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Escondido Homeowners File Lawsuit Over Country Club Housing Project

The Escondido Country Club Homeowners Organization (ECCHO) filed a lawsuit against the City of Escondido today, challenging the City's approval of the 380-home development known as The Villages Project (Project). Continuing an over four-and-a-half-year effort to protect the quality of life within the Escondido Country Club neighborhood, the ECCHO Board felt compelled to take immediate action to correct the serious deficiencies in the Environmental Impact Report that the City approved on November 15th.

Specific issues addressed in ECCHO's lawsuit include: (1) City Council failure to submit the Villages Specific Plan to a public vote as required by Proposition S; (2) City Council approval of a project that violates zoning, density and neighborhood compatibility requirements of the General Plan and (3) City Council approval of a seriously defective Environmental Impact Report. In its rush to approve the seriously flawed Villages project, the City Council failed to consider the more reasonable ECCHO plan for development of 158 homes on the Country Club property.

"The Project violates Proposition S and the City's General Plan in numerous respects; it fails to respect the existing zoning code requirements and is generally incompatible with the Escondido Country Club neighborhood. Additionally, the City approved an environmental impact report that ignores significant impacts to community and the environment, and that fails to acknowledge that there is a reduced density alternative more compatible with the surrounding area that would meet Project objectives," stated Everett DeLano, ECCHO's attorney.

Because of the increased time requirements that will be involved with management of this issue, for personal reasons some changes are being made to ECCHO's Board. Some current members are stepping down, and Gary Vest and Gary Johnston, co-founders of ECCHO, will be assuming Board leadership. They will be joined by Frank Freyne and Connie Smeyres while Betty Ferrell will remain on the Board. ECCHO wishes to express its deepest appreciation for the years of service the departing Board members have provided to the Escondido Country Club community.

ECCHO (Escondido Country Club Homeowners Organization) is a California nonprofit corporation formed to act as the voice and representative of the Escondido Country Club neighborhood. Backed by the vast majority of ECC residents, ECCHO is continuing with actions designed to hold the Escondido City Council accountable for approving use of land where the former Escondido Country Club was located in a legal and responsible manner.

For more information, please email ECCHO at ECCHO.info@gmail.com