



**MINUTES OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
STUDY SESSION**

November 18, 2008

A meeting of the Planning Commission and Economic Development Advisory Committee Study Session of the City of San Ramon was called to order by Chair Patrino at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 18, 2008 in the Council Chambers 2222 Camino Ramon, San Ramon.

ROLL CALL

Present: Comms. Kerger, Sachs, Viers, O’Loane and Chair Patrino

Absent: None

Staff: Phil Wong, Planning Services Director; Lauren Bar; Senior Planner Ryan Driscoll, Assistant Planner; Alicia Poon, Legal Analyst/Attorney at Law; Marc Fontes, Economic Development Director; Joe Tanner, Economic Administrative Analyst; Luisa Willnecker, Recording Secretary

Audience: 24

1. CALL TO ORDER /ROLL CALL

Waived

2. PURPOSE OF MEETING

To gather input as well as to receive comments and direction of the Planning Commission and Economic Development Advisory Committee on the North Camino Ramon Planning Area.

3. DISCUSSION

Planning Director Phil Wong gave a brief PowerPoint presentation and stated that the goal of tonight’s meeting was to receive input on the proposed plan. Mr. Wong stated that the North Camino Ramon Planning Area is 256 acres and is located between the Crow Canyon Specific Plan Area and the City Center. Mr. Wong further stated that the City is considering the long range planning of existing commercial properties within the plan area to meet the goals of the Economic Development Strategic Plan, improve and expand upon San Ramon’s retail services, cultivate a diverse and balanced economy, and maintain and enhance San Ramon’s high quality of life.

Mr. Wong also added that North Camino Ramon Planning Area is located the 680 Corridor, the Transit Center, Iron Horse Trail and the Alcosta Extension.

Economic Development Director Marc Fontes stated that most retail centers in San Ramon are anchored by grocery stores. The major larger retailers are Target and Home Depot. Mr. Fontes further stated that a retail demand analysis was last completed in 2005 in conjunction with the Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP). An update of this demand analysis is underway. Mr. Fontes added that the new retail opportunities must be complementary to the City Center.

Senior Planner Lauren Barr presented slides showing the size of parcels, ownership interest, and transportation opportunities. Mr. Barr stated that the redevelopment area is also an opportunity and the advanced timing of the project is well situated given the current economy. Mr. Barr further stated that the constraints of the project would be the roadway traffic capacity concerns, infrastructure, and fragmented property ownership, need to maintain to existing service uses and project funding. Mr. Barr further discussed staff's initial development potential assessment that analyzed some of the site characteristics that might shape development patterns within the plan area.

Mr. Wong described the initial vision, which includes a long-range plan with smart growth principles that is implementable through form based development standards in responsive to recent State sustainable communities' strategies. Mr. Wong added that the next steps were to complete a retail demand analysis, a complete traffic capacity study, solicit comments from Planning Commission and EDAC to define and refine the project scope. A North Camino Ramon Planning Area funding proposal will be presented to City Council at midyear budget review.

Comm. Kerger stated that the North Camino Ramon Planning Area is 256 acres and that there is a high demand of retail in the City. Mr. Fontes added that residents take their business outside the City. With the North Camino Ramon Planning Area, this would allow tax dollars to remain within the City. Comm. Kerger commented about the property vacancies and asked if staff knew the numbers of vacancies. Mr. Wong replied that staff did not have the information available at this time. Comm. Kerger added that there should be extensive community outreach.

Eric Wills – EDAC Member stated that he supports the project and added that a traffic study would need to be completed. A project of this size would only increase the flow of traffic. Mr. Wong replied that the City will be looking at different opinions to balance loss of valuable land and traffic needs.

Geoffrey Johnson – EDAC Member stated that the City might want to look into a local

shuttle system to transport residents and visitor throughout the City. This would decrease the traffic flow.

John Mills – EDAC Member asked about the Alcosta Blvd extension. Mr. Wong replied Alcosta Blvd extension is shown on the General Plan and that the City would have to work with the Town of Danville.

Eric Willis – Added that the proposed project is the best use for the area. Mr. Willis also added that the City might want to look into upgrading some of the surrounding shopping centers.

Comm. O’Loane added that the City might want to look into electronic retailers and other uses to ensure they are suited to the retail demand and market trends.

Mr. Fontes added that an analysis was done and showed that in 2009 there is a general concern and slow down with the economy and that in 2010 the economy will be returning.

Mr. Wong added that the City has notified the school district about potentially moving the school facility to another location and that the City is willing to work with the school district.

Comm. Sachs stated that he feels the project would be a great asset to the City.

Chair Patrino stated that he feels it is a excellent opportunity for the City. Chair Patrino also stated that the City needs attention to this project which is crucial to the City Center.

Comm. Viers stated that the North Camino Ramon Planning Area is similar to the Crow Canyon Specific Plan and will be an asset to the City. Comm. Viers added that copies of the SB 375 need to be given to the EDAC members to review. Comm. Viers further added that a community outreach should also be looked into.

4. WRAP-UP/NEXT STEPS

Complete retail Demand Analysis. Complete Traffic Capacity Study, Complete RFP process, present North Camino Ramon Planning Area funding proposal for midyear budget. Pursue Grant opportunities through the FOCUS program and continue the community outreach.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Chair Patrino adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Respectively Submitted, Luisa Willnecker