



ITEM 1: SUMMARY OF MEETING #9

Summary of Downtown Specific Plan Update Task Force Meeting #9 Tuesday, October 10, 2017

Task Force Members Present

1 Jerry Thorne, Mayor (Chair)	2 Kathy Narum, City Council
3 Justin Brown, Planning Commission	4 Herb Ritter, Planning Commission
5 Laura Olson, Pleasanton Downtown Association	6 Steve Baker, Economic Vitality Committee
7 Jan Batcheler, At-Large	8 Jim Merryman, At-Large

City of Pleasanton Staff

1 Gerry Beaudin, Director of Community Development	2 Adam Weinstein, Planning Manager
3 Shweta Bonn, Senior Planner	

Professional Services

1 Sophie Martin, Principal, Dyett & Bhatia	2 Elizabeth Blanton, Associate, Dyett & Bhatia
3 Jane Lin, Partner, Urban Field Studio	4 Marie Mai, Associate, Callander Associates
5 Jana Schwartz, Project Designer, Callander Associates	

1. Welcome and Prior Meeting Summary Notes

A. Welcome and Agenda Overview. The meeting was called to order and the meeting agenda was discussed.

B. Review and Approval of Meeting #8 Summary.

The Task Force voted to approve the Meeting #8 Summary. *Seven in favor; zero opposed; one abstained.*

2. Public Comment

A. Correspondence. The City provided a summary of public correspondence received. Topics raised included:

- Sidewalk improvements and improved pedestrian connections
- Parking demand
- The need for family friendly options
- Building heights
- Active ground floor uses

B. Summary of Public Comments. A summary of public comments received to date was provided to the Task Force as Item 2b in the agenda packet. These comments have influenced all work completed to date.

C. Meeting Open to the Public. Members of the public were given the opportunity to comment on items not on the agenda. There were no comments at this time.

3. Preliminary Options and Strategies

A. Streetscape Design. The Planning Manager reviewed public comment to date regarding streetscape design. Comments received have expressed a need for wider sidewalks with better pedestrian amenities, additional opportunities for outdoor dining, better pedestrian crossings across First Street, pedestrian-scale lighting, bike facilities, more active ground floor uses, and additional street trees.

Callander Associates presented options for Main Street, Peters Avenue, First Street, and Division Street. Key aspects of the options presented included:

- Main Street
 - Medium-Degree Change: Shift trees to the parking lane to allow for wider sidewalks; use enhanced materials
 - High-Degree Change: Shift trees to the parking lane and café dining to parklets to allow for wider sidewalks; use enhanced materials
- Peters Avenue
 - Medium-Degree Change: Provide green bike lanes by narrowing car travel lanes; provide trees in the parking lane; provide bulb-outs

- High-Degree Change: Provide a cycle track by narrowing car travel lanes; provide trees in the parking lane; provide bulb-outs
- First Street
 - Medium-Degree Change: Provide a bike path in the transportation corridor; provide left turn pockets
 - High-Degree Change: Provide on-street bike lanes by relocating on-street parking
- Division Street
 - Low-Degree Change: Road is open to motor vehicles with planters that define a widened pedestrian zone
 - Medium-Degree Change: Road is curbsless and semi-open to motor vehicles with special pavers, trees, and art
 - High-Degree Change: Road is curbsless and closed to motor vehicles with special pavers, trees, and art

The Task Force was asked whether the streetscape options capture input to date and if they are suitable for release to the broader public. Comments included:

- Parking that is removed must be replaced elsewhere. The replacement parking should be available before on-street parking is removed.
- Additional parking by the ACE train is needed.
- Consider a hybrid approach on Main Street that removes on-street parking on one side of the street.
- Maintain outdoor dining space.
- Include loading zones for Uber/Lyft.
- Division Street should remain flexible with cars permitted at times, but not at others.
- Consider placing physical barriers on Division Street to prevent cars from driving too fast when parked cars are not present.
- How will closing Division Street affect traffic?
- Twinkle lights, trees, and landscaping on Division Street are good features.
- Bike facilities may not be needed on all of these streets. Some of the bike paths will likely be more heavily used than others. Data on this could help determine where to allocate resources.
- Ensure that improvements are aligned with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan.
- Bike lanes on First Street would provide a connection to bike facilities on Stanley Boulevard.
- Peters Avenue should continue through to Bernal Avenue.
- Peters Avenue is best for bikes.
- Consider the needs of bicycle riders of varying ages and comfort levels.

- When Highway 84 is completed, there may be reduced traffic along First Street.
- Put further thought into the design of Peters Avenue, specifically to address the transition from commercial to residential.
- Moving trees and enhancing Main Street may not be a good use of funds, as it is already nice.

Members of the public were also given the opportunity to provide comments on the streetscape options. Comments included:

- Concern that the large, mature trees on Main Street would be replaced.
- Support for a two way bikeway on Peters Avenue.
- Some people may not enjoy dining in parklets that are close to traffic.
- Provide access to the parking lots along the southern edge of Division Street via the Inklings parking lot.
- Improvements to Division Street would increase foot traffic and create a nice entryway to the Firehouse Arts Center.
- Discourage cars on Main Street. Put bikes on Main Street, rather than Peters Avenue to encourage patronage of Main Street businesses.
- Highlight existing parking areas that are underutilized.
- Consider loading and unloading areas for businesses.
- ACE train overspill parking is a big concern for the surrounding neighborhood.
- Multifamily residential development is more appropriate than single family development in the Downtown area.
- Clarify development and design standards.

B. Active Ground Floor Uses. The Planning Manager reviewed the context/history of active ground floor uses along Main Street. Case studies discussed in the past have included San Carlos, San Rafael, Danville, Concord, Redwood City, and Los Gatos. Based on conversations with staff in those cities, policies that restricted or limited ground floor uses had a neutral or somewhat positive impact, and the policies required refinement over time.

The Planning Manager provided a draft definition of active ground floor uses that includes restaurants and retail uses that sell merchandise. It was acknowledged that this definition could be expanded to include personal services or other uses, if desired.

Three approaches for regulating active ground floor uses were presented:

- Option 1: Maintain the status quo
 - Strongly encourage active ground floor uses, but don't require them
 - Provides the lowest burden on property owners
- Option 2: Require active uses on the ground floor, with exceptions by the Zoning Administrator
 - Exceptions could be addressed in a timely manner and would not require Planning Commission or City Council review
 - Exceptions could be granted for spaces that have been vacant for a period of time or that have several other active uses immediately adjacent

- Decisions would be appealable
- Option 3: Require active ground floor uses
 - Property owners would lose flexibility with this option

The Task Force was asked whether the options presented capture input to date and if they are suitable for release to the broader public. Comments included:

- Most Task Force members agreed that Option 2 (require active ground floor uses, with exceptions by the Zoning Administrator) is generally the best approach. This would help ensure the desired character along Main Street is preserved. Those desiring an exception could apply for a minor conditional use permit. The processing time for this should be quick.
- A couple of Task Force members also expressed a preference for Option 1 (maintaining the status quo) in order to avoid placing new restrictions on property owners.
- Nail and beauty salons promote pedestrian traffic and should be included in the definition of active ground floor uses.
- Consider making the definition of active ground floor uses based on criteria such as customers per hour or length of average appointment, rather than exhaustively listing out all possibilities.

No members of the public chose to speak on this topic.

C. Civic Center. The Director of Community Development reviewed input received to date regarding the existing Civic Center site. Comments expressed have shown a desire for a parking structure; town center with a pedestrian plaza; a mix of uses, including office, hotel, theater, and/or residential above the ground floor; improved connectivity and traffic circulation; and a gateway from the ACE train station to Downtown along Old Bernal Avenue.

The Director of Community Development introduced an Arts & Culture Town Square concept for the existing Civic Center site. The concept is centered on a town square that creates a new gathering place. A theater and hotel are located on either side of the square. In addition to office and retail uses, a limited amount of residential is provided, largely on upper floors, to generate activity. A parking structure would provide 700-725 spaces. Buildings are generally 20 to 40 feet tall with high quality design. A new street network emphasizes connectivity and pedestrian-oriented design.

The Task Force was asked whether the option presented captures input to date and if it is suitable for release to the broader public. Comments included:

- Teachers, firefighters, and other service workers should be given preferential treatment for housing.
- The theater should be similar to The Vine in Livermore.
- Consider other entertainment options, such as a bocce ball court and/or other newer concepts.
- Consider moving the parking garage closer to the ACE train station.
- Residential-only development seems out of place.
- Lower the total number of residential units.
- Consider how phasing would work.

- Consider making the interior streets pedestrian only. If interior streets will be open to car traffic, they should allow access to the parking garage.
- Consider the relationship of the Civic Center site with adjacent development.
- Several Task Force members support the idea of the hotel and theater.
- Make the town square larger.
- Consider using Block 3 for a new Civic Center building and parking garage.
- Train horns should be quiet through Downtown.
- Utilities should be underground throughout Downtown.
- The library or a new library building should remain where it is as a complement to the new town square and theater.
- Block 2 would be a good place for parking. Retail could line the parking garage.
- May want to consider a design that is more circular, like the Civic Center site.

Members of the public were also given the opportunity to provide comments on the Civic Center concept. Comments included:

- The town square and theater are a great idea.
- Consider a parking garage on the fairgrounds side of the ACE train.
- Include pedestrian only areas.
- Consider keeping the library as part of this site so that it benefits from close proximity to the town square and theater. A new, larger library building could be built in the same location as the current building.
- Consider moving the parking garage to Block 2 in order to support this area as well as the rest of Downtown.
- Concern that there is too much residential included.

4. Upcoming Public Outreach

The Senior Planner reviewed the list of planned outreach events and strategies for October and November.

5. Task Force Check-In

A. Task Force Members Comment on the Planning Process To-Date.

One Task Force member expressed excitement about having designs and renderings to respond to.

6. Brief Announcements from Task Force and Staff, Summary and Next Steps

A. Summary of the Meeting and Review of Next Meeting Topics. City staff provided an overview of the Task Force's progress and upcoming schedule. The next Task Force meeting will occur on Thursday, November 28. The purpose of this meeting will be to review the results of community outreach efforts, complete the discussion of the preliminary options and strategies, and identify a preferred plan.

There were no staff announcements at this time.

A Task Force member announced a local business's efforts to support the victims of the Napa/Sonoma County fires.