

SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING NO. 651, JUNE 30, 2004

ROLL CALL

Mayor Comstock called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Ms. Howard called the roll:

Present: Councilmembers Driscoll, Merk and Toben, Davis and Mayor G. Comstock
Planning Commissioner Elkind
ASCC Commissioners Breen, Schilling, Chase and Gelpi
Others: Town Planner Mader, Assistant Town Planner Vlastic, Town Administrator
Howard, and Director of Administrative Services Powell

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

REGULAR AGENDA

(1) Town Center Master Plan – Conceptual Design(s)

Mayor Comstock introduced the Architectural Design Team, which has been working on conceptual designs for a Town Center Master Plan. Linda Weil, Public Affairs Management, provided an overview of what would be presented and also reviewed guidelines for conduct of the meeting.

Jim Goring, Goring & Straja Architects provided an overview of the Charrette workshops that had been conducted to date. Larry Strain, Siegel & Strain Architects presented 3 conceptual “schemes” (A, B, C) for the Town Center Master Plan. Following the presentation, meeting attendees were asked to comment on the schemes, by stating which was/were their preference and whether they had suggestions for additions/changes to any of the plans.

At 9:40 p.m., the Town Council closed the public comment period and began their deliberations.

Councilmember Driscoll was not persuaded that scheme “A” made sense. He preferred “B”, since it appeared to solve some problems. He was troubled by the perimeter road, which he felt could potentially impact the view of the meadow area.

He stated that he was “on the fence” about whether there was a need for a new MUR. He was also not sure about whether it was appropriate to construct a separate building for a proposed pre-school. He preferred classrooms that could be multi-use. He was concerned about the expenditure that would be necessary to build an MUR of the proposed configuration.

Driscoll felt that it was important, if the creek were to be “day lighted” that careful hydrologic study be done so that it would meander and thereby reduce the impact of higher flows.

He was in favor of a 2-story Administration building, but was not sure if all administrative functions should be on one floor and all classroom uses on another. He preferred mixed uses on both floors.

In terms of the location of the Historic Schoolhouse, Driscoll favored moving it if by doing so circulation on the property would be improved.

He urged the Council to direct staff to bring forth an analysis of options for financing the project.

Councilmember Toben stated that scheme "B" seemed to be more compelling because of safety issues posed by scheme "C" (road bisecting the property). His feeling was that internal views on the property might be more important than drive-by views.

He felt that opening up the creek would provide an aesthetic element and would enhance riparian resources. He felt it would be an asset if it could be realized, taking into account safety issues.

He felt there may be some benefit to providing a longer review period so that other residents in Town who had not participated in the Charrette workshops could review and comment on the proposed schemes.

Councilmember Davis stated that scheme "C" had 2 safety problems: 1) the risk factor posed by having an open creek during certain high-flow times of the year; and 2) the access road to buildings proposed for the (current) tennis court area. He was leaning toward scheme "B".

Davis suggested that the Council vote tonight on their preferred alternative.

In terms of the proposed pre-school, he felt it was awkward for residents in a small town, in what will be a challenging financial situation, to dedicate funds for the construction of a pre-school.

Commenting on the MUR, he stated he too had mixed emotions about the need. He felt there was a need for classrooms that could expand to create a large room to accommodate large meetings, parties, etc.

Councilmember Merk stated he was caught between schemes "B" and "C". He liked the creativity expressed in scheme "A", with the building that bends, the location of the creek, etc. He would like to see some of the creativity of "A" expressed in "B" or "C".

He felt that there might be a need for additional parking than is currently provided at Town Hall. He cited Portola Valley Ranch as a possible model, with its accessory parking areas that create smaller "patches" of parking.

In terms of the creek, he noted his own experience living on Corte Madera Creek. He has experienced situations in which a heavy storm will cause water to move very swiftly and to

overflow the banks. He stated a concern about the safety of opening up the creek at Town Center.

He liked scheme "C" because there would not be a need to move and build new fields. He noted we will need to look at cost savings wherever possible and that the "ultimate wish list" may not be attainable.

He also expressed the need to have some place for larger gatherings, in a building that would not require a stage or kitchen, such as the current MUR.

The proposed 2-story Administration building is fine and he also prefers mixed use on each floor.

Merk stated he wasn't sure if it was time for the Council to vote on a preferred alternative. He noted the Council had talked about having both the Planning Commission and ASCC review the alternatives and receive additional public input.

Merk expressed a concern about the proposed size for the corporation yard, citing the need for adequate space in order to house debris bins, equipment and tools and to provide adequate turn-around area for garbage trucks.

Councilmember Toben discussed the MUR, noting that the potential for indoor recreational use (volleyball, badminton, basketball) had not been considered. He stated there was a growing trend in the Town for organized leagues and the proposed 5,000 sq. ft. for an MUR would not accommodate such uses.

Mayor Comstock suggested that the Council instruct the Architectural Design Team to further develop scheme "B":

- Demonstrating further creativity regarding flexible use of space and how it can be used
- Incorporating MUR capabilities in a flexible structure; and
- Realizing more functionality/use out of less space/square footage

He asked the Architectural Design Team if that was sufficient direction to proceed.

Larry Strain and Susi Marzuola, Siegel & Strain Architects noted that the flexibility of the buildings is beyond the scope of a Master Plan. At the building level, they can play with the design, but can't design all spaces and uses – that is a Phase II activity, after the Master Plan is completed.

The Master Plan is a flexible document with a set of criteria and features, rather than a set of working drawings. It is a framework and a place to track what needs to be incorporated.

The Design Team will look at the circulation issue and will identify alternative ways to enter and move about the property.

Councilmember Driscoll noted he would like to see both schemes "B" and "C" further developed.

Town Administrator Howard stated that the current contractual agreement with the Architectural Design Team calls for the Council to provide direction at this meeting and for the Design Team to come back in September with a draft-final Master Plan.

What was being proposed (Design Team comes back with 2 iterations; iterations are posted on website, taken before the Planning Commission & ASCC for comment; brought back before the Council in late August/early September; draft final Master Plan presented in September) would require an amendment to the contractual agreement.

Following discussion, the Council directed staff to schedule an agreement amendment on the July 14, 2004 to revise the scope of work for the Architectural Design Team.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

Mayor

Town Clerk