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Subject Creekside Memorial Cemetery

For Follow Up: Urgent Priority

October 22, 2011

Maray Nejedly Piepho
Supervisor District III

Demian Hardman
County Planner

Dear Supervisor Nejedly Piepho and County Planner Hardman:

My name is Susan Wood-Kotkoski and I drive on Camino Tassajara daily to and from the property 7101 Camino Tassajara. Camino Tassajara is both a wide multi-lane urban road and a winding, narrow rural road. It is heavily traveled by commuters between Danville and Pleasanton. Our society has grown very impatient and I already experience the less than safe practices of other drivers on that road. A few days ago, a speeding big rig overturned by the Tassajara Hills Elementary school. The proposed cemetery would be located between the Quarry Lane Private School on the Pleasanton end of Camino Tassajara and the Diablo Vista Middle School and Tassajara Hills Elementary School on the Blackhawk end of Camino Tassajara.

As a paralegal, I deal daily with people suffering from emotional trauma. It is usual for people to medicate with prescribed drugs, non-prescribed drugs, alcohol, or any combination thereof to cope with the overwhelming feelings of loss that accompany attending the burial or entombment of a loved one. Adding a steady stream of such people, drugged or not, to the already over-traveled winding, narrow rural Camino Tassajara is a recipe for disaster not only for drivers like myself but also for the school children who do sometimes break from their supervised, orderly behavior and run out into the street. Young children will be young children.

Camino Tassajara turns very quickly from a rural road to the urban road in front of both the Tassajara Hills Elementary School and Diablo Visa Middle School. Quarry Lane Private School sits on the rural portion of the rode at the Pleasanton end. The speed limit on Camino Tassajara is 45 mph for the majority of the road. The death rate for a pedestrian struck by a vehicle traveling at a speed of 45 mph is 84%. Shortly before the Tassajara Hills Elementary School, there is a sign that instructs drivers to reduce speed to 25 mph when children are present. So it is up to the driver to determine if children are present and someone in a distracted emotional state is likely to miss the instructional sign. "Generally, pedestrian deaths rates are higher in urban areas. There is a higher ratio of deaths to injuries in rural areas because of higher impact speeds on rural roads. However, pedestrian accidents occur most frequently in urban areas because pedestrian activity and traffic volumes are greater compared to rural areas. [The proposed cemetery would increase traffic volume combining the dangers of rural and urban situations].

The National Safety Council estimates that 85.7 percent of all non-fatal pedestrian accidents in the United States occur in urban areas and 14.3 percent occur in rural areas.

- Almost two-thirds of all pedestrian fatalities occur on urban roads.
- In 2005, 72 percent of pedestrian deaths occurred in urban settings.

Although a substantial number of pedestrian injuries occur at intersections, the majority of pedestrian accidents occur at locations other than intersections. This is due to higher vehicle speeds and the fact that drivers are not expecting any stops.

Young children and the elderly are the most vulnerable for pedestrian accident related injuries. Based on population, children under the age of 16 years are most likely to be struck by motor vehicles.”

From a safety standpoint, Camino Tassajara is the wrong place for a cemetery when there is so much nearby vacant land for sale on either side of the 580 freeway and points south with freeway access and egress that remove schools and urban areas from the accessibility equation creating a better, safer situation for all concerned. In light of these facts, I urge you to deny the cemetery building permit. The responsible person chooses safety for the living. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Wood-Kotkoski
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Below please find the link to a map of public schools on Camino Tassajara. This does not include private schools in the area. The second link is to the accidents information quoted above.

http://www.danville-homes-for-sale.com/schools/Danville_CA/

<http://www.articlesbase.com/law-articles/california-pedestrian-accident-statistics-362088.html>