

**City of San Mateo  
Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
Planning Commission**

**APPROVED - October 14, 2014**

Call to Order at 7:30pm  
Pledge of Allegiance  
Roll Call

Chair Bonilla

Chair Bonilla  
Vice-Chair Drechsler  
Commissioner Hugg  
Commissioner Massey  
Commissioner Whitaker

Approval of Minutes, with amendments, for September 23, 2014

Approved: 4-0-1

Chair opened the public comment period. No one wishing to speak, the Chair closed the public hearing.

The Chair then convened the meeting in Conference Room C at 7:40pm for the purpose of viewing renderings and videos of the project site.

The meeting was then reconvened in the Council Chambers at 8:00pm.

Written questions from Conference Room C regarding the Station Park Green project.

1. Are members of the public allowed in the park areas? *Yes, the parks are open to the public.*
2. Please explain EVA? *Emergency vehicle access; open to pedestrians and bicycles it is closed to vehicles. This goes around the perimeter of the property.*

Questions from the Commission regarding tonight's study session.

1. We are limiting our comments to MU1 and RE2? *Yes. The applicant and staff have presentations to show for this evening.*

**ITEM 1**

**Study Session**

**PA14-055 Station Park Green**

Planning Commission focus tonight on MU1 and RES2.

Lorraine Weiss, Contract Senior Planner, gave the staff presentation.

The Commission had no questions or comments for staff.

Darin Schoolmeester, Principal MVE & Partners Architects, gave the applicant's presentation.

The Commission had no questions for the applicant.

The chair opened the public comment period. The following people spoke: Cheryl Hilton, San Mateo; Russ Horvath, San Mateo; John Ebnetter, San Mateo; Rich Hedges, San Mateo; Kaye Sharma, San Mateo. They had the following comments:

- One member of the public described the design quality of 2090 Delaware and stated that the Station Park Green project looks much better. The speaker showed the Commissioner various pictures taken with an iPod to explain a dislike for the 2090 Delaware project.
- A resident of the 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue Park neighborhood stated that parking has been well addressed in the Station Park Green project. He asked several questions including: What level of earthquake proof would the building be built for? Are these apartments or condos? The speaker brought up a project in San Carlos, "Transit Village" on San Carlos Ave and El Camino Real. For the Station Park Green project, 598 units seem too much. Everything looks beautiful, but one thing that doesn't get focused on.
- Four (4) sustainable technology items addressed at the last meeting included: solar, electric vehicle charging stations, sewer heat recovery, and gray water. The speaker would like to know which features are provided in this project and suggested that recycling of food waste be considered.
- Ten (10) years is a long time. Let's get this project built.
- Where are the residential buildings placed? Are some residential units along the train tracks? If so, how would noise from the trains be handled? What commitment to building materials made in the USA is there for this project? With 598 residential units in this project, how many school children will enter the school system as the schools will be impacted?

Comments from staff:

- 2090 Delaware is more of an area of industrial looking buildings. There is a public storage area across the street; therefore the design treatment is within a different context.
- There are a number of sustainable measures in this project. This is planned as a LEED Gold neighborhood.
- Noise – The Building Code and the General Plan have sections relating to the noise issue that the project must comply with. The percent of the amount of materials that will be built in the USA is unknown at this time. *Applicant response: the specifications for a lot of the materials are still to be determined. There is certainly a consideration to use locally produced materials.*
- School district was consulted during development of the Rail Corridor Plan, and the San Mateo/Foster City school district indicated that schools were adequate for the total development within the Rail Corridor Plan area. In addition, a school fee is calculated when a building permit is issued and this money is paid directly to the school district.
- As for earthquake safety measures, the buildings are reviewed in compliance with the current building codes.
- This project is proposed to be apartments.

Questions from the Commission.

- Request to have Larry Cannon, Cannon Design Consultant, answer some questions regarding the project design *Larry Cannon: The rendered drawings shown tonight give a good idea of what is*

*being proposed and a better idea of the interaction between the stoops and the sidewalks. Two items for the Commissions deliberation: the Design Guidelines were approved with one set of designs and which appear to be different than the proposed buildings in some regards. This proposal is a "heavy" design. The Hines building across the street seems "lighter" in appearance. The regularity and lack of variety in this project, especially along Concar is an issue the Commission should examine. Is the Commission comfortable with the direction that this project is going? It does not seem necessary to have such big signs to announce this development. The landscaping should be sufficient.*

- How do the pedestrian experience and the ground floor treatments work within this transit oriented project? *Larry Cannon: For the area closer to Delaware near Concar, larger stoops and more space for the residents is apparent, but narrows as along Concar moving west towards the railroad tracks. The Mission Bay area in San Francisco has stoops close to the street and the blinds in the residential units on the ground floor are always closed. In addition to this area, in the vicinity of the park, the pedestrian areas seem quite narrow. What does the concept of urban mean? Larry Cannon: The plans show glass/aluminum on the storefronts, with minimal visual interest and lack variety. Only the storefront signs would differ and provide some variety. As a positive example, Santana Row in San Jose has variety so that each storefront is just a little different. What are the expectations Of the Planning Commission for the retail areas, are they viewed as serving only project residents/employees, or the surrounding areas as well?.*
- Staff – The signs are shown for illustrative purposes only since signs are ministerial, and no variances or exceptions are permitted. One thing not seen tonight, but discussed with the applicant will be a palette of storefront prototypes to present to the Commission. Future tenants will then be able to choose from a range of storefronts provided and be handled at staff level for review and approval.
- What species of trees are going to be used along Delaware? *Staff: 48-inch box Sycamore, which was later corrected by the landscape architect to 36-inch box Sycamore trees.*
- 3 large vertical signs are proposed. *Staff: The sign square footage has not been measured at this time. The sign code is very clear and there is no variation. Sign review is handled with the building permit.*
- The administrative report discusses the club room having telescoping walls. *Applicant: The door system would open to the plaza from this club space. We are still exploring the exact specifications.*

**Parking:** There is total of 788 parking spaces for residential and 135 parking spaces for non-residential. Of the 135, 5 are car-sharing, 12 loading spaces, 47 on the street are unassigned, and 51 at level 1 are unassigned. Is that in the MU1 building? *Applicant: The 51 spaces are located on both levels of Buildings MU-1 and RES-2,.* The amount of retail along Delaware has changed over the course of this project. At one point, the entire front along Delaware was residential. *Applicant: At one point we had planned to put retail on one corner along Delaware. We still plan to have a drug store and a coffee shop. There will also be residential facing the 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue Park neighborhood.*

The Planning Commission had the following comments:

- Overall, pleased with the direction the project is going. There are two places along Delaware that concern me: 1). Along Delaware facing the residential areas be sure to have building variety on the frontage. Make sure that the modern architectural style in the urban design

context has room for variety; 2). Can the design push back from Delaware? The amount of stucco is a bit concerning. The look as these buildings get older is not always good, as these buildings often do not age well. Could there be more embellishment? I like this project to be as useful to families as possible. I appreciate the addition of the 3-bedroom units and would like to see more.

- Project is moving forward well. I like the changes that have been made, however I do have a concern about the design. It still appears as four large apartment blocks. Is there a way to soften the look? Need to consider the pedestrian experience, especially along Concar which still needs some enhancement. Can we go back more towards the original designs? This project still has much heaviness. I would like to see the three large vertical signs eliminated. The retail is heavily concentrated at Concar and Delaware; not sure that the club room and vendor carts is a good thing and do enough to promote retail near the train station.
- Why are we using the trees that have been shown listed on the plans? *Applicant: Sycamore trees on Concar are trees that already exist and it is my understanding we are following City recommendations but will welcome any suggestions.*
- The trees along 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue where the Metropolitan Apartments seem to have filled in there nicely. The European Hornbeams are a beautiful tree along 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.
- Can the applicant provide some answers regarding some green solutions? *Applicant: We have a LEED Consultant that we are working with but we have not made any final decisions relative to the LEED Gold Standard that we wish to attain. We are currently exceeding Title 24 requirements by about 15%-20%.*
- I am concerned about the club space. Not sure that a fitness center and retail vendors is enough. It needs to be more transit friendly.
- We now have eight different building façade palettes. Seems we now have too much. The residential buildings have multiple styles. *Applicant: The reason for the diversity is to create more of a traditional cityscape. We wanted to avoid having people see the same thing over and over again.*
- The two buildings fronting South Delaware, I feel they should reflect more of the residential neighborhood across the street, the 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue Park neighborhood.
- When I look at the Hines building I see 4-5 stories and lots of glass, so this project is compatible with the offices which will be located across Concar. Also, the homes in 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue Park were considered modern when they were built in the 1960's.
- As we look at the transit-oriented corridor within the Rail Corridor Plan area, we are going to see more density in housing such as the Station Park Green project.
- I want to see us get as much renewable energy as possible in this new construction, including solar and the planning for purple pipe for use of recycled water.
- We have less land, in fact, almost no land for projects. This project is a reuse of land for affordable projects. We need the housing, as dense as it is, we need the parks.
- Modern stucco is different from that of 10 years ago. Materials are more resistable/resistant than years ago.
- Some of the windows that are recessed will fare better than those that have more exposure to the elements.

- Sycamore trees are more a city standard. They provide leaf cover in the summer. As long as the signage works within the sign code, it is fine. Signage at the two main entrances would help people find the project.

Commissioner Massey moved to continue this study session/public hearing to October 28, 2014 Second by Vice-Chair Drechsler

Commissioner Massey updated the Commission on the Civic Arts Committee.

#### Communications and Announcements

1. From Staff
  - a. Public Works is working with CalTrans on improvements at El Camino and SR92
  - b. 10/28: Station Park Green Study Session; 3<sup>rd</sup> & Fremont Public Hearing
  - c. The November 11<sup>th</sup> meeting has been changed to November 10<sup>th</sup> due to Veteran's day holiday on the 11<sup>th</sup>.
  - d. Housing Element on November 25<sup>th</sup>.
2. From the Commission
  - a. Invitation to the Housing Leadership Day Conference on Friday, October 24, 2014.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:35pm