

**MINUTES OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION JOINT STUDY SESSION
NORTH CAMINO RAMON SPECIFIC PLAN**

April 17, 2012

A Joint Study Session of the Planning Commission and representatives of the Parks and Community Services Commission, Economic Development Advisory Committee, and the Transportation Advisory Committee was called to order by Chair Kerger at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 17, 2012 in the Council Chambers at 2222 Camino Ramon, San Ramon.

Lauren Barr - Senior Planner, gave a brief PowerPoint presentation in which he stated that the North Camino Ramon Specific Plan (NCRSP) area consists of approximately 295 acres bordered generally by the City limits to the north, Executive Parkway to the south, Highway 680 on the west and Alcosta Boulevard to the east. It is accessed primarily by way of Crow Canyon Road, off Interstate 680. Mr. Barr added that the NCRSP is planning for smart growth infill development, creating a mix of land uses that strengthens the City's financial base, addressing the retail and service commercial needs of the community and recognizing the need for housing types in proximity to our employment base.

Vice Chair Viers asked Mr. Barr for an example of where maintaining the flexibility of 1,500 housing units can accommodate housing units from other areas currently designated for future housing. Mr. Barr replied that Gateway shopping center is a good example. It is an existing shopping center zoned for mixed uses, but it would be difficult to develop housing because of the existing uses.

Chair Kerger opened the floor to the Committee chairs for their input on the North Camino Ramon Specific Plan.

Louis Dagen - Vice Chair of the Economic Development Advisory Committee stated that the NCRSP is a unique plan that could accommodate large retail opportunities. Mr. Dagen also stated that integrating housing in proximity to Bishop Ranch is an attractive feature. Mr. Dagen further added that the mixed use would not only enhance the area, but would bring in tax revenue dollars.

Peter Rathman - Chair of Transportation Advisory Committee stated that they are in favor of the project. Mr. Rathman added that it is a way to increase economic opportunities for the City. Mr. Rathman further stated that having mixed use development encourages the use of public transit is beneficial.

David Ernest - Chair of Parks and Community Services stated that the Parks and Community Service Commission understands and that the NCRSP is a different type of commercial, retail and residential development. Mr. Ernest further stated that given the full park dedication requirement of 6.5 acres per 1,000 residents and the nearly 1,500 residential units that will generate park dedication requirements, the Parks and Community Service Commission recognizes that it may not be suitable or economically viable to dedicate and construct the entire dedication requirement within the plan area.

The Parks and Community Service Commission would like to see that the project area contain as much park land as feasible given the mixed of uses and site constraints, and the City should be sure it receives full park dedication in the form of in-lieu fees for the balance. Mr. Ernest also stated that the Parks and Community Service Commission is concerned about the Common Area being only 1.5 acres and the Village Green only 2 acres. Mr. Ernest added that the Parks and Community and Service Commission is also concerned that the park definition within the NCRSP is not consistent with what is in the General Plan 2030 and the Parks Master Plan. Mr. Ernest also added that the Parks and Community Service Commission would like to see language in the plan that fees paid by the developer go to the Parks Deduction Fund and not the General Fund. Mr. Ernest further added that the NCRSP defines public space in several ways; it needs to be consistent with the General Plan 2030 and the Parks Master Plan.

Commissioner Wallis stated that the General Plan 2030 does not have a definition for Semi-Public Places and was Mr. Ernest suggesting that Parks and Community Service Commission would like to see that the definition of Semi- Public Spaces be removed from the NCRSP. Mr. Ernest replied yes.

Mr. Ernest stated that the Parks and Community Services Commission does not support park dedication fee credit to public spaces, under private ownership such as plazas, courtyards, pedestrian pockets, and similar features.

Commissioner Benedetti asked for clarification that the General Plan 2030 goal is 6.5 acres per thousand residents was that on a neighborhood goal or Citywide.

Debbie Chamberlain, Division Manager replied Citywide.

Commissioner Benedetti asked if it was ever applied on a neighborhood development.

Ms. Chamberlain replied Dougherty Valley and the North West Specific Plan.

Vice Chair Viers stated that the State has mandates that we develop retail and housing. This project can develop 6.5 acres / 1,000 residents of parks throughout the City but to ask to meet the full requirement in this area is impossible. Vice Chair Viers further stated that the project goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emission, bringing people into the housing that live and work in Bishop Ranch and getting them to walk to shops locally. Vice Chair Viers also stated that he is in favor of in-lieu fees to satisfy parkland dedication requirements.

Mr. Ernest added that the request for in lieu fees should go before the Parks and Community Services Commission for approval.

Commissioner Wallis stated that at our last Planning Commission meeting Ms. Chamberlain stated that for a residential developer to come in there are criteria in the city for dedication it can be either land or in lieu fees but it is the City's discretion as to which type it will accept.

Chair Kerger stated that she likes having the flexibility in the plan since it is a long range planning.

Commissioner Wallis stated one of the discussions tonight was Semi Public spaces and asked Mr. Ernest if it was discussed at a Parks and Community Services meeting if a private developer would create a park, maintain it and deed over to the City would that be an acceptable type of public space, and be allowed fee credit.

Mr. Ernest replied no, and that it would not be accepted by the Parks and Community Service Commission because it is not considered as park if it is a piece of public art or a sidewalk.

Commissioner Wallis asked Mr. Ernest what is Parks and Community Services definition of Park. Mr. Ernest replied that he did not have the Parks Master Plan in his possession and was not able to answer Commission Wallis's question.

Commissioner Wallis stated the NCRSP is residential and retail. The next 30 years of housing is going to be infill and more dense. Commissioner Wallis further stated that he agrees with Vice Chair Viers that the State is mandating housing and retail.

Mr. Ernest stated that the Parks Master Plan will not be updated for a few years. Parks and Community Services needs to focus on the reality of what this kind of plan means and the way we look at parks is changing and develop policies that expands the definition of park types that may or may not be grass.

Commissioner Sachs asked if there was any City owned land within the plan area. Mr. Barr replied City Hall. Commissioner Sachs further asked if staff could look into the school district site for potential park site and not housing units.

Chair Kerger commented that school districts have given up potential school sites in past developments. School districts are not willing to give up land because they need the revenue.

Vice Chair Viers stated that San Ramon is required to provide housing for all income levels. Vice Chair Viers further stated that we need the retail to generate the revenue and for residential to live and shop to generate revenue.

Brooke Harris Housing Manager stated that to have a demand for retail we would need to provide housing for the people working in the community. Ms. Harris added that she is in favor of the 1,500 housing units.

Commissioner Sachs stated he had concerns with the 1,500 housing unit numbers and feels that it should be limited 1,000 units. Commissioner Sachs further stated that he also had concerns with traffic impacts and if we lower our housing numbers, we can potentially reduce future traffic impacts.

Vice Chair Viers stated that we did not have to build all 1,500 housing units. We are allowed flexibility and we can reevaluate the plan area.

Commissioner Benedetti asked for clarification on the purpose of reevaluating the 1,000 housing units and what would it consist of. Commissioner Benedetti also asked for clarification of the traffic peak times coming into the City.

Ms. Chamberlain replied each project is subject to subsequent environmental review, at which point we review issues such as traffic air quality parkland requirements to list a few.

Chair Kerger stated that she likes the flexibility of the plan and is in favor of having more park facilities.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Chair Kerger adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Luisa Amerigo