

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ANTIOCH
CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING COMMISSION/
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION ON THE DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN**

Special Meeting/Study Session
6:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.

June 2, 2015
Nick Rodriguez Community Center
213 F Street, Antioch

1. ROLL CALL AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Harper called the meeting to order at 6:06 P.M. and Minutes Clerk Eiden called the roll.

City Council

Present: Council Member Wilson, Ogorchock, Tiscareno, Rocha and Mayor Harper

Planning Commission

Present: Commissioner Mason, Parsons, Miller, Westerman Chairperson Motts
Absent: Commissioner Zacharatos and Hinojosa

Economic Development Commission

Present: Commissioner Young, Sweatt, Turnage, Adebeyo, Thorpe, Wright and Chairperson Archuletta

Mayor Harper led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and thanked everyone for attending the Study Session. He acknowledged the recent passing of Antioch resident Timothy Hudson and offered his condolences to his family and friends. He stated the City was committed to working with them to address safety concerns on 11th Street.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Director of Parks and Recreation Kaiser welcomed everyone in attendance and credited staff and the volunteers who worked to prepare the Nick Rodriguez Community Center for the meeting.

Kip Stephens, Antioch resident, reported they had over 250 signatures on a petition in support of installing speed bumps on 11th Street and many people in attendance this evening were in support of the Hudson family. He expressed concern the City had removed traffic calming measures installed by citizens and had not responded to their request for assistance.

Fred Hoskins, Antioch resident, expressed concern plans from the community group for the Beede Lumber Yard parcel had not addressed impacts of their project. He discussed the importance of the future ferry terminal and developing an appropriate business plan for Antioch. He noted the City's plan was a positive step forward and suggested the City proceed with the improvements.

Cindi Harrington, Antioch resident, expressed concern regarding criminal activity occurring on West 10th Street between Celia's and the Bonfare Market Shopping Center. She requested Council address crime occurring in the area. She spoke against the proposal to place a residential complex on the property at "A" and 2nd Streets.

Earlene Lanter, Antioch resident, requested the City address her concerns regarding unsafe traffic conditions at the intersection of "L" and 11th Street as well as on 9th Street.

Mayor Harper explained Council was prohibited from discussing items that were not on the agenda. He noted staff would be given the contact information for the speakers so they could look into their concerns.

3. Opening Remarks - Staff and Consultant Presentation

- Project Status
- Overview of Opportunities & Constraints Report
- Waldie Plaza
- Draft Alternatives and Preferred Alternative

Interim Community Development Director Oshinsky provided introductory comments and discussed the agenda and format of the Study Session.

Senior Planner Gentry presented the staff report dated May 29, 2015 recommending the City Council, Planning Commission and Economic Development Commission: 1) Review the Downtown Specific Plan preliminary work products; and 2) Review and discuss the three draft Specific Plan land use Alternatives and provide staff and the consultant team with input regarding any changes that should be made to those Alternatives and input on the Preferred Alternative.

City Consultant Dick Loewke gave a brief overview of the Market Analysis, Opportunity and Constraints Report, Draft Specific Plan Land Use Alternatives, Preliminary Expanded Waldie Plaza Concept and the next steps in the process.

4. Questions - from City Council and Commissions

Mayor Harper thanked Mr. Loewke for the presentation and discussed the importance of the Downtown Specific Plan. He thanked the Commissioners present for participating in the discussion.

Planning Commission Chairperson Archuletta thanked Mr. Loewke for the presentation. He questioned the capacity of Waldie Plaza with the proposed revisions.

Mr. Loewke responded capacity would be approximately 400 – 500 people; however, a more careful analysis would need to be completed to be able to provide a more accurate answer.

Chairperson Archuletta stated with a community of over 100,000 the plaza should accommodate a larger number of residents. He suggested Mr. Loewke's analysis consider how that could be accomplished as well as how the parking structure could be designed to allow a view of the river. He stated he felt it was important to start identifying developers who wanted to invest in the downtown.

Planning Commissioner Parsons suggested plans for Waldie Plaza address minimizing the impacts of the railroad.

Mr. Loewke responded that safety features needed to be accommodated to improve the two major pedestrian access points. In addition, he stated the goal would be to make pedestrian corridors attractive to unify the entire area.

Planning Commission Chairperson Motts questioned the status of mitigation measures for railroad impacts as it pertained to future residential development.

Mr. Loewke clarified the process of developing a Specific Plan would include a formal environmental review and noted each site identified for residential development could accommodate housing with accommodations.

Chairperson Motts questioned if new zoning designation would encourage the new preferred development or if other methods such as eminent domain would be used.

Mr. Loewke responded that the Specific Plan was market based and focused on creating additional value to help stimulate investment and most desirable uses. He noted the goal was to begin filling vacancies, then add additional retail, office and housing.

Interim Community Development Director Oshinsky added that with the demise of redevelopment, the City's ability to use eminent domain for land use purposes was very limited to non-existent.

Economic Development Commissioner Sweatt questioned what impact the marina could have on Economic Development.

Mr. Loewke stated the marina was underutilized; however, there was great potential and staff was working diligently to bring a new restaurant into the area. He stated a vibrant downtown plaza would spill over, in terms of its benefits, on the marina

Public Comment

Latasha Wallace, Antioch resident, stated the plan included some great ideas; however, she felt Waldie Plaza was inadequate to address the community's needs. She spoke against residential development in downtown especially between 2nd and 3rd Streets. She urged the Council and Commissions to consider the proposal to place an event center/plaza area on the Beede Lumber Yard property.

Sandra Kelly, Antioch resident representing the "C Street Neighborhood Watch Group, stated they felt there was sufficient housing in downtown and the City should focus on improving existing buildings. She discussed the need for more recreational and shopping opportunities in the area. She suggested the City enhance the main entrances into the downtown and retain the lot between 2nd and 3rd Streets for a park.

Lee Ballesteros, Antioch resident, stated all of the reports advised against building on the Beede Lumber Yard site and if the City moved forward with housing on the property, she believed something other than facts influenced their decision. She advocated for more quality of life amenities in downtown and questioned if the RFP for the Beede Lumber Yard parcel had been granted.

Joy Motts, Antioch resident representing the Rivertown Preservation Group, read and presented written comment in opposition to a residential development on the Beede Lumber Yard property. She requested the City Council allow them to help create an event plaza in the area.

Allen Payton, representing the Rivertown Business Association, discussed their intent to host community events downtown. He gave a history of the Beede Lumber Yard property and spoke in support of developing a park on the site. He suggested the City rezone properties along 3rd Street and 2nd Street at "L" Street to high density residential with a stipulation they be owner occupied. He also suggested changing the names of "A" Street and "L" Street to Rivertown Drive and Marina Blvd.

Jim Lanter, Antioch resident, discussed the need for the City to have a large event plaza downtown to facilitate economic development. He stated improvements needed to occur quickly to prevent current businesses from closing.

Elizabeth Rimbault, Antioch resident, gave a history of the Beede Lumber Yard property and spoke in support of preserving the 3rd Street property as an open park space. She urged the City to retain the Senior Center in downtown. She commented the existing buildings amplified the sound of the train in the stage area at Waldie Plaza.

Candance Rowlett provided written comment opposing more housing in downtown Antioch.

Kelly Cobb, Antioch resident, stated she was opposed to a residential structure on the Beede Lumber Yard site and was in support of placing a historical park on the property.

Lucile Meinhardt, Antioch resident, suggested the City build a medium density condominium project by the marina, enhance commercial development and develop the Beede Lumber Yard parcel into a park/event center. She noted if the park/event center was not beneficial, the City could then consider an alternative use for the property.

David Sanderson, Antioch resident, reported the building housing the Community Center/Senior Center was renovated with grant monies and he did not believe the government invested in the community for the sake of having a revenue center for developers. He spoke in support of retaining the Senior Center at the current location.

Michael Daugelli, Antioch resident, stated the downtown area was transit rich and the future of Antioch depended on a viable downtown. He suggested the Council and Commission visit cities such as Sunnyvale, Millbrae, San Mateo and San Carlos to observe viable downtown areas.

Carol Kuhn, Antioch resident, questioned if the City's goal was to increase revenue through properly taxes or to enhance the community. She suggested improving the quality of life for all residents and noted that once that was accomplished, revenues would increase.

5. Joint Discussion - City Council and Commissions

- Input on Waldie Plaza, Alternatives and Preferred Alternative

City Manager Duran clarified relocation of the Senior Center was not part in any of the alternatives.

Economic Development Commissioner Thorpe questioned if the City had considered any alternatives to the housing development on the Beede Lumber Yard property.

Mr. Loewke responded they had not looked at commercial or office uses for the property; however, they had considered the possibility of a park/recreation use and various densities of residential. He noted the focus on where to locate parks was driven by where the density was located and maximizing access.

Economic Development Director Wright stated Waldie Plaza was a small narrow park and the proposal would create a facility hidden from view that would provide the opportunity for the homeless community to go unnoticed.

Mr. Loewke responded that they were motivated by the views and opportunity to create a more vibrant gathering place for people at Waldie Plaza. He noted the plan would need to consider his concerns.

Economic Development Commissioner Adebayo requested Mr. Loewke rate the three plans on economic viability and quality of life.

Mr. Loewke responded that all three plans addressed economic development opportunities and quality of life; however, it was more a matter of scale and flexibility. He noted alternatives #1 and 3 provided more flexibility and a more dynamic mix of uses.

Economic Development Commissioner Sweatt questioned if Mr. Loewke was in favor of increasing the population to create the demand for business or creating business to attract more people.

Mr. Loewke responded that the driving force behind a successful downtown for Antioch included housing, employment and a visitor component. He stated the focus initially needed to be on filling and renovating existing vacancies and expanding beyond that as property values increased. He noted enhancing access to the area was also very important.

Economic Development Commissioner Young stated stakeholders had expressed concern regarding crime in Antioch and if the City did not have the capacity to deter crime, he would favor developing the Beede Lumber Yard property as a park rather than housing. He questioned what impact high density housing developments would have on the City's crime statistics.

Mr. Loewke responded the analysis of crime statistics indicated the increase in crime correlated to vacancies and deterioration of facilities. He explained creating a daytime and nighttime presence of people would reduce crime rates. He stated they favored ownership housing in downtown because those residences would have a vested

interest and would provide economically to stimulate activity. He offered to look into this issue.

Economic Development Commissioner Turnage thanked Mr. Loewke for the report and questioned what income range the City focused on for the housing downtown.

Mr. Loewke responded that a mix of housing would be best; however, having as much disposable income as possible would be optimal. He noted water views and the potential to create synergy among uses would make it attractive for residence who wanted to accomplish all of their needs on foot. He noted filling vacancies and creating stronger tenancy would raise property values, increasing the ability to create higher density projects.

Economic Development Commissioner Archuletta discussed the importance of providing a balance of housing, employment and consistent foot traffic downtown. He stated he was not in favor of a large event center that was not self-supporting and suggested the City work with the Rivertown Preservation Society to develop a project that was commercially oriented on the Beede Lumber Yard site. He stated he supported much of the plan and creating a balance with a parks/event center component.

Commissioner Thorpe expressed concern that the consultant had not taken under consideration the community's request for the event center and stated he would like to see the option included for the City Council to consider.

Planning Commissioner Mason commented it had previously been stated that in the near term, high density projects downtown would not be financially feasible.

Mr. Loewke responded Urban Economist interviewed developers who indicated low to medium density single-family compact housing and townhouses were feasible, in today's market. He noted alternative #1 embraced that concept and as development started to fuel additional investment downtown, additional product types would become feasible.

Planning Commissioner Parsons thanked Mr. Loewke for the presentation and stated she wanted the Specific Plan to result in action. She noted it was important to improve the entrances to downtown.

Planning Commissioner Westerman questioned if there were plans to increase usage at the Antioch Marina.

Mr. Loewke, stated zoning and landuse policies were in place to accommodate more uses at the marina; however, the reason it had not occurred was due to constraints that had made it a less attractive place. He discussed the importance of making the corridors more attractive and filling vacancies. He reported the City Manager was focused on looking at viable uses for the marina and the Specific Plan was designed to support them.

Planning Commissioner Westerman agreed that that the “A” and “L” Street approaches needed to be improved.

Planning Commission Chairperson Motts stated Waldie Plaza was inadequate to fulfill the need for an event venue downtown and noted the Beede Lumber Yard parcel could combine a celebration of Antioch’s history in a Delta environment while providing endless activities. He further noted it could be connected to additional events at Waldie Plaza via a pedestrian trail. He stated Celebrate Antioch had offered to build the park at no cost to the City. He voiced his support for Alternative #3 with the following variations; the north end of the property #2 designated mixed use and the area shown as #5, designated as a park.

Councilmember Ogorchock stated if the City had listened to the community there would be an alternative that included an event center on the Beede Lumber Yard property.

Mr. Loewke responded the goal of the Study Session was to get direction from the Commission and Council. He noted they were focused on the market analysis, which supported regular reoccurring weekly events for approximately 500 attendees. He further noted larger events could be accommodated using public streets. He stated the desirability of accommodating larger events on the Beede Lumber Yard site could be added to any of the alternatives.

Councilmember Ogorchock spoke in support of an alternative that included an event center at the Beede Lumber Yard site and low to medium density housing projects downtown. She suggested parking garages be placed outside of the Waldie Plaza area. She stated she was concerned for the negative impacts of the train, when events would be held Waldie Plaza.

In response to Councilmember Ogorchock, Mr. Loewke clarified with mitigation measures for noise and air quality issues; housing near the railroad tracks was feasible.

In response to Councilmember Wilson, Mr. Loewke discussed the importance of providing transit oriented development as well as pedestrian and bicycle friendly communities. He noted they intended to tap into transit service to support activity downtown. He reported that they had identified buildings that required earthquake

retrofitting and commented when looking at the ability to accommodate new retail uses and offices downtown, the first priority was reutilizing existing buildings to retain the character and heritage of the area.

Councilmember Rocha stated she supported a fourth alternative that included the Beede Lumber Yard parcel as an event center.

Councilmember Tiscareno discussed the importance of increasing the population and providing an anchor business to promote and sustain a viable downtown.

In response to Councilmember Tiscareno, Mr. Loewke stated the alternatives were formulated to represent a broad range of choices. He noted all three alternatives were good for immediate results; however, alternatives #1 and #3 preserved flexibility and gave the City the ability to harness market opportunities in the future. He noted a commercial mixed use event center could be incorporated into all of the alternatives.

Councilmember Tiscareno stated he liked the concept for Waldie Plaza; however the train was a deterrent. He suggested the City attempt to address reducing the speed and noise from the railroad.

Mayor Harper thanked everyone for participating in the meeting and their interest in improving the quality of life for Antioch residents.

In response to Mayor Harper, Mr. Loewke stated based on the direction on the Council's preferred alternative, they would address making paths accessible to transportation. He noted alternative #1 created the most economic stimulus to support the ferry terminal, which was an important component of the planning process.

Mayor Harper suggested safety improvements and fencing be considered for the Amtrak station and railroad tracks. He stated with additional housing the City should consider crime prevention through environmental design. He voiced his support for retaining the Senior Center in downtown and an alternative that would consider the Beede Lumber Yard site as a park location.

6. Summary and Next Steps

City Manager Duran announced comments received at this Study Session would be incorporated into a Preferred Alternative for review and direction from the City Council on June 23, 2015. The next phase would be the development of the Specific Plan and environmental review which would take place in late 2015, followed by formal public review and hearings.

In response to previous comments, City Manager Duran explained there was a direct correlation between residential density and the vibrancy of retail and Ferry service.

7. Adjournment

Mayor Harper thanked the Community, Commissions and Council for their thoughtful input and adjourned the meeting at 9:16 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Kitty Eiden

KITTY EIDEN, Minutes Clerk