

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

SUMMARY MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE GENERAL PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS, **SEPTEMBER 14, 2005** HELD IN THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CIVIC CENTER, 110 EAST MAIN STREET, LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by *Chair Mark Sgarlato*.

ATTENDANCE

Members present: Steve Glickman, Diane McNutt, Mark Sgarlato, Barry Waitte, Tom O'Donnell and Margaret Smith

Members absent: Phil Micciche, Mike Burke, Jane Ogle

Staff present: Bud Lortz, Director of Community Development; Randy Tsuda, Assistant Community Development Director; Sandy Baily, Associate Planner; Larry Cannon, Cannon Design Group

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

ITEM 1 RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Larry Cannon discussed looking at one or two neighborhoods to do an evaluation of the houses in the area. This would then be developed into a walking tour to identify some of the issues. Later, we will focus on community expectations and design principles.

Lortz reported that staff met with Cannon to discuss challenges and issues that have been experienced. *Lortz* summarized how the document will incorporate sloping lots that are not under the Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines and the Pre-1941 Design Guidelines.

Purpose Section

Glickman commented that there needs to be some clarity on what is the character of Los Gatos. Character is not defined and the public has different perceptions of character.

Lortz stated that the guidelines are intended to assist in summarizing the policies of the General Plan. When reviewing applications, the General Plan needs to be considered in context, since there are conflicting policies.

Glickman wants to ensure that the guidelines state what the Town is and is not concerned with.

McNutt recommended choosing a neighborhood for evaluation that has been difficult to deal with. The Johnson/Loma Alta area was recommended.

Lortz stated the need to look at the historic fabric of a neighborhood.

McNutt stated we need to protect residents as well as homeowners.

Sgarlato questioned promoting increased property values. We want to ensure people can afford to live in Town. Note that the purposes listed are not in a priority order.

Glickman stated we need to be sensitive to, but not overemphasize issues. If we are going to deal with privacy issues, we need to delineate where it stops since people do have property rights. What is the boundary?

Waite agreed with the comment on promoting property values. Promoting should be changed to protect or preserve.

O'Donnell said intensity needs to be considered. There is a need to ensure there is adequate on-site parking for residences.

Glickman stated we need to ask ourselves how we are dealing with the changing family/cultural issues within the housing unit with regard to extended families.

Lortz discussed the evolution of restricting heights for detached structures. It was commented that this limits architectural compatibility if a house has a steep pitched roof.

McNutt further expressed concern about parking problems on narrow streets. She agreed that the choice of wording is very important.

Smith stated we need to define what a neighborhood is and nearby neighborhood parcels.

Lortz felt that we need to identify a neighborhood early in the process so we can get a better understanding on how to deal with specific comments.

Glickman commented that we want neighborhoods to evolve but we don't want radical changes. Evolution needs to come at a deliberate pace.

Sgarlato stated that a neighborhood isn't just related to the houses, it is also related to social aspects.

Community Expectations Section

Glickman made the following statements related to the items listed in this section:

Item A: May be appropriate for the Almond Grove area, but not elsewhere.

Item B: Questioned how highest quality would be defined. In favor of a pedestrian friendly Town, but this should not be a strong emphasis everywhere.

Item H: Questioned if Los Gatos has a “unique” scale and character? Define what is the uniqueness.

Item J: Define trendy buildings.

Item N: Need to reflect needs and desires of the whole community.

Items P&Q are for commercial buildings only. One size does not fit all.

O'Donnell commented that Los Gatos is different because of its scale. Los Gatos does not allow “monster” homes. It isn't one size fits all, but the Town's zoning ordinance does regulate house size. We need to inform applicants what we want. We do not tell them how to design it but we need to provide guidance to assist the applicant.

McNutt added it is important to incorporate the following points:

- Good design, but not highest price.
- Variety and diversity of a sensitive interface.
- Sense of place.
- Thoughtful architecture.
- 360 degree architecture.
- Community expectations - integrations of neighborhoods is important.
- Neighborhoods need to be pedestrian friendly and flow to another neighborhood.
- Acknowledgment of topographical challenges.
- Fencing and exterior lighting.

Lortz stated we should consider applying these guidelines to building permits. The Belhaven Neighborhood in Menlo Park was recommended to look at fence types that the Town would not want.

Smith said maintenance should be changed to preservation or preserve. Palm Haven in Willow Glen is a good example of an historic home that looked modern, is beautiful and was an asset to the neighborhood.

Consensus of the Committee was that compatibility should not be considered “the same.”

Sgarlato suggested that green building materials should be considered. Environmental issues are important in neighborhoods.

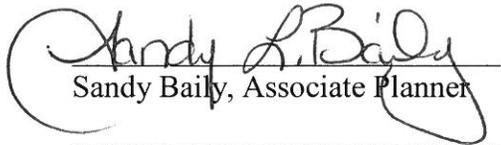
APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Glickman moved to approve the minutes of August 10, 2005. The motion was seconded by *O'Donnell* and passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m. by *Mark Sgarlato*. The next meeting of the General Plan Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, September 28, 2005 at 5:30 p.m.

Prepared By:


Sandy Baily, Associate Planner