



**Task Force Meeting No. 43 Synopsis
September 27, 2010**

Task Force Members Present*:

Teresa Alvarado, Michele Beasley, Gary Chronert, Harvey Darnell, Brian Darrow, Dave Fadness, Enrique Fernandez, Sam Ho, Nancy Ianni, Lisa Jensen, Frank Jesse, Karl Lee, Shirley Lewis, Linda LeZotte, Pierluigi Oliverio, David Pandori, Erik Schoennauer, Judy Stabile, Neil Struthers, Alofa Talivaa, Jim Zito.

Task Force Members Absent:

Jackie Adams, Shiloh Ballard, Judy Chirco, Pastor Oscar Dace, Pat Dando, Leslee Hamilton, Matt Kamkar, Charles Lauer, Sam Liccardo, Dick Santos, Patricia Sausedo, Michael Van Every.

City Staff and Other Public Agency Staff Present*

Ru Weerakoon (Mayor's Office), Nanci Klein (OED), Joe Horwedel (PBCE) Laurel Prevetti (PBCE), Susan Walton (PBCE), Andrew Crabtree (PBCE), Dipa Chundur (PBCE), John Ristow (VTA),

Public Present*:

Nancy Hickey (Coalition for a Downtown Hospital and University Neighborhoods coalition), Richard Zappelli (Willow Glen Neighborhood Association), Steven Le (The Health Trust), Peter Rothschild (Rothschild & Associates), Robert Atkinson (Sywest Dev.), Gary Prideaux and Pamela Parrish (Tonino Dr, SJ), Brian Schmidt (Committee for Green Foothills), Martin Delson, Roland Lebrun, Trixie Johnson (LWV – SJ / SC), Terri Balandra, Roz Dean (Coalition for a Downtown Hospital), Tom Armstrong (HMH), Jack Nadeau (Save Our Trails), Terry Christensen (Comm. University SJSU), Jessica Zenk (SVLG), Carlos Babcock (SV Bike Coalition), Paulo Hernandez (JPH Consulting), Gerry Hunt (CODH), Leah Toeniskueher (resident), Susan Marsland (District 1)

*As verified by registering attendance on Sign-In Sheets.

1. Welcome

The meeting convened at around 6:35 p.m.

2. Review and approval of June 28th, 2010 synopsis

The synopsis was approved.

3. Ambassador Program

Andrew Crabtree welcomed the Task Force members back after a short break and presented the Outreach Program Strategy's purpose and goals. He highlighted the need for ambassadors who can reach out to particular communities to promote the proposed Plan. The Task Force members requested that staff provide a list of organizations to review in order to identify those they would be able to outreach to.

4. Review of Draft Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan

Andrew Crabtree introduced the draft Plan and stated that the draft Plan will be refined based on comments and input as we move forward. Mr. Crabtree presented the key concepts of the draft Plan. The Co-chair requested that detailed edits on the written document be provided in writing to staff so that the Task Force meetings can be used as a forum for policy discussion, chapter by chapter. The following text summarizes the initial Task Force discussion and comment by Chapter.

Table of Contents: Mr. Crabtree explained the Table of Contents as related to the layout of the draft Plan document.

One Task Force member commented that a good navigating mechanism is still needed that would help developers and other readers understand the whole document, indicating the current style is somewhat intimidating, and specifically suggested that a matrix in the final document would be helpful.

Title Page and Chapter 1: Mr. Crabtree presented an overview of Chapter 1: “Envision San Jose 2040,” highlighting the key concepts.

One Task Force member acknowledged staff on the overall document and commented that the discussion on the historic section was good; however, there was no reference to San Jose as the first Pueblo, or the capital of Silicon Valley and a leader in green revolution.

Another Task Force member expressed concern that the overall vision could be lost at the implementation stage. Referencing the Diridon Area Station planning process, the member raised concerns that a big box type store would be supported in contradiction to the great goals that are discussed in the draft Update Plan. The member expressed the need for future discussion on the implementation strategy and a need to understand the Station Area Planning process given that it appears to be a parallel process with the General Plan Update.

In line with the above comment, another Task Force member commented that the Task Force needs to discuss the barriers that are typically faced in creating these great walkable communities.

Another Task Force member commented it is important to state an overall mission statement at the very beginning of the document (e.g., “The goal of this Plan is to develop economic, fiscal and environmental sustainability for San Jose”), and also that on Page 36 the document should reference the light rail, and the the importance of the construction of State Routes 85 and 87 in addressing City’s livability.

Staff and several of the Task Force members discussed the relevance and details of the existing Riparian Corridor Study, and staff provided clarification that the City currently has no formal Council-adopted riparian policy.

Several Task Force members discussed that the list of streets shown on page 16 is not complete and that staff should reference previous meetings when Grand Boulevards were discussed and bring that discussion back to the Task Force.

Chapter 2: Mr. Crabtree presented the overview and key points of Chapter 2: “Thriving Community”.

A Task Force member suggested that the draft Plan should include Happy Hollow zoo, Kelly Park, Japanese Friendship Garden, History Park and historic neighborhoods as tourist attractions, and further that reference should be made to the importance of trail network and goal of providing national leadership. Specifically, the member commented that Policy IE-5.3 should be edited to include providing entertainment for a diversity of ages, as most of the existing entertainment is geared toward the younger generations.

Staff indicated that a cross-reference will be provided with other chapters for the trails network.

Chapter 3: Mr. Crabtree presented an overview of Chapter 3: “Environmental Leadership,” highlighting key points such as measurable sustainability, environmental resources, and topics such as addressing hazardous materials, noise, air quality, geology and infrastructure.

Several Task Force members discussed elements of the chapter. One member indicated the language about the purpose of the Riparian Corridor should include a discussion on the migration routes of wildlife, and that on Page 27, the discussion on the Riparian Policy should be simplified. Further comments were that there is too much ambiguity on the 100 foot setback and the number of exceptions, and that the policy and guidelines should be written clearly to help property owners understand how much land is actually developable. A specific comment on Policies ER-3.2 and ER-3.7 is to delete text after ‘achieved’

Another Task Force member suggested that the goals in the air quality section should be expanded to include pollution reduction and that a cross-reference should be made with the VMT goals.

An additional comment was that there should be a discussion on social equity and potential impacts of locating sensitive populations (renters in inclusionary housing) near highways, since exposure to air quality and noise issues is generally higher in these locations than in transit corridors. Staff clarified that the appropriate sections for such a discussion would be in Chapters 2 and 4. Staff also agreed to clarify the discussion on recycling facilities in Alviso, and expand the reference to Alviso as important environmental area (Baylands and Marina).

Chapter 4: Mr. Crabtree presented an overview of Chapter 4: “Quality of Life,” and indicated that following the last Task Force meeting, staff: expanded the discussion on: height; added a section on the residential neighborhood including definition of “a neighborhood”; and added to the housing policy, city services, and cultural activities sections.

A Task Force member suggested a need for a discussion on bicycle safety and better connected bicycle routes in this section. A comment was also made that Policy VN 1.8 should reference the historic character and resources. Another member expressed concern that several of the policies and discussions are very rigid and specific, citing as examples that: Policy 7.1 on Page 20 is too specific in its limitation to only one row of 2- or 3-story buildings; Policy 7.1 and 7.10 need to be more supportive of development, instead of requiring development of a village plan first; discussion on residential neighborhood on Page 21 is overly detailed by totally rejecting the court home product type; and that limiting residential density to match existing neighborhood as in Policy 8.2 and 8.3 could result in City rejecting a good design with a density of 9 du/ac in a 8 du/ac area. The Task Force member also commented that these policies are generally good if the specificity is removed, that the document should accommodate infill development, and that there should be separate plan for village areas and not be included in this update.

Staff commented that approving a project without a village plan first could lead to infrastructure overload that could be passed on to other developments that come in later in those areas, and that there is also a concern that the remainder of the village area might not be enough for other uses, particularly employment uses. Staff indicated more information and more structure and goals on the village plan and infill development would be brought back to the Task Force.

Chapter 5: Mr. Crabtree introduced Chapter 5: “Land Use and Transportation,” referencing that this chapter directly supports the Land Use/Transportation diagram.

Several Task Force members discussed some of the issues in this chapter. One of the members wanted clarification on a possible location for a ferry, and after clarifying where the draft Plan document discusses the 15% slope line (page 71), suggested the language should be clear that development above 15% is not allowed. Staff noted that language regarding the potential for a ferry should be brought back to the Task Force.

Another Task Force member acknowledged good staff work on several of the policies, commenting that Policy LU 5.6 is good, but should encourage parking away from street frontage; Policy LU 10/11 is not complete; that Policy LU15.8 should include other organizations. Another comment was that the 2040 goal for bicycling in the Table is low, with a suggestion for staff to look at the study from the Netherlands (Page 35). Specific to trails, on Policy TR2.10, the comment was made that development should be prohibited if access not provided, and a suggestion that staff include information that the airport is accessible via bicycle, and also to include language that supports related facilities (Page 50).

Another member of the Task Force pointed out that there could be more discussion on how best to locate uses such as medical marijuana, adult uses etc. The Co-chairs pointed out that those specific uses are more located at the discretion of the City Council and not specifically called out in a General Plan.

Several of the Task Force members suggested the need for more cross referencing between chapters to interconnect topics such as trails and bicycles, and specifically that the discussion on trails on page 52 should be carried over to Chapter One.

A Task Force member pointed out that there is no discussion specifically on bicycle safety, and that the Plan document should encourage more bike parking especially in downtown, and encourage through access for bikes and pedestrians in new developments, even if there is no through automobile access.

Another Task Force member expressed concern regarding the rigidity of the policies related to residential density limitations, and commented that the City’s vacant land inventory list and projected density for those sites is not reflective of how best surrounding neighborhoods could be revitalized and that the goal should be preserve neighborhood character, not density per se. The member suggested that the draft Plan should generally not use the word prohibit as it is too rigid for industrial conversions and infill development, and instead, the discussion on infill development should be simple and without exact formulas.

Chapter 6: Mr. Crabtree presented an overview and indicated Chapter 6: "Implementation" discusses how all the policies and goals are implemented.

It was suggested again that the infill development, and the village planning process be brought back for discussion at a later date. Some of the members wanted to know how the Plan would be implemented, and whether the Council would have the ability to change any part of the Plan without broad input, and expressed concern that all the work done so far could be changed. Specifically referencing the ongoing Diridon planning effort, concern was expressed that the issue of sales tax leakage should not trump other goals and policies of the Plan. Another comment was that some components in the Plan rely on actions of other agencies so it is important to have a time line and schedule "check-ins" on the status of these inter-agency coordinations. One suggestion was to change Policy IP 2.10 from "convene Task Force" to "convene community stakeholder group."

Staff noted that the Update process has been based on community input and that there is provision for the review of the Plan every 4 years. In response to a request for clarification on Policy LU2.7 and LU 2.4, staff clarified that the proposed Plan has provision for current entitlements and extends the timeline for modifications based on entitlements. In addition, staff commented that there are pending General Plan Amendments that have a certain capacity and which warrant further discussion, but the Plan should still reflect the Council's target numbers for total housing capacity.

Mr. Crabtree presented the map of 15 % and 30 % slope lines and discussed the proposed process for the pending General Plan Amendments on file. A couple of the Task Force members requested the mapped slope line for all the City; and to add reference to community health in the Appendix.

5. Public Comment

Eight members of the public made comments. One speaker spoke in reference to a specific property and expressed concern that the proposed Plan land use designation is too specific and does not take into consideration market trends, and requested that the Task Force support a designation that would help facilitate development on the property.

One speaker wanted to understand the role of planners, given that after community meetings and input on a specific project, the project was changed without additional community input. Another speaker noted that the draft Plan document as a whole sends mixed messages to the community and the infrastructure is really not in pace with the population growth and it is important to keep people in mind while developing a plan. Yet another speaker noted that although the riparian policy discussion in good, Policy ER 3.9 is a loophole for growth and should be eliminated.

One of the speakers noted that the definition of a complete street is missing, that the concept of a village and downtown is confusing and there is a need to plan where big box stores can be located. Another speaker supported the need for bicycle safety especially around schools, also saying that with 8 principles, it is hard to grasp on the language of the document to understand what something really means. Another speaker suggested the use of a detailed index as a navigation tool.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at around 8:50 p.m.