



**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
JOINT WORKSHOP BETWEEN THE  
PLANNING COMMISSION AND  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
MONDAY, AUGUST 18, 2008**

5:30 P.M.  
City Hall  
130 Cremona Drive, Suite B  
Goleta, California

***Members of the Planning Commission***

*Kenneth Knight, Chair  
Brent Daniels, Vice Chair  
Edward Easton  
Doris Kavanagh  
Julie Kessler Solomon*

*Patricia Miller, Secretary  
Linda Gregory, Recording Clerk*

***Members of the Design Review Board***

*Bob Wignot, Chair  
Thomas Smith, Vice Chair  
Scott Branch, Architect  
Cecilia Brown, At-Large Member  
Simon Herrera, Landscape Contractor  
Chris Messner, Landscape Contractor  
Carl Schneider, Architect*

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The special meeting joint workshops were called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Planning Commission Secretary Patricia Miller followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL OF PLANNING COMMISSION**

Present: Planning Commissioners Easton, Kavanagh, Knight, and Solomon.  
Absent: Planning Commissioner Daniels.

**ROLL CALL OF DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Present: Members Branch, Brown, Herrera, Messner, Schneider, Smith, and Wignot.  
Absent: None.

Staff present: Current Planning Manager Patricia Miller, Advance Planning Manager Anne Wells, Contract Planner Pat Saley, and Recording Clerk Linda Gregory.

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

Barbara Massey, Goleta, questioned why a public hearing was not held with regard to the Track 3 Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report associated with the City's General Plan/Coastal Land Use Plan Amendments that is now available for public review.

## **AMENDMENTS OR ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA**

Current Planning Manager Patricia Miller stated that the focus of the workshop will be on Item A Discussion/Action Items; and that Item B (Director's Comments) and Item C (Planning Commission/DRB Comments) were inadvertently placed on the agenda and will not be discussed.

### **A. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

#### **A.1 Building Intensity Standards in the General Plan/Coastal Land Use Plan**

Recommendation:

That the Planning Commission and Design Review Board (DRB) hold a public workshop on the building intensity standards, take public input, give staff direction regarding information and research on the issue, and continue the public workshop to September 15, 2008.

Staff speakers:

Current Planning Manager Patricia Miller

Advance Planning Manager Anne Wells

Contract Planner Pat Saley

Contract Planner Pat Saley presented and discussed a PowerPoint document entitled "Public Workshop, Building Intensity Standards, Planning Commission & Design Review Board August 18, 2008".

DRB Member Schneider requested that the population, size, character and urban core elements be provided with regard to Santa Cruz, Petaluma and Sonoma.

DRB Member Brown commented that it would be interesting to research samples of General Plans for other cities most similar to Goleta.

Planning Commissioner Knight suggested that it would be useful to research zoning ordinances and development standards in some of these communities which would show how the standards are implemented.

Planning Commissioner Easton commented that it would be interesting to learn the floor area ratios for buildings adjacent to projects on an ongoing basis.

DRB Member Smith commented that the table format used in the City's General Plan to define allowable land use categories may not be the best way to convey the information.

DRB Member Brown commented that it would seem that a form-based code may be more appropriate than intensity and density standards for Old Town, stating that the standards in Old Town may need to be different than standards for other areas in the City. She requested information with regard to the Hampton Inn including floor area ratio and height.

Commissioner Easton commented with regard to the form-based code system that he would question how FARs and building intensity standards would interface.

Commissioner Solomon commented: 1) Requested research with regard to the City of Ventura's general plan, stating that Ventura seems similar in relation to Goleta with regard to location and relationship with agriculture land and residential. 2) She believes Mill Valley is an area that is particularly well-planned, noting that it may have more density but it is balanced with open space. 3) Requested that the discussion includes consideration with regard to what kind of commitment will be made to maintaining open space and how that relates to floor area ratio.

DRB Member Brown commented that a diagram of other FAR values would be helpful to visualize the FAR standards, similar to the 0.25 FAR graphic shown by staff.

Commissioner Knight commented that some type of criteria for making consistency findings with regard to the good cause finding would be helpful.

Commissioner Easton commented that researching the history of the development of the four Land Use Tables during the 2006 General Plan review may provide guidance.

DRB Member Smith noticed on Table 2-1 that the R-P range goes up to 13 units per acre, and the minimum permitted density for R-MD is 15 units per acre.

#### Speakers

1. Barbara Massey, Goleta, requested support for the current building intensity standards and floor area ratios, stating that the standards were created by public participation over many years for the good of the community. She believes that the public clearly said they want strong standards that cannot be easily changed. She expressed concern that the good cause finding would allow changing standards without strong justification.
2. Gary Vandeman, Goleta, spoke in support of a rigid limit with regard to building height rather than averages, with the exceptions defined. He suggested a definition of what constitutes a chimney in an architectural detail. He believes that the good cause finding concept needs to be tighter with regard to justification. He suggested that the significance of the exception for the good cause finding should be in scale with the significance of the benefit. He commented that there may be something to learn by researching general plan standards in viable and

- successful communities to see whether more rigid standards correspond with better or worse situations.
3. Craig Zimmerman, representing The Towbes Group, commented that it is important for the developer to know early in the design process if there will be a resolution for good cause finding, especially with regard to affordable housing projects. He commented that the twenty-five foot height limit for single-family residences seems to be overly restrictive based on current popular two-story home designs, for example, designs with 9-foot ceilings in vaulted areas.
  4. Harwood White, representing Oliver Dixon and John Price, expressed support for adding flexibility to the standards. He noted that two of the projects in the City that he represents, and possibly a third proposal, will need more flexibility. He spoke in support of conceptual review early in the process. He noted that it is beneficial for the developer to know early that the project has merit and if a good cause finding can be made.
  5. Andrew Bermant, Bermant Development Company, commented: a) It is best to identify projects that have public benefit for a good cause finding early in the process so guidelines can be set for meeting the objectives. b) He does not believe that floor area ratios are a necessary requirement, stating that prior to the General Plan, the criteria with regard to height limitation, open space requirements and limitation on the amount of building coverage on a site, were enough guidance to develop good projects. c) The DRB review process addresses neighborhood compatibility. d) There are architectural techniques that can be recommended by the DRB to help guide applicants with design, for example installing clerestory windows and open ceilings to address privacy concerns. e) Each site needs to be carefully considered on its own, and in relation to the surrounding neighborhood, to determine what is appropriate for that site. f) Some flexibility was integrated into the General Plan with regard to sites that were constrained by ESHA requirements.
  6. Karen Lovelace, Goleta, stated that one of her main concerns is not blocking mountain views. She spoke in support for the 25-foot maximum height limit in both coastal and inland areas, stating that the height for most of the two-story houses in her neighborhood is 21 feet from grade. She believes that 9-foot ceilings can fit within 25 feet if the roof pitch is kept down and there are not 9-foot ceilings in every room. She expressed concern that there has not been consideration that analyzes what the impacts could be if every property was built out to the highest density and intensity standards put forward.
  7. Peter Koetting expressed appreciation for the workshop, stating that he is in the process of designing a project in the community. He commented: a) It is important to define "gross floor area" and "net land area" for consistency. b) He has not seen floor area ratios in a general plan or zoning ordinance for many years other than in urban areas. c) Commercial development is generally guided by standards for parking and lot coverage. d) Agreed with speaker Andrew Bermant that the medium density zoning 35-foot height limitation is problematic and limits the ability to create a quality project. e) Expressed concern with regard to the 25-foot maximum height requirement in the Community Commercial category stating that higher parapets are needed to hide equipment on rooftops; and questioned how average roof height can be defined on a commercial building, and whether architectural elements should be given a benefit if creative. f) Standards for mixed use are not included. g) Conceptual reviews of projects are

- very beneficial to understand the general ideas. h) Using ranges would be beneficial for certain standards but the site needs to be taken into consideration.
8. E-mail received: Contract Planner Pat Saley stated that an e-mail from Hersel Mikaelian, Goleta, was received on August 18, 2008 (which was distributed). She summarized the communication from Hersel Mikaelian that expressed his concerns that the rules, regulations and policies should be kept to a minimum; that planning should be kept simple and flexible so that different projects and different people can benefit; and that today's needs are different, for example, more height, floor area ratio and bulk are needed for space as families are growing.

DRB Member Schneider requested that staff translate density into building types.

Commissioner Easton suggested, with regard to a comment from speaker Andrew Bermant, that it may be useful to have a fairly simple explanation of the pros and cons of having floor area ratios as a control mechanism.

Contract Planner Pat Saley stated that the following direction was provided to staff during the workshop by the Planning Commission and Design Review Board (not in priority order):

- a. Find comparable cities to Goleta and research their building intensity standards in their general plans and zoning ordinances; and research what tools have been used to implement those standards. Provide population, size and type of urban core for Santa Cruz, Petaluma and Sonoma.
- b. Provide floor area ratios for adjacent buildings shown on the staff presentation.
- c. Provide information with regard to the Hampton Inn project including floor area ratio and height.
- d. Provide copy of the memorandum from the City Attorney with regard to building intensity standards and case law.
- e. Provide link to and information about the Downtown Ventura Specific Plan (that illustrates a form-based code), including links between the zoning ordinance.
- f. Provide diagrams illustrating FAR values (similar to 0.25 FAR graphic shown by staff).
- g. Provide a list of groups of standards or land category requirements that cannot be achieved due to internal conflicts.
- h. Provide history of the development of the four Land Use Tables during the 2006 General Plan review.
- i. Provide definitions and/or standards for the good cause finding, net lot area, and gross building square footage.
- j. Translate density into building types in terms of units per acre, number of stories, parking, etc.
- k. Assess the pros and cons of using FARs as a control mechanism.
- l. Provide information with regard to mixed-use standards.
- m. Provide information regarding Mill Valley area; and commitment to open space, especially if done to balance or as a tradeoff for more density elsewhere.

DRB Member Brown commented that she believes the process should not lose sight that there are sites in the City with situations that need carefully consideration. She

expressed concern that lately projects have been approved at the maximum with regard to the standards, which she does not believe is the intent.

DRB Member Branch commented that there needs to be more specificity with regard to standards that are appropriate for specific areas in the City, noting that what may be appropriate for Old Town may not work somewhere else, and vice versa.

Current Planning Manager Patricia Miller stated that another public workshop will be held on September 15, 2008, at 5:30 p.m.

**B. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

No report.

**C. PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD COMMENTS**

None.

**D. ADJOURNMENT: 7:11 P.M.**

Prepared by Linda Gregory, Recording Clerk.

GOLETA PLANNING COMMISSION/DESIGN REVIEW BOARD JOINT WORKSHOPS