



Meeting Minutes

City of Davis

Downtown Davis Plan Advisory Committee Meeting

Senior Center Activity Room, 646 A Street

Thursday, May 2, 2019

7:00 P.M.

Committee Members: Meg Arnold (Chair), Michelle Byars (Vice Chair), Catherine Brinkley, Josh Chapman, Judy Corbett, Mary DeWall, Chris Granger, Larry Guenther, John Meyer, Sinisa Novakovic, Ted Parks, Deema Tamimi, Randy Yackzan

Liaison Members: Matt Dulcich, Matt Williams, Emily Shandy, Eric Gudz

Not Present: Darren McCaffrey, Eric Roe

City Council Liaisons: Brett Lee

City Staff: Ashley Feeney, Heidi Tschudin, Eric Lee, Kerry Loux

Please note: The numerical order of items and estimated times on this agenda is for convenience of reference. Items may be taken out of order.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Parks attending as the new Chamber of Commerce representative, Shandy attending as the alternate Planning Commission liaison, and Gudz attending as temporary BTSSC liaison.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes

The February 21, 2019 minutes were approved by the following vote of 11 to 1, with 1 abstention, and with the clarification that Opticos staff had stated the 4 stories in the Neighborhood Medium zone was a mistake and at the time City staff did not respond differently.

Yes: Arnold, Byars, Brinkley, Chapman, Corbett, DeWall, Granger, Meyer, Novakovic, Tamimi, Yackzan.

No: Guenther

Abstain: Parks

4. Brief Announcements from Chair, Committee Members, or Staff

None.

5. Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

Public Comments were made by Ezra Beeman that the fiscal and economic impacts of the plan should be done and reviewed prior to releasing the plan.

6. Draft Downtown Specific Plan Discussion

A. Staff Overview of Discussion Items.

Staff provided an overview of the discussion items, reviewed the recommendations being asked, the reasoning behind the requested recommendations. Staff discussed the big picture considerations related to the downtown plan and the general purpose including predictability for development and CEQA clearance. DPAC asked clarification asked questions about where the project was in the CEQA process and batching of the public comment on the item instead separate public comment on each sub-item. There was a comment about the need to take another look at the plan and why it is financially important to the city. There was also a point of clarification about public comment being batched together and not being on each item. Response that the agenda is organized that way to facilitate the meeting.

B. Public Comments.

Anthony Ruebner: His family has owned 204 University Avenue for 30 years. He thinks it is important to include it in the study area. It would give the owner clarity as far as what is economically viable. Asks DPAC to support staff recommendation.

Ezra Beeman: Supports public comment after there has been presentation and discussion. Wonders where the 4-story change came from. There is an impact on neighbors and privacy and asks if we need a 4th floor.

Becky Hibbert: Family has owned property at 5th and G Street. The small homes on G Street are not included in the same zone and if they were included, it could make for a more effective project.

Mark Grote: City staff wants to take control of the process and direction. It includes changes to University Avenue neighborhood and the fourth story being presented as a clarification, not a change. Staff changes would create bigger buildings around the perimeter of the core and create a ring of tall buildings around the core. Asks DPAC to uphold intensity in the core with smaller buildings on the edge.

Cathy Forkas: Consultants emphasized the missing middle and stepping down buildings. If have 4-stories next to a 1-story, there is no step up. Not against infill or densification.

C. Staff Comments

C. Granger: Appreciate having staff perspective on the table. However, it is unfortunate that it is coming late in the process. DPAC never heard any comment that they should review other parts. We might need to take time and maybe more meetings and data.

For Recommendation #1, staff recommended increasing the intensity on G Street to Main Street Large. Staff noted it as an opportunity area with underutilized sites and cited examples of other cities with campuses with substantial research and business park development and coworking environments.

D. Tamimi: Clarification about Option 1 and 2 from previous meeting and the differences.

M. Williams: Clarification on proposed border going to 4th or 5th Street. Staff response that it would reflect the map and go to 5th Street.

M. Dulcich: Clarification about no minimum height required. Staff response that no minimum height is proposed.

For Recommendation Item #2, staff felt that it was prudent to include 3rd Street between A and B Street in the plan and clarified that it was just of the parcels fronting on 3rd Street.

M. Byars: Clarification on the current zoning and uses allowed for this area. Staff response that current zoning is a Planned Development and allows mixed uses. The properties are not currently in the plan area, but not currently changed by the plan.

For Recommendation #3, staff recommended including the entire Davis Commons site as Main Street Large or a combination with Neighborhood Large.

For Recommendation #4, staff recommended combining Neighborhood Medium zone and Neighborhood Medium-Open zone to simplify and avoid creating non-conforming uses.

For Recommendations #5 and #6, staff recommended including several properties located in the University Avenue neighborhood in the downtown plan and discussing including the other properties in the neighborhood containing aging multifamily complexes. Staff believes that the Neighborhood Medium zone would be appropriate with substantial 4th story setbacks.

For Recommendation #7, staff recommended discussing greater development on the Hibbert Lumber Block, which presents an opportunity site.

L. Guenther clarification that the staff report references G Street between 4th and 5th Street, but it should be between 5th and 6th Street.

D. DPAC Discussion and Recommendations – Regulating Plan Map

D. Tamimi: What about Central Park area? Why are we not increasing density there?

C. Brinkley: Add Central Park to the discussion.

M. Byars: Is it Central Park or East vs. West?

Motion to add as Item #8 on the Regulating Plan a discussion of development intensity west of the core area and around Central Park.

Motion approved unanimously.

Recommendation Item #1 Discussion – G Street Flex District Area

L. Guenther: It's more than investment return – sense of place. Does not follow principle of transition in height and size. Why emphasis to east and not to the west?

J. Meyers: You can do 4 stories by Central Park now. Properties by tracks should be cut out as peace offering to Old East and to provide them with certainty. Provide good will and keep to 2 or 3 stories. Development facing tracks should not be a backdoor – should have appropriate architectural treatments.

M. Byars: Look at downtown as a whole – not piecemeal. Need transitions.

M Dulcich: Support recommendation #1. Parcels support higher development.

C. Granger: Critical to step down on backside of buildings. Respect organic nature of the community and its development and form and pay attention to the backside of buildings, including the future of the train tracks and possibility if they are abandoned. Proximity to train station should matter – higher there makes sense, but not closer to 5th Street.

M. Williams: BAE analysis that less than 4 stories is not feasible. Pay attention to sight lines, 5 stories behind 3 stories would be less brutal viewpoint.

J. Chapman: DPAC task to jumpstart downtown and create economic opportunity. Supports recommendation #1.

J. Corbett: Supports recommendation #1.

D. Tamimi: Supports recommendation #1.

A. Feeney: 4-sided architecture will be addressed in form based code.

M. Williams: Suggestion to create transition zone with 3 stories.

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S. Novokavic: Why is staff cherry picking changes. Plan has gone through a process and consultant talked about respect for transitions. Not fair. The recommendation from consultant was to leave the Planned Development alone.

R. Yackzan: This is disrespectful. Concern about these late changes.

A. Feeney: Trying to set things for the EIR. Draft plans will be released with public review and DPAC review.

M. Arnold: Reminder that the draft plan has not been released and is not finalized.

L. Guenther: Neighborhood Medium at 4 stories eliminates whole idea of transition. Motion that Neighborhood Medium have a 3 story maximum and detached buildings.

S. Novakovic: Seconded.

J. Meyer: It would downzone everything by Central Park.

M. Arnold: Neighborhood Medium on the margins of downtown shall be 3 stories maximum instead of 4 stories? Alternate motion?

M. Williams: Substitute motion to create new designation of 3 stories – transitional neighborhood attached and detached.

A. Feeney: Can direct Opticos to create transitions where there is residential. Motion needs to come from voting DPAC members. M. Williams motion dies.

D. Tamimi: Motion to create new neighborhood medium transition zone.

L. Guenther: Motion withdrawn. Seconded.

Motion approved by consensus.
Abstain: Brinkley.

C. Granger: Are we being asked to increase the height or elevations of the large form?

A. Feeney: No increase in size of form. Staff recommendation for G Street area as Main Street Large.

M. Byars: Opposed. Don't want it to block the central area.

R. Yackzan: Does it change the flex district concept.

A. Feeney. No.

C. Brinkely. In favor.

M. Arnold. Motion supporting staff recommendation.

C. Brinkley. Seconded.

Motion approved by majority.
Oppose: Guenther, Byars
Abstain: Granger

Recommendation Item #2 Discussion - 3rd Street in University Ave. Neighborhood.

M. Dulcich: Neighbors were promised no added commercialization on 3rd Street.

S. Novakovic: This would let 1-story houses on 3rd Street go to 4 stories. That is too much. Does not provide transition.

E. Shandy: Recommendations #5 and #6 would be piecemeal exceptions. Creates neighborhood inequities. Neighborhood should be looked at as a whole.

J. Chapman: We have already discussed this area.

L. Guenther: DPAC didn't leave University Avenue area out, we opted to not include it.

M. Byars: Not opposed to it but already addressed and decided.

S. Novakovic: Motion - Follow Opticos' plan and leave "as is" for recommendations #2, 5, 6. Motion dropped.

J. Meyer: Parcels are perfect for redevelopment but adjacent to residential. Need to be "one offs."

M. Byars: This is a process problem.

M. Arnold: Can we discuss one at a time and address only #2 here. Motion - DPAC does not support Recommendation #2.

R. Yackzan: Seconded.

Motion approved unanimously.

Recommendation Item #5 and #6 Discussion - University Avenue neighborhood multifamily building parcels.

R. Yackzan: How can this property be developed? Currently the multifamily site would have to be developed as single family or request a new planned development and coordinate with neighbors separately from the downtown plan.

M. Arnold: Issue of fairness to property owner. Trying to create certainty. There is an existing multifamily building that is declining in quality.

J. Chapman: We can't pick and choose properties. Need to look at whole area.

C. Granger: This part of town is messy and will bog down plan. Should leave as it is and let Council decide.

S. Novakovic: Want respect for people who live there.

M. Byars: Motion - Do not support staff recommendation #5 and #6.

L. Guenther: Seconded.

Motion approved by majority.

Oppose: Yackzan

Abstain: Brinkley, Corbett

Recommendation Item #3 Discussion - Davis Commons site.

E. Shandy: Would put 5 story next to 2 story cottages.

A. Feeney: Form Based Code will address step back requirements.

C. Brinkley: Going up makes sense. Site is near arboretum and open space.

L. Guenther: This is entrance to town and is the first impression for visitors.

C. Brinkley: Motion - Accept staff recommendation.

D. Tamimi: Seconded.

Motion approved by consensus.

Abstain: Guenther

Recommendation Item #4 Discussion - Combining Neighborhood Medium Zones.

L. Guenther: Why constrain commerce?

A. Feeney: Concern about downtown being dispersed. Staff thinks the two zones are too granular and it creates non-conforming uses.

M. Williams: Helps with parking problem.

R. Yackzan: Motion - Support staff recommendation. It increases options for downtown commerce.

C. Brinkley: Seconded.

M. Byars: Does this undermine existing single family.

L. Guenther: No, it increases options for commercial.

Motion approved unanimously.

Recommendation Item #7 Discussion - Hibbert Lumber block.

A. Feeney: Staff is asking if there is support to allow greater intensity on the parcels located on the Hibbert Lumber block for consistency on the block.

J. Meyer: Prior Option 2 was a problem. This makes sense in the long view of the east side of G Street which offers a great opportunity. Neighborhood Small remains on the west side of G Street. The east side can be higher. But also need to consider architectural treatment on the backside facing the tracks. It is an opportunity to look at the Hibbert block as one entity, but look at tiering and stepbacks.

A. Feeney: Staff will coordinate with Opticos for the best approach. Can peak exceed 4 stories?

C. Granger: Do you match across the street or maximize opportunity?

L. Guenther: We should not hold back on this site based on what is across the street.

J. Meyer: Motion - Move staff recommendation. It is a big site with lots of opportunity.

M. Byars: Keep like to like. 3 stories on west for transition?

M. Arnold: Substitute Motion - West side to be Neighborhood Small; Consolidate east side to be same as Hibbert parcels and allow 4 stories, but Opticos can look at more with thoughtful transition.

M. Byars: Seconded.

Motion passes unanimously.

7. Affordability, Sustainability, Transportation, Parking Items

Staff briefly spoke to the issues and the information and draft recommendations provided in the meeting packet. Encouraged DPAC to provide feedback to staff by email on the items. DPAC requested another meeting to follow up on items, address the financial feasibility of the plan, and discuss development around Central Park and west of downtown.

8. Working Schedule

Staff briefly reviewed the current schedule for possible draft plan in July and a 90-day public review period. Question about students. Staff responded that City can consider extending the review period.

9. Future Meeting Dates

To be determined.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 PM.