



# SUMMARY OF CAC MEETING #5: PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

On Tuesday, November 9, 2010, the City of East Palo Alto held a meeting of its Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for the Ravenswood/4 Corners Transit Oriented Development Specific Plan. The purpose of this meeting was to review the Draft Community Preferred Alternative, resolve land use designations in areas where the community did not reach consensus, and recommend a CAC Preferred Alternative to the Planning Commission and City Council. Approximately 30 members of the public attended the meeting, along with the following CAC members:

- ◆ Chair Kimberly Carlton
- ◆ Vice Chair Alfredo Bryant
- ◆ Dalila Adofo
- ◆ Ken Alsman
- ◆ Bernardo Huerta
- ◆ Betsy Yanez

Duane Bay was not present.

The meeting was also attended by the following consultants and staff:

- ◆ Bruce Brubaker, Principal, Design, Community & Environment (DC&E)
- ◆ Sean Charpentier, RDA Project Coordinator II, City of East Palo Alto Redevelopment Agency
- ◆ Carlos Martinez, RDA Director, City of East Palo Alto Redevelopment Agency
- ◆ Brad Tarr, Senior Planner, Planning Division, Community Development Department
- ◆ Jeff Williams, Associate, DC&E

## 1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The CAC approved the meeting agenda.

## 2. CAC PREFERRED LAND USE ALTERNATIVE DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This agenda item included the following topics:

### **A. Staff and DC&E Presentation**

Mr. Brubaker and Mr. Williams gave a brief presentation about the process of developing the project's land use alternatives. The presentation also summarized the Draft Community Preferred Alternative, which was created at a community workshop on October 12, 2010. Mr. Williams explained that there were six areas where the community did not reach consensus or where City staff were requesting further consideration by the CAC:

1. **Bay Street Parcels.** Some workshop participants called for mixed-use office in this area, but staff expressed concerns about residential displacement. Staff recommended making mixed-use office a conditional use on the south side of Bay Road between University Avenue and Clarke Avenue.
2. **South Facciola Parcel.** Community members were divided between research & development (R&D)/industrial and open space uses on this site. Staff recommended a mix of offices and open space, for greater compatibility with University Village and to create greater potential for open space.
3. **Bay/Clarke/Weeks/Pulgas.** Some workshop participants proposed swapping the locations of residential and civic/community service uses in this area. Staff reminded the CAC that the location shown for residential uses represents an entitled 55-unit residential project.
4. **Bayfront Parcels North of Weeks.** The community was divided between office and R&D/industrial uses on these parcels. Staff requested further direction from the CAC.
5. **North Facciola Parcel.** Some workshop participants suggested that this area could be developed in the future. Staff noted that this area is currently designated for preservation as natural open space, and that analysis of this area's development potential is beyond the scope of the Specific Plan and EIR. The landowner is free to perform independent analysis in the future.
6. **East Side of Tara Street.** Workshop participants called for R&D/industrial uses in this area. Staff recommended an office designation, which would encourage parcel consolidation and allow for more intensive development.

The complete presentation, including maps of the six areas listed above, is available on the project website:

<http://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/economicdev/dumbarton.html>



### **B. RBD LLC and ETB-EPA Coalition Presentations**

The Ravenswood Shores Business District LLC (RBD LLC) and the Envision-Transform-Build East Palo Alto (ETB-EPA) Coalition each gave a presentation to provide additional input to the CAC. The RBD LLC presentation proposed greater flexibility in Ravenswood's land use designations, while the ETB-EPA Coalition's presentation discussed a land use alternative created by the Coalition. Both presentations are available on the project website:

<http://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/economicdev/dumbarton.html>

### C. *Public Comments*

Members of the public offered the following comments:

1. The preferred alternative should include a connection between Purdue and Demeter.
2. The community groups have laudable goals. Is there a way to combine the ETB-EPA Coalition's alternative with the draft community preferred alternative?
3. Have we looked at other communities that have tried to create downtown areas? The Draft Community Preferred Alternative does not appear to create a downtown. [Mr. Charpentier explained that the mixed-use development on Bay Road is meant to create a walkable downtown, and mentioned the sites visited on the project's TOD Bus Tour. Mr. Tarr noted that a mixed-use development project has been entitled on the southeast corner of University and Bay.]
4. This is the first meeting where I've heard about infrastructure. Where does that stand? [Mr. Charpentier noted that the City has an infrastructure plan and that implementation has already begun.]
5. East Palo Alto needs job creation by incarcerated people. The City budget is \$10 million, and security accounts for \$10 million of this. The City should consider multi-level parking. People who repair cars need an area where they can do this. People should be able to operate retail stores instead of going to jail.
6. I work for Collective Roots, and I would like to see community gardens as part of the final Specific Plan.
7. The library should use the entire ground floor of City Hall, not just half. The City needs a better police station. Schools need to accommodate East Palo Alto's growing population. Cooley Landing will be a resource not just for East Palo Alto, but for the entire Bay Area. Developers haven't built in East Palo Alto because of its crime rate, but there will be more developer interest now that the crime rate is down.
8. If there are schoolchildren in the Plan Area, the City needs to avoid busing them an hour away for school.
9. Four Corners already has businesses. East Palo Alto residents don't know what the City is doing or what buildings it's going to tear down. There should be no high-rises on the northeast corner of University and Bay—heights should be limited to two stories. Don't destroy the businesses that already exist.
10. Cooley Landing is a jewel, and it needs parking somewhere. Pedestrian/bicycle access is an important issue.
11. The Plan Area needs a well-connected street network so people can walk around. Design guidelines and streetscape improvements on Bay can direct people to Cooley Landing. While the homes on the south side of Bay should be preserved, don't slow down development there or make it more cumbersome.
12. A "senior tsunami" is coming as people age, and the Plan Area needs to accommodate them.

13. Senior housing is important. Ravenswood shouldn't have such large blocks. Cooley Landing should be kept available for emergency ferry service after an earthquake—it could be a good distribution point for FEMA, which might result in revenue for East Palo Alto.

### 3. CAC DELIBERATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF A COMMUNITY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

CAC members discussed the Draft Community Preferred Alternative and the public comments on this alternative, including the presentations from the RBD LLC and ETB-EPA Coalition. Mr. Brubaker recorded their comments on a CAC discussion map, which is shown at the end of this memo.



Following this discussion, Mr. Brubaker led an exercise with the CAC in which he helped to synthesize their comments on each part of the map into a CAC Preferred Alternative, which reflected a group consensus on the most appropriate use for each part of the Plan Area. The working drawing of the CAC Preferred Alternative is shown at the end of this memo. A digital version of the CAC Preferred Alternative will be sent to the Planning Commission and City Council for their consideration as they select a Preferred Alternative.

The CAC reached consensus on all parts of the Plan Area except the south Facciola parcel, where they were split between R&D/industrial, low-rise office, and civic/community uses. The Planning Commission and City Council will be asked to identify an appropriate land use for this area.

### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT (ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA)

Members of the public offered the following comments:

1. I support office uses where they are shown on the map. The Plan should include legacy businesses, rather than telling them to move because the community has a vision.
2. There were crime problems in the past at the former shopping center at University and Bay. There should not be a parking garage in the Plan Area, since it would create crime issues. Most of the people at the CAC meeting are just daydreaming. Let the community have a voice.
3. I have been working on the 1990 Bay Road cleanup since 2005. The Ravenswood industrial park has been underused for a long time. I'm optimistic about the community's plans. Don't let the PG&E substation be an obstacle to change.
4. Make uses in Ravenswood flexible, so people who use the spaces there can own their jobs. Don't depend on outsiders to build things. Open space is okay, as long as people can have small businesses there. Jobs are owned by us, not other people. There should be job training here.

5. I did a lot of planning with YUCA. Are there opportunities in the Plan Area for live/work? Senior housing? A bowling alley? A roller rink? An indoor soccer field? A public high school? A place for the homeless?
6. The Redevelopment Agency should not use eminent domain on existing community uses.
7. The City should have a public repository for important documents and artifacts from community members.
8. We can't put all of the desired community-serving uses in Ravenswood/4 Corners. They should be distributed throughout the community.
9. I did the first historical report on East Palo Alto, and a UC Berkeley researcher threw it out.



