

TOWN OF LOS GATOS
110 East Main Street, Los Gatos, CA 95030 (408) 354-6872

SUMMARY MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE GENERAL PLAN COMMITTEE OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS ON **APRIL 7, 2010**, HELD AT THE LOS GATOS ADULT RECREATION CENTER, ROOM 214, 208 EAST MAIN STREET, LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Jane Ogle.

ATTENDANCE

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

Members absent: None

Staff present: Wendie Rooney, Director of Community Development; Suzanne Davis, Associate Planner; Joel Paulson, Associate Planner

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None

ITEM 1 AFFORDABLE HOUSING OVERLAY ZONE

Wendie Rooney noted that the discussion at the last meeting left off in review of development criteria. If a developer requests a density bonus pursuant to the State Density Bonus Law, one to three concessions on development standards are required as incentive. Parking is typically one of the three.

The Committee discussed strategies in responding to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

Lot Coverage

An increase in lot coverage could be allowed, either with an upper limit or open ended.

Wendie Rooney commented that if density is specified by the AHOZ it may preclude developers from requesting a density bonus. Staff will review the State density bonus law to verify the process.

Marcia Jensen commented that she does see the need for concessions if the density bonus law requires the Town to allow them.

Tom O'Donnell would prefer to have developers propose a project rather than deferring to State standards.

Barbara Cardillo clarified that some projects can be accomplished without environmental review.

AHOZ design criteria

Wendie Rooney commented that the Town does not have adopted design guidelines for multi-family housing. Generally the surrounding area is looked at to determine neighborhood compatibility. Design criteria can be developed for individual AHOZs. This would provide some certainty and the process could be streamlined if criteria is being complied with by a developer.

Marcia Jensen asked for clarification on whether design criteria is solely what the buildings will look like. *Wendie Rooney* stated that the intent is architectural design, however, other criteria could be included.

Tom O'Donnell asked if there are sample guidelines that could be reviewed so the Committee has a better understanding of what is being proposed.

Marcia Jensen commented that allowing affordable units to look different than market rate units is a concern, as is requiring a specific architectural style.

Joe Pirzynski commented that ideally the affordable units cannot be distinguished from the other units in a project.

Tom O'Donnell commented that the concept is good.

John Bourgeois commented that the concept of guidelines is fine as long as it does not result in applicants regularly requesting exceptions. It might be better to have multi-family design guidelines for the Town.

Marcia Jensen asked for clarification on the approval process for projects that comply with established design criteria.

Tom O'Donnell commented that if there are standards and an applicant complies, it might limit the ability of the approving body to reject a project.

Jane Ogle commented that at this point the Town would be indicating to HCD that standards or guidelines will be established.

Joe Pirzynski commented on compliance with design standards and how to give a degree of confidence to a developer. The question is how to streamline the process and get a

project in the ground. He is concerned about trying to make the process transparent at the front end.

Barbara Cardillo commented that it should be determined whether there are minimum standards and/or guidelines that should be set for this type of project. The Town should decide what is desirable.

Barbara Spector clarified that there are nine sites with the Affordable Housing Overlay Zone.

Wendie Rooney commented that design guidelines could help with securing and would help staff when evaluating projects. These would be general parameters for projects, for example, on Los Gatos Blvd., using criteria from the Boulevard Plan and of a style that is compatible with surrounding structures. Emulate the size, height, bulk and mass of surrounding buildings rather than matching it.

Joe Pirzynski commented that new development should enhance the neighborhood, even if it is not consistent with existing development that is of a style that is not desirable today.

Marcia Jensen commented that it sounds like we are looking for general criteria rather than details.

Joe Pirzynski commented that streamlining means time. Perhaps when it comes to an affordable housing project, temporary or added staff could be used to process an application in a timely manner.

Jane Ogle commented that bullet four under Design Criteria needs to be modified to add the word quality. The second bullet should be changed to state that design criteria may be appropriate.

Affordability Requirements

Wendie Rooney commented that the intent is to encourage greater diversity in affordability for each zone. This needs to be developed further and will not be included in the response to HCD.

Marcia Jensen suggested specifying minimum levels or percentages.

Streamline Review Process

John Bourgeois commented that he is not comfortable establishing categorical exemptions for unknown projects.

Tom O'Donnell commented that the Town needs to be very careful in stating that exemptions will be used that may not have been applied in the past. How it is stated is important. Stating that the process will be to help develop a project that will qualify for a categorical exemption is a more appropriate message.

Barbara Spector commented that educating and publicizing is positive phrasing.

Joe Pirzynski suggested stating that the Town has taken a proactive stance in educating developers to the CEQA process and how a project may be able to be accomplished under a categorical exemption.

Wendie Rooney suggested promoting pre-application consultation with developers in order to educate them on Town and CEQA regulations and how to streamline the process.

The Committee would like to state that the intent is to educate and facilitate, and discuss all the options with a developer, including but not limited to specified criteria that can include CEQA.

Wendie Rooney commented that amending the Town Code to not require a conditional use permit for multi-family projects would be a huge incentive to developers. The suggestion is to, at a minimum, apply this to AHOZs, although it could be done Town-wide. The Committee supported applying this to AHOZs.

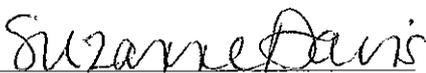
ITEM 2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Barbara Spector commented that on height, the Committee did not want to allow exceptions and did not specify that it was for reasons of neighborhood compatibility. She made a motion to approve the minutes of March 24, 2010 with this one correction. The motion was seconded by *Joe Pizynski* and passed unanimously.

ITEM 3 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm. The next meeting of the General Plan Committee is scheduled for April 28, 2010. The meeting will start at 5:00 pm

Prepared by:


Suzanne Davis, AICP
Associate Planner