



**Task Force Meeting No. 46 Synopsis
November 15, 2010**

Task Force Members Present*:

Jackie Adams, Shiloh Ballard, Michele Beasley, Gary Chronert, Harvey Darnell, Brian Darrow, Dave Fadness, Leslee Hamilton, Sam Ho, Nancy Ianni, Lisa Jensen, Frank Jesse, Karl Lee, Linda LeZotte, Sam Liccardo, Pierluigi Oliverio, David Pandori, Erik Schoennauer, Neil Struthers, Alofa Talivaa, Michael Van Every.

Task Force Members Absent:

Teresa Alvarado, Judy Chirco, Pastor Oscar Dace, Pat Dando, Enrique Fernandez, Matt Kamkar, Charles Lauer, Shirley Lewis, Dick Santos, Patricia Sausedo, Judy Stabile, Jim Zito.

City Staff and Other Public Agency Staff Present*

Laurel Prevetti (PBCE), Joe Horwedel (PBCE), Susan Walton (PBCE), Andrew Crabtree (PBCE), John Baty (PBCE), Dipa Chundur (PBCE), Wayne Chen (Housing).

Public Present*:

Brian Schmidt (Committee for Green Foothills), Carolus Boekana (CODH/PACS), Joseph Lovelace (San Jose State), Casey Junod (San Jose State), Katherine Chesio (San Jose State), Peter Rothschild (Rothschild & Associates), Richard Zappelli (Willow Glen Neighborhood Association), Rozalin Dean (Coalition for a Downtown Hospital), Bertha Starks (Downtown Hospital), Larry Ames (SJ Neighborhoods), Yolanda Reynolds, Julie Hutcheson (Committee for Green Foothills), Kathryn Mathewson (Shasta Hanchett Neighborhood), Terry Christensen (Comm. University SJSU), Marie Arnold (LWVSJSC), Nancy Hickey (Coalition for a Downtown Hospital) Carlos Babcock (SVBC), Helen Chapman (SHPNA), Jean Dresden, Jack Nadeau (Save our Trails)

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

1. Welcome

The meeting was convened at 6:38 p.m.

2. Review and approval of October 25, 2010 and November 1, 2010 synopsis

Both the October 25th and November 1st synopsis were approved.

3. Report on Requests for Pending General Plan Amendments and proposed Envision Land Use Designation Alternatives

Andrew Crabtree reported that November 15th was the last day for the public to submit requests for consideration of alternative land use designations to the draft Envision General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram to potentially allow for environmental clearance. He stated that staff had received 15 requests.

Co-Chair Liccardo noted that information and the map showing possible locations for hospital sites will be distributed at the next Task Force meeting.

4. 3rd Draft Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan

Mr. Crabtree explained that he would present the edits made to three key chapters: Chapter 4 – Environmental Leadership; Chapter 5 – Land Use and Transportation (and the Land Use/

Transportation Diagram); and Chapter 6 – Implementation; along with edits to other chapters. He clarified that the Task Force discussion would be by topic. The following text summarizes the Task Force discussion and comment.

A. Edits proposed by the Environmental Consultant

Mr. Crabtree indicated the sections and pages that were edited in Chapter 3. Several of the Task Force members discussed the language and intent of the Riparian policy study referenced in the Plan document. One member stated that the riparian setback language should be strengthened further. Staff responded that the Task Force could recommend modifications to the language, but should also remember that policy ER 3.2 is the heart of the riparian policy. Another Task Force member suggested that policy ER 3.2 should be kept as is, but that policy ER 3.3 should be deleted. Co-chair Liccardo requested that all motions on the policy edits be heard at the end of the Task Force discussion, along with all other motions, if any.

A Task Force member commented that the General Plan should not include language from a study, such as the riparian corridor study, especially when there is so much continued discussion regarding the issue. Instead, the member commented that the Council should review the language of such studies separately to make any appropriate changes, and that the General Plan should not include rigid policies without sufficient “back up analysis” because they might affect the potential for economic benefit for property owners. Another Task Force member wanted clarification on “limited number of instances” referenced in Policy ER 3.2

One member suggested that noise Policy EC2.1 should explicitly reference night time vibration. On the same topic, another member mentioned that GP2020 has language to requiring that projects provide offsets for noise levels, but that the draft Envision Plan had no similar language and was not clear about the potential for balconies.

B. Edits proposed by Task Force Members.

Mr. Crabtree indicated that the edits from Task Force members included topics such as residential infill, pedestrian-oriented development, and village planning. He indicated the pages related to residential infill, specifically pointing out that on page 4-19, language was added to help strengthen and clarify the “bright line” for when residential infill development would be appropriate.

One of the Task Force members indicated that there was no language to allow some exceptions and stated that there should be no loopholes that would allow more intense development in existing neighborhoods. Staff responded that they would review earlier Task Force comments to consider limited exceptions for blighted neighborhoods. A Task Force member responded that ‘period homes’ should also be protected, such as those built circa 1939, because such homes are more likely to be demolished, as compared to multi-family units.

Another member cautioned that the “Two Acre Rule” in the current SJ2020 General Plan was created by Council to require exceptional projects, but that as the “Rule” has been implemented, only some projects were actually of exceptional quality. The member stressed that allowing exceptions for more intense infill development could result in future land use conflicts. Therefore, the member urged that the Plan language on any exceptions for blighted neighborhoods should be very explicit so that when one purchases a property, it is very clear what the options are.

One of the Task Force members mentioned that some areas are blighted and could use redevelopment and asked if each Councilmember would be able to decide which properties were appropriate for redevelopment. Staff responded that the goal of the General Plan is not to make property-by-property determinations, but to consider the broader level, such as an entire block.

Another Task Force member wanted to know what the Plan would allow for buildings that are non-residential and vacant, but with designations for future high density residential use, and whether there were any policies on how to redevelop such sites. Staff responded that General Plan policies should not reward property owners of vacant buildings, and that staff would consider the economic viability in the case of high density use such as apartments.

Mr. Crabtree introduced the next topic of pedestrian-friendly design, stating that edits had been made throughout the document and referenced those pages with edits. Several of the Task Force members stated their appreciation of the staff work on this section.

Mr. Crabtree went on to introduce the third set of edits on Village Planning policies, mentioning the pages that reflected the edits. Some of the Task Force members expressed concern with using the term “urban village,” commenting that it might cause some confusion on what a “village” actually means, especially since there were different types of villages referenced previously. Some members suggested the use of footnotes to define a “village”.

Some Task Force members expressed concern that a definitive timeframe of nine months is likely overly-optimistic. Another member mentioned that this timeframe was workable, but only if the processes were on a simultaneous multi-track. Staff clarified that the nine-month timeframe was for the planning process, and that CEQA and other processes would follow subsequently.

One Task Force member mentioned that the word “village” and the image that it conjures up for some people, doesn’t seem to relate well to policies in the document, and was also concerned about whether policies in general had the right balance, especially Policy IP5.4 (1). Another member mentioned that adequate residential development is important to support the growing population and retail uses, especially for the economics to make successful villages. The member commented that the policies do not adequately state the importance of residential uses.

Several Task Force members discussed the language in Policy IP 5-10 ‘Landmark Projects’, especially the use of the language “all of the following criteria”. One member suggested looking at alternative language such as ‘some or all’ or ‘substantially all’ instead. One member suggested that the second criterion be deleted. Some members felt that these criteria were not realistic or clear, and ask for further refinement by staff.

C. Edits proposed by the Public.

Mr. Crabtree presented the edits based on community input which were mostly on interface between residential and non-residential land uses, building setbacks, and some environmental comments. One Task Force member wanted to know if there was language in the document that required cul-de-sacs to reviewed to be opened up for enhanced accessibility and connectivity,

especially for pedestrian and bicycle use. Mr. Crabtree indicated the section that addressed this concern.

Mr. Crabtree mentioned that some changes had been made to the Land Use/Transportation diagram and that the Diagram is available online, along with the map of health care facilities.

One Task Force member expressed concern about policies in the Plan regarding airport facilities in other jurisdictions, noting that they might encourage other cities to “weigh in” on uses at airports and facilities in San Jose. Another member commented that San Jose’s unique trail system which connects to the larger regional network had not been adequately highlighted.

5. Public Comment

Twelve members of the public provided public comment on the meeting Agenda items. One speaker shared history of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and the condition of public transit today. Another speaker mentioned that public transit was not guaranteed and that more developments should be transit-oriented.

Another speaker raised concern about potential for strong winds caused by “tall walls” of linear development along corridors. The speaker suggested that pedestrian and bicycle lanes should be separated as much as possible, and that it was important to find appropriate businesses for an area first, and then develop the site, instead of the other way around.

One speaker asked for clarification on the growth areas and the definition of a village. The speaker had a suggestion to an earlier comment by a Task Force member on using 1940 as a cut-off year rather than 1939, because that year reflects a change in methods of building construction. Another speaker expressed support to a public comment letter and emphasized that the first thirty feet of development on a site is important. Another speaker spoke about the importance of connectivity of trails.

One speaker expressed support for development transitions over time, but also emphasized the importance of historic integrity. The speaker pointed out that the nature of residential development changed in 1955, according to the Distinctive Neighborhood program. Another speaker expressed support for the current Urban Growth Boundary and stated she was looking forward to be a San Jose resident.

6. Task Force Recommendations

After the Public comments, the Task Force continued the deferred discussion on the riparian corridor policies. The discussion focused on whether the language should be changed or clarified to explain the setback requirements and allowed exceptions in Policy 3.2.

The Task Force directed staff to come back with clarification on the criteria for Landmark Projects.

7. Announcements and Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at around 8:49 p.m.