

Banning Ranch... An Open Conservation

Based on an open editorial conversation between Terry Welsh, President of the Banning Ranch Conservancy, and your truly, John Sisker.

“While indeed a former President / Vice President on the Newport Terrace BOA, currently my authority is limited to that of select committees, and I am no longer involved in any direct policy decisions. The same can be said for the Banning Ranch Conservancy. However, this format allows for personal opinions, which may or may not be in agreement with that of any other Board, Member and/or Affiliation.



Terry;

Many of us just received a new Site Plan, and written description, from Newport Beach and the Developer for Banning Ranch. While it looks like all the concerns we at Newport Terrace were actually addresses, I still have my doubts.

As one example, they show Bluff Road connecting to PCH, yet I thought the Coastal Commission already said no on that one.

The plan and dialogue shows Bluff Road now ending at 17th Street, no longer being connected to 19th Street, I wonder if that is just temporary, extending it at a later time.

The same holds true for their claim of building Bluff Road in part, as a two lane instead of 4 lane road. Plans may just be to widen it later.

Their new plan also show many big gray areas, no-doubt for residential developments, but with no numbers designated on how many units, square footage, number of stories, any commercial and even hotel designation, etc.

All this looks like to me, is a foot in the door plan. What do you think?

Thanks
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Newport Banning Ranch Conservation, Open Space & Redevelopment Plan

John

Yes, I saw that letter as well.

We have always suspected NBR's game plan was to ask for the moon and then some, and then slowly whittle off little pieces to loud trumpets and great fanfare.

This seems to be exactly what they are doing with this letter. It is what I would do if I were them.

The CCC has not ruled out the road to PCH, but it was obvious that the CCC wasn't going to approve Sunset Ridge Park because of the original Bluff Rd. However, NBR does plan to bring Bluff Rd. back to the CCC again.

I don't know if NBR is agreeing to permanently abandon Bluff Rd. to 19th, or just take it out of the current plan. The City obviously wants this extension.

The same with downsizing Bluff Rd. to 2 lanes. I remember at a planning commission meeting a couple of years ago, one of the commissioners seeking assurances from NBR that the Bluff Rd. extension to 19th (which was planned as a two lane road) would have the capability to expand to 4 lanes.

The bottom line is since we would prefer no development at all; we must continue to work hard for this. While we should acknowledge the improvements, we must ask ourselves, "Do I want a massive project with some improvements, or would I prefer to preserve the entire site as open space." Since we prefer the later, we simply have to continue our effort.

Keep up the great work.

Terry Welsh,
President, Banning Ranch Conservancy