

November 5, 2004

El Dorado Hills Community Services District
1021 Harvard Way
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

Attention Board of Directors:

Joe Chinn joejchinn@aol.com
Justin Masters jmasters@innercite.com
Larry Brilliant lsb1048@sbcglobal.net
Constance Wyatt constance@wyattfamilylaw.com
Norb Witt nwitt@sbcglobal.net

Subject: Promontory Park Plans

Dear Directors:

For several months, the El Dorado Hills Community Services District has presented various plans for the proposed Promontory Park that include as many as two dozen 70-foot tall sports field lights. To date we have remained on the sidelines concerning the plans for Promontory Park, hoping in vain that a compromise could be fashioned among the CSD Board, the sports community, and the Promontory homeowners.

We believe that those lights and the activity promoted by them will have a material adverse impact on the surrounding neighborhood in the form of noise pollution, traffic congestion, and light pollution. For that reason, Bass Lake Action Committee joins the Promontory residents in protesting against the placement of athletic field lighting in Promontory Park.

BLAC has investigated the impact of such athletic field lights and has concluded that despite the best efforts of designers, and the best intentions of users, these lights produce unwanted glare and light over a very wide area. Because they do so, the use of such lights in a residential neighborhood is in contravention of both the 2004 El Dorado County General Plan and the current El Dorado County lighting ordinance.

The 2004 General Plan provides:

General Plan Objective 2.8.1: Lighting Standards. Provide standards, consistent with prudent safety practices, for the elimination of high intensity lighting and glare.

Policy 2.8.1.1 Development shall limit excess nighttime light and glare from parking area lighting, signage, and buildings. Consideration will be given to design features, namely directional shielding for street lighting, parking lot lighting, sport field lighting, and other significant light sources, that could reduce effects from nighttime lighting. In addition, consideration will be given to the use of automatic shutoffs or motion sensors for lighting features in rural areas to further reduce excess nighttime light.

The County Lighting Ordinance provides:

17.14.170 Outdoor Lighting. Policy.

A. It is the policy of the County that the creation of artificial light and glare be controlled to the extent that unnecessary and unwarranted illumination of an adjacent property be prohibited. The creation of light or glare by any person in violation of this Section shall constitute a public nuisance and shall be subject to abatement proceedings in accordance with Chapter 17.12.

Many people have moved to El Dorado Hills because of the high quality of life the area offers to its residents. As the region grows, maintaining this standard for all of its residents, not just for a select group, should be the goal of the CSD while they also improve, build and sustain their recreational parks.

Through its park development fees from developers, state recreation bond funds, and growing property tax revenue from the community, we suggest that the CSD has an ample financial base to put lighted sports field sites outside of residential neighborhoods. Developers could be required to furnish the community with park properties outside of residential areas. We urge the CSD to investigate alternative funding mechanisms, such as professionally run athletic facilities like the Big League Dreams project recently completed in Redding, California. Restoring and improving the current overused and sometimes run-down athletic fields should also be a priority, so that there are more fields available for use on a regular basis.

In conclusion, we urge the CSD Board members to revise the proposed Promontory Park plan so it is more appropriate for a residential area park, without any athletic field lights.

Bass Lake Action Committee is a nonprofit grassroots organization in El Dorado Hills that is dedicated to responsible development. See our website at basslakeaction.org for additional information about our organization.

Sincerely,

Kathy Prevost
President
Bass Lake Action Committee

cc: Guy Gertsch, Promontory Resident
Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee
Wayne Lowery, CSD General Manager
Matthew Self, El Dorado Hills Telegraph
Crystal Vernazza, Village Life