



City of Santa Barbara Planning Division

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

August 27, 2009

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Larson called the meeting to order at 1:04 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

Present:

Chair Stella Larson

Vice-Chair Addison S. Thompson

Commissioners Bruce Bartlett, Charmaine Jacobs, John Jostes, Sheila Lodge, and Harwood A. White, Jr.

Commissioner Charmaine Jacobs arrived at 1:22 P.M.

STAFF PRESENT:

Paul Casey, Community Development Director

Bettie Weiss, City Planner

John Ledbetter, Principal Planner

N. Scott Vincent, Assistant City Attorney

Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner

Irma Unzueta, Project Planner

Peggy Burbank, Project Planner

Adam Nares, Planning Technician

Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

I. ROLL CALL

II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:

A. Requests for continuances, withdrawals, postponements, or addition of ex-agenda items.

None.

B. Announcements and appeals.

Betty Weiss, City Planner, made the following announcements:

1. Today's meeting is a continued worksession from July 23, 2009. The next PlanSB meeting will be on September 24, 2009.
 2. The September 17, 2009 Planning Commission meeting has not been cancelled and will still be held.
- C. Comments from members of the public pertaining to items not on this agenda.
- Chair Larson opened the public hearing at 1:06 P.M. and, with no one wishing to speak, closed the hearing.

III. PLAN SANTA BARBARAS WORK SESSION:

ACTUAL TIME: 1:07 P.M.

This work session was continued from the July 23, 2009 Planning Commission meeting. Focus of the work session was for the Planning Commission to discuss the location, evolution and purpose of the MODA (Mobility Oriented Development Area), options for density and unit sizes in commercial and multiple-family zones, and review of progress to date on the General Plan Land Use Map. This was a Planning Commission discussion item; no formal Commission action was taken on *Plan Santa Barbara*.

Case Planner: John Ledbetter, Principal Planner
Email: JLedbetter@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

John Ledbetter, Principal Planner, gave the Staff presentation joined by Bettie Weiss, City Planner, and Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner.

Chair Larson called members of the public Gil Barry, Tom Bolay, and Joe Andrulaitis to provide summaries of their recent residential density and design approaches.

Commissioner White referenced projects that have affordable units mixed with luxury units which have presented a conflict for affordable units being unable to pay homeowners association dues and suggested that the inclusionary fees be used for either the purchase of existing rental housing or the development of new rental housing. Commissioner Thompson concurred.

Commissioners Bartlett and White felt the scenarios should go beyond market rate units and include rental housing and how to protect the rentals we have now. Some Commissioners felt that incentives should be developed for the development and maintenance of rental housing.

Commissioner Jostes acknowledged density as one metric of urban design, but need to go beyond and look at whether we want to accept a sustainable development pattern as an underlying core assumption.

Commissioners Larson and Jacobs remained concerned about further development in the downtown core, specifically the El Pueblo Viejo (EPV) District; felt strongly about the preservation of EPV as a tourist destination area.

Commissioner Jacobs suggested having two companion maps, one that shows density and another that shows historic preservation areas. Chair Larson suggested adaptive reuse of existing resources as part of sustainability.

Discussion included use of Floor Area Ratios (FAR's) in land use decisions; condominium conversion and conservation of existing rental stock; incentives for rental property owners; and loss of jobs in the area; and variable density. Commissioners Bartlett and Lodge were concerned, not with luxury units versus inclusionary units, but rather market rate units versus affordable units.

Chair Larson opened the public hearing at 2:53 P.M.

The following people provided public comment:

1. Judy Orias, Allied Neighborhoods Association, submitted written comment and suggested that a margin-of-error be considered when calculating density.
2. Peter Hunt submitted written comment and favored offering incentives for rental housing by increasing the variable FAR in the Upper State St. area for workforce housing.
3. Fred Sweeney, Upper East Association, submitted written comment and expressed concern over secondary housing units, the proposed MODA element, and the use of FAR's.
4. Cathie McCammon, Allied Neighborhood Association shared concern with the MODA and submitted a reference article.
5. Dr. Paul Hernadi, Citizens Planning Association (CPA), summarized his written comments asking for a replacement of the MODA concept and suggestions on variable density.
6. Naomi Kovacs, CPA, summarized CPA's public comment letter, and asked for an update on the progress of the General Plan Land Use Map.
7. Connie Hannah, Santa Barbara League of Women Voters, summarized a comment letter sharing concern for the inherent trade-off in building expensive market rate housing to produce one affordable housing unit.
8. Mickey Flacks offered additional suggestions to the proposed MODA and minimum density.
9. Michael Chiacos, Community Environmental Council, asked for a reduction in carbon footprint and supported an expanded MODA.
10. John Campanella, Bermant Homes, commented on the success of developing multi-use projects with combined market rate housing and affordable housing. Cautioned against restricting condominium development with less than 2 bedroom/2 bathroom in favor of one bedroom units.
11. Sylvia Uribe supported Staff's proposal and the MODA.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 3:32 P.M.

Commissioner Larson called for recess at 3:33 P.M. and reconvened the meeting at 3:50 P.M.

John Ledbetter presented the updated Land Use Maps for closer review. Feedback from the Commission was for Staff to develop a video-taped draft map presentation that could be viewed at length.

Scott Vincent, Assistant City Attorney, reminded the Commission that any viewing of a video should be absorbed individually to avoid any Brown Act conflict.

Commissioner Jostes stated that the Commission had reached a consensus for smaller units and agreed on sustainability as a core operating principle. The remaining questions for the Commission were: 1) how should density be spread for updating variable density in the Land Use Element? and 2) Where should the MODA be drawn?

Commissioner Jostes saw the need for tools to be developed, such as the Zoning Ordinance, and some special purpose studies which will compliment the policy piece. Overlays were discussed that included rental housing; design districts, such as Upper State Street; and neighborhood sustainable planning areas. The MODA is almost an overlay.

The Commissioners made the following comments:

1. Commissioner Jostes recommended keeping the MODA flexible; suggested not over engineering it and defining it with a broad line.
2. Commissioner White envisioned the MODA as one that evolves with improved transit service. Would like transit analyzed. Would like neighborhoods to have neighborhood meetings.
3. Commissioner Lodge shared a historical perspective on the evolution of housing in the downtown area. Noted the trend for mixed-use and asked why future development in the downtown area could not be simply pure housing. Would like to see less emphasis on commercial development and more focus on housing. Felt that with a larger MODA area, there would be less opportunity to shift densities.
4. Commissioner Jacobs continued to advocate walkability and neighborhood charm. Agrees MODA is just a planning tool. Supported Commissioner Jostes suggestions for expanding the MODA. Supported incentives for adaptive reuse and rentals. Agreed with Commissioner White for disincentives for what we do not want in Santa Barbara. Suggested a Measure E-type configuration for residential development. Continued to advocate caution in the EPV area. Cannot support 60 units/acre in zoning, but could support 30-48 units/acre. FAR needs to be included in the General Plan Update.

5. Commissioner Bartlett appreciated Commissioner Jacobs's comments last month on the concept of the MODA as having already existed in Santa Barbara's early planning, but just was not called a MODA. Recognize MODA nodes and include them in mapping. Appreciated the sensitivity to EPV and sees the need for a historic map.

Mr. Vincent left at 4:59 P.M.

Staff responded to the Commission's question regarding the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) as scheduled for completion in late winter.

Commissioner Jostes offered his assistance to meet with the subcommittee and Staff.

Ms. Weiss thanked the Commission and the community for all the input received.

ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

ACTUAL TIME: 5:05 P.M.

A. Committee and Liaison Reports

1. Staff Hearing Officer Liaison Report

Commissioner Larson reported on the Staff Hearing Officer meeting held on August 26, 2009.

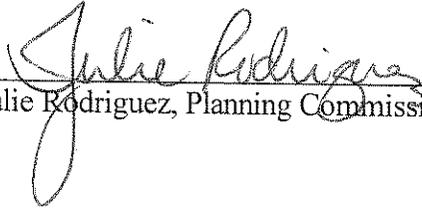
2. Other Committee and Liaison Reports

- a. None were given.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Larson adjourned the meeting at 5:06 P.M.

Submitted by,



Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

