

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 4, 1988

Mayor Cordingley convened the General Plan workshop at 7:10 p.m., following a closed session on pending litigation, Estes vs. Town of San Anselmo, et al, pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(a), with Councilmembers Chignell, Sharp, Walsh and Wooliever present.

Cordingley announced that John Roberto, Planning Consultant, would be conducting the workshop. Roberto stated that he was interested in hearing the public's comments about the Town as they looked at the current General Plan and considered whether to make modifications. The starting point for discussion was "Working Paper #5: Review of Current Planning Policies and Other Town Planning Issues." The subject for review this evening was the Land Use Element, specifically the residential goals, residential densities and types, residential policies, commercial goals, commercial land use categories, and commercial policies.

The public raised the following comments and questions regarding the residential goals, policies, densities, and types:

- (1) Goal #4, "to amend zoning to conform to other goals of the plan" was a goal of the previous Council. Is it realistic to include it since it is difficult to accomplish ?
- (2) Is there any way to hold down the population without hurting the development of the Town?
- (3) What is needed is some way of moving people, such as by rail, and the focus should be on transportation rather than homes.
- (4) How can the Town maintain the status quo?
- (5) Is there a concern in town to preserve the environment on the hillsides and protect them from developers who want to build their "dream" homes (i.e.homes built on speculation)?
- (6) The ridges and hillsides and their access roads are fragile.
- (7) Pleasanton has an ordinance that developers must meet certain conditions established by the city.
- (8) Regarding land use in the Sir Francis Drake/Center Boulevard corridor, any changes to density in that area would affect residential goal #1 regarding accommodating the housing needs of a socially and economically diverse population.
- (9) San Anselmo residents settled along the railroad line. If people in the Alder Avenue knew that it was zoned for 20 units per acre, they would be upset. (Alder Ave. is in the 6 to 12 units per acre, predominantly single family land use category).
- (10) How have other communities responded to development pressures?
- (11) There is going to be building, regardless of what is done. By setting up a program to handle development, such as establishing road access policies, will the Town actually be inducing development?
- (12) Town standards should be upheld, and variances should not be easily granted.
- (13) What are alternative measures to gaining open space?
- (14) Many lots in the low lying areas already have second units, which means the area may already be at the density of 6 to 12 units per acre designated in the Land Use Element. The density is fine the way it is, but it may not be acceptable if there are any more units.

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- (15) The public should be consulted on roadway improvements.
- (16) There are roads that are not Town maintained in front of undeveloped lots whose owners do not contribute to the maintenance of the roads. Yet when developers want to build on these lots, they want everyone else on the road to contribute to roadway improvements.
- (17) There are too many variances granted, notably in the past when one by one lots were developed on a street and each one were given variances to bringing the road up to Town standards because it would be too much of a hardship for an individual property owner.
- (18) Does the planning consultant's scope of work include creating a land use map of existing land uses? (Roberto responded that it was not included)
- (19) It is illogical to discuss all these issues that require money without discussing commercial goals?
- (20) Can property be downzoned?
- (21) Is the Town required to have low income housing and if so, must it be high density?
- (22) San Anselmo has done the biggest thing it can do by allowing second units. Real low income housing cannot exist without federal subsidy.
- (23) There is no way the Town can accommodate the amount of housing and low/moderate income housing that the State requires.
- (24) The flatlands should be protected just as much as the hillsides.
- (25) There are areas designated as 6 to 12 units per acre density that should be changed to 4 to 6 units per acre density.
- (26) Residential policy #2 establishing a maximum of six units per acre overall in the Town is too high. Although the lot sizes have already been determined by existing subdivisions, if an area is destroyed by fire, for example, the Town may not want it to be rebuilt to a density of 6 units per acre.
- (27) When addressing low income housing, the Town is only dealing with the 4% of the town that is not yet built.
- (28) Will high density units take into account parking? How can on-street parking be dealt with on hillside streets?
- (29) The end of San Francisco Boulevard may not be the appropriate place for low and moderate income housing, as designated in the Table of Hillside and Ridge Density Parcels in the General Plan. The Town already provides a good deal of low income housing.
- (30) The end of San Francisco Boulevard should be earmarked for open space, not multiple residential housing.
- (31) New development should pay for roadway improvements.
- (32) There should be more low income housing in San Anselmo, noting that children of San Anselmo residents cannot afford to live here.
- (33) The state requirements for low income housing imply that San Anselmo must provide housing for anyone who wants to move here.
- (34) The income levels of the types of jobs being created in Marin mean that the workers cannot afford to live in the

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County. The County may be faced with not having enough mechanics, etc. because they cannot afford to travel a long ways to their jobs.

- (35) Low income housing cannot be limited to people who now live in Marin.

In response to some of the questions raised, Roberto made the following comments:

- If it is the Town's desire to maintain the status quo, a strategy to accomplish this is to devise land use and zoning districts that match present conditions, which is done by looking at the units per acre that currently exist. For example, mixed residential implies a scattering of multiple residential units. If there are mixed residential areas that are now predominantly single family or single family and duplex and the public is satisfied with the existing condition, the Town may want to change its land use map to reflect the existing condition. This issue may be relevant to some of the areas designated as mixed residential, 6 to 12 units per acre, in the Land Use Element. Furthermore, location factors such as proximity to transit systems, need to be considered when establishing mixed residential areas.

- There are no projections for commercial or job growth in San Anselmo, and the population is expected to decrease with the declining average household size.

- The Circulation and Land Use Elements of the General Plan should be compatible. Therefore, if the Town allows for development in certain areas, the roadways must be compatible with that development.

- There is a state law that jurisdictions must provide housing for low and moderate income residents. There are different ways to provide this housing, such as with second units. High density development in and of itself does not guarantee affordable housing. The zoning ordinance would also have to be structured so that high density development does not occur unless there is also economic diversity.

- In response to development pressures, some communities encourage growth and some discourage it. Those that discourage growth generally either set aside land for open space or establish development regulations. Other than an outright public purchase, another method used to acquire open space is through transfer of development rights, where a open space is obtained by the Town in exchange for granting its owner higher densities elsewhere in town.

It was the general feeling of the public to support residential policy number 5, which states that narrow streets are a part of the Town's special flavor, and turnouts and parking bays should be encouraged rather than street widening or realignment, except when public safety dictates such measures.

Commercial

The following comments were made regarding the commercial goals, land use categories and policies:

- (a) There should be commercial goals in order to derive revenue. San Anselmo is losing a big source of revenue within the town, which could be improved if people were better connected and their needs were coordinated differently.
- (b) Sales tax revenue is down, the commercial district is just tolerated in the community, and the Town has to decide what it wants in its business community.
- (c) San Anselmo Avenue between Ongaro Plumbing and the Ross town limit might be better used for high density housing. There is too much commercial area in town, and this area on San Anselmo Avenue does not have much business. Perhaps the residential use here could be phased out.

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- (d) Only commercial uses should be allowed in the C-2 commercial zone, and all commercial zoning should be more specific.
- (e) There are major problems on Greenfield Avenue because there are no commercial goals in the General Plan.
- (f) The granting of parking variances creates more problems.
- (g) The Town should not reduce the commercial area because it may be needed in the future.
- (h) Mixed use of residential and commercial, such as housing units above first floor commercial spaces, is desirable; the residential units establish a supply of customers and make the downtown more active and attractive at night.
- (i) The rents charged in the commercial areas are too high and not realistically priced.
- (j) There has to be a balance between aesthetics and what will generate money in the downtown.
- (k) If the Town states that one of its goals is to pursue opportunities for parking, it may make it easier to pursue financing for parking.

Jonathan Braun, member of the Open Space Committee, asked if the Open Space Committee could make a presentation at the next meeting.

The next General Plan workshop was set for Wednesday, February 17, 1988, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Beth Calamar