



City of Santa Barbara

Planning Division

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

August 14, 2008

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair George C. Myers called the meeting to order at 1:04 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

Present:

Chair George C. Myers

Vice-Chair Stella Larson

Commissioners Bruce Bartlett, Charmaine Jacobs, John Jostes, Addison S. Thompson and Harwood A. White, Jr.

STAFF PRESENT:

Bettie Weiss, City Planner

John Ledbetter, Principal Planner

N. Scott Vincent, Assistant City Attorney

Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner

Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:

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

None.

- B. Announcements and appeals.

Ms. Weiss made the following announcements:

1. The Zoning Ordinance Amendment package was adopted by City Council on Tuesday, August 12, 2008 and will become effective in 30 days.
2. The City Council also heard the introduction of the Rezoning Ordinance for 1298 Coast Village Road at the same meeting.
3. The Solar Awards took place during Tuesday's City Council meeting. Commissioner Larson participated in the ceremony.

4. The appeal to City Council of the Planning Commission's decision on 528 Anacapa Street was withdrawn.
 5. The Planning Commission's decision on 800 Santa Barbara Street has been appealed to City Council with a hearing date pending later in September.
- C. Comments from members of the public pertaining to items not on this agenda.

Chair Myers opened the public hearing at 1:07 P.M.

1. Bob Hansen addressed the Commission with comments suggesting improved signage for public restrooms; and a suggestion for a trailer that would assist people seeking employment.
2. Commissioner Jostes invited the public to a retirement party for Jan Hubbell on September 18, 2008. The public was directed to contact the Planning Commission Secretary at PCSecretary@santabarbaraca.gov for more details.

With no one else wishing to speak, the hearing was closed at 1:10 P.M.

II. DISCUSSION ITEM:

ACTUAL TIME: 1:14 P.M.

PLAN SANTA BARBARA

The Planning Commission will have a work session to provide feedback to Staff on the Policy Options Workshops held last month and to review the next steps in the PlanSB process. Written summaries of the workshops and public comment letters received as of August 1, 2008 will be posted at www.YouPlanSB.org by August 12, 2008.

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

Bettie Weiss, City Planner, gave the Staff presentation joined by John Ledbetter, Principal Planner and Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner.

Ms. Weiss responded to the Commission's request for an update on the Public Opinion Poll with a briefing on the consultants findings and stated that the survey results will be presented to the Planning Commission on September 10, 2008.

Commissioner Jostes shared a PowerPoint presentation with the Commission on the Policy Options Report that included recurring concerns and suggestions for PlanSB.

Commissioner's Comments:

1. One Commissioner's concerns focused on restructuring, prioritizing, and sequencing the overall approach to policy and building development in an adaptive management framework.

2. Suggested that more focus be given to land use and growth management; energy and climate change; and economy and fiscal health.
3. One Commissioner voiced concerns about the lack of a clear set of land use policies and an update to the Land Use Map and overlays.
4. Suggested the next draft be restructured to reflect more focus on three policy drivers: land use/growth management; energy and climate change; and economic and fiscal health.
5. One Commissioner expressed concern over the limitations of the CTI being out of date and the impact on making long lasting decisions.
6. Believes that carrying capacity should be the prime focus; more emphasis needs to be given to reviewing our carrying capacity of water resources and the limitations of our water resources. We ask for sustainability but need to know how much it will take to live within our resources.
7. One Commissioner added that a policy is needed to reduce per capita consumption of water by 15% over 5 years, by 25% in 10 years, and readjust for a benchmark set in 10 years.
8. One Commissioner agreed with Staff's concept as a good direction, but remained concerned with the sustainability discussion and feels that it needs more work. Some Commissioners felt that sustainability needs to be defined for common understanding, perhaps soliciting the public's interpretation of sustainability.
9. Suggested studying no future non-residential growth; replacement only. Regarding residential land use, more than one Commissioner suggested a revision to the variable density formula.
10. Need to prepare land use maps and overlays now to respond to community character and livability as well as connectivity and mobility options.
11. Need to specify what is meant by the view corridors and where they are, as opposed to generality.
12. Need to provide incentives for development of rental units.
13. Need to include how we will reach transportation goals; perhaps using incentives or public policy.
14. More than one Commissioner suggested looking at the symbiosis of how sustainability systems integrate with each other.
15. Suggested the need for the community to work through their differences in a forum outside of city-sponsored meeting.

Staff answered Planning Commission questions about how water capacity is defined now and in the future with calculation models used to study supply and demand.

Chair Myers opened the public hearing at 2:05 P.M.

The following people addressed the Commission:

1. Paul Hernadi submitted written comment summarizing comments on traffic-generated air pollution.
2. Dave Davis, Executive Director, Community Environmental Council (CEC), advocated moving toward paradigms of the future, such as electric clean energy. Should look at how we make what we need happen. Suggested collaborative dialogue efforts take place among all community groups led by CEC; and challenged community groups to participate in community forums for common ground. Concerned with CEC's limited level of involvement in the survey process; only sign off requested. Suggested a redraft and recirculation of the survey with the Outreach Committee's comments.
3. Judy Orias, President, Allied Neighborhood Association, attended workshops and stated that most of decisions were made without facts; urged facts be used to make decisions. Additional workshops should be conducted that include the financial impact to the taxpayer of the decisions being considered. A definition of density is needed.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 2:22 P.M.

The Commissioners made the following comments:

1. One Commissioner referenced the City's P-3 management by objective process and suggested that it be applied to the Planning process. Acknowledged finally getting around to lower priority projects from the last General Plan update and the need to establish priorities for current projects, especially with consideration for the demand of resources. Noted that the commercial corridor zones should be a top priority.
2. City funding needs to be reviewed, especially given the current State situation. Proposition 13 needs a review; it is starving the State's infrastructure.
3. Incentives for underground parking are suggested, but should come after Staff's initial recommendations.
4. Two Commissioners felt that additional workshops are not needed, but that the public's suggested neighborhood based meetings should take place.
5. Would like to see residential/community benefit designations within residential; would like to see distinction between rental housing and ownership housing.
6. Agrees with push to create maximum unit sizes and re-evaluate variable density.
7. Suggested that a city park standard be considered to provide the Commission a tool when evaluating future development. Agrees with incorporation of common usable open space to mixed use and condominium development.
8. One Commissioner suggested form-based codes be targeted toward specific districts; referenced Upper State Street area, downtown corridor, and commercial corridors. Another Commissioner felt that less focus should be on list of allowed uses and more on where people want to be; move beyond historical segregation of land use.

9. Would like to see incentives and a program be developed for architectural salvage; and creation of demolition by neglect ordinance for historic properties.
10. Would like to see City acquire more land and develop partnerships with non-profits for non-profit use and housing.
11. Sees need for a Parking Master Plan that includes right pricing scenario for parking in commercial areas. Need detailed look at a potential transit corridor system.
12. Suggested mitigation fees be adopted for air pollution infractions.
13. The Commission acknowledged the Commission's subcommittee for its work on the General Plan Update.
14. Need to think beyond 'how we've always done it', especially with regard to future generations.
15. We do not have community benefit map to look at what we are trying to preserve. Identify what is appreciated and what we want to preserve; look at how we can bolster and not deter from those items.
16. Need to move away from auto-dependent models for development and offer incentives for less automotive use. Change parking requirements to maximums instead of minimum. Restudy parking districts and potential new parking districts.
17. Zones of benefit need to be updated to address residential use of downtown, not just business in the downtown area.
18. Suggested housing unit sizes based on USGBC LEED standard recommendations.

Chair Myers reopened the public hearing at 2:55 P.M.

The following people addressed the Commission:

1. Steve Little, Westwood Hills Avocado Alliance, submitted written documentation and gave a brief history of avocado agriculture in the city. Asked the Commission to consider a change in the Conservation Element language to include stronger language for the preservation of avocado agriculture; currently too general.
2. Bruce Burnorth asked that food, electricity, and oil be considered when looking at our resources; encouraged development of smaller and more affordable housing units; asked to study reduction of resources per capita; and encouraged neighborhoods that offer more walking and biking opportunities.
3. Trish Allen, Suzanne Elledge Planning and Permitting Services, representative for Mario Borgatello, submitted written correspondence and requested that Measure E be carefully reviewed for the impact it has on future development, its effectiveness-to-date; and the criteria to be used for establishing the effectiveness of Measure E.
4. Sheila Lodge, Citizens Planning Association, cautioned on using form-based coding and applying it to the uniqueness of Santa Barbara's mountainous settings.
5. Joe Rution, Allied Neighborhood Association, concerned with smart growth principles not being applicable to all of Santa Barbara, such as its corridors. Limited

- resources and traditional attitudes for preserving small character of Santa Barbara won't tolerate development of more market rate housing.
6. Mickey Flacks, Santa Barbara 4 All, agrees with the majority of the Policy Options Report and submitted written comments on the report with recommendations that could be funded by increasing property transfer fees.
 7. Mickey Flacks attended all workshops and felt that the audience was made mostly of civic activist groups and not reflective of the general population. Groups were divided on either keeping status quo as opposed to those wanting to plan for more change; or focused on environmental issues. Broad consensus was reached on need for more workforce housing, home ownership, and low income rentals. Saw need for limited growth rate and exploration of form-based coding. Sees Santa Barbara as more of a 'compact community' as opposed to 'small town'. Concurred with comments made by the CEC and Commissioner Jostes.
 8. Connie Hannah, Santa Barbara League of Voters, feels that another community workshop is needed, specifically on density and traffic issues. Commented on prior experience with collaborative community meetings, such as with Common Ground, and ineffective outcomes. Need to look at how the city will pay for expectations and how we will live within our resources.
 9. Lisa Plowman, Member, Santa Barbara 4 All, felt energy was put into sustainability and supporting Santa Barbara's evolving as the world changes, yet did not come out in the Policy Options Report Summary. Sees need for workforce housing; reduction of energy consumption and carbon footprints; growth as needed with a review of preservation.
 10. Lee Moldaver concurred with Commissioner Jostes' presentation. Comments focused on transportation planning and need for identifying additional funding sources for public transportation. Suggested benefit assessment districts be considered to pay for transportation infrastructure and stated that Measure A will not be sufficient.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 3:49 P.M.

Ms. Weiss described the ongoing evolution of the Plan Santa Barbara process and the next steps prior to September 10, 2008. The land use map information will not be available at that time and remains a critical issue. Ongoing community discussion remains open in the process but the plan needs to move forward, too. Preferred policy options and priorities need to be set.

Chair Myers called a recess at 4:10 P.M. and reconvened the meeting at 4:34 P.M.

Next Steps Discussion:

1. The Planning Commission and Staff agreed that no additional workshops were needed to facilitate moving Plan Santa Barbara forward.

2. Staff reiterated that the Conditions, Trends and Issues Report was done early on to analyze carrying capacities and that Plan Santa Barbara is monitoring living within our resources. One Commissioner commented on a desire to be given a factual number of the minimum level of water needed by Santa Barbara. Another Commissioner asked for a per capita table that looks at population with acre feet, as well as day time Santa Barbara and night time Santa Barbara.
3. Staff suggested that updating the Land Use Map is a large undertaking that will be forthcoming, but not available at the September meeting. Ms. Weiss stated that there is a map compilation on YouPlanSB.org that shares preliminary transit districts, parks, etc., and can be used in the interim. One Commissioner had hoped that a zoning map could be used that has overlays of varied options to consider.
4. The Commission and Staff discussed the value of meetings in the absence of the map. One Commissioner stated that the map follows the policy options and advocated the process be allowed to move forward. Many Commissioners were frustrated with moving forward without a map since it pertains to land use. Staff committed to have the map prepared for the Commission by the time the Notice of Preparation meeting is held.
5. Mr. Ledbetter resumed describing the next steps as presenting the Commission with a set of recommendations that will need to be reviewed prior to being given to City Council. While there are consensus points, it is clear that there will be fundamental differences among the various community groups when considering preservation versus evolution.
6. Ms. Weiss stated that the City Council directed poll will provide some quantification and measure of information of key items but, like any poll, will be subject to critique of bias. The Commission looks forward to the cross-tabbing information and outcome and encouraged Staff to carry on with the poll.
7. One Commissioner challenged the community groups to collaborate and build consensus on growth management, density, and sustainability issues and take on a leadership role.

Chair Myers thanked the public for their continued involvement.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

A. Committee and Liaison Reports.

Commissioners Myers and Thompson attended a Plan SB Subcommittee Meeting and incorporated their comments during the hearing.

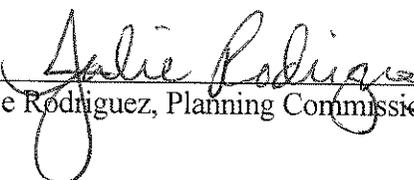
- B. Review of the decisions of the Staff Hearing Officer in accordance with SBMC §28.92.026.

Commissioner White reported on the Staff Hearing Officer's meeting held on August 13, 2008 and summarized three modifications that were approved regarding substandard lots, and buildings that do not meet current code.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Myers adjourned the meeting at 5:23 P.M.

Submitted by,



Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary