

Agenda

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
Wednesday, February 8, 2012; 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Volunteer Center, Guide Dogs for the Blind
350 Los Ranchitos Road



Desired Outcomes/Products

- Adjusted Committee membership
- Revision and acceptance of parking proposal

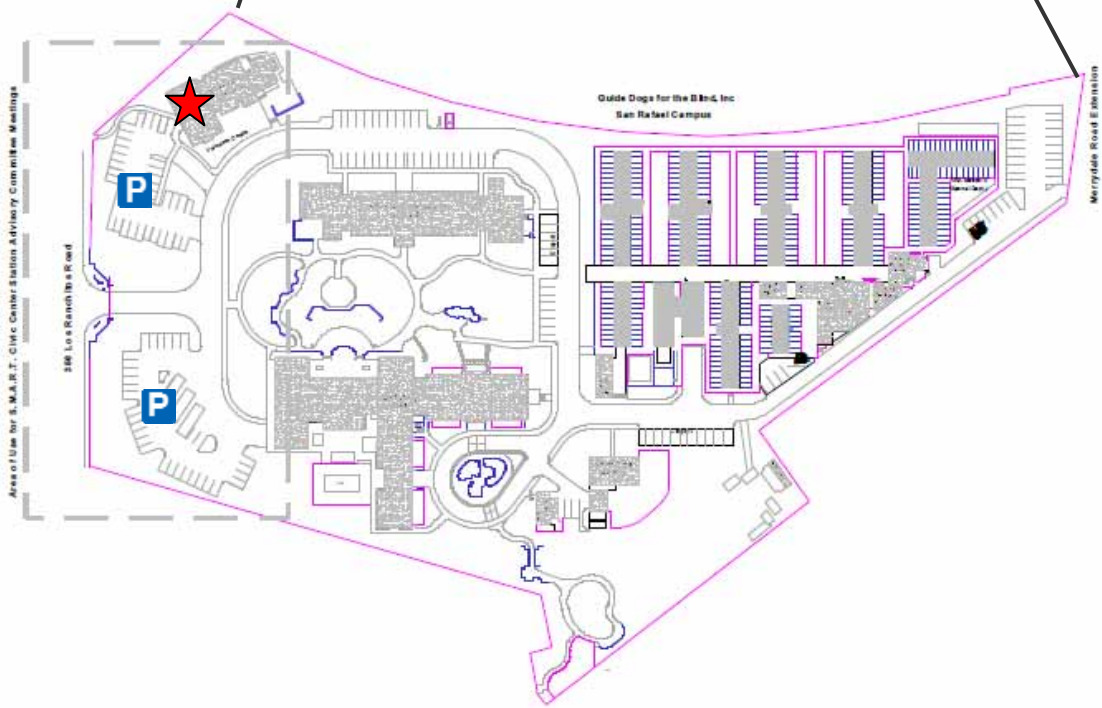
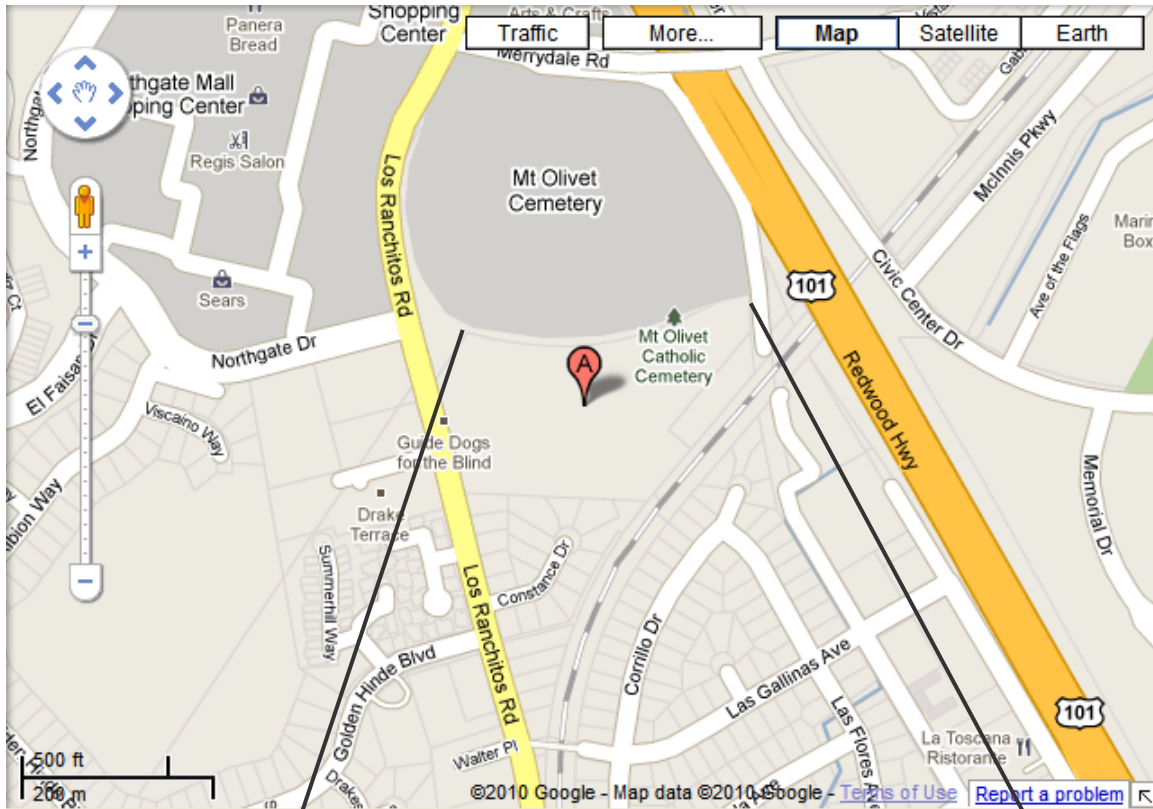
I. Welcome	7:00 – 7:15
▪ Agenda Review	
▪ Action on Meeting Notes	
▪ Announcements	
II. Open Time	7:15 – 7:30
This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the Committee on matters not on the agenda. Presentations are generally limited to TWO MINUTES.	
III. Committee Adjustments	7:30 – 7:45
▪ Resignations	
▪ Quorum and Consensus numbers change	
IV. Parking Proposal	7:45 – 8:30
▪ Presentation of proposal	
▪ Public Comments	
▪ Committee comments, changes	
▪ Committee action	
V. Preparation for draft plan	8:30 – 8:45
▪ Revisit Vision Statement	
▪ Schedule update	
VI. Public Comment	
VII. Meeting Evaluation	
VIII. Closing	9:00

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 14
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
For more information, call 485-3076



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Meeting Location: 350 Los Ranchitos Road, San Rafael, CA 94903



Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes: Wednesday, January 11, 2012; 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Guide Dogs for the Blind, 350 Los Ranchitos Rd.

Attendance

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee

Emily Dean	Preston McCoy*	Judy Schriebman*
Mike Fryer	Rich McGrath	Roger Smith
Elissa Giambastiani	Brigitte Moran	Jean Starkweather
Barbara Heller*	Larry Paul*	Tammy Taylor
Nicholas Kapas	Andrew Patterson	Craig Thomas Yates
Casey Mazzoni	Jeff Schoppert	

*Ex officio, non-voting member

**Ex officio alternate

Absent: Marcus Lee, Bob Huntsberry*, Greg Knell, Gayle Theard

Observers: Mary Linn King, Sue Mace, Heather Gass, Shirley McGrath, Stuart Shepherd, Greg Andrew, Bill Carney, Alice Watkins

Staff: Katie Korzun (Economic Development Coordinator, San Rafael Redevelopment Agency), Rebecca Woodbury (Management Analyst, City of San Rafael), John Eells (Consultant to TAM)

Welcome, Announcements and Introductions

Co-chair Mike Fryer opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. noting a quorum present. He said the purpose of the meeting was to discuss and accept a land use proposal, review a draft outline and hear about the schedule for the rest of the project. He asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Jeff Schoppert made a motion and Nicholas Kapas seconded. Minutes were approved.

Rebecca Woodbury announced a walking tour for the Downtown Station Area Plan on 1/12 at noon. The meeting place is at Whistlestop.

Nicholas Kapas announced a lecture on the history of Smith Ranch Road at on 1/14 at 4:15 pm at the Marin History Museum.

Mike Fryer noted that “Open Time” was added to the beginning of the agenda in response to a request last meeting. He opened the meeting up for public comment on items not on the agenda. There were none.

Land Use Proposal

Katie Korzun said the committee has been working on the topic of land use for many months. They have ranked photographs of buildings, learned about traffic constraints, and discussed where in the area more intense development might be appropriate. To make further progress, a subcommittee on land use was formed. They met and discussed everything they have heard from the public and the committee over this time and came up with a proposal.

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
Draft Notes for 01/11 Meeting

Emily Dean, a member of the subcommittee, presented the proposal. Other members of the subcommittee included Elissa Giambastiani, Rich McGrath, and Roger Smith. The proposal is available in the agenda packet.

Mike Fryer opened the meeting up for public comment on the land use proposal.

Public Comment

Greg Andrew: Mr. Andrew sent the committee a memo with his comments on the land use proposal. He suggests that they do not focus on the number of stories, but rather on design guidelines and heights. He appreciates the committee's intent of protecting neighborhoods. His specific recommendations include:

- Changing "3-4 stories" to "1-4 stories" in the Overarching Considerations section.
- Changing "development up to 4 stories" to "development up to 3 stories" in the Area around Merrydale section.
- Refer to planning areas (A-H) for consistency.
- Mention affordable housing.
- Mention parking.
- Split area D north/south into two separate planning areas.
- What does "occupant safety and health" mean?
- What does "housing access to station" mean in the Area East of Freeway section?

Mary Linn King: Ms. King asked that committee respect neighborhood characteristics and Frank Lloyd Wright's vision. She spoke against 5-story buildings near the Frank Lloyd Wright campus.

Member of the public: A member of the public spoke against 5-story buildings east of the freeway and spoke in favor of buffer zones to protect neighborhoods.

Bill Carney: Mr. Carney spoke in favor of the land use proposal as a sound concept and good start. He said residential near the station will help create a core. He suggested that the consultants prepare development prototypes to help the committee and the public understand what the design impact could be. He spoke in favor of higher buildings coupled with good design guidelines. He spoke in favor 5-story buildings in Area A and 4-story buildings in the Merrydale area closest to the station. He said Merrydale and the creek provide a buffer to the neighborhood. He suggested the proposal emphasize the importance of affordable housing and that additional height can be exchanged for benefits to the community, such as affordable housing.

Stuart Shepherd: Mr. Shepherd commended the committee for listening to public input. He spoke against allowing 4-story buildings near the station and said they would impact the people who live at the end of Merrydale. He spoke in favor of allowing taller heights at the freeway as long as they transitioned into lower heights on Merrydale.

End of public comment.

Preston McCoy asked if there are second stories or second units in the San Rafael Meadows neighborhood. Greg Andrew said about 10% of the homes have added second stories. He said there are no second units and the neighborhood opposes them.

Elissa Giambastiani asked about how the committee will deal with affordable housing. Katie Korzun said that is a detail that will need to be discussed at a later date. Jean Starkweather asked if the subcommittee took traffic into consideration when they came up with the proposal. Roger Smith said the subcommittee assumed that future plans will take traffic, wetland, health and safety into account. This was more of an overall vision concept.

Mike Fryer asked the committee to go through the proposal section by section to gain consensus on the concepts. Starting with the preface, the committee discussed, made modifications and voted on each section.

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
Draft Notes for 01/11 Meeting

Preface

Changes suggested:

Our overall intent was to respect the character of existing residential neighborhoods. However, we recognize that the future in

Vote:

- Level One: 13
- Level Two: 0
- Level Three: 0
- **Consensus: Yes**

Overall Considerations

Changes suggested:

In general, multi-family residential of 3 to 4 stories (unless otherwise noted) within walking distance from the station should be encouraged throughout the area. This is a long range 25 year plan,

Additional neighborhood-serving retail should be allowed, but not required in areas that are appropriate for mixed use.

Vote:

- Level One: 13
- Level Two: 0
- Level Three: 0
- **Consensus: Yes**

Area east of freeway and surrounding the Civic Center

Changes suggested:

The level properties along Civic Center Drive within walking distance of the Station are possible locations for more intense usage. In particular, the vacant County site adjacent to the station presents an opportunity for an intense, transit oriented use. It is large, close to the station and offers a blank slate for a new and exciting project.

Housing or mixed use on the identified priority development sites should be allowed up to 5 stories with sensitivity to existing residential neighborhoods, creeks and wetlands.

Vote:

- Level One: 10
- Level Two: 1
- Level Three: 1
- **Consensus: Yes**

Area around Northgate Mall

Changes suggested:

Multi-family residential and commercial mixed-use should be encouraged on the Northgate III site

Vote:

- Level One: 10
- Level Two: 1
- Level Three: 0
- **Consensus: Yes**

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
Draft Notes for 01/11 Meeting

Area around Merrydale/Redwood
Changes suggested:

Development should be allowed up to 4 stories and up to 3 stories along Merrydale Road, with design guidelines addressing building articulation, massing, and setbacks.

Vote:

- Level One: 13
- Level Two: 0
- Level Three: 0
- **Consensus: Yes**

Schedule

Due to lack of time, Katie Korzun said the remainder of the agenda was self-explanatory and did not warrant staying further.

Public Comment

Greg Andrew: Mr. Andrew requested that a representative of Public Works attend the Design Review Board and Planning Commission public meetings to answer questions, should they arise. He asked that the item on the schedule called 'Committee presentations to interest groups' occur before the Design Review Board and Planning Commission meetings.

Meeting Evaluation

+	-
Got through the land use proposal!	

Closing

Mike Fryer closed the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
 Draft Notes for 01/11 Meeting

Attendance

	9/22	10/13	10/16	11/10	12/8	1/12	2/9	3/9	4/13	5/11	6/8	7/13	8/10	10/12	11/9	12/14	1/11	2/8	
		(tour-optional)					(workshop)						(workshop)						
Damon Connolly* (CC)	E	√		√	(Brockbank)	(Brockbank)	√	√	(Brockbank)	-	√	√	√	√	-	-	-	Reappointed	
Emily Dean	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Michael Fryer	√	E		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	E	√		
Elissa Giambastiani	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Barbara Heller* (CC)																		Appointed	
Bob Huntsberry* (DRB)	-	√		-	√	√	√	√	√	-	-	√	E	-	-	-	-	-	
Nicholas Kapas	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	-	√	√		
Stanton Klose* (GGBPAC)	√	√		√	-	-	√	-	√	E	Resigned								
Greg Knell	√	√		-	√	√	√	√	-	-	√	-	E	-	-	E	-		
Klif Knoles	-	√		-	-	Resigned	-												
Marcus Lee	E	-		√		√	E	√	E	E	√	-	√	√	E	-	-		
Preston McCoy* (BPAC)	(Powers)			√	√	-	√	√	√	√	-	(Powers)	√	E	√	√	√	√	
Casey Mazzoni						Appointed	√	-	√	√	E	-	√	√	√	E	√		
Rich McGrath	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Brigitte Moran	√	E		√	√	√	E	√	E	√	-	E	√	(Ann Hussman)	√	-	√		
Larry Paul* (PC)	√	-		-	-	E	√	√	E	(Wise)	-	-	√	√	-	√	√		
Andrew Patterson	√	√		√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√		
Jeff Schoppert	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Judy Schriebman* (LGVSD)	√	E		√	-	-	√	√	√	√	√	√	(Loder)	√	√	√	√		
Roger Smith	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√		
Jean Starkweather	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	E	√		
Tammy Taylor	√	√	√	√	√	-	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		
Gayle Theard	-	√		-	√	√	√	√	√	-	-	√	√	E	-	-	-		
Craig Thomas Yates	√	-		E	√	-	√	-	√	-	-	-	√	√	√	-	√		

*Ex officio, non-voting member
 E: excused
 BPAC: Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee
 CC: City Council

DRB: Design Review Board
 LGVSD: Las Gallinas Valley Sanitation District
 PC: Planning Commission

GGBPAC: Golden Gate Bicycle Pedestrian Committee

Report on Parking Issues and Recommendations

Preface

This recommendation was developed based on information gathered from the background report, the second community workshop, a review of best practices, and in consultation with the City's Parking Manager. The intent is to identify issues and propose strategies to address each issue. Many of the strategies are derived from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's handbook *Parking Best Practices & Strategies for Supporting Transit Oriented Development in the San Francisco Bay Area* (2007), accessible at: http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/smart_growth/parking/parking_seminar/Toolbox-Handbook.pdf.

Recommendations approved by the Committee will be given to the consultant to form the basis of the parking section of the Plan.

Goal

The overall goal of this parking recommendation is to ensure that the Station Area Plan addresses adequate parking for new housing, businesses, and commuters while encouraging transit use.

Parking issues

Parking-related issues that have been identified include:

- Commuter parking in residential areas
- Additional parking for SMART patrons
- Parking requirements for new development
- Parking coordination

Commuter parking in residential areas

Issue: Residents of the San Rafael Meadows neighborhood have expressed concern that commuters may park in their neighborhood to access the station.

Recommendation:

- *Residential parking permits and time limits.* Residential parking permits coupled with 2 or 4-hour time limits can protect neighborhoods from long-term commuter parking spillover.

Additional parking for SMART patrons

Issue: SMART's Environmental Impact Report identified a need for approximately 60 parking spaces. SMART plans to provide 130 spaces for train users on Avenue of the Flags in partnership with the County of Marin.

Recommendation:

- Three additional parking opportunities have been identified for SMART commuter parking. This will be public parking and therefore they will be open to non-SMART users as well. They are:
 - McInnis Parkway, approximately 80 on-street parking spaces
 - Merrydale North, approximately 65 on-street spaces (depending on how the roadway is configured)
 - Vacant parcel northeast of station, approximately 32 spaces (can include some ADA parking for SMART)

The land use proposal approved by the committee in January did not identify the use of any parcels for parking, such as for a parking lot or parking structure. Concern has been expressed

about increased traffic on the east side of the freeway if no SMART parking is located on the west side. On-street parking on Merrydale North has been identified as potential additional parking for SMART commuters.

Parking requirements for new development

Issue: Reducing parking standards for new developments reflects the greater likelihood that residents and businesses in well-designed, transit-oriented developments will use transit.

Recommendation:

- *Reduce parking requirements.* If coupled with other strategies such as transit incentive programs, carsharing, unbundled parking, and shared parking, new development may need less parking than the current ordinance requires. Reduced requirements can also be linked to neighborhood serving uses such as dry-cleaning and Laundromats, drug stores, and food stores. Reductions in parking requirements can be considered project-by-project through discretionary review.

Tools for achieving reductions in parking requirements

The following strategies are tools that developers could use to receive reductions in on-site parking requirements. All will require substantial study and analysis.

Shared parking. Shared parking is considered a strategy to utilize parking spaces more efficiently by using parking spaces for multiple land uses at different times. Shared parking typically works well between residential/office but does not work well as well with retail. The City currently allows shared parking arrangements.

Unbundled parking. Typically, parking is included into tenant leases and rents. By “unbundling” the cost of an apartment and the cost of a parking space, renters are given the ability to choose to lease or rent one or more spaces and is therefore more equitable to renters who are car-free or have lower rates of car ownership. This program can be coupled with on-street limitations to prevent people from using on-street parking in place of paying for off-street parking.

Transit incentive programs. Employers or residential communities (apartment complexes, home owner associations) can subsidize transit passes to employees and residents who do not use a parking space.

Carsharing. Carsharing is a model of car rental where people rent cars for short periods of time, often by the hour. Carsharing can reduce parking demand for residential and office uses while preserving the convenience and flexibility of auto use. This provides a convenient option for residents to live car-free and can save businesses money on vehicle fleets. Typically, car share companies require high density levels and low car ownership rates.

Parking Coordination

Issue: The County of Marin, SMART and the City of San Rafael all have a substantial amount of public parking in the area.

Recommendation:

- *Coordination of parking.* Successful parking will require extensive on-going coordination of parking strategies between the County of Marin, SMART and the City of San Rafael.

Subcommittee Proposal for Land Use

Preface

These are the subcommittee's thoughts and interpretation of the Committee's work on land uses over the last year. We present this land use proposal as a starting point for the Committee's consideration and discussion. It is not written in stone and we expect it to be further shaped at the future meetings. We listened carefully to the technical input from staff and consultants and to community input at meetings and workshops and combined it all with our own observations and expertise.

The subcommittee deliberations were not absolutely bound by the existing technical considerations of zoning, densities, intensities, parking regulations or traffic capacities. These items and other practical considerations certainly influenced our discussions, but did not drive them. The Civic Center Station Area Committee is developing a vision of what **can** be – the technical aspects will be addressed in later, separate planning actions.

Our overall intent was to respect the character of existing residential neighborhoods. However, we recognize that the future in general and SMART in particular will bring change and we want the Station Area Vision to shape that change in a positive way. A successful train will draw and accommodate increases in intensity which are naturally part of a dynamic community. We are confident that this can make the station an attractive, new neighborhood amenity and community feature.

Overall Considerations

In general, multi-family residential of 3 to 4 stories (unless otherwise noted) within walking distance from the station should be encouraged throughout the area. This is a long range 25 year plan, and major alterations in uses could occur that are not currently contemplated. Development that is focused and clustered around the freeway and train station and not extending into the nearby neighborhoods will help preserve the existing residential neighborhood character.

While policies should emphasize residential development, increases in both residential and commercial intensities are seen as positive in the immediate vicinity of the station, especially within walking distance. The goal is to achieve lessened reliance on single occupancy vehicles and to develop the station area as a community center. The market should also be allowed to determine the specific usage.

There does not appear to be a market demand to support significant additional, general purpose retail in the area. Limited station-related retail should be allowed in very close proximity to the station. Additional neighborhood-serving retail should be allowed, but not required in areas that are appropriate for mixed use.

It is also understood that higher density demands greater attention to high quality design. Where height limits are increased, architectural quality becomes essential. With close proximity to the freeway, care should also be taken to insure that occupant safety and health are maintained. Further, environmental considerations are always important, especially attention to the area's wetlands.

Area east of freeway and surrounding the Civic Center

Current office and hotel development sites should allow greater densities and heights and should allow for the addition of residential development. The level properties along Civic Center Drive within walking distance of the Station are possible locations for more intense usage. In particular, the vacant County site adjacent to the station presents an opportunity for an intense, transit oriented use. It is large, close to the station and offers a blank slate for a new and exciting project. The currently developed properties could be further developed with added office space, housing added to the office development for mixed use, or for complete conversion to residential. Any housing on the Civic Center Drive hilltop sites must include improvements that facilitate access to the Station, including addressing the perceived barrier of the uphill climb from the station to the site. Housing or mixed use on the identified priority development sites should be allowed up to 5 stories with sensitivity to existing residential neighborhoods, creeks and wetlands.

Area around Northgate Mall

Multi-family residential should be allowed and encouraged at Northgate Mall and allowed to develop up to 5 stories. Multi-family residential and commercial mixed-use should be encouraged on the Northgate III site at 3 to 4 stories, and should include an extension of the Promenade. Housing would be permitted but not encouraged in the office area along Las Gallinas across from Northgate Mall. This stretch is well suited to its current, convenience-oriented commercial uses.

Area around Merrydale/Redwood

All single family areas should remain as single family and be buffered from new development. Multi-family housing should be encouraged on the properties closest to the Station, specifically Northgate Storage, Public Storage, and Marin Ventures. These close-in lots could also contain small amounts of station serving retail, such as a coffee shop, convenience store or cleaners, clustered near the station. Development should be allowed up to 4 stories and up to 3 stories along Merrydale Road, with design guidelines addressing building articulation, massing, and setbacks.

The area south of the station along Merrydale and Redwood Hwy is an appropriate place for a mix of retail and residential. Residential could be added to the commercial uses along Redwood Hwy, and developments with residential above retail could go up to 4 stories. Properties along Merrydale should remain residential with up to 3 stories. Design guidelines are necessary for the Merrydale properties and should include height transitions, building articulation and varied setbacks to prevent the appearance of a solid wall to the adjacent single family neighborhood.

From: Mazer [nfrlprdpr@yahoo.com]

Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2012 1:52 PM

To: Paul Jensen; Rebecca Woodbury; Katie Korzun

Subject: Smart Train Committeee - Merrydale Station design proposals

Jan. 16, 2012

Dear City of San Rafael Planning and SMART Civic Center Station Design Area Committee:

I was extremely disappointed and dismayed at the way the meeting was conducted on January 12th, 2012. I was under the impression during the first couple of meetings that the council was to be diplomatic and the public was to be involved in every step of the process. Last night's meeting appeared to veer greatly from this track, specifically with regard to the subcommittee's draft proposal regarding the development of the East side of 101 and their suggestion to build on the "Christmas tree lot." First, this lot was never a part of the SMART committee's scope of planning and when objections made by Judy Schriebman, Jean Starkweather, Tammy Taylor, Brigitte Moran, and Nicholas Kapas regarding this, all five were brusquely overruled by some of the other council members including the chair.

There is an issue with the fact that this property was only on the table for discussion during the first publicly attended meeting where we were encouraged to mark up large maps depicting our vision of the entire SMART train area. Since then, that property has not been up for discussion, nor is it part of the A-H designated planning areas given the committee by the city, nor is it under the jurisdiction of the city being county property.

Secondly, much of that area is currently influenced by salt water intrusion; in fact, there is a thriving population of pickleweed growing on the grounds within 40 feet of the freeway's boundary fence. This population has grown nearly three times in size since last spring. As you know, pickleweed is a salt water indicator plant. This area also supports a nice population of ducks every winter when it's inundated by stormwater due to its low elevation and lack of any potential for drainage. To even consider building on the east side of the freeway in this area would not only jeopardize the investment of the building owners but also the occupants and their property due to inevitable stormwater flooding and sea level rise.

A watershed plan considering sea level rise and its impact on the residents of the low lying areas of the 94903 area is already in process at the county, and considering the current mess created by building on areas adjacent to wetlands (Santa Venetia, Marin Lagoon), it frankly shocks me that anyone would suggest further building on bay mudlands. Ms. Schriebman and the Gallinas Watershed Council, including myself, gave a presentation to the public and the committee members at the last public workshop highlighting the impacts of sea level rise, so other than possible personal future gain for someone on the committee, I can not imagine why anyone would consciously put future residents

in harm's way.

In addition to the issue above, the public was denied the option for input on the changes proposed by the committee members on the subcommittee's document. Any time something is changed by the committee, the public should have the benefit of being able to voice their opinion. After all, it is our neighborhoods that will be impacted. This is also a potential violation of the Brown Act regarding public input.

Neither the committee nor the city has ever brought up in *any* of their previous planning sessions or discussions the concept of 5-story buildings in any of the areas under consideration for increased density, until the land use subcommittee put it into THEIR plan. This plan was not widely available to the public until that very evening. It is dishonest for this document to go to San Rafael's planners with 5-story buildings as a possibility when this height was never proposed by the city to any of the residents or the committee at large at any previous workshop, nor proposed at any time by the committee, prior to this night's meeting when it was presented by the land use subcommittee, which appeared to be stacked with developer interests. I would like to see the City contact the residents of Marin Lagoon, Marin Vista and Santa Venetia to advise them of what this committee is now proposing.

After witnessing some of the committee members' and the public's viewpoints being dismissed out of hand because the chair did not appear to agree with them is not democratic or a fair community process. This needs to be addressed and corrected immediately. I have been to almost every meeting of this committee as a nearby resident and member of the public and am appalled by this turn of events. In a true community process, the considerations of the public and the minority viewpoints of the committee need to be included as they are all representatives of the larger community.

Sincerely,

Sue "Mazer" Mace
ARS - KE6CJC
San Rafael, California

Cc: Paul Jensen, Community Development
Gary Phillips
Barbara Heller
Andrew McCullough
Damon Connolly
Marc Levine