

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF MAY 12, 2008**Seismic Safety and Safety Sub-Element Update of the General Plan**

Dayton Pang, Deputy Chief of Special Operations in the Department of Public Safety (DPS), presented the staff report. He introduced Lieutenant John Gienger, and Community Services Officer Cherele Sampson, also from DPS, who were in attendance to help with the presentation. He said the most recent update to this sub-element was in 1993. He said staff is recommending that after the Planning Commission reviews the draft sub-element that staff will include the input from the Commission in the final draft to present for City Council's consideration on June 10, 2008.

Comm. Simons asked if there is anything in the sub-element regarding mitigating liquefaction. Staff referred to page 32 of the draft Seismic Safety and Safety Sub-Element and said that one of the changes that has occurred since 1993 is the requirement of geotechnical reports on all new structures. Comm. Simons commented that there are new technologies being developed that could possibly help mitigate earthquake related problems. He asked if there is anything that shows where Sunnyvale would have major problems in an earthquake. Lt. Gienger said there are no known active faults in Sunnyvale. Ms. Sampson said that staff relies on information received from the United State Geologic Survey (USGS) including shake maps and information about how a particular size earthquake might affect a specific area. Comm. Simons commented that when he looks at a sub-element he considers how the document will be used to help Commissioners and City Council do their jobs. **Trudi Ryan**, Planning Officer, commented that in the sub-elements the information is general and that staff attempts to treat all areas of concern with the same level care rather than some areas with more detail. Comm. Simons commented about mitigation that Palo Alto did some years ago to address levee systems and said that Sunnyvale has similar concerns about earthquakes, flooding and levees. Lt. Gienger confirmed that Sunnyvale has similar concerns and noted that the levees are controlled by Santa Clara Valley Water District. Comm. Simons discussed flood issues with staff and asked if there would be information in the sub-element that would address mitigations. Ms. Ryan said that the Municipal Code is designed to make the structures safer in the case of an earthquake and that the sub-element contains the policies about how to respond to such events.

Comm. Hungerford referred to page 5 of the sub-element which indicates that the purpose of the document is to be a "planning document to guide land use

decisions.” He commented that pages 95 to 100 lay out how the document should be used to govern land use decisions and confirmed with Lt. Gienger that these pages would probably be the most important pages to the Planning Commission. Comm. Hungerford asked if the information on pages 95 to 100 has changed significantly from the past sub-element. Lt. Gienger said that the pages are mostly the same adding that when new codes are adopted that the guidelines improve. Comm. Hungerford said that he found this document to be a useful information document commenting that he did not realize there is an American Red Cross (ARC) program at eight school sites where materials are stored to help in times of a disaster. Lt. Gienger commented how these services are used for day to day needs. Ms. Sampson added that the purpose of the ARCs are to set up public shelters as quickly as possible, i.e. bedding and water, commenting that there is no food stored at these sites.

Comm. Klein thanked staff for the detailed, informational report. He commented that he saw multiple references to fire detectors and no mention of carbon monoxide detectors. Deputy Chief Pang said there are no references to the carbon monoxide detectors adding that Public Safety does provide training about this issue. Deputy Chief Pang said staff could look at addressing carbon monoxide detectors in the sub-element. Comm. Klein referred to page 51 of the sub-element regarding the “Bearcat” and said he felt the sentence structure is confusing and needs clarification. Lt. Gienger explained the meaning with Comm. Klein asking that the paragraph be reexamined. Comm. Klein commented about the community radio and said he would like to see further clarification in the document about the long term goals and how the radio could be used on a daily basis. Lt. Gienger explained the use of the community radio. Comm. Klein said the document refers to a microwave network that will connect all the Public Safety dispatch centers, wirelessly. Comm. Klein asked for an explanation of the program. Lt. Gienger explained that this is a program that DPS is trying to move forward with and that DPS is looking at possible funding from the 911 system.

Vice Chair Rowe said she was glad to see an explanation of the ARC program in the document and asked staff about the program. Ms. Sampson said that the program is a cooperative effort between the school districts, the ARC and the City and that when there is a crisis that the containers can be used by the City staff or the ARC. She said they would prefer for the container to be used by the ARC as then they would assume the financial responsibility and the coordination of the shelter. Vice Chair Rowe asked staff to comment about the encouragement of building basements in houses in relationship to flooding. Ms. Ryan said that basements may not be appropriate in different parts of the City

due to the water table confirming that the Planning Division has maps that help staff determine whether basements are appropriate. Vice Chair Rowe commented about the Sunnyvale Amateur Radio Emergency Services (SARES) and asked staff how they might be involved in a crisis. Ms. Sampson said that SARES is a proven entity in emergencies, are very active in the community, are a part of the Emergency Management program and are used in conjunction with the Sunnyvale Neighborhoods Actively Prepare (SNAP) program. Vice Chair Rowe asked, in the event of an emergency, if there is any plan for SARES to help get information in and out of Sunnyvale. Ms. Sampson said the SARES and SNAP teams are assigned to the fire stations and schools and are used to communicate back to the City. Vice Chair Rowe referred to page 16 of the sub-element regarding finance recovery phases, and discussed with staff that there is a process in place and no plan. Staff said that the City has been very successful in the past in obtaining reimbursement. Vice Chair Rowe referred to page 15 regarding the "local annex to ABAG (Association of Bay Area Governments)" and asked for more information. Lt. Gienger said the annex is similar to a plan that is an adaptation to the central ABAG plan. Vice Chair Rowe commented that it would be helpful to have a list of the acronyms used in the sub-element located the back of the sub-element, with staff acknowledging this would be a helpful addition.

Comm. Babcock commented that this was a very detailed report and that she applauds staff for the amount of work. She commented that the carbon monoxide detectors are required for new construction as they were required in the building of the new Heritage Museum.

Comm. Chang referred to page 52 of the sub-element regarding the "GeoCast portion" and asked if there is a backup system if the power goes down. Lt. Gienger said the GeoCast portion is located in the DPS building, which has two backup generators. Comm. Chang asked about the phones and digitized versus analog phones. Lt. Gienger said he was not sure whether the phones are digitized or analog, and that there are 24 dedicated hard lines in DPS. Comm. Chang asked if there is a backup for the call center. Deputy Chief Pang said if the backup generators were not operating that "County Comm" (County Communications) can do the dispatching for Sunnyvale.

Chair Sulser opened the public hearing.

Jim Griffith, a Sunnyvale resident, said he is a member of the Spring 2008 SNAP class. He encouraged the Commissioners to become members of the SNAP program and said he has found it to be extremely valuable. He

commented about preventive planning and disaster response and encouraged the Commission to keep disaster response in mind while making decisions.

Vice Chair Rowe commented about the importance of community involvement in a time of disaster and said that individuals need to realize that the City cannot come to them individually. She asked Mr. Griffith if he had any suggestions about how to educate the public and encourage individuals to prepare by becoming involved in programs like SNAP. Mr. Griffith said that SNAP is sort of a “top down dissemination of information” and explained how the program works. He said members of SNAP should constantly update and train themselves to so they can help their neighborhoods if needed. Vice Chair Rowe Rowe commented that people need to commit to taking care, adding that SNAP teaches to first take care of yourself, then your family, and then your neighborhood. Mr. Griffith said mailers help reach some people that will hopefully become advocates for becoming involved. Vice Chair Rowe asked Ms. Sampson about mailers and newsletters and other ways citizens can be reached and encouraged to be prepared and get involved. Ms. Sampson explained several ways they try to reach the community.

Comm. Simons commented to Mr. Griffith about the sub-element and how it could be helpful to people in the planning decision process asking if he had any suggestions. Mr. Griffith discussed using examples of what could happen and how people need to be prepared, as this advocacy will reach some. Comm. Simons discussed with Mr. Griffith about processes that should possibly be in place for remodeling the City in the event of a disaster with suggestion that a list of leaders and known resources be compiled.

Chair Sulser closed the public hearing.

Vice Chair Rowe commented to staff, in the event of a disaster, that the Public Works, Planning Division and Planning Commission would have a lot of work, and that would be no time to be making changes. She asked if blocks of property were destroyed, could some of our existing problems be solved at the time of rebuilding. Ms. Ryan said there is not a master list of corrections to be made and discussed the redevelopment of property. Ms. Ryan said staff would rely on the existing codes and most of the basic infrastructure in place would likely not change. Vice Chair Rowe said it concerns her that planning for correcting some of our existing problems is not being looked at. Ms. Ryan said if she feels something should be done, that a policy or action statement as part of the general plan sub-element could be added.

Comm. Klein moved to approve the Seismic Safety and Safety Sub-Element Update of the General Plan as presented tonight, including the Planning Commission's comments and to provide this as a recommendation to the City Council. Vice Chair Rowe seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Rowe commented that she feels this is an excellent document and said she feels safer being a Sunnyvale citizen. She said it is good to know what is going on behind the scenes and encouraged the public to read this document. She thanked staff for their work.

ACTION: Comm. Klein made a motion to recommend to City Council to approve the Seismic Safety and Safety Sub-Element Update of the General Plan as presented tonight, including the Planning Commission's comments. Vice Chair Rowe seconded. Motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

APPEAL OPTIONS: This recommendation will be forwarded to City Council for consideration at the June 10, 2008 City Council meeting.