

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA CITY COUNCIL

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735 Anacapa Street

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MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2007, 2:30 P.M.

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

LOUISE LOWRY DAVIS RECREATION CENTER, 1232 DE LA VINA STREET

ORDER OF BUSINESS: Regular meetings of the Ordinance Committee begin at 12:30 p.m. Regular meetings of the Finance Committee begin at 1:00 p.m. The regular City Council meeting begins at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber at City Hall.

REPORTS: Copies of the reports relating to agenda items are available for review in the City Clerk's Office, at the Central Library, and <http://www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov>. In accordance with state law requirements, this agenda generally contains only a brief general description of each item of business to be transacted or discussed at the meeting. Should you wish more detailed information regarding any particular agenda item, you are encouraged to obtain a copy of the Council Agenda Report (a "CAR") for that item from either the Clerk's Office, the Reference Desk at the City's Main Library, or online at the City's website (<http://www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov>).

REQUEST TO SPEAK: A member of the public may address the City Council regarding any scheduled agenda item. Any person wishing to address the City Council should first complete and deliver to the City Administrator/City Clerk a "Request to Speak" form prior to the time that the item on the agenda is read by the Deputy City Clerk. The City Council, upon majority vote, may decline to hear a speaker on the grounds that the subject matter is beyond their jurisdiction.

PUBLIC COMMENT: At the beginning of an Ordinance or Finance Committee meeting, any member of the public who so requests will be provided with a brief opportunity to address the Committee concerning any item on the Committee's agenda for that meeting. At the beginning of the 2:00 p.m. session of each regular City Council meeting, and at the beginning of each special City Council meeting, any member of the public may address the City Council. Should City Council business continue into the evening session of a regular City Council meeting at 6:00 p.m., the City Council will allow any member of the public who did not address them during the 2:00 p.m. session to do so. The total amount of time for public comments will be 15 minutes, and no individual speaker may speak for more than 1 minute.

CONSENT CALENDAR: The Consent Calendar is comprised of items that will not usually require discussion by the City Council. A Consent Calendar item is open for discussion by the City Council upon request of a Councilmember, City staff, or member of the public. Items on the Consent Calendar may be approved by a single motion. Should you wish to comment on an item listed on the Consent Agenda, after turning in your speaker slip, you should come forward to speak at the time the Council considers the Consent Calendar.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to gain access to, comment at, or participate in this meeting, please contact the City Administrator's Office at 564-5305 or inquire at the City Clerk's Office on the day of the meeting. If possible, notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements in most cases.

TELEVISION COVERAGE: Each regular City Council meeting is broadcast live in English and Spanish on Channel 18, and rebroadcast in its entirety in English on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. and on Saturdays at 9:00 a.m. and in Spanish on Sundays at 4:00 p.m. Each televised City Council meeting is closed captioned for the hearing impaired.

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING JOINT SESSION WITH PLANNING COMMISSION

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT

NOTICES

The City Clerk has on Thursday, September 6, 2007, posted this agenda in the Office of the City Clerk, on the City Hall Public Notice Board on the outside balcony of City Hall, and on the Internet.

WORK SESSIONS

1. Subject: Plan Santa Barbara And Community Design Issues (650.05)

Recommendation: That Council and the Planning Commission:

- A. Hear staff presentations on the Plan Santa Barbara (PlanSB) Round I Community Input Summary Report and July 18th Community Design Work Session;
- B. Consider potential next steps to address Community Design issues as a follow-up to the July 18 work session; and
- C. Provide feedback to staff on PlanSB and Community Design issues.

ADJOURNMENT



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: September 10, 2007

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers
Planning Commission

FROM: Community Development Department

SUBJECT: Plan Santa Barbara and Community Design Issues

RECOMMENDATION: That Council and the Planning Commission:

- A. Hear staff presentations on the Plan Santa Barbara (PlanSB) Round I *Community Input Summary Report* and July 18th Community Design Work Session;
- B. Consider potential next steps to address Community Design issues as a follow-up to the July 18 work session; and
- C. Provide feedback to staff on PlanSB and Community Design issues.

DISCUSSION:

Plan Santa Barbara - Community Input Summary Report

The Round I PlanSB workshop series was concluded on July 7, 2007 and the summaries from each of these four workshops are being assembled in a *Community Input Summary Report*. Input for this report also includes 554 comments cards received through a city-wide mailing and via the *YouPlanSB.org* website, and over 40 small, "grassroots" meetings in which almost 1,000 people have participated to date.

All of this input has been carefully recorded on the *YouPlanSb.org* website and is now being summarized in the *Community Input Summary Report*. The full report is expected to be completed by the end of September. The Round I community input process was designed to solicit basic community values, concerns, and opportunities for future growth and development in Santa Barbara. The input was then summarized into broad themes which identify the range of opinion, points of consensus, and key differences within the community. The process has been a success thus far and staff looks forward to the next challenge.

The next step will be to use this input as the foundation for developing policy framework options that will be analyzed and eventually presented in the Round II workshop series

REVIEWED BY: _____ Finance _____ Attorney

Agenda Item No. _____

next year. Early reaction to the *Community Input Summary Report* findings by the Council, Boards and Commissions, and interested community members will help ensure staff has “got it right”, before moving on to the next phase of work.

Community Design Worksession

On July 18th, the City Council held a joint worksession with the Planning Commission, Architectural Board of Review (ABR) and the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) to discuss existing policies, guidelines and standards as related to community design and development. Listed below are the possible outcomes that were anticipated for the joint worksession.

1. *Immediate value for all groups to have a greater and common understanding of existing policies and standards for review of large projects in El Pueblo Viejo (EPV) and throughout the City.*
2. *Confirmation that the existing rules, guidelines and findings for approval give sufficient direction to approve, revise or deny projects.*
3. *Gage interest in near-term actions such as:*
 - a. *Establishing additional findings especially related to the review of projects for consistency with the Urban Design Guidelines or*
 - b. *Changing the variable density provisions in the Zoning Ordinance to reduce the size of new units.*
4. *Ideas and possible questions to help shape the community discussion on policy options and trade-offs in Round 2 of Plan SB.*

Attachment 1, the Community Design Worksession Outcomes and Next Steps report, provides a brief description of whether the outcome was achieved and what next steps are proposed, as well as a brief analysis of the legal considerations for any new findings of Community Benefit. Staff will present the attached report at the September 10th Worksession for discussion and feedback.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

The two items identified in this report are for discussion purposes only at this juncture and will not have any budget/financial impact beyond existing budgeted resources.

ATTACHMENT: Community Design Worksession – Outcomes and Next Steps

PREPARED BY: John Ledbetter, Principal Planner

SUBMITTED BY: Paul Casey, Community Development Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office

Community Design Worksession – July 18, 2007

Outcomes and Next Steps

On July 18th, the City Council held a joint Worksession with the Planning Commission, Architectural Board of Review (ABR) and the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC). The meeting was held at the Cabrillo Pavilion and was well-attended by Board and Council members as well as the public. The meeting began with a brief staff presentation. Then Council and Board members were asked to form four small groups comprised of two members from Council, PC, ABR and HLC. The 90-minute small group discussion was followed by reports and public comment in the large group setting.

A complete listing of the flip chart notes taken during each of the four small group discussions, and a video of the actual joint worksession, can be viewed at http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/Resident/Major_Planning_Efforts/Special_Joint_Meeting_of_City_Council/

Worksession Outcomes and Next Steps

Listed below are the possible outcomes anticipated for the joint worksession followed by a brief description of whether the outcome was achieved.

1. *Immediate value for all groups to have a greater and common understanding of existing policies and standards for review of large projects in El Pueblo Viejo (EPV) and throughout the City.*

Worksession participants seemed to really appreciate the opportunity to meet informally to discuss current issues. Many observed that they couldn't remember the last time the Council, PC, ABR and HLC all convened in a worksession format. Even members of the public, who were initially reluctant about not being able to participate in the small group discussions, acknowledged how important it was for the Council and board members to be able to talk amongst themselves in an informal setting.

There was also a general recognition that the City's Urban Design Guidelines were not being used to the extent possible. In particular, it was acknowledged that the Urban Design Guidelines address in detail critical design review elements such as:

- Compatibility of new development with the existing environment,
- Human-scale character – Visual relationship between development and pedestrians, and
- Building / Street Edge – Functional relationship between development and pedestrians.

There was general, possibly even unanimous, support that the design review boards should be required to make findings of approval that projects are consistent with the Urban Design Guidelines.

2. Confirmation that the existing rules, guidelines and findings for approval give sufficient direction to approve, revise or deny projects.

As stated above, there was significant support expressed for stronger implementation of the City's Urban Design Guidelines including creating new findings for design review approval. Many felt that the proposal to limit building heights in EPV had served as a "wake-up call" for the ABR, HLC and PC to be more aggressive in their review of new development projects. While this may serve the city well in the near-term, many participants expressed concern about our current policies. Most questioned whether the development we are seeing is adequately meeting the City's goals, especially with respect to Affordable housing and the historic character of EPV.

When one considers all the comments made at the Worksession, one cannot conclude that there is a consensus regarding our current plans and policies. Some participants were interested in reducing requirements such as on-site parking and open space to encourage more Downtown housing. However, most participants felt recently developed projects lack the significant landscaping, open space, setbacks/ openness and human scale characteristics that have historically been essential to Santa Barbara's physical beauty.

This lack of consensus will have significant implications for the *Plan SB* process (see below).

3. Gauge interest in near-term actions such as:

- a. Establishing additional findings especially related to the review of projects for consistency with the Urban Design Guidelines or**
- b. Changing the variable density provisions in the Zoning Ordinance to reduce the size of new units.**

There was broad support for developing new findings for design review approval. Based on the input at the joint Worksession, staff has drafted the following potential new findings:

The Historic Landmarks Commission and Architectural Board of Review must find that the proposed development demonstrates compatibility on four different levels:

- *The development will be compatible with the distinctive architectural character of Santa Barbara and the surrounding neighborhood;*
- *The height, scale and massing of the development will be compatible with adjacent developments;*
- *The development will have sufficient open space and landscaping; and*

- *The development will be consistent with the City's Urban Design Guidelines.*

Staff will be looking for input on these possible new findings at the joint meeting on September 10th. Shortly thereafter, staff will request that Council initiate an ordinance amendment to incorporate new findings for HLC and ABR. If possible, staff anticipates incorporating this work effort into the ordinance changes being drafted as a follow-up/clean-up effort to the NPO / Single Family Design Guidelines amendment.

Changing the variable density standards in the Zoning Ordinance is a much more complex and complicated issue. Staff agrees that the ordinance should be amended to encourage smaller units (and possibly rental-only). These changes could also address some of the size, bulk and scale concerns that are being expressed. However, it would be very difficult to keep this zoning amendment simple. Issues related to density, on-site parking requirements, setbacks, affordability, open space, historic preservation, energy efficiency and a host of other issues would likely surface. Staff hopes to be able to address this zoning change concurrently as part of and during the Plan SB process.

4. *Ideas and possible questions to help shape the community discussion on policy options and trade-offs in Round 2 of Plan SB.*

During the small group discussions, a wide range of opinions were expressed as to whether the City's current plan and policies are on track. Many excellent questions were raised and suggestions for additional information that should be considered during the *Plan SB* process. This will be helpful to staff as we begin to plan the next phase of public workshops on future growth and development in the City.

Community Benefit Findings - Legal Considerations

At the joint Worksession on community design and at many *Plan SB* meetings, the idea has been proposed that new developments should be required to provide community benefits / address community needs. In particular, it's been suggested that the City only allow new development projects to reach the maximum height allowed by zoning (3-4 stories) if the project provides community benefit or meets existing community needs. Ideas have included:

- Providing more affordable housing than is required by Inclusionary Program,
- For rental housing only,
- Exceeding new Green Building requirements,
- Receiving transfer of development rights from the Gaviota Coast or elsewhere to preserve open space.

These are great ideas that need full review and study in the context of *Plan SB*. However implementing these ideas in the context of new findings for approval in our current policy framework is extremely problematic.

State law prohibits the City from imposing findings that would result in exactions that are not directly related to the project's impacts if the project is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning. State law is clear that proposed new development projects can not be expected to address existing community needs and resource deficiencies. To require a project to address a community need, it must be demonstrated that a proposed project is creating an impact, or increased demand for resources and services that needs to be addressed / mitigated. Even then, the project may only be assessed a proportional share of the overall cost of the improvement or service that needs to be delivered.

For example, there is an established need for a new public park in the West Downtown area for existing and future residents. New development can not be expected to pay the full costs for a new park. However, if a nexus study were completed, the project could be assessed a fee proportional to the incremental increased need for a West Downtown park caused by the project. The same approach would be needed for traffic improvements and other public resources and services.

Some cities, such as San Luis Obispo, are moving in the direction of requiring projects to meet multiple policy objectives (paseos, open space, design amenities, views, historic preservation or affordable housing) in order to be approved. However, the development policy context in that city is very different – a current 2-story maximum building height. They have decided to allow an increase in building height and intensity only if projects meet multiple policy objectives.

For this approach to work in the City of Santa Barbara, the City would need to first take significant steps to create a similar situation. These steps would include either:

- (1) Reducing the allowable height and densities currently allowed in the General Plan and zoning to 2-stories (downzone), and then adopt the policy objectives establishing under what conditions projects could be allowed to build to 4-stories, 60 feet for example. or
- (2) Amend the City Charter, General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to allow buildings to exceed the 4-story 60 feet maximum as long as multiple policy objectives are met.

Staff believes that either of these steps raises significant issues that should be part of the *Plan SB* discussion.