

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF JULY 28, 2008**Land Reuse Options for Onizuka Air Force Station BS**

Steve Lynch, Senior Planner, said he is the project planner assigned to the Onizuka Base Closure and Reuse. He introduced **Robert Switzer** from the Office of the City Manager and the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Project Manager. Mr. Lynch said the tonight's report is a report that was provided to the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC), which is a Sunnyvale advisory group that is in charge of making comments and recommendations to the City Council who are sitting as the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA). He said staff's recommendation to the Commission tonight is that the Commission would make similar recommendations as did the CAC to the City Council in terms of land use decisions related to the future of Onizuka and the reuse of the base.

Robert Switzer said that staff is seeking the Commission's recommendation on three priority land uses that were ranked and recommended by the CAC. He said the Commission's comments will be included in the recommendations to the City Council on the long-term land uses for Onizuka Air Force Station. He said the City Council was appointed by the Department of Defense as the official redevelopment authority. Mr. Switzer presented the report provided to the CAC which is Attachment A to this agenda item. He said staff is requesting the Commission's opinion on the ranking of uses for the entire property. He said they are not seeking comment on the density at this time. Mr. Switzer said the Commission's comments would be forwarded to the City Council with the CAC recommendations.

Comm. Sulser referred to the map of the site and commented that different portions of the parcel seem to encourage different land uses. He asked where the light rail stations are located in relation to the parcel. Mr. Lynch said one station is located where Innovation Way intersects with Mathilda Avenue and another is located heading towards Mountain View and is within 1/3 of a mile from the site. Comm. Sulser confirmed with staff that the decision made for the site would affect two light rail stations.

Comm. Klein said he has a question about the concept of the hotel use. **He said that this area has very little infrastructure that would support the hotel use**, i.e. restaurants, supermarkets. He asked why this is considered to be a good location for a hotel. Mr. Switzer said the primary concern is that this is a unique site and a unique location. Mr. Switzer said the analysis of this site for hotel use indicated that a hotel would have significant traffic impacts that other uses would not, and that the site is larger than needed for a hotel. Mr. Switzer further discussed the consideration of this site for hotel use.

Vice Chair Chang referred to Attachment A, page 5 regarding traffic analysis and asked if the fiscal impact of transportation would have to be reanalyzed for each option. Mr. Switzer said that only the hotel option would require additional traffic analysis. Vice Chair Chang referred to Attachment B, page 22, Option 2, the Corporate Office, with 50% FAR (Floor Area Ratio) Residual Land Value and asked staff if this appears to be the best choice based on the best value. Mr. Switzer did not directly answer this question and said staff is requesting the Commission's recommendation without reference to the FAR because the FAR would be something negotiated with the DOD, Air Force, or subsequent developer as one of the conditions for entitlement to the property.

Comm. McKenna asked if there were other options for reuse also considered that came close, but ended up not being brought forward as options. Mr. Switzer said there were two mentioned in the report: the Homeless Housing; and the Department of Veterans Affairs request for reuse of the existing offices. He said beyond these two there were others discussed, i.e. public uses, a grocery store, and these did not end up being uses that the City Council requested further analysis of. **Comm. McKenna made a comment that there are competing interests with the freeway entrance and the light rail stations and said she does not feel the report emphasized very much the closeness of potential hazardous materials. She said, when taking into consideration the hazardous materials, her thinking is changed regarding the reuse of the site for residential, retail, etc. She said she thinks the CAC deliberations came up with good recommendations.** She asked staff if the FAR established in this area is a direct result of the Golden Triangle Task Force. **Gerri Caruso**, Principal Planner, said that Onizuka is located in the Moffett Park Specific Plan area and the FAR of 35% that is applied to most of Sunnyvale is the result of the Golden Triangle Task Force. Ms. Caruso added that there was a decision made to adopt the Specific Plan for the area north of Highway 237 and, with an environmental impact report done, the FARs were increased and adopted for this area.

Chair Rowe commented that she found the report easy to understand except for a few issues. She referred to Attachment B, page 6, which states "the Onizuka site also presents the potential for a prominent freeway-adjacent location for a headquarters or other large user; users interested in such a site might prefer and alternative prominent freeway-adjacent location in another city over an interior site in Moffett Park." Chair Rowe asked if this means if a user cannot have a site with the freeway adjacent and must go to the interior site in Moffett Park that a user would rather go elsewhere to have the freeway adjacent. Mr. Switzer said yes and further discussed this issue. Chair Rowe referred to Attachment B, page 18, which states, "This means that for the auto center options, economic development benefits are effectively traded for potential increases in fiscal benefits." She asked what is being traded. Mr. Switzer said that the economic benefits that might be created by an office use, i.e.

employment, are considered different from the fiscal benefits that might be created by an auto center, i.e. tax ratables. Chair Rowe referred to Attachment B, page 21 the final paragraph regarding "...land value to recover potential City costs to accommodate/relocate VA and homeless housing development off-site, while still providing the Air Force with greater land value than it would receive if it auctions the site with VA and homeless housing encumbrances in place..." and asked staff to explain so she could understand this better. Mr. Switzer explained that the paragraph reflects a concern of the City to identify a reuse option that has the financial capacity to relocate the Department of Veterans Affairs offices and the proposed homeless housing building into the options the discount for the cost of relocating the two "encumbrances" on the property. *In effect, we are trying to provide the Air Force with a greater value than would otherwise be the case and to provide the Air Force with the incentive that is necessary to allow the City to remove these other two options.* He said the primary concern is how to maximize the value of the property from the community's perspective and provide the greatest benefit to the community. Chair Rowe asked about the antennas on the property. Mr. Switzer said what will be done with the antennas still needs to be determined.

Chair Rowe opened the public hearing.

Eleanor Hansen, a resident of Sunnyvale, said she has three points. She commented about a parking rule from the previous public hearing item. Ms. Hansen commented about the overall layout of the site. **She said she thinks the buildings should be as close to the light rail as possible. She said, regarding the homeless housing, that she thinks if someone has land with entitlements and you want them to give up the land, that you should offer them land with entitlements elsewhere.**

Chair Rowe closed the public hearing.

Comm. McKenna confirmed with staff that the site maps provided in the report are broad and general and would vary with different land uses. She confirmed with staff that once the uses are determined that the buildings could be moved closer to the light rail station and the location of the buildings would be part of the design element.

Chair Rowe discussed with staff the process this evening and determined that the comments from the Planning Commission and the public would be provided to the LRA for consideration.

ACTION: Gerri Caruso, Principal Planner, said that the comments of the Commission and the public this evening would be forwarded to the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) for consideration.