

TOWN OF LOS GATOS
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SUMMARY MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE GENERAL PLAN COMMITTEE OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS ON **SEPTEMBER 23, 2009**, HELD AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER, LARGE HALL, 110 EAST MAIN STREET, LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA.

The meeting was called to order at 5:20 pm by Jane Ogle.

ATTENDANCE

Members present: John Bourgeois, Barbara Cardillo, Tom O'Donnell, Jane Ogle, Joe Pirzynski, Chuck Sloan, Barbara Spector

Members absent: Marcia Jensen

Staff present: Greg Larson, Town Manager; Bud Lortz, Deputy Town Manager; Wendie Rooney, Director of Community Development; Suzanne Davis, Associate Planner; Joel Paulson, Associate Planner; Jennifer Savage, Assistant Planner; Jessica von Borck, Economic Vitality Manager

Consultants present: David Early, Design Community & Environment (DC&E); Peter Calthorpe, Architect

Public attendees: Mike Amidi, Lynlee Bischoff, Pete Brutsche, Ray Davis, Kerry Laubach, Milt Mintz, Tom Spilsbury

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Ray Davis commented on Monday's Town Council meeting. The Council voted to acquire two acres below the dam for soccer fields. He disagrees with Bud Lortz's recommendation to install two small fields and parking for 60 cars. He also commented that the money from the sale of Town property in Vasona is not being used for its intended purpose, and he feels it is a fraud. Lastly, he commented on the dust cloud being spread by the cement plant in Cupertino. He encouraged people to protest as the permit is up for renewal.

ITEM 1 REVIEW OF NORTH 40 SPECIFIC PLAN

Greg Larson opened the meeting noting that tonight's meeting is the result of Council direction from a meeting held August 2009. At that meeting the Council directed staff to complete the North 40 Specific Plan. The plan was originally developed through a community process and was tabled pending the General Plan update in 2000. There will be an on-going series of discussions over the next six months. The North 40 is the largest

undeveloped area in the Town. Council directed staff to review design standards, to determine an appropriate land use mix that may include residential and will not compete with the Downtown, and to look at the development standards. The primary property owner, the Yuki family, has a representative who will present their thoughts on the development of the North 40. There will be a Town Council study session on October 19, 2009.

John Bourgeois clarified that the Committee should be providing a recommendation to the Town Council on the consultant's presentation.

David Early, DC&E, noted that the requested action is to include the North 40 program as a component of the General Plan EIR. The goals for the project are to identify an appropriate mix of uses and the parameters for design and development. There is an existing draft plan that currently supports destination retail and mixed use commercial. The plan no longer matches the Town's vision included in the current General Plan. The goal is to find a project that is smart growth, sustainable, and that reflect today's market. Guiding principles include residential uses to the south, retail mixed use to the north and a variety of types of residential.

The Yuki family is working with a developer, Grosvenor, and an architect, Peter Calthorpe, who will be preparing a development proposal in parallel with the General Plan Update. Many of the ideas overlap. Grosvenor controls about 30 acres of the 42 acre site.

Barbara Cardillo clarified that the portion of the North 40 that is not being discussed is the parcels that are already developed. *David Early* noted that for the Specific Plan, the entire area is being included. The development proposal from Grosvenor does not include already developed parcels, a few residences and land not owned by the Yuki family.

Peter Calthorpe, Architect, presented four principles that make a good place that is sustainable and smart growth as follows:

- Diversity and balance: inclusive of a civic realm, residential, commercial and neighborhood.
- Human and pedestrian scale: building shape, size, not centered around the automobile. There are different types of human scale, but they all have the same components including walkability and vitality.
- Conservation and sustainability: no place is an island, sustainability and conservation is more than placing solar panels on the roof and driving a Prius. Single family is sprawl. Green sprawl is when people conserve energy and drive an energy efficient vehicle. Compact housing includes more efficient building envelopes as opposed to large lot single-family development. Compact green is higher density residential (compact) with sustainable design. There is a need for a range of housing types. Housing that fits into the compact green category is a 4:1 savings on carbon emissions. There is currently a regional housing shortage.

- Connection and interdependence: proximity to jobs and housing.

One of the good things about the location of the North 40 site is its proximity to regional transit. Once the light rail is extended to Los Gatos, a shuttle link between there, the Downtown and the North 40 will interconnect the areas and allow people to travel around town without using their cars.

Desirable plan elements:

- The scale of the site needs to be attended to
- A pedestrian oriented edge along Los Gatos Blvd. is needed
- Minimal parking along the street and in front of buildings
- More of a pedestrian edge along buildings
- Create a more unified landscape for sense of unity and consistent theme
- Need to connect through and use as many access points as possible so the site becomes interconnected and traffic is dispersed
- Streets have to be designed for pedestrians
- Traffic calming
- Break the scale of the blocks down
- Two characteristics: civic anchors including a park surrounded by residential and a center plaza surrounded by mixed use
- Create boulevard treatment along the edge (Los Gatos Blvd.) to provide continuity and connectiveness

A true compact interconnected community can be achieved without impacting views of the hills and overwhelming its surroundings. The predominant residential type would be three-story townhouses.

David Early discussed the overall development goal that will be expressed in the General Plan, which is to develop the North 40 with a mix of uses that complements and does not compete with the Downtown and the rest of the community, and to plan for a smart community that is sustainable.

Guiding Principles to be included in the General Plan:

Mixed use:

- High quality architecture
- Residential uses to south
- Retail mixed use to north
- Variety of types of residential

Connected street network:

- Connections to existing intersections along Lark & LGV
- Pedestrian orientation

Open Space:

- Park at center of residential
- Plaza at center of mixed use area
- Continuation of treatment along LGB
- Vegetative screening/buffer along Highway 17 and Route 85
- Pedestrian scale buildings along LGB with minimal parking
- Split level buildings
- Tuck under parking
- Building heights that protect Town character and views:
 - a. 2-story maximum along LGB
 - b. 4-story maximum further back on the site
 - c. possible 5-story hotel

Development potential of up to 585,000 square feet of retail and office space and up to 750 residential units to be evaluated in EIR.

Tom O'Donnell asked about the numbers and what acreage would be assigned to those uses. He is having difficulty envisioning the density. *David Early* noted that Grosvenor controls about 31 acres. The entire site is about 42 acres and the average for residential is about 18 units per acre. *Bud Lortz* noted that the proposed development potential is about 30% less dense than the Sobrato development.

Tom O'Donnell expressed concern that the height limitations will provide enough control. *Peter Calthorpe* noted that the objective is to shape something that provides a good envelope for development. *David Early* stated that the development parameters are intended for the entire site and that the density could not be made more compact and proposed for only a portion of the site.

Barbara Spector commented that she is concerned about the proposed building heights and potential visibility, how the development may or may not be phased, infrastructure, road intersection congestion.

Barbara Cardillo commented on the goal of complementing and not competing with the Downtown. While it sounds good, it presents the possibility of a Santana Row-like project. *David Early* noted that the anticipated businesses would be those that would not fit in the Downtown and would provide good that are not available there. *Peter Calthorpe* noted that it will be important to specify the type of retail that is needed and desired. What types of products are people leaving town to obtain.

John Bourgeois commented that he is concerned about view preservation and visual impact. He asked for clarification on the split between mixed use commercial and residential and how it was determined. *Peter Calthorpe* explained that the mixed use area will need its own access and should not be hidden behind the existing commercial area just north of Lark Avenue.

John Bourgeois clarified that the proposed numbers are for purposes of study and environmental evaluation. He commented that the parcel is one of the last areas of agricultural use, and if the concept of retaining a portion of the orchard has been considered. *Peter Calthorpe* noted that project specific details are not being shown at this point. *Bud Lortz* noted that the history of the Yuki family should be included with preservation of a component of the existing agricultural use of the site.

Joe Pirzynski commented that he agrees with everything that has been said. An important consideration is traffic generation. The entrance and egress will be very important because of the existing traffic impact that is there now. The impact on schools will need to be considered. He is not sure there is a nexus with the residential area to the south of Lark Avenue. This has gone a long way to competing the North 40 Plan, and he is very interested to see how the principles are received. He supports the proposal. This is an extremely important piece of the community. It is a chance to do things right.

Jane Ogle commented that this is a very important project and she feels uncomfortable making a decision after an hour and a half discussion. *Tom O'Donnell* and *Barbara Spector* agreed.

David Early said the principles can be revised based on comments that were made tonight. For example, the need for a cultural component and preservation of views of the hills. The matter will be returned to the Committee for further discussion.


NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM. The next meeting of the General Plan Committee is scheduled for October 14, 2009.

Prepared by:


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