



MEETING SUMMARY FORM

Please fill out the following form as best you can. All information identified as public information will be summarized and published on the *Plan Santa Barbara* website (www.YouPlanSB.org).

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Meeting Date: June 7, 2007

Plan Santa Barbara representative(s): John Ledbetter (City staff)

Host Organization: Cottage Hospital

Number of Participants: 11

Please take a moment to summarize the meeting. What were the overall themes? What issues arose? What concerns did the participants express?

Presentation

The City is currently in the process of updating their General Plan and is seeking public input. A General Plan includes seven required elements on topics such as transportation, land use, housing, and open space. The public is encouraged to come to the first set of community workshops in June and July to share what they love about Santa Barbara, what are the concerns, and what they would like to see in the future. The City of Santa Barbara is also currently doing presentations for various groups who want to learn about Plan Santa Barbara. In the fall, the City will host a series of education forums, and then there will be another round of workshops from the winter 2007 to spring 2008. More information is available at www.YouPlanSB.org.

Questions & Answers

Q: Do you have to live in the City of Santa Barbara to participate in this process?

A: No. Anyone that lives or works in Santa Barbara is invited to provide their input.

Q: What type of interaction is there between the City of Santa Barbara and the City of Goleta in terms of development?

A: There is no regional government among the cities and the Santa Barbara Association of Governments has little clout. Santa Barbara is aware that development that occurs in Goleta will affect them.

Q: What is the status of the development on upper State Street?

A: The land use pattern along Upper State Street evolved very differently from the downtown "grid" pattern. Consequently, the more strip commercial and suburban look and feel of upper State Street is very different from the more urban and architecturally cohesive downtown. The recently completed Upper State Street study attempts to improve the urban design (the "look and feel") of the area, as well as improve the circulation for both pedestrian and vehicles.

Q: How does the City balance spending for tourists and residents?

A: The downtown benefits for the Redevelopment Agency, which generates a significant amount of improvement funding through tax increment financing. All the funds generated by the Redevelopment Agency must be spent within the Redevelopment district with the exception of affordable housing project. Many affordable housing projects have been built outside of the Downtown. Typically, though, neighborhood improvements are funded by the General Fund. Within the last few years the City has initiated the Neighbor Task Force to address neighborhood improvement concerns.

Q: How does the City help small local businesses with unaffordable rents?

A: Some towns have an economic retention program, but Santa Barbara does not.

Q: Does the General Plan include repair and maintenance of streets and sidewalks?

A: No, these are Public Works maintenance issues. Maintenance of streets is very expensive and much of the current funding comes from Measure D, the renewal of which was defeated last election. It will be on the ballot again this year and needs 66% of the vote for approval.

Q: Who makes the final decision regarding roundabouts?

A: Residents start the process by requesting action from the City regarding traffic issues. The City investigates the issue and presents the best possible solution to the City Council who makes the final decision. The new roundabouts will be beautified with landscaping.

Q: Who requested the Samarkand traffic chokers/calming devices?

A: The residents requested the City assist with slowing traffic in that neighborhood.

Q: What is the status of the Transit Center redevelopment project?

A: The project is still moving forward, but no major decisions have been made as yet.

Q: Do issues surrounding gang violence fall into the General Plan?

A: Typically "youth" is not a separate Element of a General Plan. Youth issues tend to fall into other categories such as housing and recreation.

Q: Do seniors have a separate category in the General Plan?

A: Seniors do not have a separate Element since their issues are present in other Elements such as housing and transportation. If the public identifies seniors as a top priority then the City could develop a senior "Element".

Q: What is the status of the project regarding bike path and roundabout near Cabrillo and Coast Village Road?

A: The project is moving forward.

Q: Do we have community gardens?

A: Santa Barbara does have some community gardens, and this topic can be included in the General Plan.

Q: Is there a way to report graffiti?

A: There is a graffiti hotline. (Graffiti Hotline Phone Number: (805) 897-2513 and more information can be found at <http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/Resident/Home/Graffiti/>)

Q: Is the new Granada parking lot full yet?

A: The lot is not full yet, but more people are parking in that garage. The City anticipates greater usage as the word spreads about the location.

Q: What is being done about illegal dwellings?

A: This is a difficult issue in Santa Barbara since people need places to live, but many of those places are not up to code. Currently, only five granny units have been legally permitted by the City. The Housing Element of the General Plan is the only Element that needs to be certified by the State. Each year the State requires that the City demonstrate that there is the zoning capacity for so many residences, but granny units are not identified per say. However State law is changing and each year local governments are being required more and more to facilitate the approval of granny units.

Q: How are fees determined for residential construction since they can be cost prohibitive?

A: The City of Santa Barbara compares its fees to surrounding communities and finds that we are always either at or often times below the average. Currently the City recoups about 30% of the actual cost. The County charges 100% of the cost.

Q: Is the City moving forward with green buildings?

A: Yes. One example is where the local contractors association has worked with the City to create a green building program for residential development. The Council also recently adopted a set of regulations requiring that all new City buildings will be LEED certified and that energy efficiency requirements exceed state standards by 25%. In addition, the City is installing solar panels on the buildings in the Public Works yard at no cost to us through a creative tax arrangement with a consulting firm.

Q: Is the four day work week going well for the City?

A: This will be implemented in July, and there is excitement surrounding the new hours. This is a good program since employees won't be driving during the am and pm commute hours and there will be fewer cars on the road on Friday. In addition, this plan makes employees happy which helps employee recruitment and retention efforts.

Q: Does the City plan to give tax breaks to residents who people who have solar panels on their home?

A: The tax breaks will probably come down from the State and or Federal government; the City of Santa Barbara currently doesn't offer any tax breaks. Some environmental groups in Santa Barbara are saying that Santa Barbara needs to once again become a model city when it comes to the environment.

Q: How do projects transition from the old to the new General Plan?

A: Once the City Council approves the General Plan it goes into affect. Any new projects from that day forward must meet the requirements of the new General Plan.

Q: When will the City of Santa Barbara get a Target store?

A: La Cumbre Plaza is a possibility since they are looking at completely redeveloping the mall at some point.

Q: Will the City ever close downtown State Street to automobiles?

A: It's not likely to happen permanently, but it might happen on occasion.

Q: What is the status of Whole Foods?

A: The project is moving forward and the environmental impact report will begin soon. Whole Foods is looking to make it a "green" LEED certified shopping center. The current plan is to have Whole Foods, Circuit City, and condominiums. Traffic is the biggest issue at the moment.

Q: Would it be possible to close the Wharf to cars and just have busses shuttle people?

A: It is possible, but unlikely in the near future