



City of Sunnyvale

Excerpt Meeting Minutes - Draft Planning Commission

Monday, June 20, 2022

6:00 PM

Telepresence Meeting: City Web Stream |
Comcast Channel 15 | AT&T Channel 99

Special Meeting: Study Session - 6 PM | Public Hearing - 7 PM

7 P.M. PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

Pursuant to Government Code Subdivision 54953(e), the meeting was conducted telephonically; pursuant to state law, the City Council made the necessary findings by adopting Resolution No. 1089-21, reaffirmed on May 24, 2022

Chair Howard called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Chair Daniel Howard
Vice Chair Martin Pyne
Commissioner Sue Harrison
Commissioner Ken Rheaume
Commissioner Carol Weiss

Absent: 2 - Commissioner John Howe
Commissioner Nathan Iglesias

Commissioner Howe's absence is excused.
Commissioner Iglesias' absence is excused.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: Vice Chair Pyne moved and Commissioner Weiss seconded the motion to approve the Consent Calendar with the following revision to the minutes:

1.) Note that the first sentence of the third paragraph on page eight pertaining to Agenda Item 3 should read as follows: "Gail Rubino, member of Livable Sunnyvale,

advocated for the inclusion of more than 18 units per acre of affordable housing units within the Village Centers and echoed comments made by Ms. Liu and Mr. Fraleigh regarding the allocation of 60% of high-density sites to accommodate the Low Income RHNA.”

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Chair Howard
Vice Chair Pyne
Commissioner Harrison
Commissioner Rheaume
Commissioner Weiss

No: 0

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Howe
Commissioner Iglesias

1. [22-0647](#) Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of May 23, 2022

Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of May 23, 2022 as submitted.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

2. [22-0370](#) **Proposed Project:**
Forward recommendation to the City Council related to the El Camino Real Specific Plan (ECRSP):
 - A. Adopt a Resolution (Attachment 6) to:**
 - Certify the Environmental Impact Report (EIR); Make the findings required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); Adopt the Statement of Overriding Considerations and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; Adopt the Water Supply Assessment; Adopt the ECRSP
 - Repeal the Precise Plan for El Camino Real;
 - Amend the General Plan and update the General Plan Map; and
 - Adopt the ECRSP Community Benefits/Incentives Program (CBP).
 - B. Adopt a Resolution (Attachment 7) to:**
 - Amend the Fiscal Year 2022/23 Master Fee Schedule to add the ECRSP Maintenance Fee and ECRSP Transportation Impact Fee (TIF).
 - C. Introduce Ordinances (Attachments 8, 9, 10) to:**
 - Amend Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) Chapters/Sections: 19.12 (Definitions), 19.16.020 (Zoning

Districts-Creation); 19.34.040(c) (Front yard- Average and reduction); 19.34.060(b)(2) (Vision Triangles); 19.44 (Sign Code), 19.46.100 (Shared Parking); 19.54 (Wireless Telecommunication Facilities); 19.56 (Solar Energy Systems); and 19.90.010 (Special Development Permits - Purpose).

- Add SMC Chapters: 19.36 (El Camino Real Specific Plan District) to Title 19 (Zoning) and 3.54 (ECRSP Transportation Impact Fee) to Title 3 (Revenue and Finance);
- Repeal SMC Chapters/Sections: 19.08 (Grant of Landscape Easements Along El Camino Real and Mathilda Avenue) and 19.26.140-170 (Precise Plan for El Camino Real) of Chapter 19.26 (Combining Districts) in Title 19 (Zoning); and
- Amend the Zoning Plan Districts Map and re-zone parcels currently within the new ECRSP district.

D. Introduce an Ordinance to: Re-Zone Certain Properties Located at 510, 530, 550, And 570 Fall River Terrace From C2/PD (Highway Business/Planned Development) To R-3/PD (Medium Density Residential/Planned Development), and find that the Action is Exempt from CEQA.

E. Introduce an Ordinance to: Re-Zone Certain Properties Located at 1075, 1079, 1080, 1083, 1084, 1087, and 1088 Ed Roth Terrace From C2/ECR (Highway Business/El Camino Real) To R-3/PD (Medium Density Residential/Planned Development), and Find that the Action is Exempt from CEQA.

Location: Existing Plan: Precise Plan for El Camino Real

File number: 2014-7432 (El Camino Real Specific Plan)

General Plan Designation:

Existing: Corridor Mixed Use; Commercial; High Density Residential

Proposed: El Camino Real Specific Plan; Medium Density Residential; High Density Residential

Zoning:

Existing: C2/ECR and R-3/ECR and R4/ECR, O/ECR and PF/ECR

Proposed ECRSP Zoning Districts: El Camino Real - Commercial (ECR-C); El Camino Real - Mixed Use (ECR-MU); El Camino Real - Office (ECR-O); El Camino Real - Public Facilities (ECR-PF); El Camino Real - Medium Density Residential (ECR-R3); and, El Camino Real - High Density Residential (ECR-R4).

Applicant: City of Sunnyvale

Environmental Review (SCH # 2017102082): Adopt a resolution to make findings required by CEQA, certify the EIR, and adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting

Program.

Project Planner: Jeffrey Cucinotta, 408-730-7424,
jcucinotta@sunnyvale.ca.gov

Commissioner Harrison announced her recusal from Agenda Item 2 due to the proximity of her home to the Sunnyvale El Camino Real Specific Plan (ECRSP) area.

Senior Planner Jeffrey Cucinotta presented the staff report with a slide presentation.

Commissioner Weiss commended Senior Planner Cucinotta and staff on a job well-done. She then advocated for the increase of minimum open space requirements for higher-density sites and advised building upward to allow for more open space.

Commissioner Weiss questioned the safety of the removal of front yard standards and vision triangle exemptions relative to El Camino Real in the proposed amendment to Chapter 19.36 of the Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) and described in the staff report. Senior Planner Cucinotta explained that this is a textual amendment which will ensure that what was previously referred to as the Precise Plan will instead be referred to as the Specific Plan and contains no other modification.

Commissioner Weiss received clarification on VTA-compliant bus shelters. Director of Community Development Trudi Ryan explained that bus shelters are considered frontage improvements made to redeveloped sites that developers are responsible for. Principal Planner Blizinski added that a future Sense of Place Plan for the ECRSP could provide objective standards and more specificity in terms of requirements for bus shelter standards and locations within the plan area.

Commissioner Weiss commented that the number of trees along El Camino Real should be maximized. She also stated that she agrees with the decision to designate the northwest side of Wolfe Road and El Camino Real as commercial zoning since this will allow Golfland USA, a regional attraction and family recreational area, to remain there. Senior Planner Cucinotta revealed that Golfland USA intends to continue operating at the same location.

Vice Chair Pyne voiced his support for keeping Golfland USA where it is currently located. He also commented that if the site were to be redeveloped, he would prefer that it be a mixed-use site rather than a commercial site.

Vice Chair Pyne asked about the length of time to implement a Sense of Place Plan in the future. Principal Planner Blizinski responded that the timing will depend on workload and prioritization of the project by the City Council over other policy projects. However, once commenced, a Sense of Place Plan would likely take around a year to complete.

Vice Chair Pyne echoed Commissioner Weiss' comments regarding the importance of including trees along El Camino Real.

Vice Chair Pyne noted that he advised staff of a minimal error he identified in one of the City's resolutions. He also thanked staff on their work on the ECRSP.

Commissioner Rheume thanked staff for the comprehensiveness of the ECRSP. At Commissioner Rheume's request, Senior Planner Cucinotta provided reasoning for the designated zoning of sites in the ECRSP. In short, sites were examined for feasibility of retail versus residential development.

Commissioner Rheume mentioned a previous discussion that took place regarding the possibility of varying design characteristics for each of the ECRSP nodes and questioned whether plans to do so are still in place. Senior Planner Cucinotta answered that although this approach is no longer being considered, there may be some variation between the nodes and segments of the ECRSP. For instance, whereas nodes might generally be found along transit or bus stops where residential development is present, segments might generally be in predominantly commercial areas. In response, Commissioner Rheume expressed his desire to see variations in architectural designs. Senior Planner Cucinotta assured him that a future Sense of Place Plan could allow for variations in signage to create a uniform look across the El Camino Real Corridor while simultaneously implementing a neighborhood-specific design.

Like Commissioner Weiss, Commissioner Rheume spoke in favor of maximizing trees along El Camino Real and building upward to increase the availability of open space.

Commissioner Rheume asked whether utility equipment on new development sites may be covered or screened from view to enhance pedestrian experience. Principal Planner Blizinski mentioned that some of the new design guidelines help to address this concern.

Chair Howard engaged in a discussion with Director of Community Development Ryan regarding the methods for retail calculation of parcels on El Camino Real and the reasoning behind each. Director of Community Development Ryan advised Chair Howard to propose a modification, if any at all, that would affect a specific site rather than one that would affect multiple sites at once.

Chair Howard opened the Public Hearing.

Ari Feinsmith, team leader of Bike Sunnyvale (the local chapter of the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition), congratulated City staff on putting together a wonderful plan and presentation. He applauded recent changes made to the ECRSP, including strengthening language for removing on-street parking, but proposed additional changes. These changes include increasing the minimum number of required long-term bicycle parking spaces, requiring the availability of lockable storage spaces for bicycles on the ground floor, ensuring that Class I bicycle parking supports cargo bicycles, and considering the addition of a mid-block crossing on El Camino Real between Hollenbeck Avenue and Mary Avenue.

John Cordes, Sunnyvale resident, thanked Planning Commissioners and City staff for their service. He spoke in favor of Alternative 2 and proposed modifications to the ECRSP. He suggested the acceleration of removal of on-street parking on El Camino Real, maintaining the zoning of the unit at the northwest corner of Wolfe Road as ECR-MU42 rather than ECR-C due to our housing need, and increasing the bicycle parking ratio, density bonuses for secure bicycle parking, and electric bicycle charging availability.

Murali Srinivasan, speaking in his own capacity, spoke in overall support of the ECRSP and thanked staff for their wonderful work. In particular, he voiced his support for transit passes, pedestrian crossings, and higher density near nodes.

Josh Rupert, owner of property on El Camino Real, thanked staff for their hard work on the ECRSP and their reduction of open space requirements. He noted that despite this reduction, the site he owns will still possess over three acres of open space and will aim to maximize residential units. He also reminded Planning Commissioners that building upward to a height greater than 85 feet will result in high-rise construction that will result in increased construction costs and inhibit their ability to provide affordable or market-rate housing. Lastly, Mr. Rupert spoke in favor of allowing a variance for commercial sites.

Sue Harrison, speaking in her own capacity, emphasized the importance of maintaining open space requirements.

Alison Warner, Senior Vice President at Balboa Retail Partners and owner of property on El Camino Real, thanked staff for work done on the ECRSP and voiced her concerns about portions of the plan. In particular, she mentioned that the landscaping requirement might prevent the achievement of required density of proposed projects and urged for flexibility regarding the requirements for commercial space.

Greg Christopher, Senior Vice President of Development at Carmel Partners, recommended alterations to the ECRSP: maintaining the ECR-MU54 zoning to assist with meeting the City's housing goals; reducing landscaping requirements; and reducing commercial requirements for mixed-use developments that have no frontage on El Camino Real.

Ed Gocka expressed his concerns about changes made to the ECRSP since 2017 and the negative impact that these changes will have on residents, many of whom are not aware of these changes. He also stressed the importance of maintaining commercial sites rather than converting them to mixed-used development.

Jennifer T., echoed comments made by Mr. Gocka, advocated for more open space, and shared her concerns regarding water, sewer, traffic, air quality, and other environmental issues.

Chair Howard closed the Public Hearing.

At Vice Chair Pyne's request, Director of Community Development Ryan provided clarification on landscaping requirements and open space requirements and the differences between the two.

Vice Chair Pyne discussed with Director of Community Development Ryan the difference between a Deviation versus a Variance as they apply to the amount of commercial space allowed on a site. Director of Community Development Ryan explained what a Special Development Permit would allow as well. Vice Chair Pyne communicated that while he supports the preservation of levels of commercial development that staff is encouraging, he understands concerns that developers have regarding the viability of commercial developments on their sites.

Chair Howard acknowledged the importance of reviewing standards for commercial development in light of the City's immediate and future needs. He also spoke in favor of open space that is proportional to density.

Commissioner Weiss confirmed with Director of Community Development Ryan that publicly available and privately maintained open space is an incentive and that private usable open space reserved only for residents is a possibility as well.

Commissioner Weiss recalled the reduction of mixed-use sites in favor of commercial sites that was discussed in Attachment 19 of the staff report. She questioned whether the loss of housing units could be allocated elsewhere on El Camino Real rather than the sites specified in the attachment. Principal Planner Blizinski advised that units could only be moved within existing and adjacent Traffic Analysis Zones because of the associated environmental review that occurred for the project. She then reminded the Commission that recently adopted state law prohibits "downzoning" of properties in some circumstances, and once a density is assigned to a parcel it is difficult to make modifications that would lower the maximum allowed.

Chair Howard proposed that ECRSP's bicycle parking standards follow VTA's Bicycle Technical Guidelines. Principal Planner Blizinski provided background information on the origin of the City's lockable storage provisions and mentioned that many residents use this space for bicycle storage. She then mentioned that requiring both lockable storage and increased bicycle parking spaces may put too much of a burden on developers. Finally, she mentioned that in many cases the required lockable storage areas and bicycle parking will be in the same area of the development which is not always located at the front of the site.

MOTION: Chair Howard moved and Commissioner Weiss seconded the motion to approve Alternative 2- Alternative 1 with modifications.

These modifications are as follows:

- 1.) Maintain the minimum open space requirement as presented in the draft plan.
- 2.) Explore a mid-block crossing on El Camino Real between Hollenbeck Avenue and Mary Avenue.
- 3.) Remove on-street parking on connector streets within 50 feet of the El Camino Real intersection to improve visibility and pedestrian/bicycle safety.
- 4.) Consider modification of the minimum landscaping requirement.

- 5.) Maximize tree planting to the fullest extent possible.
- 6.) Correlate tree sizing to the proposed building height and massing.
- 7.) Revise SMC 19.36.120(f) to read as follows: "In accordance with Chapter 19.46 parking analysis must be provided with the planning application submittal and will be evaluated prior to issuance of a permit."

Chair Howard recognized the work that has been done thus far on the ECRSP.

Commissioner Weiss highlighted that El Camino Real will be changed for the better because of the ECRSP and noted that housing will be made available in the southern part of the City. She urged her fellow Commissioners to support the motion.

Commissioner Rheume spoke in favor of the motion and thanked staff for their work on the ECRSP and their inclusion of housing in much-needed areas within the City.

Vice Chair Pyne voiced his support of the motion and thanked staff for their work on the ECRSP. He also revealed that, if the motion included Option B which would lower certain densities, he would not be in support of the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Chair Howard
Vice Chair Pyne
Commissioner Rheume
Commissioner Weiss

No: 0

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Howe
Commissioner Iglesias

Recused: 1 - Commissioner Harrison

This recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at the June 28, 2022 meeting.