

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF AUGUST 24, 2009**2009-0654 - Overview of the City of Santa Clara Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed 49ers Stadium – AM**

Andrew Miner, Principal Planner, presented the staff report. He said staff will provide a letter to the City of Santa Clara regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) with input and comments from the Sunnyvale Planning Commission, City Council and staff. Mr. Miner discussed some of the issues related to the DEIR. He said other Departments in the City of Sunnyvale will also be reviewing the DEIR including Public Safety, the Office of the City Attorney, and Public Works. He said this is a regional project affecting other cities including San Jose and Milpitas. Mr. Miner said **Jack Witthaus**, Sunnyvale Transportation and Traffic Manager is present this evening to address questions. **Trudi Ryan**, Planning Officer, commented that the Planning Commission's focus tonight is to review the adequacy of the DEIR and not on the merits of the project.

Comm. Rowe discussed with staff the parking concerns, the need for clarification about estimated number of events both weekend and non-weekend, and the possible use of Baylands Park for parking. Comm. Rowe said she is concerned that there would not be a public hearing until the final draft is available. Comm. Rowe discussed with **Jack Witthaus**, Sunnyvale Transportation and Traffic Manager, trip assignments and the need for more information. Comm. Rowe discussed with Mr. Witthaus cumulative impact analysis and the need for consideration of a longer term cumulative impacts analysis. Comm. Rowe discussed with staff that the stadium is a little less than a mile from the Sunnyvale border. Comm. Rowe discussed the number of seats in the stadium. Comm. Rowe referred to the staff report and discussed possible emergency evacuation plans if necessary due to nearby possible toxic release. Staff discussed that there are impacts of the proposed stadium on Sunnyvale, San Jose, Milpitas, and other agencies including VTA (Valley Transportation Authority). Comm. Rowe asked about affects on increased Spare-the-Air days. Comm. Rowe discussed impacts of tailgating and loud noise and asked about the notification process from their disturbance coordinator. Comm. Rowe asked whether the citizens of Santa Clara could place a referendum should they not want the stadium. Ms. Ryan replied that is possible, as in any city. Comm. Rowe discussed with staff the many modes of regional transportation in the area and how schedules and services might be affected. Comm. Rowe asked about the affects of sharing parking with neighboring businesses.

Comm. Sulser asked questions about how the project might require additional involvement by Sunnyvale Public Safety officers to control affected intersections during events and who would be responsible to pay for the additional coverage. Staff said the Sunnyvale Public Safety is asking for additional information about

affects in coverage. Additionally, Mr. Witthaus mentioned that Public Safety response times could be negatively impacted in affected areas during events at the stadium.

Comm. Klein discussed with staff concerns about affects on traffic in different areas including the Lawrence and 237 intersection, and the Lawrence and Wildwood area. Comm. Klein discussed the traffic impacts with staff and the effects on weeknight traffic and Sunday traffic and levels of service. Comm. Klein discussed bike lanes and said he does not think they are adequate on Tasman, especially during increased traffic due to events at the stadium. Comm. Klein discussed noise and air quality impacts the project. Comm. Klein said he has concern about tailgating in parking lots when the stadium might share parking on a weeknight with a nearby business.

Comm. McKenna commented that she is concerned that public transit may not be the great option that some think it might be for providing transportation to the site. Comm. McKenna said off-site parking is a real issue. Comm. McKenna said that this is going to be a publicly financed stadium and more events may be needed than expected to make the project economically feasible. Comm. McKenna said that the public safety demands are legitimate concerns raised.

Comm. Hungerford said he agrees that two of the bigger issues are parking and traffic. He commented that the traffic concerns should also include the concept of traffic affects on global warming and green house gas emissions. Comm. Hungerford said for a project of this size that the carbon dioxide levels should be reviewed. Comm. Hungerford expressed concern that there is a creek next to proposed stadium and there needs to be mitigation measures to protect the creek and consider storm water drainage. Comm. Hungerford said he was pleased to see comments and mitigation measures for energy consumption including the use of solar panels and heat pumps.

Comm. Rowe commented that consideration needs to be given to scheduling of events in order to determine the conflicts with neighboring sites. Comm. Rowe discussed with staff that the project needs to be reviewed to determine if additional fire stations need to be built.

Comm. Klein asked staff where the San Jose border is. Staff said they thought the Guadalupe Creek might be the border. Comm. Klein asked about the evacuation plans for possible chemical releases.

Comm. McKenna suggested that the Draft EIR should be provided on the Sunnyvale website as it is provided on the Santa Clara website. Staff said they would look into that with Comm. Rowe commenting the report is large and difficult to open for slower computer connections.

Chair Chang agreed with other comments regarding parking concerns and the short review period of the document. Chair Chang commented about the safety of neighborhoods from the behavior of fans after a win or a loss and the need to protect citizens and property.

Comm. Klein discussed light pollution making sure it is addressed in the Draft EIR and possible ways to reduce light impacts. Staff mentioned that the report lists a covered stadium as an environmentally superior project because it reduces lighting and noise impacts on surrounding uses.

Chair Chang opened the public hearing.

Jim Griffith, a resident of Sunnyvale and Danbury Place, near Tasman Drive, expressed concerns about parking, the effects of light rail, the Fresh and Easy store currently being built in the neighborhood and the concern of creating more parking issues at these sites. He said the parking in this neighborhood is already scarce, and this project may make things significantly worse if adequate parking is not provided. He said he is cautiously optimistic that this project could bring business to Sunnyvale, however it will affect his neighborhood. Mr. Griffith said he hopes the traffic study took into account approved new developments near Lawrence and 237 with staff saying it is uncertain whether new development was taken into account.

Comm. Klein expressed concern that the Fair Oaks/101 exit could become an alternative route to the proposed stadium, and said that the exit is sub-par and the effects on that intersection would affect commute traffic.

Comm. Rowe asked that decibel levels in the lower bass levels be addressed as a concern in the letter.

Chair Chang closed the public hearing.

Chair Chang confirmed with staff that no motion is necessary and the comments of the Planning Commission would be included in the City of Sunnyvale's letter to the City of Santa Clara.

Mr. Miner said staff's goal is to provide the letter to the City of Santa Clara before September 14, 2009; however, the City of Sunnyvale would be asking for more time to review the project.