

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes: Wednesday, July 25, 2012; 7:00 – 8:30 pm
Guide Dogs for the Blind, 350 Los Ranchitos Rd.

Attendance

Civic Center Station Area Plan Advisory Committee

Emily Dean	Casey Mazzoni	Jeff Schoppert
Mike Fryer	Preston McCoy*	Roger Smith
Elissa Giambastiani	Rich McGrath	Jean Starkweather
Nicholas Kapas	Larry Paul*	Craig Thomas Yates

*Ex officio, non-voting member

**Ex officio alternate

Absent: Barbara Heller*, Bob Huntsberry*, Brigitte Moran, Andrew Patterson, Tammy Taylor, Gayle Theard

Observers: Maureen Degnan, Jonathan Artz, Bari Levinson, Kenneth Louie, Heidi Alegaur, Victor Manovi, Greg Andrew, Stuart Shepard, Janet Shirley, David Schonbrunn, Wayne Rayburn, Steve Mansfield, Debra Mansfield, Geraldine Judas, Linda Saldana, Fawn Yacker, Chris Daniels, Bill Frink, Jennifer Wallace, Sue Ciolino, Gary Ciolino, Valerie Taylor, Tim Sullivan, Kathie Sullivan, Glenn Bossow, Jenean La Roche, Mary Collie, Linda Balestrieri, Sandra Chilvers, Bob Chilvers, Dennis Johnson, Tony Taubert, Stephanie Taubert, Carolyn Lenert, A Sideris, Patricia Drenzo, Kate Powers, Gaye Lauchenhauer, Veronica Gondouin, Francis Gondouin, Cindy Hiroshima, Lea Ann Bernick, Richard Hall, Morgan Genolly, Mary Donlan, Hariott Manley, Chris Henzel, Carl Kontz, Julie Lavezzo, Ken Dickinson

Staff: Katie Korzun (Economic Development Coordinator, City of San Rafael), Rebecca Woodbury (Management Analyst, City of San Rafael)

Welcome, Announcements and Introductions

Co-chairman Mike Fryer opened the meeting at 7:05 pm. Fryer reviewed the agenda and noted that the desired meeting outcomes were to review the final changes to the Plan as directed by the Committee at their last meeting and to celebrate the completion of the Committee's work.

Fryer noted that the Committee had been working on the Plan for almost 2 years, with 23 meetings and workshops, and that 4 members had perfect attendance.

Staff noted that the seconds had been left off the minutes for the July 11 meeting but they would be added. A motion to adopt the minutes with the staff amendments was made by Dean and seconded by Schoppert. The minutes were approved.

Fryer noted that Judy Schriebman, an ex-officio member has submitted a letter of resignation from the Committee and thanked for her good attendance and input.

Open Time

Fryer announced Open Time for comments on items not on the agenda and requested that speakers limit comments two minutes.

- Linda Balistrieri, President of Vista Marin HOA. Voiced strong objections to proposed zoning changes; said Homeowners' associations should be notified; zoning changes will impact the

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architectural integrity of their neighborhood. She stated desires for wetlands protection, protection against noise generated by the construction of high density housing, and the construction and operation of SMART, and believes property values of Vista Marin will decrease if high density residential allowed.

- Richard Hall, past president of Vista Marin HOA. Before any additional residential zoning occurs, as is being considered, the Freitas freeway interchange would need to be updated as it is already the number one most dangerous intersection in Marin according to Caltrans. He was surprised at high density housing proposed. Civic Center should have charged parking in order to encourage county employees to use the train and not place any further strain on parking; employers should provide bus and shuttle service to allow employees to get to station.
- Jenean La Roche. There was public outcry last time a multi-story public safety building was proposed for the dog park at the Civic Center area, and it was moved to another location; Plan description of a “vibrant, mixed-use liveable area supported by a mix of transit opportunities” is not what people want in their neighborhood; this is a residential area with a beautiful landscape; the lack of density is what Marin wants; opposes recommendation for multi-story, high density residential.
- Lea Ann Bernick, Vista Marin resident. Vista Marin is a private gated community without a gate; the proposals in the Plan do not preserve the character of their neighborhood; wants low density as high density will have an adverse impact; remove 5 story proposal from east side of freeway; the reason for position is that too many people and housing will cause congestion, it will reduce their housing value, the provision of SMART parking will attract more cars to the area and the provision of amenities referenced in the Plan should be closer to the existing amenities and services at the mall.
- Harriet Manley, Vista Marin resident. Clapper rails are her passion and they are not on the list of protected species in SMART EIR and the impacts to them are not mitigated. Therefore the SMART EIR cannot be relied upon for this development.
- Glenn Bossow, Vista Marin resident. 101 access is bad; traffic during the Marin County fair and Civic Center events is bad and will be exacerbated by high density housing; maintain the integrity of single family housing by allowing nothing but 2-story residential east of the freeway.
- Sandy Chilvers, Vista Marin resident. 4 to 5 stories on Civic Center Drive will be a profound change to the area; will change the suburban environment to an urban environment. Vista Marin is impacted by parking during the Marin County Fair and must retain security to keep people out of the neighborhood and from blocking their driveways.
- Janet Shirley, San Rafael Meadows resident. SR Meadows petition has collected 140 signatures so far and is not complete yet. They will be some of the people most impacted by the Plan. The petition includes: Limit development on storage lots and Marin Ventures to 3 stories, limit Dandy Market to 1 story, limit Casa Marin to 2 stories, do not allow height increases as concessions for affordable housing, parcels on Merrydale and Redwood should provide SMART parking, no vehicular crossing at Walter Place or Merrydale Road. They want to maintain the character of the neighborhood.
- Bob Chilvers, San Rafael Meadows resident. How many units are proposed in the Plan? SMART train is supposed to take cars off the freeway, high density housing will add cars, block views, and decrease property values.
- Greg Andrew, San Rafael Meadows resident. The comment analysis presented at the last meeting had 40 of the 72 comments noted as “no change” or “comment noted” responses from staff. He was disappointed by that.
- Jonathan Artz, Vista Marin resident. Opposes height/density increases on east side of freeway because of pollution and congestion; there will be health issues for runners and people walking their dogs.
- Carolyn Lenert, North San Rafael Coalition. It is well known that high density housing units use more water than single family units. The City cannot zone for high density until it is known where the water will come from for these units.
- David Schonbrunn, TRANSDEF. The Plan takes a regional focus with regard to planning; people complained when Vista Marin was proposed and now the Vista Marin is protesting the next development; strongly supports Committee’s work.

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- Julie Lavezzo. Wants to align the feel of the area with the environment; has no confidence with the follow through for intentions or design guidelines; Committee should uphold the vision of Frank Lloyd Wright for the area and Marin; maintain feel of the area; public comments are not reflected in the Plan; high standards for development are important.
- Bari Levinson, Vista Marin resident. Needs to sleep in the morning and is concerned with the noise generated by the train. Knows the Committee does not deal with that issue, but a Quiet Zone is essential.
- Wayne Rayburn, San Rafael Meadows. The Plan takes revenue into concern more than the public comments; high density housing means more revenue to the City and there is more interest in money than concern for residents.

Review Final Plan

Fryer asked for the staff presentation on Agenda item III, the Final Plan Review. Staff member Katie Korzun gave a presentation about the split decision on height from the July 11 meeting. The committee had directed staff to include both alternatives in the Recommended Plan and to indicate that the decision was almost evenly split. In response to this direction, staff placed the following text box in four areas in the Recommended Plan noting the decision, and included the two Alternatives as Figures 18 A and B.

The Committee reached consensus on the Draft plan to include the italicized text above. After hearing the public comments on the draft, the Committee was not able to reach consensus on heights for the redwood Highway frontage, the Marin Ventures site, or either storage lot parcel, and were evenly divided between a No Change Alternative and a Four-Story Alternative.

Korzun stated that the various pages where the insert was made had been distributed to the Committee.

The Parking Section was completely reorganized to reflect the Committee's decision to emphasize their concern that SMART parking not impact existing neighborhoods, and Korzun referred the Committee to the online version of the Plan to see the changes. Korzun also explained that the other changes made at the last meeting had been incorporated throughout the document.

Co-chair Fryer asked for public comment.

Public Comment:

- Opposes 4 or 5 story building heights
- Objects to any expanded parking near the train station; the train is supposed to remove cars from the roadways
- There is already too much traffic in the area now
- High density housing will impact the neighborhoods
- The Plan applies urban standards to a non-urban area
- What happens with the split decision language at the City Council meeting?
- No one is asking for tall buildings; people want 3-story buildings or less
- Opposes height changes on the east side; development should be confined to the other areas

Kapas made a motion to incorporate the requests of the petition in the Plan. Starkweather seconded the motion.

Fryer said it would be better to include the petition with the staff report to Council. Giambastiani disagreed with incorporating the petition. Dean said the petition issues were considered at the last meeting, were debated intensively and the Committee arrived at the split decision. She noted that SMART was providing parking and the Plan tried to insure that parking would not go into neighborhoods. She also noted that the Plan already includes statement on no vehicular crossing at Walter Place and Merrydale. She doesn't agree with incorporating the petition into the Plan. Smith asked how they would be incorporated. Kapas said staff could incorporate them into the text.

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Starkweather said she thought Kapas meant that the petition would be reflected in the minutes and the minutes attached to the staff report. Kapas asked to revise his motion to mean that the petition be reflected in the minutes and attached to the staff report.

Schoppert said the petition will be part of the public record and the Council be made aware of it regardless of committee action. Smith said there was no harm in the committee asking the petition be attached to the staff report. Korzun said it would be normal staff procedure for the staff report to include the petition and address the petition's concerns.

Vote: 8-1; approved.

Schoppert made a motion that the committee present to the City Council for its consideration and acceptance the recommended plan as submitted to the committee for approval at the July 25, 2012 meeting. Giambastiani seconded the motion.

Public Comment:

- The Committee should include in the motion that the City look at Comment # 35 on the Plan's parking recommendations and consider applying them citywide, especially with regards to providing certainty for affordable housing projects. The Committee should also include in the motion that conditions of project approval be used to require mitigation for traffic impacts of projects more than say 1000 ft from the station: create a fund for shuttles to the Station and to require commercial and multifamily building owners to contribute annually to the fund.

Vote: 10-0; approved

Next Steps

Korzun explained that the Plan was scheduled for consideration by Council at their August 20 meeting, but cautioned that the meeting date could change.

Public Comment

- Vista Marin neighborhood is signing a petition for quiet zones and opposing 5 story buildings. The petition has 34 signatures so far.
- Is staff asking the Council to do something different than it originally planned in terms of accepting the Plan?
- Concerned about public health issues for cyclists and runners due to increased congestion. Requests that a public health assessment be done.
- Good intentions as regards parking are not good enough.
- What is the best way to submit public comments if unable to attend council meeting?

Dean encouraged residents to become involved earlier in then planning processes so the comments can be considered earlier.

Yates said he understood concerns about public safety, parking, and building heights.

Kapas thanked the public for participating and encouraged them to stay involved.

Meeting Evaluation

Giambastiani congratulated the four members with perfect attendance. Kapas thanked staff for their work over the past 2 years, especially Rebecca who was on staff for the entire process. Korzun thanked Committee on behalf of herself and Rebecca.

Closing

Fryer closed the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

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Attendance

	2010				2011								2012											
	9/22	10/13	10/16	11/10	12/8	1/12	2/9	3/9	4/13	5/11	6/8	7/13	8/10	10/12	11/9	12/14	1/11	2/8	3/14	4/11	5/9	7/11	7/25	
Damon Connolly* (CC)	E	√	(tour-optional)	√ (Brockbank)	(Brockbank)	√	√	√	√	-	√	√	√	√	-	-	Reappointed							
Emily Dean	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Michael Fryer	√	E		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Elissa Giambastiani	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Barbara Heller* (CC)																	Appointed		-	√	E	√	E	E
Bob Huntsberry* (DRB)	-	√		-	√	√	√	√	√	-	-	√	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nicholas Kapas	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Stanton Klose* (GGBPAC)	√	√		√	-	-	√	-	√	E Resigned														
Greg Knell	√	√		-	√	√	√	√	-	-	√	-	E	-	-	E	-	Resigned						
Klif Knoles	-	√		-	-	Resigned																		
Marcus Lee	E	-		√	√	E	√	E	E	√	-	√	√	E	-	-	Resigned							
Preston McCoy* (BPAC)	(Powers)	-		√	√	-	√	√	√	√	-	(Powers)	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	√ (Powers)	(Powers)	√	√	√
Casey Mazzoni						Appointed		√	-	√	√	E	-	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	E	√	√
Rich McGrath	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	E	√
Brigitte Moran	√	E		√	√	√	E	√	E	√	-	E	√ (Hussman)	√	-	√	√	-	E	E	-	E	-	E
Larry Paul* (PC)	√	-		-	-	E	√	√	E	(Wise)	-	-	√	√	-	√	√	-	E	√	√	-	√	√
Andrew Patterson	√	√		√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	-	√	-	-	-	-	-
Jeff Schoppert	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Judy Schriebman* (LGVSD)	√	E		√	-	-	√	√	√	√	√	√	(Loder)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Resigned
Roger Smith	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	√	√
Jean Starkweather	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	E	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	√	-	√
Tammy Taylor	√	√	√	√	√	-	√	√	E	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	E
Gayle Theard	-	√		-	√	√	√	√	√	-	-	√	√	E	-	-	-	-	√	E	-	-	-	-
Craig Thomas Yates	√	-		E	√	-	√	-	√	-	-	-	√	√	√	-	√	-	E	√	√	√	√	√

*Ex officio, non-voting member
E: excused
BPAC: Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee

CC: City Council
DRB: Design Review Board
LGVSD: Las Gallinas Valley Sanitation District

PC: Planning Commission
GGBPAC: Golden Gate Bicycle Pedestrian Committee

I present to your Committee as a private homeowner living very near your proposed site for development.

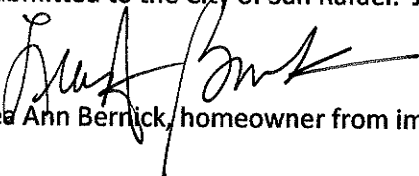
Vista Marin is a private community, a gated community without a gate. We bought our homes because of the value we all share for tranquil, uncongested living that is so apparent in our area, including the beautiful wetlands, hillsides and views, that we so enjoy. So strong was that regard of the developers and purchasers, that the 55 acres of what is noted on your maps as either "park" or "open space" is indeed private land owned by Vista Marin homeowners- to never be developed as was the legal agreement at it's purchase.

In reading many versions of your reports and final recommendations, you have authored a strong sense of commitment to and I quote, " preserve the existing character of the area, and in addition, "these neighborhoods should be protected from adverse impacts of new development". Your current proposals—as written in your report I do not believe protect us from adverse effects, and this is why we are here. Before I mention those, I want to be clear in communicating that I am not in opposition of the proposed plan in it's entirety. The map called FIGURE 18A with the removal of the blue sections of proposed housing on Civic Center Drive near our community and off McGinnis parkway adjacent to our community are what I oppose. The reasons being:

- 1) Congestion – too many people and too many cars --which is not why we live here and would drastically change the peace and quiet that we have known for over 12 years.
- 2) Reduction in housing values – a high density congested area will negatively impact what draws buyers to our homes – an open, peaceful and quiet private community without traffic or people congestion.
- 3) Parking – bringing more cars and their Co2 emissions into our community negatively impacts our health, our environment, and the wetland habitat ecosystem.
- 4) Amenities – new housing should be located close to consumer amenities -which is not on the east side of the freeway—but rather on the purple area outlined on the aforementioned map. Your report references that current market demand does not support additional retail in the area.

Thank you for your serious consideration to our concerns.

Submitted to the City of San Rafael: July 25, 2012 by


Lea Ann Bernick, homeowner from impact area

July 25, 2012

To: SMART Train Advisory Committee/Civic Center Station
Re: Recommended Plan

Dear Committee Members:

As a voting resident in North San Rafael, I am thankful that our laws allow for things like "Advisory Committees" and citizen input. I know how much time it takes to come to consensus on complicated issues with major impacts, and I appreciate the efforts of those who have come up with the current Recommended Plan.

That said, it is extremely unfortunate that this plan does not take into consideration the concerns of people like me, who live right next to the proposed Civic Center station and the future SMART train tracks.

Specifically, I'd like to address environmental impacts along the federally designated wetland area bordering North Gallinas Creek. As you know, the tracks run parallel to this wetland. Proposals to upgrade and alter the current rails will significantly impact this area. Wetlands in this region have been designated as critical habitat for the federally endangered California clapper rail, an wetland species that requires special consideration and protection under federal law. It's ironic that the clapper rail does not even appear on the animal species list created for this project (attached here). I heard one there last night.

This wetland is going to be impacted and changed forever. Your current recommendations to "celebrate natural resources" along the SMART train corridor and at the Civic Center station don't do enough to ensure that the existing habitat and its native (endangered) species are not impacted, especially when those species aren't adequately identified. This is not acceptable, and is deeply troubling as the project moves forward. What facts are being ignored or glanced over in the name of "progress"?

Thank you very much for your time.

Harriot Manley, Registered Voter
47 Vista Marin Drive San Rafael CA 94903
415.472.2116

WILDLIFE SPECIES OBSERVED IN THE PROJECT CORRIDOR

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	TYPE OF DETECTION*
Amphibians		
<i>Hyla regilla</i>	Pacific tree frog	O
<i>Rana catesbeiana</i>	Bullfrog	O
Reptiles		
<i>Clemmys marmorata</i>	Western pond turtle	O
<i>Sceloporus occidentalis</i>	Western fence lizard	O
<i>Diadophis punctatus</i>	Ringneck snake	O
<i>Pituophis melanoleucus</i>	Gopher snake	O
Birds		
<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>	American white pelican	O
<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	Double-crested cormorant	O
<i>Ardea herodias</i>	Great blue heron	O
<i>Ardea alba</i>	Great egret	O, N
<i>Egretta thula</i>	Snowy egret	O, N
<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	Black-crowned night heron	O
<i>Cathartes aura</i>	Turkey vulture	O
<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Canada goose	O
<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Mute swan	O
<i>Aix sponsa</i>	Wood duck	O
<i>Anas americana</i>	American wigeon	O
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Mallard	O
<i>Anas cyanoptera</i>	Cinnamon teal	O
<i>Anas clypeata</i>	Northern shoveler	O
<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	Northern harrier	O
<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	Red-tailed hawk	O
<i>Falco sparverius</i>	American kestrel	O
<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Ring-necked pheasant	O
<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>	Wild turkey	F
<i>Callipepla californica</i>	California quail	O, V
<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	Killdeer	O, V
<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>	Black-necked stilt	O
<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>	American avocet	O
<i>Limnodromus sp.</i>	Dowitcher	O
<i>Sterna forsteri</i>	Forster's tern	O

* Type of detection: B = burrow, C = carcass, F = feathers, N = Nest, O = visual observation, S = scat/ guano, T = tracks, V = vocal detection (i.e., call, song)

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	TYPE OF DETECTION*
<i>Columba livia</i>	Rock dove (domestic pigeon)	O
<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	Mourning dove	O, V
<i>Bubo virginianus</i>	Great horned owl	O
<i>Calypte anna</i>	Anna's hummingbird	O
<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>	Acorn woodpecker	O
<i>Picoides nuttallii</i>	Nuttall's woodpecker	O
<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	Northern flicker	O
<i>Empidonax difficilis</i>	Pacific-slope flycatcher	O
<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	Black phoebe	O
<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>	Western scrub-jay	O, V
<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	American crow	O
<i>Corvus corax</i>	Common raven	O
<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	Tree swallow	O
<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	Northern rough-winged swallow	O
<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>	Cliff swallow	O, N
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Barn swallow	O, N
<i>Baeolophus inornatus</i>	Plain oak titmouse	O
<i>Psaltriparus minimus</i>	Bushtit	O
<i>Certhia americana</i>	Brown creeper	O
<i>Sialia mexicana</i>	Western bluebird	O
<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	Northern mockingbird	O, V
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	European starling	C
<i>Icteria virens</i>	Yellow-breasted chat	O
<i>Pipilo crissalis</i>	California towhee	O
<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	Song sparrow	O, V
<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>	Black-headed grosbeak	O
<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	Red-winged blackbird	O, V
<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>	Brewer's blackbird	O
<i>Molothrus ater</i>	Brown-headed cowbird	O
<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>	House finch	O
<i>Carduelis psaltria</i>	Lesser goldfinch	O
<i>Carduelis tristis</i>	American goldfinch	O
<i>Passer domesticus</i>	House sparrow	O, V
Mammals		
<i>Lepus californicus</i>	Black-tailed jackrabbit	O, S
<i>Spermophilus beecheyi</i>	California ground squirrel	O
<i>Canis latrans</i>	Coyote	O, S
<i>Felis catus</i>	Feral cat	O
<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>	Mule deer	O, T