



GREEN VALLEY LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION

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

January 2021 Newsletter

– **In this issue ...**

- President's Message
- Cordelia Fire Protection District
- Falls School Property
- Green Valley FireSafe Council
- City of Vallejo, Lakes Water System
- Middle Green Valley Development
- Patwino Worrta Kodoi Dihi Open Space Park
- Hosted vs. Unhosted Tourist Rental Homes
- Contact Us

– **President's Message:**

Whew! While 2020 is now in the rearview mirror, we recognize what a difficult year it was for all. Our thoughts and condolences go out to those whose lives have been irreparably changed by COVID-19.

This is GVLA's first 2021 newsletter, and as the new President, my first direct communication with GVLA members and Green Valley residents. I am hoping to follow in the formidable footsteps of Roger Merrill – but also am happy to report he will remain on the Board and be an ongoing resource going forward. My husband, Rick Voigt, and I moved to Green Valley 7 years ago – enticed by what we all know is a special place. We feel very fortunate to enjoy our Valley's rural beauty, agricultural bounty and the strong sense of community with everyone we meet.

As we begin 2021, our community is facing its usual stresses – high water bills, toppling trees, too-fast drivers, wildlife in our streets and yards, and errant or missing cats and dogs.

The GVLA Board takes our mission as a community organization to preserve and enhance the rural character of Green Valley seriously. In the coming months, we will be working with local officials and organizations to encourage and champion improvements in our utilities, amenities and surroundings.

This newsletter is intended to bring all "up to speed" with some of the issues we face as a community. If you have thoughts or helpful suggestions for any of these topics or would like to join our efforts in working toward solutions on any of these issues, please let us know.

Thank you for your support!
Mary Burczyk

– **Cordelia Fire Protection District:**

The Cordelia Fire Protection District (CFPD) is dedicated to providing for the safety and welfare of the public through the preservation of life, health, property and the environment.

Their vision is to be recognized by our community and employees as a model of excellence in providing services through education, prevention, and mitigation; a district that is synonymous with the term leadership; a district that fosters an environment of involvement, trust and cohesion; a district responsive to the needs and concerns of the community we serve.

CFPD estimates its funding and reserve funding will run out in 18 to 24 months. Given their financial situation a “merger” or consolidation of rural fire districts into a County-wide agency seems logical, although challenging. GVLA is working with the CFPD Board and elected officials to ensure a long-term solution that supports the level of fire protection and EMS services Green Valley residents deserve.

CFPD’s strategic plan and presentation are available on their website at <https://www.cordeliafire.org/>

– **Falls School Property:**

As we all are aware, the land around the former Falls School has remained fallow and under-utilized for many years. While we did and do have some hope of applying for a grant to transform this property into a community pocket park, as of this writing, the owner of the property, the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District (FSUSD), has put this land up for a public bid process. We also are aware that other discussions may be ongoing between the FSUSD and the County. While we are not party to these discussions, as the discussions are between public agencies, we are committed to be actively involved as decisions are made about the property and its future.

– **Green Valley FireSafe Council:**

When it comes to wildfire, no single person alone can protect a community. Residents throughout California are joining forces to create local FireSafe Councils to effectively reduce and prevent wildfire losses. FireSafe Councils are voluntary, grassroots, community-led organizations mobilizing residents to protect their homes, communities, and environments from loss due to catastrophic wildfire. A local FireSafe Council is often sparked by a catalyst – perhaps a recent fire or a group of neighbors eager to spread a firesafe message – then embraced by the community, turning that initial interest into a committed group empowering residents to do their part to make their community more safe.

– **Green Valley FireSafe Council, cont'd:**

Green Valley FireSafe Council's (GVFSC) goal is to work with local fire officials to assess community wildfire risk, design and implement projects increasing wildfire survivability, and educate homeowners about wildfire preparedness activities. By mobilizing community members, GVFSC represents a powerful group that can help to:

- Forge strong partnerships with first responders.
- Minimize risks to life, homes, natural and human-made resources.
- Help to ensure the insurability of property by increasing community safety.
- Acquire resources, in the form of donations and grants, to assist in fire prevention efforts.

Please visit <https://www.gvfsc.org> for more information and updates. If you would like to get involved, or for more information and meeting times, please e-mail the GVFSC chair, Rochelle Sherlock at rochelle@potentiatellc.com or call her at (707) 718-5637.

– **City of Vallejo, Lakes Water System:**

The City of Vallejo's Lakes Water System (LWS) has a long history. It currently provides water to approximately 800 customers who live in Green Valley, Gordon Valley, parts of Cordelia and Willotta Oaks.

The City of Vallejo owns the LWS as part of the services provided by its Water Department. This system was created from the Division Dam in the early 1890s, with the Lakes Frey and Madigan reservoirs added in 1914. Originally, these reservoirs provided water to residents of Vallejo, Green Valley and the surrounding rural areas.

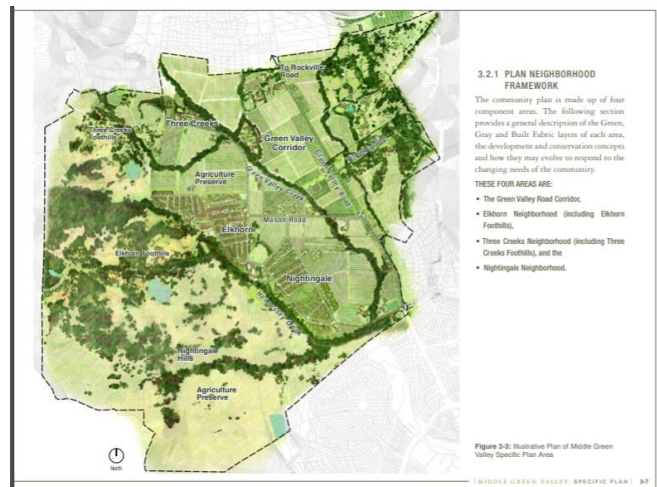
In 1992, Vallejo closed the valve on one of its major lake delivery systems and passed an ordinance making the LWS a distinct water "district", shifting 100% of the cost of operations to LWS customers. At present, GVLA is working with Vallejo to address some of the issues our community faces, including high water rates and adequate maintenance of infrastructure and we are pleased with progress that is being made under a new management group.

GVLA also has been collaborating with the developers of Middle Green Valley to encourage that the water requirements for these new homes be provided by Vallejo Water. For LWS customers, this would mean more users and could help with overall water delivery costs and system reliability. We will provide new or additional information as it becomes available.

– **Middle Green Valley Development** –

Middle Green Valley (MGV) is a development plan for 1,905 acres in the middle of unincorporated Green Valley, bounded primarily by Green Valley Road, Rockville Road, Terminal/Reservoir Road, the Hidden Meadows subdivision, and the western foothills.

Envisioned as a collection of small neighborhoods that nestle along the base of the oak-wooded foothills, MGV is a comprehensively planned community that reflects the traditional rural settlement patterns of the past.



With full knowledge of the planning discussions and decisions, GVLA concluded that implementation of the MGV Specific Plan would help maintain the rural character of this vital acreage and provided its full support during the County review process in 2016 and 2017.

As of January 2021, the MGV landowners have put forward documentation to the County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to request some amendments to the plan. These include the relocation of some proposed home sites due to site-specific building constraints, shifting an entrance road location, and locating a potential site for a possible fire station.

These requested amendments must be reviewed and approved by the County Planning Department, County Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Following a year of discussion and review, the GVLA Board remains supportive of the plan and these amendments.

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

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

– **Patwino Worrta Kodoi Dihi Open Space Park (fka Rockville Trails Preserve):**

A new park, with miles of trails and many recreational opportunities, is opening in Green Valley in 2021 – after only two decades of discussions about it!

The Solano Land Trust is continuing its work on the master plan for the space that will become Patwino Worrta Kodoi Dihi Open Space Park (pronounced “*pat-wee-no war-claw ko-day dee-he*”). All that remains for completion are a parking lot, restrooms, several new trails, and a new intersection on Rockville Road.

– **Patwino Worrta Kodoi Dihi Open Space Park, cont'd:**

Long the summer hunting grounds of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, the name means Southern Rock Home of the Patwin People. The tribe offered this name, as tribal members and their ancestors hunted, lived on and traversed the park land for over a century.

In the mid-1970s, the White Wing development project was planned in this northeast corner of Green Valley. The project was to include 750 homes, three 9-hole golf courses, an upscale clubhouse and restaurant, and a 12-room inn. Green Valley residents objected to the development for many years. A major cause of concern was the lack of a water source and potential adverse effects on the wells of adjacent property owners; these issues were both raised in the Environmental Impact Review (EIR) for the property. Discussions about this project were ongoing for nearly a decade.

In the mid-2000's, a smaller residential development, Rockville Trails Estates, was reborn. This revised development and its EIR were approved by the County Board of Supervisors – setting the stage for development to begin.

However, on the grounds the revised EIR was incomplete and inaccurate, in 2006 GVLA and the Sierra Club initiated a lawsuit against Solano County and the developer. The impact of the lawsuit, as well as the 2008 recession which slowed housing market demand, created a stalemate for the development team. This spurred then-GVLA leadership into action and discussions for purchase were initiated. From these negotiations a price for purchasing the undeveloped land on the “hillside” was reached.

Subsequently, the Solano Land Trust obtained a series of grants, donations and a loan to buy the 1500-acre property for \$13.5 million. GVLA members were significant donors in this fundraising effort along with the California Coastal Conservancy and the State Wildlife Conservation Board. The transaction was completed in 2012 and park development began.

For additional information about the park or docent tours that are beginning in advance of the full public opening, visit the website of the Solano Land Trust at: <https://www.solanolandtrust.org/protected-lands/rockville-trails-preserve>.

– **Hosted vs. Unhosted Tourist Rental Homes:**

At GVLA's October 2020 Annual Meeting, several local homeowners raised the issue of unhosted short-term rentals in Green Valley and some of the problems occurring on their specific street. We are aware of at least three homes in Green Valley that rent to larger groups. At the meeting, GVLA member Cliff Neal defined the difference between a hosted rental (when the owner of the property resides at the property during any rental) and unhosted (when the owner is not resident at the property during its rental and resides elsewhere.)

– **Hosted vs. Unhosted Tourist Rental Homes, cont'd:**

Some of the specific concerns included:

- Renters being unaware of Green Valley's significant fire risk and taking chances with the disposal of cigarettes & other smoking materials
- The likely negative impact of additional cars and unfamiliar drivers in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- The lack of understanding by renters of the trespassing laws protecting neighboring parcels.
- The inherent dangers and liability issues presented by surrounding yards and landscape – i.e. rattlesnakes, crevasses, sinkholes, and other potential natural hazards.

If you would like to be involved in discussions about this issue or have an opinion that you would like to share with Mr. Neal please send an email to: cliff.b.neal@gmail.com.

– **Contact Us:**

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