



MEETING NOTES

Lawrence Station Area Plan, Sunnyvale

Community Workshop One - Visioning

Meeting Date: January 16, 2011
Location: Sunnyvale Public Library
Subject: Community Workshop
Attendees: City of Sunnyvale (CoS)
County of Santa Clara (Cnty)
VTA
BMS Design Group (BMS)
Fehr & Peers (FP)
(see sign-in sheets at conclusion of notes)

Agenda:

The agenda included the following main topics:

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Existing Conditions
3. Visioning
4. Next Steps/Close

The Community Workshop was organized to have a short slide presentation with two separate small group work sessions. The first work session discussed existing conditions and the second was a visioning session that encouraged groups to discuss a variety of opportunities and desired improvements within the study area.

Key discussion points include:

Discussion Topic

Welcome and Introduction

The project was introduced and project goals, background and schedule was reviewed. The public was provided information about public meetings for Caltrain. The consultant team was introduced.

Existing Conditions

Diagrams and existing photographs were used to discuss the existing conditions within the study area. Land Use, Cities of Sunnyvale and Santa Clara's General Plans and Zoning, Development Pattern, Circulation and Access, Planned and Proposed Projects were discussed. Summaries of land use and circulation and access issues were provided at the conclusion of the section.

Small Group Work Session I

The slide presentation was paused for small groups to work together for 20 minutes to discuss, confirm and provide additional information about existing conditions within the study area. Each group was encouraged to take notes and discuss issues and provide feedback.

Visioning

Slides were presented that discussed transit-oriented development, elements of TOD areas and comparable transit-oriented developments. Examples of supportive land uses and densities were



Discussion Topic

presented as well as imagery of successful ground-floor retail and improved pedestrian environments.

Small Group Visioning Session II

The community broke into six groups and was given discussion topics, a tool box of visioning elements that consisted of color coded paper symbols, and an overall plan of the study area. Groups were given 45 minutes to brainstorm ideas for the study area.

Once completed, each group reported back to the larger group by verbally presenting their plans and explaining their vision and plan goals.

Small Group Visioning Session Summary

The following notes summarize the comments and drawings generated by each group and draws conclusions where appropriate.

SIDEWALKS

- **5** out of **6** groups would like sidewalk improvements in the area.
- **50%** would like sidewalk improvements on Lawrence Expressway, Willow Avenue, and Aster Avenue.
- Other sidewalk improvements to existing roads and creeks included: Kifer Road, Sonora Court, Tahoe Way, Calabazas Creek and the drainage channel. In addition, several groups added in sidewalks where there are not currently roads, including the following locations: from Sonora Court cul-de-sac north to Kifer Road; from Sonora Court cul-de-sac south to Aster Avenue (across the RR tracks); from Costco to Agate Drive (across the RR tracks); from intersection of Vinemapple and Columbine north to Reed Avenue; from Kifer Road to Peninsula Building Materials (across the RR tracks); and from Reed and Timberlake across parcels straight to the Lawrence Station.

BICYCLE LANES

- **4** out of **6** groups included bicycle lanes on the plans.
- **50%** of the groups added bicycle lanes to Lawrence Expressway and Kifer Road.
- Other locations included the following: Central Expressway, Reed Avenue, Monroe Street, Iris Avenue, Willow Avenue, San Zeno Way, along the RR tracks, along Calabazas Creek and the drainage channel. In addition, several off-road bicycle connections were proposed, including a bicycle lane connecting from Reed Avenue south to Smoke Tree Way and Henderson Avenue, one from Central Expressway east of Copper Road south to the RR tracks, and Kifer Road to Evelyn Avenue near the edge of the study area.

STREET TREES

- **33%** of the groups would like street trees on Lawrence Expressway.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

- **4** out of **6** groups desire improved pedestrian crossings somewhere within the study area.



- Two groups indicated a need at Reed and Lawrence, Reed and Willow, and Lawrence and Kifer.
- Other intersections included Lawrence and the RR tracks, Reed at the drainage channel, Evelyn and Aster, Monroe at the Christian School, Tahoe Way, Monroe and Calabazas, and Reed and Timberlake.

OPEN SPACE

- **100%** of the groups advocated for additional open space.
- **5** out of **6** groups located new open space on the Peninsula Building Materials site.
- **50%** located open space on the agricultural parcels (two groups included comments here: community garden and park with mixed residential, and park – not more houses)
- **2** out of **6** groups located open space on the Extreme Networks site and the Sonora court parcels.
- Additional open space was placed on the Costco site, the NW corner of Kifer and Tahoe Way (with a note for it to be a community garden), SE corner of Reed and the drainage channel, along Aster Avenue just west of Peninsula Building Materials, the SW corner of Kifer and Lawrence, and in the parcel just west of Peninsula Building Materials.

RETAIL

- **4** out of **6** groups included retail in their vision plan.
- Two or more groups selected the Peninsula Building Materials site, the Costco site, and the Sonora Court parcels as good locations for additional retail.
- Other locations included: Extreme Networks site, Southeast of Reed and the drainage channel (with note: "Food"), Ryder Street parcel (with note: "Auto-oriented retail"), on Kifer across from Tahoe Way (with note: grocery food"), along Reed at Evelyn, along drainage channel near Reed, along Lawrence from Extreme Networks to Costco, Between Kifer and Sonora Court,, and from Sonora Court to Peninsula Building Materials (across the RR tracks). In addition, one note read "Go to El Camino Real."

OFFICE

- **5** out of **6** groups included office use on their plan
- **50%** of the groups chose the parcels between Kifer and the RR tracks, west of Lawrence Expressway.
- Other locations included: Costco, Peninsula Building Materials, along the north side of Kifer west of Tahoe Way, along the north side of Reed west of Willow Ave., and crossing the tracks from Costco to the Extreme Networks site, and from Sonora Court to Peninsula Building Materials.

HIGH-DENSITY HOUSING

- **4** out of **6** groups included high density housing in the exercise.
- **50%** advocated for high density housing at the Costco site.
- **2** groups chose the Sonora Court parcels.



- Other locations included: the agricultural parcels, Peninsula Building Materials, Between Kifer and the Sonora Court Parcels, and both north and south of Agate, adjacent to Lawrence.

PARKING

- **50%** of the groups called for parking on their plans.
- **2** groups thought that the Costco, Peninsula Building Materials, and Extreme Networks site were good locations for parking.
- Other locations included: Sonora Court parcels, along the south side of Central Expressway just west of Enoch Street, and in the parcel just west of Peninsula Building Materials.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- "Protect" - area south of tracks, including Peninsula Building Materials, and the parcels between Aster Ave and the drainage channel, west and south to E. Evelyn Ave and down to Reed Ave.
- "Industrial" - north of the track, west of Lawrence Expressway
- "Safer bike lanes along L.E. between tracks and Reed Ave.
- "School" - Aster Park Site - in curve of drainage channel section from Lawrence west to Reed Ave.
- "4-6 story within 1/4-mile"
- "Street network suitable uses" - Central Expwy to Tracks, Copper Rd to Lawrence.
- "VTA BUS" - along Willow Ave adjacent to Caltrain Station;
- "Bus Stops" - on Reed Ave btwn Drainage channel and Willow Ave."
- "Sidewalks on all streets (Both sides)"
- "Light Industrial" - between Central Expwy & Kifer, west of Lawrence; between Central Expwy & Kifer, East of Lawrence; West of Sonora Court Parcels.
- "Retail and services under Lawrence overpasses"
- "No highrise anywhere (over 4 stories)"
- One group added in several streets (9 in total) into the area north of the RR tracks.
- "Need better access to station"
- "Offer transit on Lawrence"
- "Rezone Lawrence from Expressway to Highway"
- "Leave Industrial and Calstone" - Peninsula Building Materials and parcels south of Aster Ave.
- "Better Street Lights" - Aster Ave.
- "Need street lights" - French St.
- "See Mt. View example on Evelyn - true mixed use"
- "Make this a true working village - with all types of uses"
- "More setback - new residences from street"
- "Better walking paths from Reed area to Caltrain Station"
- "Need safe bike routes"
- "Use drainage channels for safe, wide bike trails"



- "Be able to take kids by bike to Baylands via Lawrence"

The following is a list of verbatim notes from each group and are divided by small group sessions I and II:

Group 1

Session I

- Plan for station was released in April 2009 and community there's concern the plan is already set.
- Want to be part of the process.
- Area was industrial and now the City wants housing. May not be what the business owners want.
- Industrial across from Peninsula Builders has multiple owners.
- Challenge desirability of residential adjacent to rail lines.
- Question high density
- Not enough open space if housing increases.
- City should slow progress.

Session II

- Safer bike lanes on Lawrence
- Finish downtown first!
- Why build more housing when there are empty units available?
- Creek behind Aster housing has "environmental protection" (maybe) / Red legged frog
- City should promote business
- Peninsula Builders open space

Group 2

Sessions I & II

- Drainage channel could be an amenity. It's a wasted resource.
- No place to park near station.
- Better access to residential in SW quadrant.
- Preserve jobs north of station.
- Parks!!
- No pedestrian access to station from residential side.
- Mixed-use north of station, Costco needs better access.
- Add parks in the area
- No bike paths / don't connect / hazardous!!
- Neighborhoods not bike-friendly
- Restaurant complex near train station / plaza / café.
- Overpass @ Reed and Monroe.
- Access to Caltrain is terrible.
- Retail at Caltrain Station
- Residential / mixed-use on Sonoma Ct.
- Calstone shouldn't be so close to station.



Group 3

Sessions I & II

- Existing retail already nearby, at Reed & Wolfe.
- Not necessarily an area for increased density (esp. housing)
- Sunnyvale has significant job base – additional housing may be useful.
- Relationship to General Plan – need to ensure coordinated process.
- Station is not very visible.
- Costco takes up a lot of space – lots of surface parking.
- Access from Corn Palace to station is difficult.
- Access North of station seems adequate for today's businesses.

Group 4

Sessions I & II

- Evelyn Ave – now 2 lanes because of bike lanes.
- Protect existing residential areas if area intensifies – traffic calming
- Need better access off Lawrence to Costco – future will need better access.
- Blind corners under Expressway on south side – unsafe for pedestrians.
- Pedestrian / bike conflicts in tunnel
- More pedestrian crossovers over RR
- "Smart Growth" – more development where people can live and work and get services.
- Not enough parks – not in the right place – need for additional
- No sidewalks beside Lawrence Expwy
- Lack of walkable neighborhood retail services.
- Lawrence / Reed intersection not good for local residents.

GROUP 5

No Group 5

GROUP 6

Sessions I & II

- Spillover parking in neighborhoods – parking restrictions needed.
- Sidewalks on Sonora Court
- Creating a livable community
- Neighborhood serving retail
- Monroe & Calabazas are pedestrian issues.
- North-South travel for pedestrians and bikes.

GROUP 7

No Group 7

GROUP 8

Session I

- 4 lanes back on Evelyn
- Add parks and running/walking trails



- Need sidewalks
- Bring in BART / Transit on Lawrence
- More overpasses on Lawrence; there are too many lights
- Cost incentives for using Caltrain from Lawrence Station to Sunnyvale Station (currently have to pay for 2 zones)
- Consider impact on schools and parks with increased population

Session II

- Financial impact of Industrial-to-Residential
- Not enough volume for a local grocery store (Safeway closed @ Reed & Wolfe)
- Keep existing businesses
- Concern with businesses leaving and more residential
- New developments without parks
- Dangerous to bike on Lawrence
- Traffic congestion on Lawrence
- Left turn from Willow to Reed – dangerous
- Works @ Peninsula Building Materials
- Business since 1968 on Aster Ave.
- Son rides Caltrain to get to work
- Evelyn now 2-lane instead of 4 – traffic is worse
- Increase residential = increase traffic
- Dusty with mix of residential and commercial
- Cost to relocate a business when planning to retire – astronomical costs
- New member of area – new walking paths; need a park for a new development – impact on surrounding neighbors

Questionnaire Answers – A questionnaire was distributed to attendees and four were returned. The answers are noted as follows:

What kinds of uses would you like to see in the area?

- Residential and retail; recreation, walking and bicycling
- Parks/trails; No ITR, at most residential over commercial

Where would you locate these uses and amenities?

- Around station, building materials yard
- Corn Palace, drainage channel, Calabazas Creek

Where are the future development opportunities within the study area?

- Building materials yard, drainage channel for bicycle/walking paths (currently locked)
- Overhead

How can access to the station be improved?

- Sidewalks at Sonora Court



- Parking, sidewalks, remove blind spots under bridge
- Reserve track crossings as are at Sunnyvale Station and others. Walking through tunnels takes too long and tunnels = graffiti
- Personal rapid transit system

What amenities are needed in the study area?

- Sidewalks
- Retail, Parks (recreation for younger families), Trails, Sidewalks, Crosswalks, Other (Safe pedestrian crossing to station, cycle trails, crossing under Lawrence & under rail (currently use station underpass but that is not preferred))
- Other (bathrooms, lack of retail means no bathrooms, bad for walking)

Where should higher density uses be located?

- In low density office over to northwest of station
- Santa Clara