

JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION/ASCC MEETING. TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY, APRIL 6, 2005.
TOWN CENTER, HISTORIC SCHOOLHOUSE, 765 PORTOLA ROAD, PORTOLA VALLEY, CA 94028

Chairman McIntosh called the meeting to order at 8:10 p.m. Ms. Lambert called the roll:

Present: Planning Commissioners Elkind, Wengert and Zaffaroni, and Chairman McIntosh
ASCC Commissioners Breen, Schilling, Warr and Chair Chase
Absent: Planning Commissioner McKitterick and ASCC Commissioner Gelpi
Staff Present: George Mader, Town Planner
Tom Vlastic, Dep. Town Planner
Leslie Lambert, Planning Manager
Richard Merk and George Comstock, Liaisons

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

REGULAR AGENDA

(1) STUDY SESSION: Conceptual Town Center Master Plan

Town Planner Mader reviewed the staff report of 3/29/05 on the conceptual site plan for the new Town Center. He noted that ASCC Commissioner Gelpi had forwarded his comments in an e-mail dated 4/2/05. He introduced Larry Strain, Susi Marzuola and Jim Goring from the design team.

Ms. Marzuola used slides to discuss: 1) the previous master plan; 2) changes made in the new plan (e.g., deferring opening up the creek, a second entry drive near Christ Church, and revised emergency access); and 3) phasing. Responding to questions, she discussed infrastructure included in phase 1. She continued the presentation and discussed: 4) the land swap area; 5) entry drives and parking; 6) the landscape zoning plan; 7) play areas and fencing; 8) grading; 9) the Town Plaza and gardens; 10) Town Square area; 11) the green; 12) redwood grove; 13) seasonal plantings and native vegetation; 14) trees; 15) overflow parking; 16) trails and paths; 17) types of fences; 18) athletic field materials, fencing/backstops, and bleachers; and 19) tennis and all-sport courts including fencing/landscaping.

Using slides and the model, Messrs. Strain and Goring discussed how the plan had evolved since November. They described: a) buildings in relation to courtyards; b) Town Plaza area; c) entries; d) roof forms and colors; e) Town Hall building; f) elevations; g) roof materials; h) views on site; i) shading screens; j) the one-story library building, including materials, screening, entry, lighting, shading/louvers, siding, etc; k) the Town Hall building, including the entry porch and canopy, views, public lobby and offices, views and upstairs; l) the Community Hall and courtyard; m) activity room, including vegetative roof; n) types of shading and trellises; o) cooling of high use rooms; p) the maintenance area; q) elevations; r) sustainable finished materials, maintenance and costs; s) roof materials; and t) location of photovoltaics.

Commissioner Warr discussed the south face of the library. He said he would like to see a way of doing shading that more was plain and didn't use louvers/horizontals. He suggested that roofs be brought out to the south further to create more shade. Mr. Strain said the unifying things about the buildings were the roofs that picked up at the entries and the louvers/light shelves. Mr. Goring added that the goal was to provide some view of the sky and hills. Noting that the end of the library was one of the first things seen on the site, Mr. Warr said he would prefer a more familiar shape. He liked the roof coming up in order to capture the views but reiterated his concerns about the use of louvers

Commissioner Schilling referred to the kick up at the corner of two of the buildings. He understood that the intent was to give a vista out, but screening/louvers would block the view. He also felt louvers created maintenance problems. Responding to Mr. Goring, he felt that screening the sun would also screen the view.

With respect to the roofs, Commissioner Wengert said they were quite elegant and very dramatic. Her only concern was that in some of the places where steep angles met, there could be major runoff that could impact the ingress/egress to the buildings; drainage was another question. Mr. Strain discussed the use of cisterns at the intersection points which were not yet shown on the plans.

Responding to Commissioner Warr, Mr. Strain discussed anticipated water needs for the fields and the buildings. He said not enough water could be collected to water the fields. Responding to Commissioner Wengert, he said a quick analysis of the PG&E bills had been done to find out the electric loads; a 25-kilowatt system would be needed or about 2,500 sf of photovoltaics. Heating the buildings using photovoltaic power to run a heat pump would mean every square inch of the building would need to be covered; they would all have to face south. The plan was to come up with a very efficient boiler-type radiant system in the floor for all of the buildings except the Community Hall. Because of that building's use, you needed a faster response heating; it would probably be an air system. Some natural gas would be used, and it would be made as efficient as possible. Responding to Commissioner Warr, he said he met with the mechanical engineer and PV person to talk about geothermal systems. It was doable, but it would be an expensive system to install. It was a "first cost versus long-term payback" issue. Commissioner Warr discussed the benefits of using geothermal systems. He also felt there was greater opportunity for photovoltaics on the roofs than what was proposed. He felt there was about 6,000-7,000 sf of roof available that was south-facing. Mr. Strain said 2-3 options would be presented with pricing data, payback times, etc.

Commissioner Zaffaroni said the bathrooms were of concern to her. She thought there should be a bathroom to serve the Schoolhouse. She did not think people should have to traverse the youth play area to get to a bathroom. As proposed, the bathroom was too far away. Additional lighting would also be required at night for safety. Similarly, people would have to exit the MUR and go outside to access the bathroom. That was inconvenient for people attending large community or private events that might take place there. In the wintertime, it was also cold and unpleasant. Additionally, she was concerned about the distance from parking to the entry for the library. She thought it would be unnecessarily inconvenient--especially for little children with big stacks of books. With regards to the central path and the entry to the Community Hall/MUR, she said people often brought in large tables, the band needed to set up, etc. Responding, Mr. Strain confirmed that the central path could be used for access. It was an emergency access and would be used to service the fields as well as get to the building. Ms. Marzuola said it would not accommodate a fire truck but would accommodate a smaller vehicle. Mr. Strain discussed an alternate permeable surface entry that could be used to access the building for deliveries, etc.

Ms. Marzuola said the restroom for the MUR was outside but undercover; the amount of outdoor space was about 10 feet. Additional lighting would be on if there was an event going on there. Mr. Strain pointed out that the design could be altered to enclose the area. The bathroom would also serve the activity rooms. Responding to Commissioner Zaffaroni, he said the bathroom servicing the Schoolhouse was constrained by the rupture zone. Responding to Commissioner Warr, Mr. Strain discussed options considered for the location of the bathroom and the seismic constraints. He agreed alternative locations for the bathroom should be looked at.

Responding to Commissioner Zaffaroni, Mr. Strain said water and PG&E bills had been looked at, and it was expected that all of them would go down; the current site was very inefficient and 30-40 years old. The temporary building was new, but it was not particularly well-built or efficient in terms of insulation, etc. He reiterated for Commissioner Zaffaroni that he felt the long-term operating expenses would all go down.

Councilmember Merk disagreed. He said labor had to be taken into account. What was proposed would require a lot more labor to keep it clean and neat. Responding, Mr. Goring said if the current buildings were being taken care of, he did not think it would cost any more than what was proposed. Councilmember Merk described the kind of work that would be required to maintain the new Town Center grassy areas, paths, etc.

Ms. Marzuola said it had been designed to keep it more rustic, as directed by the ADT. There was always the option to use solid concrete and alleviate maintenance required for the grassy areas. Currently, there was more paving on the existing site now than there would be on the future site. By taking away paving and

putting it in landscape, the intent was to keep it in a native state that would take care of itself. Mr. Strain said it was the design team's understanding that a great deal of this should be native landscaping. There was some maintenance required, but the idea was to extend the native garden, etc. The Conservation Committee wanted to treat it like an experiment. If it turned out to be a lot of work, it could go back to what was there now. The intent was to try to balance what the Town wanted with what was maintainable. Responding to Commissioner Warr, he said the first proposal used a decomposed granite surface for the central path. But, the Town Engineer did not want to see a gravel-based surface because it did not hold up well. Commissioner Warr described areas that he thought should be paved and areas that should be pasture grass based on seasonal use. Mr. Strain said one of the approaches was to try the simple thing first; if it was not good enough, you upgraded to something like DG. If the pasture grass survived and looked fine, there was no problem. For pricing, however, what might be ultimately needed was considered. The alternative was to back off and try the minimal approach to everything.

Responding to Commissioner Breen, Ms. Marzuola said the central path would have a simple gate/chain that would keep vehicles off of it. Mr. Strain discussed proposed low-level lighting along paths. Commissioners discussed lighting on the path which would be necessary for Community Hall events. Mr. Vlasic suggested that there be enough switching controls so that the lighting only came on during the events; some kind of light would be necessary to make the path usable at those times.

With respect to phasing, Ms. Marzuola verified for Commissioner Zaffaroni that the first phase would include the Town Hall, library, maintenance facility, and all of the infrastructure. Responding to Commissioner Zaffaroni, Commissioner McIntosh said it would be more cost efficient to do the infrastructure for all of the buildings at the same time. Responding to Commissioner Zaffaroni, Ms. Marzuola said the second tier items could happen in almost any order. It would be more convenient from a construction point of view to do the other buildings closer to the time of completion or at the same time as the first two buildings in the Town Center. With respect to the infrastructure, she said the biggest load buildings would be done up front. The premium paid for the additional load was about one quarter.

Responding to Commissioner McIntosh, Mr. Strain said phase 1 was estimated at \$7-8 million. A little more than half of the project was in Phase 1. Phase 2 (e.g., athletic facilities) was the cheapest phase and was estimated at \$1-2 million. Responding to Councilmember Merk, Ms. Marzuola said the playground priced out by the previous architect at \$450,000.

Commissioner Wengert said it was difficult not knowing the financial aspect. In her experience, phase 1 was usually the smallest. She thought there might be some wisdom in having some additional vetting of the phasing in case the full \$8 million was not available. There should be a way to start the project and get some material things done in slightly smaller chunks.

Mr. Strain noted that the Council felt the life/safety issues were the most important. The problem was that he did not think the library could remain where it was for years and years until phase 2 or 3. It was the highest use building, and the thinking was to get it done in phase 1 because the most people were in that building on a weekly basis.

Responding to Commissioner McIntosh, Ms. Howard said there was about \$4.25 million in reserves. Different funding strategies were being looked at, including a public financing loan over 30 years for the other 3.5 million that would fund the first phase. A sub-committee was looking at some other strategies (e.g., a parcel tax, general obligation bond, etc.). There was also the possibility that the Town would be very successful with fundraising; consultants would be doing a feasibility study. She felt anything that could be done to make the phases larger and take advantage of cost savings of not having to store materials, etc., should be done. The bottom line was that the support of the community was essential. What she was hearing was that the library was one of the things the community did not want to do without. The community felt it should be in phase 1, and it was the most expensive building. Commissioner McIntosh noted that there were 60,000 users of the library last year. Commissioner Wengert suggested that that was the best fundraising strategy. Commissioner Elkind thought that a beautiful library in place would excite people more

about what was coming.

Commissioner Elkind said the concept of clustering the buildings adjacent to the church and the ability to look over the buildings at the trees and hills was wonderful. She was enormously excited by this because it created a real sense of a center with vistas and the whole recreation area. Her only aesthetic concern was all of the fences that would be needed around the fields. Ms. Marzuola said there were different ways of handling fencing. Metal was one approach, and wood was another. Typically metal used smaller members because the material was stronger; wood was bigger and heavier and was not as durable. Safety fencing would be required around the various elements but could be screened with vines. Commissioner Elkind said she did not like metal but thought it was the only thing that would work. On some of the edges that backed up to the more natural landscape areas, there might be more wood elements.

Commissioner Breen said rusted steel could look almost like wood from a distance. Commissioners discussed rusted steel fences and types/cost of steel.

Responding to Commissioner Zaffaroni, Ms. Marzuola said the baseball field would be removed in phase 1. In terms of demolition, you might take down the old Town Hall and the artists' studios. You would also lose the MUR and the tennis courts in phase 1. Responding to Commissioner Warr, she confirmed that those buildings need not come down. In that case, you would only lose the tennis courts and baseball field. She confirmed for Commissioner Elkind that the materials could not be re-used if the buildings did not come down.

With respect to the funding, SallyAnn Reiss said in mid-August, the sub-committee would present the Council with some findings on the feasibility of fundraising. The goal was to have the Blues and BBQ event unveil the campaign. The target amount would be known at that time.

Mr. Warr said the plan had come a long way, and he liked the shape of the outdoor spaces. He hoped that the Council would continue to refer the design review to the ASCC, including hardscape buildings and plant materials. He wanted to ensure that the Town Center fit within the architectural guidelines. Town Planner Mader said after this phase was done and more detailed design work was completed, it would come to the ASCC; the Planning Commission might be involved in some of that as well.

Commissioner Schilling said the grading plan still needed to be looked at. Fencing and lighting would also need further discussion. He suggested that the condition of the Sausal culvert that ran into the property be looked at; if repairs were needed, it should be done at this point in time. He asked if any thought had been given to building expansion 20-30 years down the road. Responding to Commissioner Schilling, Mr. Strain said moveable partitions could be used in the MUR. In terms of meeting rooms, Commissioner Warr added that he felt there were numerous opportunities on the site for smaller meeting places, such as the Schoolhouse, the 2 activity rooms, the EOC, and spaces in the library.

Commissioner Breen said she was thrilled with the proposed green roof and loved the architecture. One of her concerns was the location of the play structure at the entrance where there were wonderful open vistas. She disliked play structures and thought it would be preferable to have a meadow or lawn through there. She hoped the play structure would be relocated. With respect to the use of natives, she did not want to see non-natives around the redwood grove. If maples were used, she suggested using the vine maple to keep it very quiet, native for a contemplative experience back there. She didn't want to see it "brightened up." She had some concerns about some of the linear planting, which had a lot to do with the fencing. If vines were put on some of the high fencing, she didn't want it to block the openness of the site.

Responding to Commissioner Elkind, Ms. Howard said the Town should know by May if ABAG would continue to insure the buildings. ABAG wanted to see a reduction in use, and she hoped to convince them of the Town's attempts to limit the use. Hopefully, they would continue to insure the Town for another year or so until some of the new buildings were built. If the Town was banned from using the buildings, Commissioner Elkind wanted to ensure that the buildings were taken down as part of phase 1 so that the

materials could be salvaged.

Responding to Commissioner Zaffaroni, Mr. Strain used a map to show the part of the library that was in the rupture zone. He explained where the new library would be located in relation to the fault and culvert. Responding to Commissioner Zaffaroni, Ms. Marzuola confirmed that phase 1 included the library. If the library could wait until Sept '07, they could move once; if they couldn't stay in that building, it was not clear what would happen. Ms. Howard added that a structural engineer hired by the County through the JPA would submit his report next week. The employees were County employees, and it would be the County's decision whether the building was safe enough for the employees. The Town hoped that the library would remain in its current location until it could move into the new building.

Commissioner McIntosh said he had had the privilege of going to the ADT meetings and watching the plan evolve. He was excited by what was planned. This was wonderful property which was utilized a lot by a lot of people in Town. This would be such an improvement; he thought it would draw many more users and be more appreciated by everybody for the next 75 years. He commended and thanked the design team. Commissioners agreed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Chip McIntosh, Vice Chair
Planning Commission

Leslie Lambert
Planning Manager