



**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING – PLANNING COMMISSION
OCTOBER 19, 1999**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission, City of San Ramon was called to order by Chair Kerger at 7:08 p.m., Tuesday, October 19, 1999, PG&E Learning Center at 3301 Crow Canyon Road, Room J101, San Ramon.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners DiGeronimo, Fahey, Livingstone, Sabye and Chair Kerger

Absent: None

Staff: Bob Saxe, City Attorney; Phil Wong, Planning Director; Charlie Mullen, Associate Planner; Detlef Curtis, Senior Civil Engineer; Phil Agostini, Senior Transportation Engineer; and Dee Steinbrenner, Recording Secretary

Audience: Approximately 250+/- people

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS OR WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Chair Kerger indicated that there were no public comment cards or written communications.

5. ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS

Phil Wong indicated that the Commission has been provided with copies of late communications received by staff for their review and consideration (see Late Communication Nos. 1-30 attached).

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

-None-

7. CONTINUED ITEMS AFTER CLOSING OF PUBLIC HEARING

The item(s) below has been continued from a previous Planning Commission meeting. The public hearing(s) has been closed and therefore, no further testimony will be taken. The item is before the Planning Commission for deliberation and final action.

-None-

8. **CONTINUED ITEMS - OPEN PUBLIC HEARINGS**

8.1 **Text Amendment TA 99-001 – Text Amendment to the AG (Agricultural) District.** Staff report by Charlie Mullen, Associate Planner.

Applicant/Owner

Jeff Thayer,
Davidon Homes
1600 S. Main St., #150
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

Request: Request for a text amendment to the Agricultural (AG) District of the Zoning Ordinance to add "Cemetery" to the list of Commercial Uses category, which can be conditionally permitted subject to a use permit.

Location: Citywide, and potential for a site located north of Old Ranch Road (APNs: 210-550-017 & -018).

Charlie Mullen, Associate Planner, summarized the staff report for the Commission and audience. He indicated that all speaker cards received from the 10/5/99 meeting are attached to the staff report as Attachment 6. He indicated that the following corrections need to be made to Attachment 6 as follows:

- 1) Catherine Pettinichi, 405 Merriwood Place, San Ramon, is opposed to the project;
- 2) Margaret Rodriguez, 5000 Summit View, San Ramon, is opposed to the project;
- 3) Don Costa, 5000 Summit View, San Ramon, is opposed to the project; and
- 4) Patty Lory, 905 Regency Court, San Ramon, is opposed to the project.

Jeff Thayer, Davidon Homes, indicated that Davidon Homes is surprised by the negative response to their proposal for a cemetery. In view of the negative response and the need to have a direct and informative rapport with the neighborhood, Davidon Homes is withdrawing its application for the text amendment.

Chair Kerger read the following comments into the record. These speaker cards were presented at the October 5, 1999 public hearing which was continued to the meeting of October 19, 1999 because of the late hour of the meeting:

Rick Stallbaum, 404 Merriwood Place, San Ramon:

Against the project. Inappropriate use of an AG zoned district.

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June Steckhahn, 140 Alcosta Court, San Ramon:

Due to the late hour, I was not able to stay to become informed of the above proposal. I wish for this proposal to be continued. I wish for no houses to be placed on the hill.

Susan Chew, 805 Springbrook Drive, San Ramon:

I feel that it is completely unacceptable to add a "cemetery" to an agricultural zone in San Ramon. This particular zone is adjacent to our neighborhood. A cemetery in our area is wrong. We have a family neighborhood. Not only would property values decline, but our children would witness funeral processions regularly. I strongly oppose this amendment.

Brad Chew, 805 Springbrook Drive, San Ramon:

I strongly oppose TA 99-001 because: 1) the Davidon property above Old Ranch Estates is currently the only agricultural district within City limits; 2) permitting a cemetery to be built near existing homes would reduce dramatically their property values; and 3) cemeteries are not agricultural.

Sam L. Ng, 5031 Portillo Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I strongly against this Text Amendment to the Agriculture (AG) District of zoning ordinance to add "cemetery" to list commercial use category. It's incompatible to residential area and is inconsiderate.

Dr. Neil K. Jablan and Dr. Duen-Mei Wang; 201 Rustic Place, San Ramon:

As residents of Old Ranch Estates, we oppose the proposed text amendment to add cemetery to the list of commercial uses category.

Phong D. Ho, 9689 Alcosta Boulevard, San Ramon:

I am strongly opposed to it because of all the reasons you've been given.

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Madhu & Ram Venkatesh, 5230 Portillo Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I am firmly against a cemetery on the open space bordering Old Ranch Road and Alcosta Boulevard. I believe it will negatively impact our property values. I don't think a cemetery belongs in the middle of residential housing. I do not like the idea of my children watching funeral processions and burials on a daily basis.

Helena & Jeff Grean, 908 Bentley Oaks Court, San Ramon:

I am strongly opposed to it because of all the reasons you've been given.

Mei & Jack Kieo, 1021 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

We are completely opposed to this project because of the potential harmful living environment.

Meishiang Hsieh, 700 Ashton Oaks Court, San Ramon:

I am opposed to this amendment because we retired last year and we really want to enjoy our daily life with joy, peace and healthy environment.

Michael Chong, 233 Sun Ridge Drive, San Ramon:

The City of San Ramon has grown into a very beautiful city, far from the farmlands and orchards of yester years. Large amount of money was spent on the purchase of beautiful and expensive homes, compared to other neighboring cities. The people, including myself, purchasing these homes bring money into the City. I'm sure that they and myself didn't come here to have the possibility of a cemetery being built in this City, let alone in the backyard. Would you want a cemetery built behind your house if it could be done? A cemetery will give the City a blackeye and degrade the City's beautiful image. I'm sure this great City don't want to be nicknamed the "cemetery city" or other degrading names. Please, Planning Commission members, don't take the wrong steps backwards. Vote against this text amendment.

Danny Kwong, 1011 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

I am against the proposal.

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Kevin Kwong, 1011 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

I don't want a working cemetery around our neighborhood.

Reuben Chen, 616 Fawn Ridge Court, San Ramon:

I am against this proposal. If the cemetery project is approved, the city will lose the appeal to raise healthy children. We'll lose the tax revenue. Lose business.

Annie Chen, 616 Fawn Ridge Court, San Ramon:

Against the project. It will affect the environment of San Ramon as a whole-both physically and mentally. San Ramon is currently a high class community. With a cemetery right in the middle of a high density area is totally ridiculous and unhealthy.

Jennifer Zhang, 900 Bentley Oaks, San Ramon:

Against the project. A cemetery in a high density environment is so unhealthy. It will affect the high quality environment that San Ramon is famous for.

Monica Kwong, 1011 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

I'm against the proposal because it will totally destroy our pleasant environment. I'm against the proposal because nobody wants a working cemetery around our neighborhood.

Dennis Kwong, 900 Bentley Oaks, San Ramon:

Against the project. It will create an unhealthy environment for all residents.

Scott Armanini, 1141 Timbercreek Road, San Ramon, Citizens for Cemeteries in Residential Neighborhoods:

I am for the cemetery, and a nuclear waste disposal site, and higher taxes, and lower property values. Keep up the good work!

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Larry Becker, 204 Alderwood Lane, San Ramon:

Davidon sold us our property in Old Ranch Estates with the clear understanding that there would be no development on the open space that they owned. Let's hold them to that.

Margaret Rodriguez, 5000 Summit View, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Don Costa, 5000 Summit View, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Teresa Johnson, 1071 Stoney Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I am against the addition of "cemetery" to the list of commercial uses which can be permitted subject to a use permit.

Elizabeth A. Williams, 1071 Stoney Creek Drive, San Ramon:

As a homeowner near the proposed site, I am against the "hills project".

May Kwan, 9740 Alcosta Boulevard, San Ramon:

I love gardening everyday in my backyard which is so quiet and without disturbance. This is my best and only way to eliminate stress. However, if there was a cemetery in my backyard, it would scare me. How can the unsightly funeral processions help me relax. I strongly against this item.

Rich Steele, 409 Merriwood Place, San Ramon:

Against the project. Leave it open space.

Frank Poon, 712 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I do not wish to have cemetery in my backyard. I do not wish for my children to be raised under such environment.

Rosita Poon, 712 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I do not agree to have a cemetery in my area. It will _____ the whole San Ramon city.

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Denise & Andrew Young, 809 Springbrook Drive, San Ramon:

I do not want a cemetery in my community. I do not want our children growing up in this environment.

Vivian Dawson, 304 Holbrook Place, San Ramon:

Don't even think about doing this.

Al Dawson, 304 Holbrook Place, San Ramon:

That my family and neighbors within my block and throughout the community is adamantly opposed to the text amendment that would allow a cemetery within San Ramon and within the property boundaries of Old Ranch Estates development.

William C. Scott, 104 Shireoakes Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Brandt Weibezahn, 612 Fawn Ridge Court, San Ramon:

When the development was approved, open lands were part of that approved process. Will I be fighting for the promised open space when Ponderosa homes release its land 8 years from now?

Mark Lander, 612 Vine Hill Lane, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Pam & Mike Burke, 600 Vine Hill Lane, San Ramon:

We are opposed to the development of a cemetery in our neighborhood. When we bought our home 6 years ago, we were told by Davidon that this area would be open space.

Liz Christensen, 601 Royal Coach Court, San Ramon:

If recollection serves me, there was concern due to slides from rains in that area. There is a still space available in nearby cemeteries – a 20-30 minute drive is not much of a drive given other traffic concerns. Traffic will certainly increase, especially with funeral processions. We were advised by Davidon Homes that it would remain open. Most of the homes are “down

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wind" from the hill (should a crematorium go in). My children have said it would be too "sad" or "depressing" to have to see a cemetery every day.

Kris Garrett, 901 Regency Court, San Ramon:

A cemetery should be built and then the homes around it – people deserve a choice! When you buy the home of your dreams and spend everything you've worked so hard for, you should never be put in this position. It's out of line!!

Rick Garrett, 901 Regency Court, San Ramon:

I am totally adamant about the rezoning. It would devalue the homes next to it. A cemetery should be put in first, not last. This should have been told to the people before they bought their dream home. All because Davidon was denied his new homes.

Sherri L. Miller, 1501 Old Ranch Estates Drive, San Ramon:

I'm opposed to the text amendment to add "cemetery" to the list of uses for an agricultural district due to safety, traffic and "quality of life".

Clement Pellani, 1911 Knollcrest Court, San Ramon:

I am against this project. If approved it 1) will have severe negative financial impact on my family; 2) will have negative impact on my quality of life. I do not want to live near a cemetery and would not have bought this home if I knew this; 3) do not see evidence of any demand for a cemetery and any benefits do not outweigh negative impact on the many residents in the area; 4) is a particularly bad idea for one of the most beautiful and visible location in the city; and 5) I do not want to watch funeral processions while walking my dog or having picnics with my family.

Caron Hoffman, 908 Regency Court, San Ramon:

As a resident of the Old Ranch Estates housing development, I wish to put on record that I am strongly opposed to this amendment. San Ramon current laws dictate that the City cannot operate a cemetery within the City limits. I feel that the Davidon property is an extremely poor choice for a proposed cemetery. The impact on the adjoining communities would be huge and I feel a very negative one. As stated in the public notice we received from the city, this DOES NOT impact San Ramon citywide. The Davidon property in question is currently the ONLY agricultural district within the city limits.

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Ted Wakamija & Sally G. Joe-Wakamija, 205 Blackthorn Court, San Ramon:

We strongly oppose the request of the text amendment. It is unacceptable to change the zoning (to cemetery) after we have all moved in our homes. Had we known this, we would have NOT bought our home. We have two young children, 17 months and 3 years old. I would not know what to say when my children see a cemetery in our own backyard and ask us what they are.

Denise Turnquist, 408 Old Ranch Court, San Ramon:

I do not want plastic flowers on the hillside. I do not want people roaming about the hills in this manner. I do not want to look at rows of cement plots littering our hills. My kids, 4 & 12, see a cemetery as a "scary" place to be near.

Dave Aiken, 1080 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon, representing The Hills at Bent Creek Homeowners' Association:

Against the project.

Nancy Tatarka, 12207 Toluca Drive, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Haldun Arin, 615 Bancroft Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Anup K. & Sreela Pal, 200 Alderwood Lane, San Ramon:

I strongly oppose building a cemetery in and around Old Ranch Estates neighborhood. This proposal will cause drop in value of home prices in the neighborhood.

Susan Lim, 615 Vine Hill Lane, San Ramon:

This amendment is opposed by myself and every (many) Old Ranch Estates neighbors I have spoken with. Not in our neighborhood. Mr. Kinney, would you have wanted a cemetery next door to your house as your children were growing up?

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Ted Fagenson, 605 Bancroft Place, San Ramon:

Decreased property value on the order of 20%. This commercial use does not belong abutted to residential houses.

Tom Hart, 1060 Canyon Green Drive, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Judy Jensen, 701 Hawthorn Court, San Ramon:

I strongly disagree with this proposal.

Lars Jensen, 701 Hawthorn Court, San Ramon:

Strongly against the language change and any potential project!

George & Kelli Pagano, 309 Rubicon Valley Court, San Ramon:

Old Ranch and Bent Creek developments would be bordered by a military training facility and cemetery, two undesirables! Many small children in area creating a disturbance surrounding greater vehicle traffic and unsafe conditions.

Matt Scanlon, 309 Holbrook Place, San Ramon:

When I purchased my home, we were told by Davidon representative that the hillside would always be open space, with no development allowed.

Jenny Scanlon, 309 Holbrook Place, San Ramon:

The homeowners were told the hillside would remain undeveloped. A cemetery is considered "development" in my opinion. It would negatively affect the value of my home.

Linda Foresti, 1130 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

I am opposed to this amendment text change. It will change the character of the surrounding neighborhood and be a nuisance, i.e., traffic, property value, aesthetics, value, just to name a few of the many reasons.

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Myles I. Suer, 608 Bancroft Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Tony Nunes, 523 Shadelands Place, San Ramon:

I believe the voters have expressed our concerns and made it clear to the Commission. We do not support the text amendment before and we do not want a cemetery anywhere near our residential areas.

David Wong, 262 Sun Ridge Drive, San Ramon:

I am strongly against "even planning" to build a cemetery in San Ramon on Old Ranch Road. I am very surprised that a cemetery proposal would even be considered in one of San Ramon's highest priced neighborhoods. My family and I (two young kids) moved to San Ramon's Bent Creek neighborhood to enjoy the quietness and beauty. Please stop any further consideration of the "cemetery" project. Thank you for your attention.

Sheryl Wong, 262 Sun Ridge Drive, San Ramon:

We strongly against the plan to build a cemetery at Old Ranch Road. On behalf of my 7 year old and 10 year old boys, I'm requesting the Planning Committee to reconsider. We do not want to live next to a cemetery.

Debra K. Morford, 101 Woodland Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I am against this amendment. I don't wish to have a potential cemetery in my neighborhood. In fact, when we purchased our home three years ago, we called the City and told that at least part of this land was going to be a large public park.

Jack Saada, 612 Bancroft Place, San Ramon:

We moved from Maryland to San Ramon only recently. If this information was available and disclosed to us, we wouldn't have bought our house in this area. We are very much against putting a cemetery in and around an established neighborhood.

Marcus Duncan, 1050 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

I vigorously oppose the text amendment which may potentially permit a cemetery to be constructed within the San Ramon city limits. My objections

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are obvious to any of my fellow residents: 1) depressed property values; 2) loss of natural habitat; 3) increased traffic, noise; and 4) potential risk to health.

Theresa Tavares, 1050 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

I strongly oppose the text amendment which could permit the development of a cemetery within the San Ramon city limits. I believe that the addition of a cemetery will have a negative impact on the nature and character of San Ramon as well as the following specific items: 1) the health of residents; 2) property values; and 3) natural habitat. I look forward to hearing from residents of San Ramon who have good reasons for building a cemetery within the San Ramon city limits.

Richard & Wunmi Kamson, 5020 Portillo Valley Drive, San Ramon:

This will bring down property values tremendously. Not conducive for children, most all the families in this area of San Ramon have small children.

Tayo Oguns-Kamson, 5020 Portillo Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I am 14 years old and do not want a cemetery in my backyard – gives me the creeps.

Chelsey Kamson, 5020 Portillo Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I am 8 years old and the thought of a cemetery around my house will make me have nightmares at night.

Elizabeth V. Kareo, 1141 Stoney Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I am in violent disagreement with the proposal to add "cemetery" to the list of commercial uses category. This will have a negative impact on the value of my home and the quality of my family's lifestyle. We would never have purchased this home if we had any idea this would occur. We were originally told we would have 2 parks on the hills. The one has been developed. San Ramon is a young community with young families and children. What we need is parks and areas for our children to run around and play. In addition, we don't want to deal with all that is associated with a cemetery. Please vote against this proposal.

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Barbara Turko, 635 Peaceful Valley Drive, San Ramon:

Changing the wording for this amendment to allow the creation of a cemetery will create a totally negative situation for all neighbors of the area and residents of San Ramon. The possibility of having a cemetery built in an existing residential area is one of the most absurd and reprehensible ideas I've ever heard.

Vram Kouramajian, 5051 Portillo Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I oppose building a cemetery in the middle of new, young residential area.

Rose Kouramajian, 5051 Portillo Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I vehemently oppose this proposition, because we wouldn't have purchased our property in this area had we know this hidden agenda. I ask the _____ the Council members to do their _____ best to keep our environment the way it is. The owners of the land in question should be allowed to use the land only for what it was allotted, which is for agriculture.

Thomas Holownia, 204 Hat Creek Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Joseph B. Pettinicchi, 405 Merriwood Place, San Ramon:

Having lived my entire life in California, I have grown tired of losing AG space to development. I spent countless weekends and summers on a cattle ranch in San Jose that is now a parking lot for light rail. My wife and I chose Old Ranch Estates for its larger lots and its proximity to open space. Developing this AG district will destroy my memories of the California of my youth.

Terry Smith, 5010 Portillo Valley Drive, San Ramon:

We 100% oppose the cemetery. It will decrease property values as well as less tax revenue to the City. This land was to remain open area.

Gerald Clark, 1251 Stoney Creek Drive, San Ramon:

My family and I are against any consideration that could lead to the potential of a cemetery being constructed in our neighborhood. It would not be an attractive area to raise our children nor would it be helpful to area property

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values. As seen from area freeways, there is plenty of open land surrounding San Ramon, Dublin, Danville and Pleasanton that a developer could work a deal to establish a cemetery.

Farrokh Khodadadi, 801 Winterhaven Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Otha & Barbara Brooks, 551 Columbia Creek Drive, San Ramon:

This should not be changed to include land use as a cemetery. It will decrease the value and decrease property taxes, as well as making this development much less desirable to buyers and the established families. How many of you would like to have a cemetery adjacent to your home.

Steven Foster, 10017 Santa Rosa Avenue, San Ramon:

I am not opposed to adding cemeteries as an acceptable use for agricultural land – but this sounds and seems like a project for Davidon Homes and that is unacceptable!!

Dan Pearson, 248 Sun Ridge Drive, San Ramon:

Against the project.

James Weckman, 505 Lindell Lane, San Ramon:

What does a cemetery have to do with agriculture? A cemetery should be zoned before expensive homes are built, not after. This action could lower property values for lots of homeowners, residents of San Ramon. Residents in Old Ranch Estates have made major financial investments in their homes and it would be wrong to permit a cemetery or anything which would adversely affect the property values of so many residents and I don't see how the residents of San Ramon would benefit either.

Ann Marie Johnson, 400 Merriwood Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Catherine Pettinicchi, 405 Merriwood Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

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Patty Lory, 905 Regency Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Angela Holden, 5240 Portillo Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I am opposed to the text amendment proposal to build a cemetery on the 134 acres between Alcosta, Old Ranch, Old Ranch Estates.

Robert Ingalls, 3147 Riviera Way, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Judd Kuehn, 608 Vine Hill Lane, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Victor Petersen, 2955 Morgan Drive, San Ramon:

A cemetery should not be forced on existing residents. While some residents may not mind, others may be forced to sell their homes because of the awkward feeling this could present. Allowing a home development next to an existing cemetery is one thing, because the buyers can decide in advance if this situation is comfortable. Please do not approve a cemetery at this location. It is not the right place given the existing homes.

Scott Soruchak, 804 Whitehaven Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

H. Phil Hsieh, 700 Ashton Oaks Court, San Ramon:

San Ramon has been a progressive and well planned city. This proposal is not consistent with the vision. The proposal will advertently affect the property values of so many neighboring homes.

Janice Adachi, 741 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I ask the Council to deny amendment TA 99-001. This amendment would have a negative impact on our community (site located north of Old Ranch Road).

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Tom Counts, 809 Amberwood Way, San Ramon:

I am against this change. Please vote NO: 1) increased traffic; and 2) possible crime in area. Please uphold San Ramon statutes of a premier community.

Joy & Ken Rauch, 112 Morning Hills Court, San Ramon:

We oppose the proposal to add cemetery to the wording in the Zoning Ordinance.

Sharon D. Gilbreth, 113 Morning Hills Court, San Ramon:

I totally oppose the cemetery proposal. Please do not vote for this. You can't put a cemetery in the middle of an upscale residential area.

Steve Gilbreth, 113 Morning Hills Court, San Ramon:

I strongly oppose the building of a cemetery along Alcosta and Old Ranch Road. It should not be built in the middle of a residential area.

Akbar Morhtarani, 9586 Alcosta Boulevard, San Ramon:

I believe the proposed cemetery project is in direct conflict with municipal codes A5-21 A,B,C,F and A5-25 A,B which deals with the impact of the project on the quality of life and the financial well being of the residents in the immediate neighborhood.

Kathleen Weir, 12212 Toluca Drive, San Ramon:

Do not want cemetery.

Kathy Hansen, 108 Shireoakes, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Julie & Alex Venierakis, 509 Columbia Creek Drive, San Ramon:

We strongly oppose the proposal to add a cemetery to a site located north of Old Ranch Road.

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Alexander & Audrey Sih, 736 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I am strongly opposed due to affect in property values, and possible health concerns/risks if there is a crematorium.

Rich Balocco, 808 Ridgpointe Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Denise Balocco, 808 Ridgpointe Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Bahram & Ziba Shadmehri, 1131 Timbercreek Road, San Ramon:

I purchased my house in 1995 from a previous owner. We were told by the owner and the real estate agent that the intended site would remain as open space. The value of our property and our standard of living will be compromised if a cemetery is built ion this site.

Gil Deluna, 1521 Old Ranch Estates Drive, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Jim Thorpe, 905 Bentley Oaks Court, San Ramon:

The Bent Creek/Old Ranch area is a showcase neighborhood in San Ramon – we have lived there since 1991. Please do not destroy the natural beauty of this fine family neighborhood by putting a cemetery on our hills! Had there been a cemetery previously, we would not have chosen to heavily invest in a new home at The Hills. I fully understand the need of accessible cemeteries in the Tri-Valley area. But why in the middle of a residential neighborhood? I grew up in San Francisco where no cemeteries are allowed (other than 2 historical sites). Rather, Colma was selected as an unpopulated suburb to place cemeteries. Further, I fully disagree with the wholesale amendment to the definition of Agricultural District. We have pen space behind our house – we bought there because of the open space. I don't mind having cows and coyotes there, but I don't want to look at, or have my children look at, a depressing cemetery!

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(No Name Provided), 5210 Portillo Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I strongly oppose the proposal of building cemetery. My reason is similar to all the people who live in the area.

"Bent Creek Neighbor", (No Address Provided):

Against the project: 1) having my kids see a funeral procession possibly on a daily basis; 2) noise/ traffic/vandalism; 3) devaluation of home prices/monetary loss; 4) a sense of morbid, creepy feeling; 5) if a cemetery is plopped in an established neighborhood, I feel like I'm being pushed/forced out. I'd definitely not buy this property if I knew this ahead of time. I'll probably have to sell at a loss and have to pay more for a similar home!

David Jefferson & Kathleen Gilcrest, 717 Ashton Oaks Court, San Ramon:

I object to including cemeteries within agricultural zones. In fact, I object to any traffic-generating business in such a zone.

Dean Allman, 776 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

The entire neighborhood is against this plan.

Don Kelsey, 772 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I am against this proposal.

Trevor Weeks, 725 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

Oppose proposal.

Yuka Fruguglietti, 733 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

No way!

Caitlin Clenard, 301 Holbrook Place, San Ramon:

I strongly oppose the request for a text amendment. Would you like to live next to a cemetery??

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Jeff Clenard, 301 Holbrook Place, San Ramon:

I strongly object to the request for a text amendment to add cemetery. As a homeowner, I want to be able to decide whether to live next to a cemetery before I buy! Not after the fact!!

Dean J. Clark, 412 Sunnyside Place, San Ramon:

I would like to hear the impact upon 1) quality of life; 2) traffic; 3) safety; 4) air pollution. I would like to see an EIR. Finally, why here, why now? Also, impact on City perception?

Thomas J. Schaefer, 1150 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

Me and my family are vehemently against this proposal. The land in question was purchased with the current language in effect and there is no reason to change it now. Absolutely do not pass this language change.

Jim Hoyt, 1511 Old Ranch Estates Drive, San Ramon:

I am against this change. I do not know the motivation behind this change. I have not spoken with any residents in San Ramon who are in favor of this change.

Patty Hoyt, 1511 Old Ranch Estates Drive, San Ramon:

I am opposed to the Text Amendment to include cemetery. I am concerned about security. I won't know who is coming and going, and traffic. It should remain agricultural, not commercial!!

Camille Didas, 1151 Timbercreek Road, San Ramon:

I oppose the text amendment. If a cemetery is built in San Ramon or anywhere else, it should not be built in an existing neighborhood. People deserve to know up front before buying. I don't feel that there is a need for a cemetery in San Ramon.

Donna Lettman, 5000 Portillo Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I do not want to add cemetery to the list of commercial uses because, property values will decrease and that's not an environment in which I want to raise my kids.

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Suzanne Glab, 12231 Santa Teresa Drive, San Ramon:

I would like to state that I am utterly opposed to a cemetery in San Ramon. I feel that our land is at a premium and the last thing we need in San Ramon is a cemetery. Thank you for your consideration.

Chair Kerger then read into the record comment cards for the 10/19/99 meeting as follows:

John & Wendy Pomeroy, 804 Amberwood Way, San Ramon:

We oppose TA 99-01. A cemetery is not only aesthetically displeasing, but is inconsistent with the community vision San Ramon has created. Also, cemeteries do not offer long-lasting benefits to the community as capacity is limited. City officials should consider the overall desires of residents above political maneuvers or developer influences.

Janet Chan, 301 Rubicon Valley, San Ramon:

I would not like a cemetery in our neighborhood.

William Chan, 301 Rubicon Valley Court, San Ramon:

I do not wish for my family and myself to reside near a cemetery. It is the wrong way to use the land and would ruin the area.

Tim Quinn, 9518 Alcosta Boulevard, San Ramon:

I am a 15-year resident of Alcosta Boulevard. I do not want a cemetery in my back yard.

Scott Armanini, 1141 Timbercreek Road, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Penny Pan, 1920 Knollcrest Court, San Ramon:

Strongly against the recommendation.

Tom Hwang, 1920 Knollcrest Court, San Ramon:

We are betrayed by Davidon. We are betrayed by Vice Mayor. If you in favor of this text amendment, we are betrayed by City of San Ramon.

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Thomas P. Coffey, 1140 Timbercreek Road, San Ramon:

As a homeowner in Old Ranch Estates, I paid a premium for property which I was led to believe was adjacent to land zoned in a way that would prevent development of projects such as a cemetery. I oppose development of a cemetery. Although it may be something that the City wishes to discuss and the voters wish to decide. This text amendment merely lays the ground work for development of a specific project. There should be more process and voter input.

Alfonso Quintor, 600 Burney Creek Place, San Ramon:

I do not want a cemetery in my neighborhood.

Laelah Quintor, 600 Burney Creek Place, San Ramon:

I do not want a cemetery in my neighborhood.

Teresa Johnson, 1071 Stoney Creek Drive, San Ramon:

We are strongly opposed to the request for a text amendment to the AG district of the Zoning Ordinance. The Ordinance of San Ramon does not allow a cemetery – don't change it.

Elizabeth Williams, 1071 Stoney Creek Drive, San Ramon:

We are opposed to the request for a text amendment to AG District of the Zoning Ordinance. The Ordinance of San Ramon does not allow a cemetery – don't change it.

Marie Stoffoerb, 713 Ashton Oaks Court, San Ramon:

No cemetery to agriculture zoning.

M. Ravishankar, 705 Ashton Oaks Court, San Ramon:

I am against the text amendment.

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Michael & Soraya Kriston, 1060 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

We are against the cemetery. Cemeteries should be part of commercial zoning. For years – going back to the foundation of our country, the cemetery has been in the commercial district of town, usually adjacent to a church.

Roxanne Rhodes, 1140 Timbercreek Road, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Charles W. Cantoni, 904 Regency Court, San Ramon:

I am against this amendment. The land should be left as open space, or a combination of open space and low density housing.

Robert J. Nike, 404 Sunnyside Place, San Ramon:

Approval of this amendment would be inconsistent with maintaining the quality and value of the neighborhood.

Mano & Jane Chinnaswamy, 316 Shady Valley Court, San Ramon:

There are many open spaces available for consideration. We should pursue these instead of adding a cemetery to an existing/established area where we purchased homes without knowledge of a cemetery.

Bob Kranson, 101 Wildflower Valley Court, San Ramon:

In favor of the project.

Patty Lory, 905 Regency Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Tom Schaefer, 1150 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

I handed in my strong objection at the last meeting when I waited around for 2 hours to have the meeting cancelled. I trust you kept my comments from that meeting.

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Clement Pellani & Daina Schmidt, 1911 Knollcrest Court, San Ramon:

I am strongly against the amendment because: 1) there will be a severe decline in my family's quality of life; 2) it will have a dramatic negative financial impact on my home's market value which will force me to sell my house or risk living in a house that no longer has the ability to appreciate at the market rate; 3) it is common sense that you do not build a new cemetery in the middle of a thriving, established neighborhood; 4) my family does not want daily reminders of death and we do not want to watch funeral processions regardless of the time of day they occur. My home is my home 24 hours a day; and 5) I see no serious demand for a cemetery except for a very small minority.

William Wells, 701 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

It's in an obvious spot – on the hill will be ugly and hurt property values. Strongly against the project.

Lynn Sarison, 701 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I am very strongly against a cemetery.

Jim Hoyt, 1511 Old Ranch Estates Drive, San Ramon:

I am not in favor of the project.

Rich Steele, 409 Merriwood Place, San Ramon:

Leave it open space! Davidon told us when we bought it would always be open space.

H. Abram Wilson, no address provided:

Against the project.

Steven Gilbreth, 113 Morning Hills Court, San Ramon:

The cemetery will be a disaster if permitted to be built in San Ramon. Please vote NO on the cemetery.

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George Pagano, 309 Rubicon Valley Court, San Ramon:

A cemetery in this location is wrong. If a cemetery is desired, a more remote location should be searched out. An "active" cemetery brings many concerns to an area.

Haldun Arin, 615 Bancroft Place, San Ramon:

Very strongly opposed.

Judy Chu, 105 Woodland Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I strongly against the cemetery planning. I don't like cemetery in my residential area. Bent Creek is a nice, quiet area. Don't waste the land. Don't spoil the nice area.

Rick Stallbaum, 404 Merriwood Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Cecelia Velson, 205 Pleasant Valley Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Rupa Narain, 412 Old Ranch Court, San Ramon:

To build a cemetery in an existing neighborhood is unfair and disturbing.

Kamna Narain, 412 Old Ranch Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Tom Counts, 809 Amberwood Way, San Ramon:

I oppose this amendment. Please vote no for the good of San Ramon. My family and I enjoy living in San Ramon and do not want a cemetery.

Debbie Counts, 809 Amberwood Way, San Ramon:

I am opposed to changing agriculture to include cemetery. Please vote NO! The value of San Ramon is at risk.

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Paul Hauser, 800 Ridge Pointe Court, San Ramon:

I am not in favor of the land use as a cemetery. The zoning should remain as it is.

Joy Rauch, 112 Morning Hills Court, San Ramon:

I oppose adding cemetery to the Zoning Ordinance. I would rather see the land used for custom home lots – to raise our property values instead of devaluing our property!

Carol Lau, 1041 Stoney Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I do not want a cemetery in my backyard.

John Callahan, 9610 Alcosta Boulevard, San Ramon:

My house butts up against the proposed cemetery. I do not want my 11 year old daughter to be exposed to death and mourning daily.

J & H Caruthers, 400 Heather Ridge Court, San Ramon:

We strongly oppose a cemetery on this property. It is an unhealthy use of precious property in a precious community. A better location in a rural area would be more appropriate for a cemetery. Funeral processions would overwhelm our residential atmosphere and lower our property values. The Planning Commission has a duty to protect San Ramon, not place it at risk. The traffic impact of a cemetery is also a negative impact. This is a sad and depressing use of beautiful open space.

Rick Garrett, 901 Regency Court, San Ramon:

When I purchased my house, I was told that the property in question would remain agriculture. Davidon profited from the sell of Old Ranch. If we would have been told at the time of purchase about the cemetery, I would not have purchased my home. No Cemetery!

Susan Morrill, 200 Hat Creek Court, San Ramon:

I do not think that a cemetery is appropriate to add to a family neighborhood. We purchased our property with the understanding that the land under question is for agriculture usage. This should not be change to include a cemetery.

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Steve Cashion, 105 Shireoakes Place, San Ramon:

I am outraged that an amendment or revision to put a cemetery in our neighborhood when there is another more appropriate location available.

Jim Kull, 400 Old Ranch Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Neil K. Jablon, 201 Rustic Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Ismail Mahomed, 600 Fawn Ridge Court, San Ramon:

The building of a cemetery is a breach of trust. It violates the understanding we as neighbors have regarding land use.

Margie Cashion, 105 Shireoakes Place, San Ramon:

I am appalled at the insensitivity with which these developers are proposing. They are acting like an unruly child, unhappy at the thought of their original proposal of houses were blocked.

Amir Mirabrishami, 1900 Knollcrest Court, San Ramon:

I am against cemetery in my backyard.

Jim Thorpe, 905 Bentley Oaks Court, San Ramon:

I am passionately opposed to a wholesale text amendment that would allow cemeteries to be developed on what is currently zoned as agricultural land. We have open space behind our home, and purchased the home particularly because of this "protected" open space. I believe cemeteries are necessary in the are, but agree with Councilmember Raab that they should be developed in an isolated area then develop homes in the vicinity if you so choose. This leaves the decision of whether to invest \$500,000 (or more) in an expensive San Ramon home to the homeowner – not the whimsy of a developer. Thank you for considering my comments. I urge you to vote against this text amendment.

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Pamela Wallace, 509 Shadelands Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Dean Allman, 776 Bridge Creek, San Ramon:

I purchased our home July 1998. At no time was I informed of a proposal to build a cemetery a ¼ mile from our home. I am strongly against this proposal and would not have purchased this home if I was informed of this proposal.

Alexander & Audrey Sih, 736 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I am opposed to a cemetery in my neighborhood due to the adverse effects it will have on my property value.

Ted & LuAnn Horlbeck, 756 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

We are against the proposal for building or allocating land for a cemetery in San Ramon.

Paula & Kurt Thompson, 764 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

This would not only add a cemetery, but also support buildings and the business. This area is not and should not be zoned for business.

Trevor & Laurie Weeks, 725 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

We do not want a cemetery in our neighborhood! Please find a location outside of residence area.

John & Flo Dalisky, 600 Bancroft Place, San Ramon:

We are against the text amendment. We are against a cemetery in San Ramon. We would have bought differently.

Vivian Dawson, 304 Holbrook Place, San Ramon:

This is unacceptable for our neighborhood.

Ted Ferguson, 605 Bancroft Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

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Arezoo Agharokh, 1131 Timbercreek Road, San Ramon:

I am adamantly against the approval of a cemetery being placed directly in the view of my backyard.

Dan Pearson, 248 Sun Ridge Drive, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Janice & Steve Adachi, 741 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

We are against the proposed rezoning and believe it will have a negative impact on the residential neighborhood surrounding the site.

Phillip Lee, 108 Wildflower Valley Court, San Ramon:

I'm against the request to change the text amendment to add "cemetery" to the list. Doing so would permit a project to develop in this area where the quality of life of existing homes and neighborhoods will be compromised. It does no good to the community.

Behram Shadmehri, 1131 Timbercreek Road, San Ramon:

I purchased my house in 1995 and was told that the hills behind my house were going to become a public park. I am against the cemetery as the value of property adjacent to it will depreciate.

Dr. Janis Dunn-VanCamp, 3001 Summit View Drive, San Ramon:

My family and I are profoundly opposed to the proposed text amendment. We purchased our property with the understanding that the nearby land was zoned for agricultural use exclusively. Davidon, the landowner, also purchased the property with the understanding that it was agricultural land. There were no promised or implied zoning changes! It is unconscionable that the San Ramon Planning Commission would even consider opening up this land for the use of a cemetery. The impact to the surrounding residential property values and quality of life are too substantial to allow this. There is no need for a cemetery (graveyard) in San Ramon.

Deborah K. Morford, 101 Woodland Valley Drive, San Ramon:

I do not wish for you to add the term "cemetery" to the Zoning Ordinance. I am concerned about the value of my property going down. I was told by

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the Planning Commission (Parks) BEFORE I purchased my property 3 years ago that the AG would partially be a park.

Gerald Cambry, 9762 Tareyton Avenue, San Ramon:

No cemetery! Not right for this spot. Move to undeveloped area. Valley Area.

Catherine Pettinicchi, 405 Merriwood Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Ann Marie Johnson, 400 Merriwood Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Collette Ricks, 916 Bentley Oaks Court, San Ramon:

I am concerned about the additional traffic as well as the aesthetics. I have purchased a \$700,000 home in the area, and we would NOT have made the purchase if the cemetery was already there in existence, or if there were plans for a cemetery. We are concerned about traffic coming out exits one way and having to turn around the other way. We are concerned about funeral processions. All other cemeteries I know of were put in FIRST, and the houses followed later. They made the decision to purchase AFTER the cemetery was already there. It is not right to put a cemetery in after homes have been purchased. The cemetery belongs somewhere still undeveloped.

Sonia Mirabrishami, 1900 Knollcrest Court, San Ramon:

I am against a cemetery in my backyard.

Kris Garrett, 901 Regency Court, San Ramon:

I'm outraged about the fact our builder profited handsomely from his project (Old Ranch) and now after the fact has proposed such an outrageous plan to once profit again and to make residence against more housing softer. Davidon himself showed a park in this proposed area. Maybe an honest prediction of what this land would become would slow sales down of these expensive homes!!

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James Weckman, 505 Lindell Lane, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Larry Becker, 204 Alderwood Lane, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Al Dawson, 304 Holbrook Place, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Tuttoe Tran, 2040 Bent Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I definitely don't want the cemetery to be built on our street. If this is the case, I will sell my house and so will the rest of the neighbors. It's distasteful and despicable.

Julie Venierakis, 509 Columbia Creek Drive, San Ramon:

If I do not have time to speak I would like to add to the record that there are 82 cemetery locations in the Metropolitan Bay Area, and that there is space available. I would like to recommend other areas in the City as well as incorporated areas specifically. Northwest of Bollinger Canyon Road as a potential site if deemed necessary by this Commission as well as the residents of San Ramon. May I recommend this change be put to a vote for the residents to decide the appropriate location if necessary. Thank you.

Marty Clinter, 204 Sun Ridge Drive, San Ramon:

This cemetery should not be here! It will lower property value and it's pretty scary to have dead people in our backyard.

Chacko Samuel, 744 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

I am against the proposed rezoning and believe it will have a negative impact on residential neighborhood surrounding the site.

Reem Galloway, 732 Bridge Creek Drive, San Ramon:

When we purchased our house, we were not aware of any cemetery plans and do not feel its fair to disregard our opinion since we are the owners.

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Brandt Weibezahn, 612 Fawn Ridge Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Kim Carter, 305 Rubicon Valley Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

David Jefferson, 717 Ashton Oaks Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Patrick Tuohy, 316 Pine Valley Court, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Tom DeMarco, 532 Columbia Creek Drive, San Ramon:

Against the project.

Caron Hoffman, 908 Regency Court, San Ramon:

Davidon used the fact that this ridge in question is unstable to allow him to lower his purchase price – now he wants to back track and develop it. It is against the law to operate cemetery within the city limits. This would lower our property values considerably. We paid a premium when we purchased our property due to its location and we continue to pay that premium through our yearly property taxes. You cannot take an existing neighborhood and purposely lowers its standards.

Phil & Pam Henry, 19689 San Ramon Valley Boulevard, San Ramon:

I am in favor of a cemetery as a permitted use in AG zoning provided only in ground burial with flush markers be allowed.

Theresa Tavares, 1050 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

I strongly oppose the text amendment! I believe that the proposal to change the commercial use of AG land to include a cemetery will affect all of us living in the surrounding areas adversely because of the negative impact on the following: 1) environment; 2) increased traffic; 3) property values; and 4) public health.

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Marcus Duncan, 1050 Vista Monte Drive, San Ramon:

I vigorously oppose the text amendment. The proposal to change the commercial use of AG land to include a cemetery is unacceptable for the following reasons: 1) environmental impact on local wildlife; 2) impact of cemetery on property values; 3) traffic increase and noise; and 4) risk to public health.

Phil Wong, Planning Director, asked that the applicant prepare a formal letter of withdrawal for the files.

Chair Kerger called a recess from 7:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.

8.2 DP 99-004; LUP 99-021; AR 99-041 & IS 99-006. Staff report by G. Ryan Lenhardt, Assistant Planner.

Applicant

Franklin T. Utchen
935 Woodland Drive
San Ramon, CA 94583

Owner

Sunset Development Company
Attn: Peter Oswald
One Annabel Lane
San Ramon, CA 94583

Request: Development Plan, Land Use Permit, Architectural Review, and Environmental Review approvals to construct a 21,135± gross square foot veterinary center to include: an animal hospital, indoor animal boarding, an outdoor animal exercise area, a retail store, and ancillary office space.

Location: The project site is located at 2000 Bishop Drive (APN: 213-133-070), generally at the southwest intersection of Norris Canyon Road and Bishop Drive.

Phil Wong, Planning Director, summarized the staff report for the Commission and audience. He indicated that the proponents of the project have reviewed the draft conditions and have no concerns.

Comm. Livingstone referred to page 5 of 14, Condition No. 41. He stated that he had asked that "6" stalls be relocated instead of the 2 noted in the condition. He asked the applicant if he had any issues with this change. The applicant stated that he did not have any concerns.