



City of Santa Barbara

De La Guerra Plaza Revitalization
Advisory Committee

MINUTES
NOVEMBER 8, 2019

8:30 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.
Room 15, City Hall
735 Anacapa Street
SantaBarbaraCA.gov

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Kristen Sneddon, City Council, *Chair*
Lesley Wiscomb, Planning Commission, *Vice Chair*
Jason Dominguez, City Council
Michael Jordan, Planning Commission
Michael Drury, Historic Landmarks Commission
Julio Juan Veyna, Historic Landmarks Commission
Beebe Longstreet, Parks & Recreation Commission
Roger Perry, Parks & Recreation Commission
Sam Edelman, Santa Barbara Certified Farmers'
Market
Dr. Anne Petersen, Santa Barbara Trust for Historic
Preservation

ALTERNATE MEMBERS:

None

STAFF:

Brad Hess, Principal Project Manager
Sara Iza, Senior Planner
Phil Davis, Engineering Technician

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Hess opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

I. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Kristen Sneddon, Lesley Wiscomb, Michael Drury, Julio Juan Veyna, Roger Perry,
Sam Edelman, and Dr. Anne Petersen

Absent: Jason Dominguez, Beebe Longstreet, and Michael Jordan

STAFF PRESENT

Paul Casey, City Administrator
George Buell, Community Development Director
Jill Zachary, Parks & Recreation Director
Daniel S. Hentschke, Assistant City Attorney
Brad Hess, Principal Project Manager
Sara Iza, Senior Planner
Allison DeBusk, Senior Planner
Nicole Hernandez, Associate Planner/Urban Historian
Phil Davis, Engineering Technician

INVITED SPEAKERS

Lief McKay, RRM Design Group
Debbie Lagomarcino Rudd, RRM Design Group

II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

A. **Purpose of Advisory Committee:**

Mr. Casey discussed the purpose and importance of the Committee.

B. **Election of Advisory Committee Chair and Vice Chair:**

Ms. Sneddon volunteered to serve as Chair, and Ms. Wiscomb volunteered to serve as Vice Chair; Committee approved.

C. **Acceptance of Meeting Protocol:**

Committee approved of meeting protocol. See Staff Report – Meeting Protocols

III. AGENDA ITEMS

A. **Presentation of Draft Constraints Map and Draft Utility Map of Plaza; Presentation of Public Feedback from March 9, 2019, Public Outreach Workshop.**

Mr. McKay, architectural consultant, presented existing infrastructure and cultural resources within the project limits that constrain the extent of design. Afterwards, Mr. McKay summarized the Suzanne Elledge Planning & Permitting Services' report of public feedback regarding preferred uses, design features, and amount of parking of the Plaza. Mr. McKay and Ms. Lagomarcino Rudd were available to answer any questions.

A few highlights of the information from the constraints portion of the presentation are described below. See Staff Report – RRM's Presentation and see Staff Report - SEPPS's Report

Historic Plaza Features

Some historic features include two trees within the Plaza and an adobe wall. These features are to remain preserved.

Non-historic Plaza Features

Some non-historic features include the concrete and asphalt infrastructures within the Plaza. These features are not needed to remain preserved.

Water Table Location and Soils Boring Tests

The water table was located at approximately 22 feet deep. The clay soil type does not allow drainage which is the main feature of permeable pavers; however, pavers still offer aesthetic value and could be a preferred material. The goal will be to have limited excavation for the installation of whichever surface material(s) is/are selected, due to known archaeological resources on-site.

Member Comments

In general, the informational presentation was well received by the Committee.

Public Comments

1. Ms. Mary Louise Days expressed fondness of the existing open grass lawn and a desire to retain the softscape element in the design of the Plaza.

2. Ms. Susan Elledge recalled the public's enthusiasm of the feedback process from the public workshops and expressed the effectiveness of bollards in other metropolitan plazas.

B. Presentation and discussion of Topics from March 9, 2019, Public Outreach Workshop

Mr. Hess requested that each Committee Member state the issues most important to them, and other boards, commissions, or organizations for which they are members. The following are the issues and ideas stated and discussed:

Potential Design Features

Implement a single-level ground surface. Include softscape that will provide shade and absorb heat during summer. Allow enough spacing within the Plaza to attract visitors and encourage visitors to stay downtown longer. Emphasize historical elements within the Plaza in contrast to the planned modern features of the nearby Paseo Nuevo, currently under renovations. Consider alternative surface materials to permeable pavers that exhibit a combination of hardscape and softscape features. Incorporate ideas and interests of Plaza users throughout the design review process.

Community Events

Increase frequency of regular activities and events, while also designing for regular passive activity within the Plaza. Increase visibility of the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation during the annual Old Spanish Days event. Potentially closing State Street between Ortega and Canon Perdido during events to increase foot traffic. See Staff Report – Trust for Historic Preservation's List of Interests

Parking

Potentially remove parking from De La Guerra Street to create a pedestrian-only space. City Hall parking lot to remain as-is for event parking, such as the Farmers' Market customers.

Farmers' Market Criteria

Plaza should have enough free space to accommodate vendor and vehicle mobility and market setup. Farmers' Market vendors should be able to drive and set up around trees. Hardscape surface for vehicle drivability because having trucks on site at market is critical. See Staff Report – Farmers' Market complete list of desired needs

Downtown Housing

Plaza should accommodate potential downtown residents expected from the Housing and Revitalization of State Street, which is an initiative to increase downtown housing. Plaza should be an active area for the potential downtown residents.

Business Collaboration

Coordinate with businesses surrounding the Plaza to clear/organize "back of house" operations or transform into business fronts to increase aesthetic value

Past Research

Review past plans from the previously proposed design and review recorded historic elements and their context as well as civic uses.

Public Comments

None

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Comments from members of the public pertaining to items on the agenda or on any subject within the jurisdiction of the subcommittee. Due to time constraints, each person is limited to two minutes.

Public comment opened and the following individuals spoke:

1. Ms. Ariana Palmisano expressed deep advocacy for the Saturday Farmers' Market operation to remain at the existing site, and that the Plaza could not "fit" the Farmers' Market.
2. Mr. Jamie Slone requested the City take into consideration the needs not only of the businesses and vendors around the Plaza, but the needs of the customers of those businesses, specifically the wine businesses in El Paseo.
3. Ms. Jennifer Scarbrough expressed concern on construction notifications and phasing of construction to not impact access to business. Also expressed concern on regular maintenance of the Plaza after construction is completed.

Public comment closed.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Sneddon adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, January 23, 2020, 1:30 p.m. -3:00 p.m., Room 15, City Hall 735 Anacapa Street.