



**SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

**City Hall Council Chambers
1000 San Pablo Avenue
November 17, 2010 – 7:30 p.m.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cooper at 7:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Cooper, Kitahara, Lieberman, Price, Schrift, Smith Heimer, Yang

Others Present: UC Village Project representatives, Jeff Bond, Planning & Building Manager

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3-1. Approve minutes from October 2010 meeting (attached)

Minutes approved unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

5. PRESENTATION

5-1. UC Village Project - this study session is intended to provide an opportunity for the applicant to provide the

Committee an update on the project. No action is to be taken at this meeting. (**Attachment 1**)

Bond provided an introduction - the final EIR is expected to be released to the public shortly, Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a study session in early 2011.

Kevin Hufford, Project Planner from UC provided an overview of the project evolution. The intent is to establish a LEED Silver development that incorporates renewable energy, stormwater management, green roofs and creek protection. The City's parking requirements are substantial. The design includes subsurface parking to help minimize impact on the site footprint.

The Committee held a question & answer discussion with the applicant.

Price asked about the size of the bedrooms/apartments, and what percentage would be affordable units.

UC staff responded that the average size is approximately 700 square feet, and there will be some care facilities that are approximately 400 square feet. The percentage of affordable units is still being researched.

Cooper asked whether there are alternatives to Whole Foods that would be ok with a smaller store size.

UC staff responded that they are in contract with Whole Foods.

Cooper asked what options are available to shrink building size, and whether there can be changes to the amount of surface parking.

UC staff responded that there are limits in the size, if it shrinks by orders of magnitude, the project would not be feasible for Whole Foods. The proposed project is similar in size to the proposed Safeway project.

Kitahara commented that Whole Foods will result in a regional draw, which would be better suited to the area near Target.

Lieberman asked about the number of parking spaces, and whether the number of parking spaces proposed would be less if the City's parking requirements were waived.

UC staff responded they would likely have less parking. Some of the parking spaces will be shared between retail and residential.

Bond added that the parking requirements are dated, and that getting exceptions is not easy. It is a voter approved mandate from 1978. Parking on Monroe is proposed as back-in parking which is safer for cyclists.

Kitahara asked how the Active Transportation Plan coincides with the proposed project.

Bond replied that they will work together to accommodate active transportation.

Schrift asked if there would be shading for the parking.

Bond replied that shading is required per codes.

Smith-Heimer recommended additional greening features to improve the project's sustainable design.

Yang asked if auto traffic from UC Village is coming through Monroe.

UC staff responded that traffic moves three ways through the Village: 8th Street, Monroe, and Jackson.

Kitahara stated that Whole Foods and Target might out-compete local retail, and asked about the retail tenants.

UC staff replied that they will not know the tenants until later, but anticipate service-oriented such as a green pharmacy.

Yang asked how public transit would be affected.

UC staff replied that an increase in ridership could occur because there are more attractions in the area.

Public Comment:

Preston Jordan, Strollers & Rollers – developer has engaged with Strollers & Rollers to work on functional solutions to safe crossings on San Pablo. Strollers & Rollers would like better connectivity from the bike path to Whole Foods, and prefer Whole Foods adjacent to Codornices creek with underground parking.

UC staff response: the project was redesigned to underground parking and to provide for truck accessibility and better stormwater management for the parcel, and the senior housing will have the amenity of Codornices creek.

Susan Schwartz, Friends of 5 Creeks – would like walking access along Village creek, would like bicycle routes better defined, proponent of the green roofs.

Ed Fields – asked if a developer has been identified for the senior housing project, square footage for the units seems larger than the average noted by the applicant of 750 square feet. The affordable housing requirement should be met on site as much as possible. Suggests focusing on the retail store as the sustainability issue.

UC Staff response: the developer has not been selected for the housing component yet, the process will be initiated shortly. They are working with a consultant on the inclusionary housing item and will include a discussion of this with the Planning & Zoning Commission. There is a lease agreement with Whole Foods that calls out the square footage of the store, however the size of the store is still under discussion. If there is a significant reduction in size of the store, the project would not be feasible. Goals include integrating the stores to the surrounding Village, and improving the San Pablo Corridor to improve AC Transit ridership.

The scale and number of parking spaces is driven by the City's Zoning Ordinance. They are trying to design shared use parking.

Bond stated that the parking requirements are established and it is difficult to get exceptions to the code, as well as voter approved mandates for two parking spaces per residential unit.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

6-1. Subcommittee Updates

Building/Energy – discussed opportunities for community outreach for residential energy efficiency.

Water/Green Infrastructure – working on developing a calendar for projects.

6-2. Arts & Green Festival Update

The Green subcommittee met to discuss logistics and vendor list.

6-3. Albany Farmer's Market Update

Ben Feldman from the Ecology Center provided an update. They are working to open a seasonal market (May-October), on Solano between Adams and San Pablo in May 2011, on Wednesday evenings. A community meeting will be held in the Community Center in December.

7. DISCUSSIONS AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

7-1. Update from staff on the region-wide Sustainable Communities Strategy mandated by SB 375

Bond provided an update – the planning process is ongoing to determine the application of SB 375 regionally. Additional housing will need to be accommodated in the region. The AB32 goals are not being reached.

Priority development areas (PDA) have been selected throughout the region, and that is where development will occur first. The City chose not to be a PDA. Albany could be asked to increase density.

7-2. Climate Action Plan implementation – confirm implementation tasks for subcommittees

This item was moved to the December agenda.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

(Commission/Committee/Board Member announcement of requests for future agenda items. No public comment will be taken on announcement of future agenda items).

8-1. Next meeting – December 15, 2010: Climate Action Plan implementation funding – review draft document to prepare report for City Council

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10 p.m.