

## Sophia Cassam

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**From:** Heather Nicholson <heatherfold@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 27, 2021 4:59 PM  
**To:** Sophia Cassam  
**Cc:** San Juan County Council; Christine Minney; Jamie Stephens; Cindy Wolf  
**Subject:** Support Docket Request 21-0003

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Sept 27, 2021

Attn: SJ County Council members.

There is serious concern among the public about the proceedings of Request 21-0003, and that it is not currently fully understood by decision makers.

I appreciate best efforts to date although, I request:

- Council to add Request 21-0003 to the current comp plan work program on Sept 28.
- Short of that happening, there must be an informative two way public discussion convened with the Sponsor (Joe Symons) and Council, before proceeding any further.
- Joe Symons to be invited to dialogue with Council in the Tuesday Sept 28 meeting, with ample time to assure the public that '03 is well understood. Until the public is confident with the process, people will not have confidence in decisions made. But more to the point, the public wants the County to simply run the potential full population buildout number and fully add 03 to DCD's work program in the current Update.
- Remedy technical malfunctions of public meetings prior to Sept 28. Citizens are unable to join or hear the meetings. Public meetings should not proceed if citizens don't have access and meetings are inaudible.

**The main point of Docket Request 21-0003 is to:**

- Count the number of residents that our land zoning can accommodate in SJC.
- Then do an impact analysis of that number.

This is referenced as a Buildout Analysis (BOA). It's reasonable and synchronous with expectations of the public, and the Growth Management Act

What seems to be going on, is County and Council are talking about alternative measures that don't actually meet the request. Clarifications have been submitted about this, but there's been no acknowledgment.

Count the number of residents that our land zoning can accommodate in SJC. That's the potential full buildout number. It's been shown it can be done in less than a day. And it's a standalone task, meaning programmatic changes don't need to occur to get this number calculated. People have been surprised to learn County hasn't already done this small task.

Then do an impact analysis of that number. Not of a 20, 30 or 50 year forecast, but of the buildout number, since that's the reality that's coming unless we change it. That number is likely to be close to the 134,000 that's been estimated. Meaning we are not going to be compliant with our comp plan, and the world of hurt we're already experiencing will be unbearable not only for humans, but ecosystems will collapse. People aren't okay with that outcome.

Request '03 details that our living conditions need to be what the comp plan Vision carefully spells out.

From the public's perspective, seeing blame placed on the Sponsor of '03 for not accepting measures that don't meet the request is worrisome. Council member Minney's outright rejection of '03 on Sept 14, is causing concern. People had a hard time understanding her statement and couldn't find the substance or justification in her conclusion. A great amount of citizens own time as been spent communicating with the County. In terms of what the public is due from it's government proceedings, it's not meeting an acceptable standard. More so, considering how critical '03 is, and that the public unequivocally wants it implemented. The public wants a better understanding of what's standing in the way, and to work through it together.

Joe Symons docket request goes back to when the comp plan was crafted by citizens committees, which Symons was part of. They were told they could talk about anything except density. But density is ground zero for growth planning. It's a point on a timeline that is unavoidable unless you know it exists and change it so it fits with your stated Vision.

Inconsistencies ensued and a group of citizens, including Symons, sued the county in the late 90's and won. It was demonstrated to the Growth Management Hearings Board:

- "that one-third to one-half of all CP [Comp Plan] designations were inconsistent with the official maps' allowable densities."
- "These inconsistencies, caused by the retention of 1980 densities, do not comply with the GMA."

A sufficient remedy did not take effect, which is why the Request continues. This is a core critical issue in SJC. A huge amount of citizens own time has been spent to prioritize 03. Daily, residents speak of worsening infringements on their quality of life in the form of noise, air traffic, road traffic, over-development, over-tourism, common courtesy & sense of community, and above all, the disregard and abjection of the natural environment. All of these are in direct conflict with our Comp Plan and it's Vision and goals. Enormous time was volunteered by citizens to craft these, with consensus. And it's the legal obligation of SJC to adhere to it.

An outpouring of urgent letters and testimony, all imploring to implement '03 has been submitted to County this year. 118 to date.

I request Council to add 21-0003 to the current comp plan work program on Sept 28.

#### **Request 21-0003 includes:**

- Calculate what the max legal density-assigned population is and make that number public.
- "work with local stakeholders to craft a true buildout/impact analysis process, involving professional consultants and a public engagement process that fully and honorably provides extensive opportunity to shape the process by which the analysis, its conclusions, and recommendations can be brought into alignment with the Vision Statement and **codified into law.**"
- "a comprehensive "truth in planning" component of the CP specifically geared to communicate in language understood by residents not formally trained in law or land use planning, and located right up front in the CP rather than buried in an Appendix." This is an executive summary of the "Build-Out Analysis" written in layman's terms.
- Internally consistent Comp Plan and a lived reality that matches it's Vision.

#### **County has offered that it's Land Capacity Analysis (LCA) makes it unnecessary to calculate the buildout number and it's impacts, as being requested.**

But Friends of San Juans submitted a letter, explaining that efforts to date do not address or contemplate the full buildout requested in '03, and describes flaws in the LCA.

The letter provides details of the following:

1. identify continuing flaws in the 2019 Land Capacity Analysis;
2. contrast the limitations of existing reviews with the scope of information requested by the build-out analysis;

3. request that the proposed analysis be conducted during the current Comprehensive Plan update.

[https://www.sanjuanco.com/DocumentCenter/View/23447/2021-07-07\\_2021-Docket\\_PUB\\_Friends-of-the-San-Juans\\_Support-Request-21-0003](https://www.sanjuanco.com/DocumentCenter/View/23447/2021-07-07_2021-Docket_PUB_Friends-of-the-San-Juans_Support-Request-21-0003)

Submitted July 7, 2021

Submitted with encouragement of working together through these obstacles.

Best Regards,

Heather Nicholson