

# DOHENY VILLAGE ZONING DISTRICT

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER ISSUES OF CONCERN

**Toni Nelson, Capo Cares**

I commend the hard work undertaken by City Staff and the Doheny Village Working Group and have a number of comments that I'm hopeful you will consider before the Plan is completed and submitted to the Coastal Commission.

**Guiding Principle:** The draft Doheny Village District Overlay states that the intent and purpose of the rezoning is *"to preserve and enhance the eclectic combination of commercial, light industrial, and residential mixed uses in the area."* While Capo Beach residents have long lobbied for a revitalization of Doheny Village, we recognize that any rezoning must be sensitive to the "soul" of this special part of our community. It is vital that the large, tall buildings allowed by the new development do not obliterate what has always been, at heart, a "village".

**Village Name:** While I understand the interest in renaming this area "Capistrano Beach Village" in recognition of the fact that it is a very important part of Capistrano Beach, 92624, I'm hoping the "Doheny Village" name can be preserved. "Doheny Village" harkens back to our historic roots and the importance of Ned Doheny who first developed Capistrano Beach. "Doheny Beach", our famous "Doheny Park Road", our beautiful 1920's historic homes, and many long time Village businesses proudly bear this name. I hope it sticks.

**Historic/Cultural Preservation:** Doheny Village is a very special area – one that has an important significance as the site of the historic El Camino Real, early Highway 101, and the 1890s railroad stop on Victoria Street, marked as "San Juan" back when we were known as "San Juan by the Sea." The village has great significance to Dana Point's surfing heritage and is still home to famous surfing icons, metal and other industrial workers and talented artists and designers.

I would love to see a Historic Preservation guideline incorporated into the Plan. Can historic facades be incorporated into new buildings, or at a minimum, can historic plaques and photos acknowledge the significance of certain sites? Can guidelines or preference be given to developments that will honor the area's history and culture so that we don't lose these important elements in sanitized, modern structures that don't fit the flavor or sense of a "village"?

I'd also love to see the City or developers embrace the Historic Fence Concept for Victoria Blvd. along the border of Capo Beach Church. This concept, which will depict important milestones in the area's history, was developed through a coalition of community members and local artist and graphic designer Tom Clark. It was approved by the Arts and Culture Commission and the Dana Point Historical Society, which donated \$5,000 toward the project.

**Environmental/Aesthetic Concerns:** While the District Overlay makes sense in terms of preserving the commercial, residential and main street interests of Doheny Village, I am concerned that the building heights and densities (if the area is developed to maximum standards) could have environmental and aesthetic issues including:

1. Tall buildings potentially blocking light and views of existing residential and commercial structures.
2. Although the zoning requires minimal landscaping, the City has no funding for beautifully landscaped medians which would significantly improve aesthetics in Doheny Village. Perhaps this can be incorporated and funded by large developers. Prolific trees and landscaping will be better for the environment and considerably soften the look of large, tall buildings.
3. Traffic from large residential development in the Village may have negative impacts on existing uses like existing churches and residences. Palisades residents have some concern that traffic back ups along Doheny Park Road could result in people seeking alternate routes up Via Canon or Camino Capistrano.
4. Building heights, in particular the 50 foot heights throughout the area now occupied by Beachwood create a significant bulky presence. The Gehry buildings are unique historic buildings that could be carved out with special zoning. There is a big aesthetic difference between a couple of unique and architecturally significant buildings and a large mass of 50 foot structures over several acres. Reduced building heights and more landscaping in these areas will fit so much better with the “village” character we’re trying to preserve.
5. Entrances from all sides of the Village are vital as they set the stage for what lies within the Village area:
  - a. Cal-trans should be lobbied to improve the Stonehill/Doheny Park Road freeway entrance one of the ugliest freeway entrances in SoCal);
  - b. San Juan Capistrano should be asked to improve the two sad-looking medians that are in their jurisdiction but are effectively the “entrance” to Doheny Village; and
  - c. The entrance from PCH, into Dana Point and connectivity with Doheny State Beach are paramount and must be improved and aesthetically enhanced.
6. The possibility of conflicts and coordination challenges with the proposed SCWD desalination plant must be considered.
7. Steps should be taken to alleviate possible noise concerns, bearing in mind the competing interests of residents, shoppers and workers. Landscaping, sound walls and

other mitigations should be incorporated into the plan wherever necessary to preserve, in particular, the quality of life of current and future Village residents.

It is exciting to see Doheny Village on the road to revitalization at last. I look forward to the changes that will significantly modernize and enhance this area while preserving its importance as a vital part of Capistrano Beach and the larger city of Dana Point.

**From:** [Belinda Deines](#)  
**To:** [Staci Sheaks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Comments for Doheny Village EIR  
**Date:** Thursday, May 21, 2020 1:16:29 PM

---

Please post this email on the Environmental webpage

---

From: Keith Johannes [kjohannes1@cox.net]  
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:50 PM  
To: Belinda Deines  
Subject: Comments for Doheny Village EIR

Belinda,

As Chair of the Dana Point Historical Society(DPHS), Preservation Committee, I am responding to the Notice of Preparation of the EIR, reissued May 7, 2020, by the City of Dana Point. These comments are for the for the proposed Doheny Village Zoning District Update Project. With regard to the Scope and Content of the EIR review, please review the historic nature of the main roadway through this project. This is one of the most historic roadways in local and California history. Going back more than 250 years, this roadway was the route of the Portola Expedition and therefore becoming the historic El Camino Real used during the mission period and celebrated as El Camino Real, with the signature bells as California began developing highways as cars became the mode of transportation. Next, as highways developed and improved, it became the historic US 101 and the mid-point between Los Angeles and San Diego, with businesses developing in this community, responding to the motorists needs and comforts. Any development in this area must be concerned with honoring this history. A Dana Point Park a short distance from here has a monument to PCH and California Highway 1. The history of this roadway must also be acknowledged and highlighted, as we believe it is possibly more significant and important to our city's history. Was there one of the El Camino Real iconic bells here? In summary, tall buildings, 50 foot high anywhere along this roadway is not only unacceptable, it would ruin the historic character of this historic roadway. What would be the historic building height? There are already some examples in the area.

Another point, nearby is another part of the same linear park, honoring watermen (and women) legends. Some of the activities and work that made some of these individuals legends, took place in Doheny Village. These sites, connecting to these Dana Point treasures, need to be identified, evaluated, acknowledged and honored in the places they made their contributions. We cannot lose this history.

The DPHS also recommends that the City of Dana Point connect with the Main Street America and the California Main Street programs to get the best practices and research that show how historic preservation leads to better, and faster economic development. The California Preservation Foundation conference, just had a session that released that data.

Thank you for your consideration!

Keith Johannes-Chair Preservation  
Dana Point Historical Society

**From:** [Belinda Deines](#)  
**To:** [Staci Sheaks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Re EIR for Doheny Village  
**Date:** Thursday, May 21, 2020 1:13:36 PM

---

Staci,

Could you please post this email on the Environmental webpage?

Thanks!  
Belinda

---

From: Doug Lowe [douglowe2010@gmail.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 3:48 PM  
To: Belinda Deines  
Cc: aaron@beachcitiesglass.com; Barry Burnett; rlaw1@mac.com  
Subject: Re EIR for Doheny Village

Dear Belinda, Thank you for your email. Your attention to detail is impeccable, and very much appreciated.

My concern for the environment is paramount. Based on what I remember about the extensive study of the area that the City paid about \$900K for years ago, I believe the one item that will impact the environment most significantly is vehicle traffic through the valley. From the presentation of the study, and from my personal experience of using the same size traffic circle in SJC at Valley Road & La Novia, I support the recommendation from the study that includes, among other ideas, a traffic circle at the intersection of Victoria Blvd. and Doheny Park Road.

I am acutely aware that my opinion on this is shared by only a small minority of stakeholders, but historically that has always been the case in the discussion of environment vs development. So this letter is intended to change that paradigm; from one of "What's the least we can do to maintain the environment" to an approach that asks the question: "What is the best possible thing we can do to improve the environment" so that fifty years from now we will be best served by our investment. Obviously it will be more expensive to improve the environment vs maintaining the status quo. Besides the additional money we will spend, we, as a society, will have to adapt to new ways. Slowing down is one of the things we must do. IMHO.

According to our study, from the best of my memory: A single lane traffic circle;

- 1) Allows the same amount of traffic to transverse the valley that the existing two lanes now carry, in about the same amount of time.
- 2) Reduces average speed to 20 mph vs 45 mph now. This will;
  - A) Reduce accident rates and severity
  - B) Reduce noise pollution.
  - C) Reduce fuel consumption.
  - D) Reduce air pollution from brake and tire dust.
  - e) Reduce air pollution from fuel consumption.

I believe these are exactly the mandates required when the Environmental Protection Act was created, the very reason the EIR is required when development is considered. While I am perfectly ready to concede that my memory may be flawed, that the study may not have been thorough, and that new information may contradict the old study; these possibilities in no way excuse us from carefully considering and thoroughly understanding, then adapting to the best possible option, when it comes to the critically important issue of our environment, and the significant effect vehicle traffic has on it.

I thank everyone that is participating in this study for their efforts to improve our lives through thoughtful and sensible development.

Sincerely Doug Lowe. 949-702-4814 email [douglowe2010@gmail.com](mailto:douglowe2010@gmail.com)<<mailto:douglowe2010@gmail.com>>.

## DOHENY VILLAGE ZONING DISTRICT

### ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER ISSUES OF CONCERN

#### Public Comment Toni Nelson, Capo Cares

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this exciting project. I commend the hard work undertaken by City Staff and the Doheny Village Working Group and have a number of comments that I've submitted to Belinda Deines as a separate document.

The draft Doheny Village District Overlay states that the intent and purpose of the rezoning is *"to preserve and enhance the eclectic combination of commercial, light industrial, and residential mixed uses in the area."* While Capo Beach residents have long lobbied for a revitalization of Doheny Village, we recognize that any rezoning must be sensitive to the "soul" of this special part of our community. It is vital that the large, tall buildings allowed by the new development do not obliterate what has always been, at heart, a "village".

While I understand the interest in renaming this area "Capistrano Beach Village" in recognition of the fact that it is a very important part of Capistrano Beach, 92624, I'm hoping the "Doheny Village" name can be preserved. "Doheny Village" harkens back to our historic roots and the importance of Ned Doheny who first developed Capistrano Beach. "Doheny Beach", our famous "Doheny Park Road", our beautiful 1920's historic homes, and many long time Village businesses proudly bear this name. I hope it sticks.

Doheny Village is a very special area – one that has an important significance as the site of the historic El Camino Real, early Highway 101, and the 1890s railroad stop on Victoria Street, marked as "San Juan" back when we were known as "San Juan by the Sea." The village has great significance to Dana Point's surfing heritage and is still home to famous surfing icons, metal and other industrial workers and talented artists and designers.

I would love to see an Historic Preservation guideline incorporated into the Plan. I have forwarded specific suggestions on historic preservation plus some environmental and aesthetic concerns to Belinda and am hopeful these will be considered.

It is exciting to see Doheny Village on the road to revitalization at last. I look forward to the changes that will significantly modernize and enhance this area while preserving its importance as a vital part of both the community of Capistrano Beach and the larger city of Dana Point.

**From:** [Belinda Deines](#)  
**To:** [Torres, Eddie](#)  
**Cc:** [Yau, Frances](#); [Staci Sheaks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Doheny Village EIR Scoping...Public Comment Period  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 27, 2020 8:17:54 AM

---

Eddie, Frances – FYI

Staci – please post on Environmental webpage

## **Belinda Ann Deines**

*Principal Planner*

City of Dana Point | Planning Division  
33282 Golden Lantern, Dana Point, CA 92629  
(949) 248-3570 | [bdeines@danapoint.org](mailto:bdeines@danapoint.org)

*Please be aware that effective May 26, 2020, Dana Point City Hall is open to the public. The Community Development Department Counter is open from 8 a.m. to 12 noon, and by appointment only in the afternoon. Visitors are subject to temperature testing on the first floor before entering the premises, and must wear a face covering at all times.*

*For more information regarding the City's response to COVID-19, please visit:  
<https://www.danapoint.org/departments/general-services/emergency-services/covid-19-coronavirus>*

---

**From:** Richard Law [mailto:rlaw1@mac.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2020 7:28 PM  
**To:** Belinda Deines  
**Cc:** Robinson Larry; Carl Iverson  
**Subject:** Doheny Village EIR Scoping...Public Comment Period

Hi Belinda,

This may not be the right forum for this, but there have been concerns expressed about the proposed zoning and development standards for the Beachwood Village Mobile Home Park area. Beachwood Village is about 13 acres. The draft zoning proposes a density of up to 50 du/ac. and a height limit of up to 50 feet. This would allow up to 650 residential units. The concern is that it could be a massive project of all the same thing. It doesn't have to be.

Good planning and design would create a very positive community environment. This community should not be all the same thing. It should have a mix of uses: townhouses, apartments, live/work units, small scale commercial, a mix of building types, a mix of building heights, a pedestrian friendly environment with park and recreation spaces.

Buildings on the outside street edges should be no more than 3 stories, 36 feet high, be pedestrian friendly and face outward. Taller buildings, above 36 feet should occur more toward the inside and cover no more than 25% of the total building footprint. With good planning and design this can all be accomplished within the proposed zoning and development standards.

We need to establish a more well defined process to make sure it happens.

Best regards,

Richard Law  
34192 Sepulveda Ave.  
Capistrano Beach, CA 92624  
[rlaw1@mac.com](mailto:rlaw1@mac.com)  
949-637-4052

**From:** [Belinda Deines](#)  
**To:** [Torres, Eddie](#)  
**Cc:** [Yau, Frances](#); [Staci Sheaks](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Doheny Village Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 27, 2020 5:44:30 PM

---

FYI

Staci – Please post on Environmental webpage

## **Belinda Ann Deines**

*Principal Planner*

City of Dana Point | Planning Division  
33282 Golden Lantern, Dana Point, CA 92629  
(949) 248-3570 | [bdeines@danapoint.org](mailto:bdeines@danapoint.org)

*Please be aware that effective May 26, 2020, Dana Point City Hall is open to the public. The Community Development Department Counter is open from 8 a.m. to 12 noon, and by appointment only in the afternoon. Visitors are subject to temperature testing on the first floor before entering the premises, and must wear a face covering at all times.*

*For more information regarding the City's response to COVID-19, please visit:  
<https://www.danapoint.org/departments/general-services/emergency-services/covid-19-coronavirus>*

**From:** Betty Hill [mailto:[bettyhill@savedanapoint.com](mailto:bettyhill@savedanapoint.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 27, 2020 5:17 PM  
**To:** Belinda Deines  
**Subject:** Doheny Village Plan

As a long time resident of Dana Point, I am glad to see the City plan for the development of the Doheny Village area after years of neglect. Residents are dismayed at how the Raintree project in Town Center looks and how it has changed the character of the City. The Town Center Plan approved by the residents required that development "preserve the small town village atmosphere". However, developers and a complicit City Council allowed major variances to the plan that resulted in the citizens having to pass an Initiative to force compliance. Please don't make the same mistake in Doheny Village.

The residents of Dana Point support responsible development that maintains the quality of living that is enjoyed in Dana Point. While they would like to see more retail and restaurants, they do not want to see dense residential development and extra tall buildings that exceed what is allowed throughout the City. The extra height and residential density envisioned in the Doheny Village Plan would not be supported by the majority of Dana Point's residents. It is well known that developers want the extra height so their projects will be more profitable. But, once their projects are completed, they will leave town and the residents will be left to deal with the consequences.

Dana Point is a highly desirable and rare location for new development. The development of Doheny Village should be part of an overall plan for the future of Dana Point. More public

outreach should be done until input has been received by a significant number of residents. It would be unacceptable if you approve a plan knowing that there has been little response from Dana Point's residents during the approval process. For whatever reason it does not appear that your approach has informed the public effectively. Please provide more public outreach before a decision is made.

Betty Hill.  
Dana Point Resident