
NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. **UP-11-02** – Henry Killings requests the approval of a use permit for the Threshing Floor Tabernacle religious assembly. The use will include a sanctuary, offices, a multipurpose room, and restroom. The project is located in an existing building at 1787 and 1793 Vineyard Drive (**APN: 051-052-102**).

Staff recommended that this item be continued to April 20, 2011.

On motion by Commissioner Langford, seconded by Commissioner Travers, the Planning Commission members present unanimously continued UP-11-02 to April 20, 2011.

3. **PD-06-04, UP-06-21, AR-06-17** – Ted Liu of Bedrock Ventures, Inc. requests an amendment to condition of approval number 3 of City Council Resolution 2008/29. The amendment would extend the expiration date of the approvals for the Final Planned Development, Use Permit, and design review to March 11, 2013. The project consists of retail and offices, located at Hillcrest Avenue and East Tregallas Road (**APN: 052-100-069 and -068**).

Mindy Gentry, Acting Senior Planner, provided a summary of the staff report dated March 31, 2011.

Commissioner Langford confirmed with staff that included in this request was the Final Planned Development, the Use Permit and the design review.

Vice Chair Westerman clarified with staff that this in fact was for a time extension.

Commissioner Baatrup confirmed with staff that there are no competing projects to be processed on this property at this location.

OPENED PUBLIC HEARING

The applicant, Ted Liu, stated that they have worked diligently to obtain entitlements, which included two years for planning and another three years getting ready for building permits. He said that financing was lined up but that the credit markets have dried up and that building today is not economically viable. Given that they do not want to end up with an empty building with no tenants, they are now asking that the Commission allow the extension so that they can build the project and save their investment.

CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING

Commissioner Travers stated that he is inclined to give Mr. Liu the extension in light of the economic situation and the vacancy rate.

Commissioner Azevedo stated that given the information provided to the Commission regarding building permits, he is not surprised to see people requesting extensions and indicated that he is inclined to vote for the extension.

Commissioner Langford concurred with the comments.

Commissioner Baatrup said he had nothing to add.

Vice Chair Westerman stated that he remembered seeing this project and given that it would be good for the area, he could approve the extension.

RESOLUTION NO. 2011-02

On Motion by Commissioner Azevedo and seconded by Commissioner Travers, the Planning Commission approved an amendment to condition of approval number 3 of City Council Resolution 2008/29 for the Hillcrest Summit project, extending the Final Planned Development, Use Permit, and design review until March 11, 2013.

AYES: *Westerman, Langford, Travers, Baatrup, Azevedo and Manuel*
NOES: *None*
ABSTAIN: *None*
ABSENT: *Johnson*

NEW ITEM

- 4. Initial Vision Scenario** – provide feedback on the document prepared by ABAG and MTC.

Community Development Director, Tina Wehrmeister presented the staff report.

Commissioner Travers asked staff what measurements for growth or guide did they use and did they factor in the economic climate to which CDD Wehrmeister stated that ABAG memos explaining forecast methodology were attached to the staff report.

Commissioner Azevedo expressed concern that these numbers are not realistic and that given the economic climate and the situation with real estate, job growth is not going to happen and that realistic numbers are needed to prepare an intelligent plan and provide intelligent feedback.

Commissioner Travers stated that some growth can be realized from E-Bart which is a catalyst for the area.

Commissioner Baatrup questioned page 2 of their document stating that transit systems are financially unsustainable. He asked staff what the end product would be when this report is done and what impact it has to the City once done and accepted as prepared.

CDD Wehrmeister stated that ABAG/MTC will take the comments, factor in constraints, and then release detail scenarios and allow time for further comment. The end product will be the Sustainable Communities Strategy. She stated that while there is no

statutory requirement for any jurisdiction to change their General Plan to match the SCS, future funding and grant opportunities may be tied to SCS consistency.

Commissioner Baatrup questioned that if strategies adopted by the City will be a mechanism for money to flow, by being overly optimistic, does that steer more money to the City because we have greater need?

CDD Wehrmeister said that with a sustainable community strategy we would have more need, but planning functions would need to reflect that and if the General Plan was not changed and density was not changed that funding may be in jeopardy.

The Commissioners discussed the five questions requesting feedback and their comments were as follows:

1. *Is the proposed place type appropriate for your Priority Development Area(s), Growth Opportunity Area(s)? Given the availability of resources, is the proposed urban scale, mix of uses, and expected household growth appropriate?*

Commissioner Baatrup expressed concern over density to which CDD Wehrmeister explained that ABAG increased density in the Hillcrest Specific Plan area based on place type and regional transportation investment.

Commissioner Azevedo expressed concern that they were looking to the City for higher density numbers.

Commissioner Langford agreed that while they are forcing change out here, they are not forcing it upon others.

Vice Chair Westerman stated that they do not want to jeopardize funding for the Hillcrest area to which CDD Wehrmeister clarified that E-BART funding would not be impacted by the SCS.

Commissioner Azevedo noted that Antioch is providing affordable housing based on listing prices of homes.

Commissioner Baatrup confirmed with staff that the Commission does not agree with the density for the Hillcrest area.

2. *What transportation improvements would help support those Priority Development Area(s), Growth Opportunity Area(s) in your jurisdiction?*

Commissioner Langford stated that the Phillips interchange will be a big one.

Commissioner Azevedo said that regular Bart is not realistic and that the City is getting eBart without bathrooms, escalators or a station agent and that they needed to push for a Bart station that will have safety amenities. He said that a downtown ferry terminal and more frequent Amtrak service would open up business in the downtown area making it a destination for people to travel to.

Commissioner Baatrup indicated that he did not see any comments about the regional transit system to employment centers like Sacramento and Stockton for the reduction of greenhouse gases. He stated that there are limited services at the downtown Amtrak station and an enhanced station is needed to provide better services.

3. *What additional funding would be needed to support housing growth?*

Commissioner Azevedo stated that Amtrak service and secure parking needs to be improved.

Commissioner Baatrup questioned staff about what was driving this particular question and what kind of funding would stimulate housing growth to which CDD Wehrmeister said that this was linked to the Regional Transportation Plan to get at what programs will lead to housing development.

Commissioner Azevedo stated that E-Bart, Amtrak and the Ferry would help Hillcrest and downtown which are primary development areas.

Commissioner Langford stated that infrastructure was needed to support business development. Commissioner Baatrup stated that loans and grants would help these projects.

4. *If the Initial Vision Scenario growth estimate is too high, should some of the growth be shifted to another part of your jurisdiction, elsewhere in the County, or elsewhere in the region?*

Commissioner Azevedo stated that if density is shifted to other areas of the County, transportation funding still needs to catch up with prior housing development in the region, especially in East County where housing is relatively affordable.

5. *What are the challenges for your local jurisdiction to attract and retain jobs that match your local workforce?*

Commissioner Langford stated that the rail system could be improved.

Commissioner Azevedo stated that unfortunately the rails are in areas of heavy industrial and there is a need to make them accessible to light industrial. He went on to say that the regulatory environment in California is prohibitive to heavy industries.

CDD Wehrmeister said that she will summarize the comments, forward them to the City Council and will copy the Planning Commissioners on the letter to the regional agencies.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Tina Wehrmeister stated that she had a couple of updates. First that the Somersville portion of the State Highway 4 widening project ground breaking is this Friday at 9:00

a.m. Secondly, that this Friday there is a full closure of the highway in one direction scheduled from 11:00 p.m. on Friday to 5:00 a.m. on Saturday morning.

City Attorney Lynn Nerland informed the Planning Commissioners that the RDA ordinance extension was approved by the City Council by a unanimous vote and that the City is continuing discussions with Seeno and Discovery on the Black Diamond approvals.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Commissioner Azevedo said that Transplan has met and received a report from Joel Keller of BART and that he has a rendering of the eBart station. He provided an update on the station design negotiations with BART.

Commissioner Azevedo also reported that MTC has asked for projects to be considered in the RTP. He also reported that Transplan has decided to bring an action against the City of Pittsburg.

Commissioner Azevedo clarified that Pittsburg has not withdrawn from Transplan.

Commissioner Langford clarified with Commissioner Azevedo that the Bart police will have a presence at the station responding to incidents but that City police will respond until Bart police arrive.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Westerman adjourned the Planning Commission at 7:45 p.m. to the next regularly scheduled meeting on April 20, 2011.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cheryl Hammers