



City of Santa Barbara

Planning Division

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

May 11, 2006

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair John Jostes called the meeting to order at 1:05 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

Present:

Chair John Jostes

Vice-Chair Charmaine Jacobs

Commissioners, Bill Mahan, George C. Myers, Addison S. Thompson and Harwood A. White, Jr.

Absent:

Stella Larson

STAFF PRESENT:

Paul Casey, Community Development Director

Bettie Weiss, City Planner and Staff Hearing Officer

Jan Hubbell, Senior Planner

John Ledbetter, Principal Planner

Irma Unzueta, Project Planner

Chelsey Swanson, Assistant Planner

Chris Hansen, Building Inspector/Plan Check Supervisor

Homer Smith, Principal Engineer

Michele Decant, Administrative Analyst

N. Scott Vincent, Assistant City Attorney

Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

Chair Jostes called for a moment of silence to recognize the recent passing of Dr. John Gray, Environmental Consultant, who had worked with the City for two decades .

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:

- A. Requests for continuances, withdrawals, postponements, or addition of ex-agenda items.

None.

B. Announcements and appeals.

None.

C. Comments from members of the public pertaining to items not on this agenda.

Chair Jostes opened the public hearing at 1:07 P.M. With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 1:07 P.M.

II. RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL:

ACTUAL TIME: 1:07 P.M.

PROJECT SELECTION FOR CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION RULE 20A UTILITY UNDERGROUNDING PROJECTS

Recommendation to City Council for priority undergrounding projects funded through Rule 20A funds.

Case Planner: Homer Smith, Principal Engineer
Email: hsmith@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Homer Smith, Principal Engineer, gave the Staff presentation.

Commissioner's questions and comments:

1. Asked Staff to describe the process of prioritizing Cliff Drive as compared to Mission Street and whether there was a fiscal factor.
2. Asked Staff if Cottage Hospital is requiring any new service on the Mission Street poles or if they will remain the same.
3. Commented that many of the Cottage Hospital poles will be undergrounded with their project and asked if City funds can be leveraged with this undergrounding.
4. Asked if there were opportunities for the neighbors to join in with supplemental funding. Asked if there are situations where Rule 20A funding and public funding can be commingled.
5. Asked if there would be left over funding to use on the De la Vina/Haley Street Bridge and whether the distance criteria would be met. Asked if the cost would be approximately \$1.5 million. Encouraged extension to Flora Vista.
6. Asked if priority #2 moves up when priority #1 is accomplished.
7. Asked if monies come from Southern California Edison's reduced dividends to stockholders or from rate payers.
8. Asked if there is a significant cost/benefit for a homeowner to do a project while the Rule 20 A project is being done. If so, asked how this could be communicated with the public.

Mr. Smith responded that a fiscal factor was not used; Cliff Drive was selected because of its blight and the need for improvement. Ms. Hubbell added that more distance was covered in the Mission Street project visually than fiscally.

Ms. Hubbell replied that Cottage Hospital is not requesting additional service on the Mission Street poles and they will remain exactly as they are now. She added that the undergrounding for Cottage will not reach De la Vina which is the only street that qualifies for Rule 20A criteria. Bath, Pueblo, and Castillo Streets did not meet the criteria as well. There are complexities with not all the poles being owned by Edison; some are owned by Verizon and Cox. Mr. Smith stated that he had spoken with Edison Rule 20 A Central Coast Manager Mark Nayo who said that the CPUC will not allow commingling of Rule 20A funds with any required undergrounding or Rule 20 B funds.

Mr. Smith stated that a Rule 20.B assessment district could be formed in some areas that would allow for public participation with funds. There are no situations where Rule 20A funds are commingled with public funds.

Mr. Smith stated that the 800 lineal feet would be accomplished by going 400 feet in each direction. Mr. Smith was not sure of the cost, but does not think that \$1.5 million would be sufficient. He will continue to work with consultant to see if there are additional funds.

Ms. Hubbell stated that approximately \$600,000 is accumulated each year and that the priorities are reviewed as they are completed, and not necessarily kept sequential.

Mr. Smith stated that this work is rate payer funded.

Mr. Smith stated there are opportunities for the public to take advantage of doing work during the Edison process; will double check.

Chair Jostes opened the public hearing at 1:41 P.M. With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 1:41 P.M.

Commissioner's comments and questions:

1. Supports keeping the small reserve for opportunity projects. Appreciates the 'pay as you go' approach.
2. Agrees with the first priority, but is not in agreement with the second priority and would like to hear discussion on Mission Street becoming the second priority. This is a heavily traveled route to one of the top five tourist destinations in California. Would like to see Mission Street moved up to second priority.
3. Asked if Edison or the City does notification to property owners affected by Rule 20A projects.
4. Asked if Edison could provide notices to neighbors alerting them that Rule 20 C options are available to them.

5. Supports Miegs/Cliff as priority #1. Suggest City reach out to using neighborhood associations to notify neighbors of work being done and potential for supplemental funding stream. Would like feedback from SCE if there is a price benefit to doing any add-ons. Sees merit in raising Mission Street to priority #2.

Mr. Vincent left council chambers at 1:44 P.M. and returned at 1:47 P.M.

MOTION: Mahan/White

dergrounding for Meigs/Cliff Drive as priority #1, and 2) Rearrange priorities to make Mission Street priority #2; and 3) Noticing by Edison or the City to neighbors regarding the opportunity to add on additional pole removal at reduced costs.

This motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 6 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 (Larson)

Chair Jostes announced that this is a non-appealable item.

Mr. Smith reported that he will be going to City Council on June 6, 2005.

III. DISCUSSION ITEM

ACTUAL TIME: 1:49 P.M.

**PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED FINANCIAL PLAN
2006-07, OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET**

Focus on Community Development Department, Planning Division and Major Workload Programs.

Bettie Weiss, City Planner
Email: bweiss@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Bettie Weiss, City Planner, gave the Staff presentation and introduced Paul Casey, Development Director and Michele Decant, Administrative Analyst,

Commissioner's comments and questions:

1. Asked if the number of days for plan check turnaround is calendar days or business days. Asked if at 27 business days, then the process takes 5-6 weeks.
2. Asked what the total fees per residence are, including water meter, sewer hook-up, etc.
3. Would like to see where we stand with others and the contrasts with Counties in the number of plan check days.

4. Asked for the overall increases in line items this year as compared to last year. Asked if the cost/recovery goal is getting to 30% and then leveling off.
5. Asked about the specific fee increase for 5 or more condominiums in a tentative subdivision map.
6. Asked if the fluctuation over the past five years in plan check time was attributed to volume.
7. Asked for definition of 'long term' in the report, specifically in reference to pending wireless facility guidelines, the Multi-Family Design guidelines and the Haley Milpas Design Manual Update.
8. Believes that shooting for a 30% level is good. Feels this all adds to the cost of doing building and of housing. Feels it would be helpful to have an estimate of the total fees for different kinds of projects; would be helpful to offer to customer to give at front end.
9. Asked about the design review process and the ABR; Feels many more projects will be going to ABR than in the past. Asked what is being done to lighten the load in ABR and what will be coming from the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO).
10. Asked how the interim NPO ordinance has affected the number of projects coming through the design review process.
11. Asked how the various goals are determined. Noted that the 30% cost recovery is a judgment call. Asked how the 22 day goal for plan check was derived and if it was an optimal flow.
12. Fought hard for improvements in garnering fees for development review and for move cost recovery. Stated that the variable is not what the unit will sell for, but the land costs. Believes that the rest of the community is subsidizing the general fund, even though the developer is impacted. Feels that fees should be reduced during recessive times to stimulate activity, and increased when the economy is growing.
13. Congratulates staff toward moving toward 30% reduction. Santa Barbara fees may be in line with other communities, but the cost of Santa Barbara homes is greater making it harder to compare with other cities. Suggests a variable fee structure for projects that return to ABR repeatedly. Suggests a different fee structure for as-built permits; increasing number are seen before the Commission.
14. Noted that we do not charge a per/hour fee for Staff time and it becomes unlimited. Consideration should be made for staff effort when staff is overburdened by projects.

Mr. Vincent left council chambers at 1:50 P.M. and returned at 1:57 P.M.

Ms. Weiss confirmed that business days are used for plan check. She added the 5-6 weeks is an average; some go faster and others take longer.

Ms. Weiss stated that the City does participate in a multi-agency survey that covers the full range of fees (hook up fees, water meter, sewer connection, etc.) that is put together in a tri-county report. Copies will be made for the Commission of the relevant charts and information. We are one of those communities that do not have a lot of development fees.

Ms. Weiss stated that most departments showed an increase this year in line item categories as last year; most fees have a high percentage increase. Ms. Weiss confirmed that the goal of cost recovery is leveling off at 30%.

Ms. Weiss stated that the fee increase for tentative subdivision maps of 5 or more condominiums is a combination of trying to reach the overall revenue goal and get to the 30% level. She noted that some projects would be going to the Staff Hearing Officer and not the Planning Commission.

Paul Casey, Development Director, added that the 30% figure was chosen as a reasonable recovery level goal and is attainable this fiscal year with the fee increases. At a minimum, the level is to be maintained, but will be reevaluated in two years for comparison with other jurisdictions and possible increases. He stated that the plan check fee increases were due to many factors including volume and project complexities.

Ms. Weiss stated that the guidelines were presented at the last Planning Commission/City Council joint work session. The area of guidelines and the areas to be worked on present a need for prioritization. The ABR has some language in their guidelines for wireless facilities; long term guidelines for wireless will be within a few years. The Multi-Family Design and Haley Milpas Design Manual Update would come after SB2030. The guidelines used now maybe out of date but are workable.

Ms. Weiss stated that the NPO ordinance effects were not factored into the financial plan budget. It was felt that it was better to wait until the final outline of the NPO requirements to determine how much is guideline as opposed to requirement. Anticipates that full implementation of the NPO will be in fiscal year 2008.

Ms. Weiss stated that there has been an increase in the amount of projects going through the design review process since the interim NPO ordinance, but the impact to ABR has not been quantified.

Ms. Hubbell stated that a land development audit was conducted in the mid-1990's and the plan check process was reviewed. There is a point where the 22 days can not longer be reduced.

Chair Jostes opened the public hearing at 2:37 P.M.

1. John Blankenship, developer, commented on the rising costs of developing.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 2:40 P.M.

The commission thanked staff for the update and wished them well in presentation to Council.

IV. NEW ITEMS:

ACTUAL TIME: 2:40 P.M.

A. JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION AND STAFF HEARING OFFICER CONCEPT REVIEW:

Because the two projects listed below are adjacent to each other and share access, the Planning Commission requested a joint concept review with the Staff Hearing Officer, who will make the decisions on the individual projects.

1. APPLICATION OF KIRK GRADIN, ARCHITECT FOR CCCP, LLC, 822 E. CANON PERDIDO STREET, APN 031-042-006, C-2, COMMERCIAL ZONE, GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: RESIDENTIAL, 12 UNITS/ACRE (MST2005-00506)

The proposed project for 822 E. Canon Perdido involves the demolition of two existing residential units and two garages and the construction of four new three-bedroom, two-story condominium units ranging in size from 1,354 square feet to 1,456 square feet, on an 11,250 square foot lot in the C-2 zone. Parking would be provided with four attached two-car garages. A Modification would be required for a trash enclosure to be located within the rear yard setback. The project is processing concurrently with the development of the adjacent property to the north (824 E. Canon Perdido Street) with shared easements for the access drive and utilities. The adjacent property is under a separate application for the development of four residential condominiums.

Upon review and formal action on the application for the development proposal, the proposed project will require the following discretionary applications:

- a. Tentative Subdivision Map for a one-lot subdivision with four (4) new condominiums (SBMC §27.07.030 and §27.13);
- b. Modification to allow a trash enclosure in the rear yard (SBMC §28.21.060);
- c. Design Review Approval by the Architectural Board of Review (SBMC §22.68).

Case Planner: Chelsey Swanson, Assistant Planner
Email: cswanson@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

2. APPLICATION OF CHRISTINE PIERRON, ARCHITECT FOR CANON PERDIDO COTTAGES LLC, 824 E. CANON PERDIDO STREET, APN 031-042-007, C-2, COMMERCIAL ZONE, GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: RESIDENTIAL, 12 UNITS/ACRE (MST2005-00504)

The project proposed for 824 E. Canon Perdido Street involves the demolition of a 400 square foot garage and the construction of four new residential condominiums on a lot of approximately 8,053 square feet in the C-2 zone. The project contains one 1,268 square foot two-bedroom unit, and three 857 square foot one-bedroom units. Parking would be provided within four attached two and one-car garages. A Modification is required to allow the entry porch of Unit A to encroach into the required front yard setback. The project is processing concurrently with the development of the adjacent property to the south (822 E. Canon Perdido Street) with shared easements for the access drive and utilities. The adjacent property is under a separate application for the development of four residential condominiums.

Upon review and formal action on the application for the development proposal, the proposed project will require the following discretionary applications:

- a. Tentative Subdivision Map for a one-lot subdivision with four (4) residential condominiums (SBMC §27.07.030 and §27.13);
- b. Modification to allow the front condominium unit and the existing kiosk to encroach into the required front yard setback (SBMC §28.21.060); and
- c. Design Review Approval by the Architectural Board of Review (SBMC §22.68).
- d. Canon Perdido Street Setback Variance Approval by the City Council (SBMC §28.83.007)

The purpose of this joint concept review is to allow the Planning Commission and Staff Hearing Officer an opportunity to review the proposed project design at a conceptual level and provide the Applicants and Staff with feedback and direction regarding the proposed land use and design. No formal action on the development proposal will be taken at the concept review, nor will any determination be made regarding environmental review of the proposed project.

Case Planner: Irma Unzueta, Project Planner
Email: iunzueta@santabarbaraca.gov

Ms. Hubbell introduced the unique hearing situation. Commissioner Myers asked what happens after the Commission hears these items today. Ms. Hubbell explained that today's presentations would be joint; however, the projects will return to the Staff Hearing Officer separately.

Irma Unzueta, Project Planner, gave the Staff presentation.

Planning Commission and Staff Hearing Officer comments and questions:

1. Asked Staff about the drain line and suitability for proper drainage. Asked if there are concerns about having drain inlets used as the sole source of conveying water away from the property.
2. Asked if the drains are on the property and draining onto adjacent property. Asked if both homeowner associations of the proposed developments would address the maintenance.
3. Asked if either project would develop dwellings over existing easements and if so, how would access be addressed to the easements.
4. Would like to know more about the design consideration for the drainage swales and asked that the Commission review options.

Chris Hansen, Building Plan Check Supervisor, addressed the drainage concerns. He added that the issue of the drain inlets was taken into consideration and addressed with drainage swales. If the drain inlets become plugged, then they would spill over into the drainage swales. Mr. Hansen stated that maintenance is the responsibility of the property owner or association. He added that the downhill property owner has the duty to accept the uphill runoff, but has the right to modify it to his benefit to keep it from endangering those that are uphill. Mr. Hansen stated that the CC&R's would cover the HOA's maintenance.

Bettie Weiss, Staff Hearing Officer, recalled having seen a project where the paved open space was really a drainage swale and sees that as a design consideration; requests that these drainage swales be made more green or vegetated wherever possible.

Mr. Hansen stated that the private line of one property owner is being connected to the other. No easements are impacted.

Commissioner Jostes called a recess at 2:58 P.M. and reconvened at 3:13 P.M.

Christine Pierron, architect for the applicant, gave a brief presentation for 824 E. Canon Perdido Street and requested that the Planning Commission waive the required noise study for the project.

Kirk Gradin, architect for the applicant, gave a brief presentation for 822 E. Canon Perdido Street.

Mr. Vincent left the council chambers at 3:38 P.M and returned at 3:45 P.M.

Planning Commission and Staff Hearing Officer comment's and questions:

1. Asked Ms. Pierron if the requested front porch encroachment is due to a site constraint or for design purposes.
2. Asked Mr. Gradin where the concrete swale is on the site plan that is being requested by the engineers. Asked if there was a retaining wall currently in place.

3. Asked Ms. Pierron for a walk through of the elevations. Asked for locations of the uncovered parking spaces. Asked for the nearest "open" spaces.
4. Asked if there were any guest parking included in the project.
5. Asked Mr. Blankenship if the parking spaces would be designated for residents only.
6. Asked how the uncovered parking spaces for the one bedroom units will be assigned. Asked how the units would be marketed with the parking.
7. Asked Mr. Gradin about the composite west elevation and for the actual height. Also, asked about the relationship to adjacent property, and the height of the building. Asked about the setback distance between the two buildings.
8. Asked Staff about the variance and the intent behind the variance to protect that part of the Street more than is usually seen. Commented on the porch being in the setback; not an inhabitable area.
9. Asked about the floor-to-floor elevation in the 2 bedroom west elevation.

Ms. Pierron addressed the porch encroachment issue and commented that such porches address the street better and result in a superior design.

Mr. Gradin addressed concrete swale dimensions and the retaining wall issue. The concrete swale is 18-inches in width attached to a CMU slump-stone block retaining wall that runs the entire length of the property line. A portion of the site will be raised to meet the level of the current neighbor's retaining wall. Ms. Pierron also reviewed the elevations for the Commission.

Ms. Pierron clarified the front unit's Canon Perdido elevation, the parapet walls, one-car garages, entry courtyard walls, gates, and the locations of the uncovered spaces.

Ms. Hubbell stated the nearest open spaces were Santa Barbara Junior High, Santa Barbara High School, and Ortega Park, among others.

Ms. Hubbell commented that the two guest parking spaces identified by the applicant were not guest parking spaces under zoning, but required parking for the units of the project. Since there are two separate projects with 4 units each, there is no guest parking requirement.

Mr. Blankenship stated that the intent is for people purchasing the one bedroom units to have one covered parking space with access to the two remaining spaces on a first-come/first serve basis.

Mr. Gradin clarified the height of the adjacent buildings, the height of the lowest parapet on the front building, the aggregate distance between the buildings, and the stepping out & in design style.

Ms. Hubbell commented on the street setbacks. The setbacks are based on earlier considerations that were given for the possibility of street widening back in the 1950-60's

which has since lost focus as a solution to traffic congestion. Ms. Hubbell further clarified that the porch element is considered a structural element of the primary building, which may pose a concern.

Ms. Unzueta addressed the mailbox, porch, and other elements within the setback on Canon Perdido, and stated that conversations are still being held with Public Works regarding the supportability of the variance. Ms. Pierron commented on the justification of the variance if widening of the street were ever considered in the future.

Ms Pierron clarified the floor-to-floor west elevation dimensions of the project

Chair Jostes opened the public hearing at 4:02 P.M. With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 4:02 P.M.

Commissioner Jostes asked Staff Hearing Officer Weiss what outcome was desired from the hearing regarding: drainage issue, noise issue on one of the projects, the front setback issue, overall design comments, and requested modifications for the project.

Ms. Hubbell stated that the decks are usable space and therefore subject to a noise threshold. After conferring with Debra Andaloro, Project Planner/Environmental Analyst, staff determined that the project is within the 60-65 noise decibel area, but until the analysis is complete, it cannot be determined if there should be further modifications to the site plan.

Commissioner's comments and questions:

1. Feels applicant makes compelling argument for waiver of noise study. Likes design of projects. Has concern over height relationship between 822 E. Canon Perdido and neighboring buildings to the west. Likes the entry courtyard at 824 E. Canon Perdido and deck over garage; supports modifications. Applauds use of green building techniques. Concern over landscaping, since not much was shown.
2. Finds design charming. Asks that both projects try to work with Architectural Board of Review (ABR) to reduce plate heights, especially 824 Canon Perdido, which supports green building techniques. Proposal for 822 Canon Perdido will create a 12 foot canyon for westerly neighbor, which would lose views, and feels that ABR and architect should address and make more pleasing for neighbor, undulation of building and landscaping would help. Agrees with architect that the deck area should be utilized. Feels City noise requirements may be too conservative in business areas where residential additions into the area expect higher traffic and noise levels. Feels that existing landscaping is charming and should be reused or duplicated to the extent practical in the new landscaping. Supports the variance for porch.
3. With regard to the drainage, asked to continue pursuing vegetative swales between 822 Canon Perdido and neighboring buildings. Supports noise study but would hope that a modification could be granted to keep the front deck and facilitate the cow overlook. Supports the requested variances and modifications as well as the art

deco and the Spanish style designs. Suggested use of story poles. The differentiated pavement should continue all the way to the street. Concerned that squeezing many cars over a shared driveway with a small lot impacts the amount of potential green space. Concur with the need for a landscaping plan and an easement agreement between the two projects for use of the shared driveway. Study possibility of a pedestrian path through adjacent properties (817 N. Milpas and Old Chevron property).

4. Commends the two project designers for working together and supports modifications. Likes the solar features. With regard to problematical drainage, suggests another look at hard swale versus soft swale. Feels it will be a challenge for two homeowners associations to work together to maintain one driveway.
5. Encourages another look at the drainage swale on the southwest side of the project, and didn't understand reasoning behind engineer's lack of more green approach. Supports all aspects of projects and its return to the Staff Hearing Officer.
6. Likes the combined architectural "Span-deco" styles. Finds Mr. Gradin's height estimates confusing and would like to see them better emphasized. Concerned with the parking within the properties and the reality that the prospective residents will have more cars than available parking. Would like more clarification on the drainage swale issue.

ACTUAL TIME: 4:29 P.M.

B. APPLICATION OF JOSE LUIS ESPARZA, ARCHITECT, FOR CARLOS ADAME, PROPERTY OWNER, 29 (UNITS A AND B) AND 33 S. SOLEDAD STREET, AND 1209 AND 1211 CARPINTERIA STREET, APN 017-183-012, R-2, TWO-FAMILY RESIDENCE ZONE, GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: RESIDENTIAL, 12 UNITS/ ACRE (MST2005-00321)

The project consists of the conversion of five existing rental units to five condominium units on a 20,080 square foot lot in the R-2 Zone. All of the units are two-stories with three bedrooms, and have two-car garages.

The discretionary applications required for this project are:

1. A Tentative Subdivision Map for a one-lot subdivision to create five (5) residential condominium units (SBMC §27.07);
2. A Condominium Conversion Permit to convert five (5) existing residential units to five (5) condominium units (SBMC §28.88).

The Environmental Analyst has determined that the project is exempt from further environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities).

Case Planner: Chelsey Swanson, Assistant Planner
Email: cswanson@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Chelsey Swanson, Assistant Planner, gave the Staff presentation.

Jose Luis Esparza, architect, gave the applicant presentation.

Commissioner's comments and questions:

1. Asked about the hedge on the front property line and if it was going to be removed.
2. Asked for an explanation on why there is no sidewalk leading to the front door of Unit No.1.

Mr. Esparza addressed the hedge and stated that existing hedge would be cut down to 42 inches for driveway visibility. Stated ABR supported not having an additional hedge for Unit No. 1

Chair Jostes opened the public hearing at 4:37 P.M. With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 4:37 P.M.

Commissioner's comments and questions:

1. Supports the condominium conversion. Concerned that the parking lots be used for parking cars and not become storage. Notes the sliding doors appear to be the front entry and would like to see a more defined front entry.
2. Would like to see conditions of approval state a direct connection between the front door and the sidewalk on Unit No. 1. Compliments owners on exemplary maintenance of rental property.
3. Supports making the findings for the project.
4. Well designed and well maintained property. Concurs with comments made on front entry to unit 1.
5. All commissioners expressed appreciation of a well maintained property.

MOTION: Jacobs/Mahan

Assigned Resolution No. 019-06

Approve the Staff recommendation with the condition that Unit No. 1 have a sidewalk from the front door leading to Soledad Street, subject to ABR.

This motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 6 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 1 (Larson)

Chair Jostes announced the ten calendar day appeal period.

ACTUAL TIME: 4:46 P.M.

V. DISCUSSION ITEM

UPPER STATE STREET STUDY AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN INTRODUCTION

Staff presentation of the process, schedule, and scope of work approved by City Council for the Upper State Street Study and Improvement Plan. Planning Commission feedback on the study is requested at this time.

Case Planner: Beatriz E. Ramirez, Project Planner
Email: bramirez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Beatriz E. Ramirez, Project Planner, gave the Staff presentation. Joining her to answer questions were Bettie Weiss, Case Planner, and John Ledbetter, Principal Planner.

Commissioner Jostes opened the public comment at 5:00 P.M.

Speaking in support of the Upper State Street Study:

1. Naomi Kovacs, Citizens Planning Association
2. Paul Hernadi, Citizens Planning Association

With no one else wishing to speak, the public comment was closed at 5:06 P.M.

Commissioner Jostes asked what Staff was seeking from the Commission. Ms. Weiss replied that overall comments on Staff's approach, and understanding the distinction between this process and SB 2030 were being sought.

Commissioner's questions and comments:

1. Asked for more information on the approach to the public input workshops. Commented on the recent AIA meeting and how it provided many ideas. Asked if there will be other public input opportunities before the draft plan stage.
2. Commented on how the uptown planning process was different from the planning process stating that it is all about the streetscape. Feels we should be looking at form-based zoning. Pleased to see that this study is moving forward but feels that public participation could be improved. Suggests hands-on public workshops be held, that would invite participant from eastern Goleta Valley. Request City use as a model the form-based process that Ventura has used. Stated that developers are currently spending a great deal of money and could be stifled when trying to reach final approval. Suggests plain language be used in the traffic study.
3. Commissioners acknowledged that this was a good report and thanked Staff. Contrasted the difference between Upper State Street and downtown; downtown has more than one street. Suggests the consultant give serious consideration to the need for more streets beside State Street as arteries in Uptown. Feels that the SD-2 overlay zone is obsolete and that a new overlay zone is needed. Would like to see clarification on what is meant by allowing smaller projects to proceed. Identified the north side of State Street as the view side and believes that both sides will need different rules.
4. Questioned the pending projects issue and who would decide what is a smaller project and who would proceed. Would like to see less categorical exemptions and

moving forward with EIR's. Would like to see a balance of residential with commercial; residential use is not even mentioned in the General Plan. Strong need for definition between public vision and public review.

5. Appreciates public comments made by Citizens Planning Association. There is a micro and macro look. Feels we are stuck in micro approach while looking at a larger picture; cannot be done without looking at a macro approach.
6. Would like Commissioners to be better briefed on Form Based Coding; suggests a workshop or other training. Does not see how streets parallel to State Street can occur, but does see other opportunities in areas like Calle Real. Livability in this area is huge. Wonders what opportunities will be available for communal parking. There is a need for more connectivity and pedestrian connections. Suggested finding funding for communal open space.
7. Asked Staff if there has ever been any thought to this area being a candidate for becoming a redevelopment area.
8. Excited in the direction that Staff is taking this study and the public involvement. Does have reservations and feels that we could improve the process with sequencing with the general plan update, layering with the various land uses, and defining broader than just the corridor. Need to look at the residential layer that surrounds the area known as the SD-2 zone. The Goleta Vision Committee is interested in participation in the study. This process is going to inform the general plan update better than would have been accomplished earlier. Sets in motion a parking/mobility/open space district.
9. The study needs more than just curb cuts and turn lanes. Traffic experts will contribute great ideas, but focus needs to go beyond early implementation projects and look at the larger picture. Recommends a walking tour of area.
10. Asked how we deal with environmental review process; opportunity to piggy-back on other environmental reviews taking place. This could be part of a bigger process to revitalizing outer State Street. Suggested revising the timeline.

Ms. Ramirez explained the workshop approach and said that the public input will occur long before the draft plan.

Ms. Weiss stated that as development projects make their way through the process, there is a potential for awkwardness. It is being recommended that projects requiring EIR's hold off until the City traffic study is completed before any environmental studies would be done.

Ms. Hubbell did not think that the area would pass the test for redevelopment area criteria. Mr. Ledbetter agreed with Ms. Hubbell and stated that there are tools available to consider such as business improvement districts and similar types of funding mechanisms. These will be considered when looking at development fees.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

A. Committee and Liaison Reports.

Commissioner Jacobs announced that the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance public Open House at the Faulker Gallery this Saturday from 12:30 – 5:30 P.M.

B. Review of the decisions of the Staff Hearing Officer in accordance with SBMC §28.92.026.

None were requested.

C. Review and consideration of the following Planning Commission Minutes and Resolutions:

a. Minutes of April 20, 2006

b. Resolution 017-06 - 406, 410, 414, 418, 420 Paseo del Descanso

MOTION: Mahan/Thompson

Approve the minutes and resolutions as corrected.

This motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 5 Noes: 0 Abstain: 1 (White) Absent: 1 (Larson)

Commissioner White was not present for the April 20, 2006 meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jostes adjourned the meeting at 5:51 P.M.

Submitted by,

Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary