Community Planners Committee
Planning Department • City of San Diego • 202 C Street, 5th Floor, San Diego, CA 92101

SDPlanningGroups@sandiego.gov • (619) 235-5200

DRAFT

CPC MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF AUGUST 22, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Donna Nenow, Carmel Valley
Larry Marshall, Centre City
Michael Sprague, City Heights
Eleanor Mang, Clairemont Mesa
Steve Laub, College Area
Laura Riebau, Eastern Area
Pat Shields, Greater Golden Hill
Vicki Granowitz, Greater North Park
Buzz Gibbs, Kearny Mesa
Tom Hebrank, Kensington/Talmadge
Ed Cramer, Linda Vista (7:15 p.m.)
Judy Elliot, Normal Heights
Tom Gawronski, Ocean Beach
Frank Busic, Old Town (7:10 p.m.)
Mel Ingalls, Otay Mesa
Kathy Mateer, Pacific Beach
Cynthia Conger, Peninsula (7:10 p.m.)
Jim Denton, Rancho Bernardo
Mike Freedman, San Ysidro
Tamar Silverstein, Scripps Ranch
Doug Wescott, Serra Mesa
Guy Pruess, Skyline-Paradise Hills
Reynaldo Pisano, Southeastern San Diego
Eric Germain, Tierrasanta
Dash Meeks, Torrey Hills
Leo Wilson, Uptown

VOTING ELIGIBILITY/RECUSALS: None.

NON ELIGIBLE REPRESENTATIVE PRESENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT:

City Staff: Betsy McCullough, Jackie Dominguez, Bill Levin, Nancy Bragado, Jeff Strohminger and Jim Waring at 8:30 p.m.

Guests: None.

NOTE: *The sign-in sheets that are provided at the entrance to the meeting are used to list CPC Representatives, guest speakers and staff present at the meeting.*

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Steve Laub called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and proceeded with roll call.

2. **NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT:** Kathleen Blavatt informed members that the San Diego Coastal Alliance has had a lot of response to the Housing Element, the General Plan and the reformation of the Redevelopment Agency among other current issues at the City. Ms. Blavatt expressed concern over the decline in public oversight and stated that CPC is one of the few public oversight committees.

   Lee Campbell of Tierrasanta said he searched the General Plan for the words *quality of life*. There were 30 references, with only three in the requirements and the rest were in the introductory paragraphs.

The City of San Diego

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Katheryn Rhodes of Point Loma discussed the importance of public involvement and expressed concerns that Development Services is taking away control from the planning groups by making projects ministerial, over-the-counter and non-appealable.

Eric Germain said Proposition A, the November 7, 2006 ballot initiative, will ask the county if there should be an airport at MCAS Miramar. Mr. Germain said an airport would be irresponsible planning for reasons of public safety, cost, encroachment on the environment, impact to the quality of life and traffic noise.

3. **MODIFICATIONS TO AGENDA:** None.

4. **PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** None.

5. **HOUSING ELEMENT: (Action Item)** Bill Levin presented an overview of the Housing Element. The Element is a 5-year, short-range document, almost a combination of a plan and reporting document to the state and is only slightly modified from the previous Housing Element, with changes made to reflect changed conditions since the previous Housing Element, otherwise the format is the same and it is very similar to the previous one. By contrast, the General Plan is an entire new look for the City of San Diego. Mr. Levin said the basic framework of the Housing Element is mandate by state law and much of the Housing Element is driven by state requirements. The five major goal areas are requirements of the state. Mr. Levin was available to answer questions.

   The Committee voiced their concerns and comments on the Housing Element as follows:

   Pat Shields said she was disturbed about the concept of constraints; she finds the document to have no respect for democracy and does not want to take any action on the Housing Element and General Plan until we have a competent and effective City government.

   Laura Riebau said the General Plan is a beacon of hope and light and the Housing Element completely contrary; she said the Housing Element destroys Urban Design and Economic Prosperity.

   Buzz Gibbs observed an error on Page 173, Item 8, Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans; the plans have not been approved by the Airport Authority yet, so that section needs work to make it accurate. Buzz Gibbs echoed Pat Shields' concerns of constraints. Mr. Gibbs said the tenor is a little strong for this document.

   Leo Wilson believes the goals in the document can be achieved without loosening the regulations and design standards proposed in the document; he recommended that the committee support the goals being achieved within our present regulatory framework.

   Cynthia Conger agreed with former comments made; she suggested the use of the word *restraints* instead of *constraints*.

   Judy Eliott agreed with previous comments made; the thing she found most disturbing in the document was the attitude.

Guy Preuss expressed concerns that San Diego has no water supply and eventually we will face some constraints on how much we can build.

Public comment from the audience on the Housing Element was as follows:

Eric Germain said reducing the average permit processing time is good, but cautioned taking away community review; he said higher density must come with the support of the community; on the ministerial review process Mr. Germain said the idea of taking away the open discussion and the public review is a horrible idea; he does not like the quote on Page 175, Item 9, Open Space Requirements, "…the City's open space requirements are clearly a constraint on development of housing." Mr. Germain believes it is the open space areas that make San Diego unique.

Kathryn Rhodes of Point Loma, stated that the building industry uses words like *streamlining* and *predictability* to avoid going through the planning groups; she likes Chapters 1, 2 & 4; she does not agree with Chapters 3, Minimize Government Constraints and Chapter 5, Constraints to Development.

Tom Mulaney stated PDO's are the thing that help us preserve our community character; bypassing community input will put total focus on Development Services with fast processing; he believes we are returning to the idea that the applicant is the only customer; Mr. Mulaney objects to the statement on Page 4 of the Introduction, which states that it will be necessary to rezone and redesignate more land to allow higher-density housing, starting in 2006. Mr. Mulaney has looked at all SANDAG figures and said we have more than a 15 year supply of housing; he said we'll let Bill Levin figure out how to deal with the Housing Commission five years from now, but for the next five to ten years there is no need to pressure communities to add density, especially with the tone of the Housing Element being regardless of the effect on our quality of life; said he wants more time to look at the document in detail.

Doug Wescott agreed with by Pat Shield's comment on constraints and Judy Elliott's comment on the tone of the document. Mr. Wescott said the General Plan states that the nine elements are interlinked through common goals and there is synergy between the elements; no one element should take precedence over another and each element must be considered in the context of the entire General Plan.

Michael Sprague, speaking as the CPC representative to the Housing Element working group said the Housing Element is a dose of reality and in the General Plan we have a tremendous number of latitudes; he said whether we agree or not, the General Plan is in fact following the Housing Element, because that's what is required by the state and we must be realistic or face the consequences.

Pat Shields called the question to end discussion on the Housing Element and take a vote. The motion was seconded and approved 20-6-0.

Mike Freedman moved to approve the Housing Element as presented. The motion was seconded by Tom Gawronski. The motion failed 7-19-0.

Steve Laub inquired about the penalties if the Housing Element is not submitted in accordance with state laws. Mr. Levin responded that the main negative of not having an adopted, state certified Housing Element is that the City is not eligible for certain funds that may be available to us. Mr. Laub shared other members concerns about the comment on Policies, Page 76, Item 5, which states "The Development Service Department shall stress the importance of flexibility in the application and interpretation of regulations…" – Mr. Laub said it's a frightening, vague, open-ended statement that doesn't belong in the document. Mr. Levin responded that the second part of that statement is "…while not compromising life, safety, the purpose or intent of the City's design regulations or community and General Plan goals." Mr. Laub also commented that Housing Element should not contain items we cannot enforce, such as the references that student housing will be taken care of by the colleges; this is a false reliance on action by other people.

Reynaldo Pisano referenced Page 177; he would like to know how we are going to address the issue of updating existing infrastructure; also wants more development verbage regarding the impact fees.

Leo Wilson moved to oppose the current draft of the Housing Element, which conflicts with the General Plan's focus on sensitivity of design and balance of interest. The housing and affordability goals of the Housing Element can be accomplished under the current regulations, emphasizing good design and preserving the quality life. Specifically opposed to weakening and repealing PDO's, not providing sufficient parking in new development, not applying good design standards, failing to provide necessary public facilities, limiting community participation in the development process. The motion was seconded by Eric Germain. The motion was approved 22-4-0.

The Housing Element will be presented at a hearing of the Planning Commission on September 7, 2006 and the CPC motion will be presented to them.

Pat Shield moved that the CPC take the position that it is untimely to proceed with the Housing Element prior to putting the City's larger house in order. The motion was seconded by Cynthia Conger. The motion failed 8-18-0.

6. **Q&A WITH JIM WARING, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OF LAND USE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (Info Item)** Jim Waring said that although there has been a level of negativity, he believes that our core citizenry, community and opportunities are higher than the negative influences. Mr. Waring has hopes that our future lies in the tomorrows, not in reliving the past. Mr. Waring reported that that Mayor believes the planning groups are an essential element of the fabric of the City and the hours of work and effort put in is appreciated by City staff.

Cynthia Conger inquired about the outcome of the discrepancy of the 3,000 versus 11,000 parcels that the City's Real Estate Assets Department was unsure of ownership. Jim Waring said the reason for the discrepancy between the parcels reported by the City and the County, is that County records showed some parcels as two parcels, and the City was

considering multiple parcels as a single ownership, therefore, the County records showed a larger number.

Cynthia Conger said she believes that if Neighborhood Code Compliance were given the proper tools for enforcement, corruption in our communities would be reduced. Mr. Waring said the penalties for enforcement are not high enough and part of the best practice reengineering is to set a new policy to give an initial fix-it ticket, but if the problem is corrected within a certain timeframe, the fine is voided.

Michael Sprague said we must be prepared for the fact that we are tremendously under-taxed. Mr. Sprague believes there continues to be a disconnect between the school district and Planning.

Jim Denton expressed concerns of keeping businesses in San Diego and keeping industrial parks industrial. Mr. Waring said there is a definite push under Bill Anderson's leadership to make sure we preserve our prime industrial where we have it.

Larry Marshall expressed concerns about the manner in which the balanced community policy on low-income housing is ignored.

Laura Riebau expressed concerns that in her community what once was commercial is now being redesignated as mixed use, and commercial space is being put aside for residential.

7. REPORTS TO CPC:

- **Staff Report:** Betsy McCullough spoke on future agenda items. Ms. McCullough also mentioned that a slightly updated Bylaws Shell was emailed and post mailed to all the Planning Group Chairs. The Bylaws Shell is posted on the website.
- **Subcommittee Report:** None.
- **Chairperson's Report:** None.
- **CPC Member Comments:** None.

The next Regular Meeting of the CPC will be held on September 26, 2006, 7:00 p.m., at the Metropolitan Operations Center II, Auditorium, 9192 Topaz Way, Kearny Mesa, California.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. by Steve Laub.

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