to local public park and has direct convenient access | Proposed 6.70% Usable Project Open space exceeds 5% standard adjacent to public park(see Page |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | | 2) |
| 8.b) Usable Private Open Space | 150 square feet per unit. The ratio of length to width may be no more than 3:1 | Proposed Usable Private Open space exceeds 150 SF/DU standard |
| 9) Off-Street Parking | Use Bedroom Count, per ADS D-9 and D-10 | 158 spaces provided meets the requirement of 185 parking spaces. (see Page 4) |
| 10) Garage, Carport Placement ADS D-5 17-Foot Driveways | Min. setback of 7' or less, 17' assuming a roll-up garage door or more from back of sidewalk or back of curb | Driveways are all less than 7-ft. |
| 11) Private Drives, Alleys ADS G3 Alleys, Private Drives and Courts Emergency Access Required | a) Private Drives: minimum paved width of 24-feet. b) Alleys minimum paved width of 22-feet, or 24-feet if required for emergency access. | All minimum private drives, alleys or motorcourt widths are a minimum of 24-feet |
| 12) Signs Section III.L.2.a.1) Freestanding Temporary Signs Sales office | a) Signage plan drawings indicating type, size, color, height, location etc. b) Such signs not to exceed height of 16', length of 10', total area of 80 s.f. | A model site plan (Sheet M-1) may be provided prior to approval |
| 13) Fences and Walls | 6' within area where buildings can be placed, 7.5' along boundary, except 3.5' at intersections. | Fences & walls shall meet standards, per separate fence & wall plan |
| 14) Lights | Confine rays to premises | Understood: Landscape and motorcourt lights shall comply |

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS:

As allowed by General Regulation #25 of the Ranch Plan Planned Community Program Text, proposed Alternative Development Standards are intended to be incorporated into the development as listed in Note 12 on Sheet SDP-1.

~~Upon review of this application our hope is that staff supports administrative approval of the Site Development Permit (i.e., staff agrees that the project complies with all applicable requirements of the Ranch Plan PC Text, and no public notice of a Zoning Administrator hearing is required).~~

SITE SPECIFIC ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT STANDARD

The proposed project is seeking to allow “direct and convenient access” for project open space through a public sidewalk into Lot N of VTTM19306. While the Planning Community Guidance Text allows adjacent open space to be accessed via public sidewalks (as long as a resident does not have to cross a local or collector street), and out of an abundance of caution, it was agreed that a Site-Specific Alternative Development Standard would be requested. Per Ranch

Plan Planned Community Text Section II.C.4b., the Zoning Administrator, in a public meeting, may approve a site-specific alternative development standard subject to the following findings:

1) **General Plan:** *The use or project proposed is consistent with the General Plan*

The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan which calls for this area to be developed as residential.

2) **Ranch Plan PC Text and Zoning Code:** *The use, activity, or improvement(s) proposed by the application is (are) consistent with the provisions of this Ranch Plan PC Text and provisions of the Zoning Code*

The proposed project is consistent with the use, activity, and improvements within the provisions of the Ranch Plan PC Text and the provisions of the Zoning Code. The project provides adequate project useable open space and private open space per the requirements of the Ranch Plan PC Text.

3) **CEQA:** *The approval of the development application is in compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.*

The project is consistent with Ranch Plan EIR589, which allows for the development of residential projects.

4) **Compatibility:** *The location, size, design and operating characteristics of the proposed use will not create a significant noise, traffic or other conditions or situations that are objectionable, detrimental or incompatible with other permitted uses in the vicinity of the project area.*

The proposed project is part of a master planned community and will be surrounded by residential uses with similar project site designs. Significant noise, traffic or other situations that are objectionable, detrimental, or incompatible will not be generated by this project. The project will comply with all other applicable development standards from the Ranch Plan PC Text and Zoning Code such as lot size, setbacks, height, off-street parking, and driveway lengths.

5) **General Welfare:** *The application will not result in conditions or circumstances contrary to the public health, safety, and general welfare.*

The proposed project will not impose on, nor result in conditions or circumstances contrary to the public health, safety, and general welfare. The project will look and function just like the surrounding residential products and will have all of the same characteristics including lot size, setbacks, heights, and off-street parking standards.

6) **Equivalent or better project:** *The alternative development standard(s) will result in an equivalent or better project in terms of reducing adverse impacts and/or providing additional or superior public benefits to the immediate and surrounding community.*

While the project does meet all of the standards in the Planned Community Text, residences on the east side of the project would have to access useable project open space through a public sidewalk in order to get to Lot N of VTTM19306. The PC Guidance Text does allow project open space to be used as long as a homeowner does not

have to cross a local or collector street. Out of an abundance of caution, a site specific alternative development standard would be processed to show how this would be an equivalent or better project with homeowners using a public sidewalk to access project useable open space. If the project was redesigned to have interior access to the project useable open space, homeowners would have less private open space along with less privacy due to an interior walkway being built through the side yard areas of multiple homes. By utilizing the public sidewalk to get to project useable open space, a better project can be provided where homeowners gain additional private yard area without having community members walk by their side yard windows.

Please contact me with any questions, or if you or your staff need any further information.

Sincerely,

Richard Vuong
Project Director, Planning and Entitlement
Rancho Mission Viejo