



MEETING NOTES

Lawrence Station Area Plan | Phase 2

City of Sunnyvale

Meeting Date: August 1, 2012
Location: City of Sunnyvale, West Conference Room
Subject: Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting 1
Attendees: Sunnyvale staff
Citizens Advisory Group
BMS Design Group (BMS)

Agenda

The agenda included the following main topics:

1. Introduction and Welcome
2. Project Status Review
3. Discussion: Alternatives Brainstorming
4. Summary of Next Steps
5. Public Comment

Key discussion points include:

Discussion Topic

Introduction and Welcome

Hanson Hom welcomed the group and provided an introduction to the project including a brief history of the work to date, Council direction, the selected consultant team and the CAG's role and responsibilities. It was also noted that CAG meetings will be treated as Brown Act meetings and are open to the public. Meeting materials and all correspondence within the CAG, with city staff and the consultants can be made available to the public.

The group was informed that a Chair and Vice-chair would be selected at the second CAG meeting. The responsibilities of the Chair and Vice-chair were outlined, including:

- Facilitate CAG meetings
- Report recommendations of the CAG to the Council, Boards, Commissions, and neighborhood and community meetings
- Occasional meetings with city staff to prepare for CAG meetings
- Vice-chair is available to fill-in for Chair when necessary.

It was stated that two key roles of the CAG are to provide input for the City Council and Planning Commission and help get neighbors and co-workers interested in the process and to attend public meetings.

Project Status Review

- Phase one activities were summarized.
 - The project area and surrounding context was described and the project goals were presented.
 - The project scope and schedule was discussed with a focused discussion on the immediate task of developing a preferred alternative which will conclude with Planning Commission and Council input by January 2013.
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Discussion Topic

- The CAG was informed about current relevant and related projects; of particular importance is Intuitive Surgical possible property acquisition along Kifer Road, redevelopment of the Extreme Networks site in Santa Clara on Monroe Street and the County's study of grade separations along Lawrence Expressway.
- The General Plans for both Sunnyvale and Santa Clara were discussed as were allowed land uses in the station area which include: industrial, office/research & development, mixed-use and residential, among others.
- An update on the City of Sunnyvale's Land Use and Transportation Planning (LUTE) effort was presented as well as areas where the draft LUTE has designated and encourages focused development for industrial use, mixed-use and residential. All three uses are described in the LUTE as appropriate uses in the station area.
- A brief presentation about major elements of successful transit-oriented development was given.
- The three land use alternatives from phase one were presented with a brief description of each plan's features.

A summary of community input from phase one was provided which included the general preference for a mixed-use scenario because of the flexibility to accommodate additional housing needs while maintaining and providing for more local jobs.

Discussion: Alternatives Brainstorming

The meeting was opened to elicit feedback from the CAG on the three land use alternatives described in phase one. The following comments were collected:

- Need open space, why are parks not shown?
 - Examples of high-density R&D were requested and Nokia in downtown was given. It was questioned why Intuitive Surgical can only be 1-2 stories. The response was that industrial and light manufacturing buildings are typically more horizontal due to: business operations, low land values and higher densities typically require structured parking.
 - Concerned about impact of housing on schools
 - Plan should include affordable housing.
 - It is risky to commit to all residential because once the plan specifies that it is difficult to reverse.
 - The pyramid of land use with higher density closer to the station and the ½ mile radius was questioned. It was recommended that the plan be more flexible to respond to the evolving market conditions.
 - The Calstone/Peninsula Building Materials site is a key location related to future planning for the area, and its potential future land use was discussed.
 - Mixed-use creates better neighborhoods than a single land use type. Single land use won't encourage people to use other modes of transportation besides the auto.
 - Mixed-use can support businesses and services.
 - An all residential plan provides less opportunity for people to engage in the neighborhoods and support local businesses and services during the day. Mixed-use would provide more people in the area at all times of day and night.
 - Mixed-use provides more opportunity for different types of housing.
 - Need more services around the station.
 - The broader community needs and supports mixed-use. Would like to be closer to services and have better access to transportation.
 - As a large section of the population gets older, having services and transit close to home and within a walkable neighborhood is important.
 - Higher density can support transit and retail.
 - Calstone/Peninsula Building Materials does not need rail access. They own the spurs to the north of their parcel, but no longer use them.
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Discussion Topic

- Lawrence Expressway and the rail are major barriers to access.
- Concerned about increasing density without open space. Higher density neighborhoods need outdoor space.
- Developments at higher densities need open space, tot lots, play areas, etc.
- City has identified this area as needing additional open space.
- Prefer mixed-use. Need walkable community.
- Residential scheme is too big of a jump. Because of land use conflicts, mixed use provides a gradual transition overtime that the residential scheme does not allow.
- Mixed-use blends day and night population and balances it. Wants to see coffee shops and increased foot traffic. Likes the idea of people living close to restaurants.
- Think in terms of legacy; what should a transit station be? Mixed-Use is the way to go.
- How can the plan be implemented?
- What about including city incentives to help facilitate change?
- Zoning and regulatory tools can help make change happen. Density bonuses can be offered, etc.
- The residential emphasis alternative is a dramatic change from the existing condition.
- The Office/R&D emphasis alternative indicates Office/R&D on Santa Clara land which conflicts with the Santa Clara's General Plan. This seems inappropriate.
- Mixed-use offers the best opportunity for transition from existing land uses.
- The residential emphasis alternative is overly transformative.
- Concerned with residential only option. More demand for single occupants (not family oriented). Need a mix of old and young – Mixed-Use option can better provide that.
- Mixed-use will support transit better. One CAG member who is a regular Caltrain rider noted that she rides her bike to the downtown station instead of using Lawrence station because of the infrequent, inconvenient schedule at Lawrence station, the higher fare zone and no adjacent services.

The committee's unanimous consensus was to focus on mixed-use on the north side of the tracks.

Public Comment

Time for public comment was provided:

- The circulation should be a diverse, 24 hour system. It should be able to handle increased traffic during commute times.

Next Steps

The committee was advised that election of Chair and Vice-chair would occur at the next meeting.
