



## **UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE SUBCOMMITTEE**

**Meeting Minutes - Tuesday, March 16, 2020**

**Regular Time 5:30 PM**

**REMOTE MEETING VIA ZOOM**

### **5:35 CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL BY CHAIR: Andy Wiese**

AW: Calls the meeting to order and calls the roll.

#### **Roll Call:**

##### *Members present:*

Andy Wiese (AW), Keith Jenne (KJ), Roger Cavanaugh (RC), Debby Knight (DK), George Lattimer (GL), Katie Rodolico (KR), Joanne Selleck (JS), Laurie Phillips (LP), Anu Delouri (AD), Rebecca Robinson Wood (RRW), Jason Morehead (JM), Dinesh Martien (DiM), Kris Kopensky (KK), Petr Krysl (PK), Abbey Reuter (AR).

##### *Members not present:*

Kristin Camper (KC), Melanie Cohn (MC), Carol Uribe (CU)

##### *Non-voting Member:*

Kristin Camper (KC).

*Note: MCAS Miramar representative Kristin Camper does not vote per US Government policy.*

##### *City Staff:*

Tait Galloway (TG)

Katie Witherspoon (KW) – Sr. Planner, Planning Department

Diego Velasco (DV) – Consultant, Urban Design and Planning

Rick Barrett (RB) – Consultant, M/G

Steven Davidovas (SD) – Consultant

Martin Flores (MF) – Rec. and Parks Department, City of San Diego

Some members of the public are identified below as:

|                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| Barry Bernstein    | (BB)  |
| Nancy Groves       | (NG)  |
| Deanna Ratnikova   | (DR)  |
| Diane Ahern        | (DA)  |
| Kaitlyn Willoughby | (KWI) |
| Louis Rodolico     | (LR)  |
| David Campbell     | (DC)  |

|               |          |
|---------------|----------|
| Alyssa Helper | (AH)     |
| Isabelle Kay  | (IK)     |
| Andrew Barton | (AB)     |
| Public member | (Public) |

**5:39 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

No minutes were available.

Chris Nielsen (CN) to take minutes for this meeting.

**5:39 NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT**

*No non-agenda public comment.*

**5:39 SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT**

*No subcommittee member comment.*

**5:39 Information Item #1: Urban Design Elements #1 – Diego Velasco**

KW: The topic is Urban Design Elements today.  
Land use scenarios will be in the early fall.  
The OCET (On Line Engagement Tool) / Public Workshops will be in May and June.  
Urban Design Elements #1: March. Urban Design Elements #2: April. Urban Design Elements #3: May.

DV: Recapped the January 2020 meeting on Urban Design, the January 2020 Economic Forum, and the April 2020 Urban Design meeting.

TOD Transit Oriented Development (TOD) principles will be presented tonight.

Defining characteristics are:

- 15 minute community with everything close by: shopping, work.
- Mix of uses.
- Network of public spaces.
- Last mile connectivity.
- Mobility Hubs.

Key elements are:

- People: who are going and coming?
- Activities: what are they doing?
- Connections: how do they get to where they are going?
- Places: how do we orient development so it shapes places people want to visit?

Source: ITDP: TOD Standards, 2017, <http://www.itdp.org/publications>

DV: Look at Focus Area #2 – Towne Centre Drive.

#### Towne Centre Drive Concepts:

- Cluster development and focus it onto Towne Centre Drive.
- Activate the entrances to each cluster with a small plaza and “micro” Mobility Hub.
- Maintain some surface parking lots but design quality outdoor spaces between lots and buildings.
- Connect to the natural landscape with a perimeter network of continuous trails and paths.

There are some limitations from the APZ but we see additional opportunities. We should focus development on the entrances to the Focus Area where transit opportunities exist; a micro-mobility hub might be developed. Outdoor spaces should be separated by minimal surface parking. There should be connections to the natural landscape via trails. There may be minimal change here except for a few key nodes that support noontime activities.

#### Discussion:

JS: Likes the idea of an entry way. This represents an enormous area that is being removed from public access that is unused on weekends. There is extreme beauty in the canyons, and doesn't think it's wise to isolate it from the public. When the idea of access to the trolley lay down yard (for further canyon access) was broached it was denied. In terms of design, how would you make the buildings compatible with the canyons?

LP: As a follow on to JS's comment, what would liability look like for access to the trails? What is the perception by land owners? Are there any policies that would assist access?

DV: Don't have an answer for that. Office workers could have access, but not the public.

JS: Don't know, but city-maintained easements might work for access. Maybe some City property could come into play. Likes the idea of public access/rim trails/views.

IK: Likes the concept; its antithesis is in the Torrey Pines area where buildings are down a street and on the canyon edge, isolated, and not creating a neighborhood. With new development in the FA2 area, maybe we should have no surface parking, and maybe we try to limit cars into University City.

DK: Some thoughts: This is a really stark look at how badly the previous development impacted the environment. We should pull back buildings from the street and pull in canyons from the edge so the habitat is available to those who work there and the public, with canyon habitats restored. A problem is that this is a TPA but it's not close to transit using the State definition, which are circles on a map, and not walk-able, a 1.5 mile walk to transit. Agree with IK that parking should be undergrounded.

KR: This is not a real TPA. Disagrees with IK: it's too far to walk, and will require driving a car. This is not a friendly place to get to without a car. Perhaps there should be some public parking to permit more public trail access.

JA: KR & DK brought up that it is a TPA but is there any way to bring MTS to this street and area?

DV: Maybe public shuttles? Don't know.

KW: There have been some discussions about this but nothing concrete.

DK: I think the chances of MTS service are zero.

LP: Supports that it is not a TPA, as the canyons are not traversable. Having worked on the site for six years I can say it is not a walk-able destination. I would caution people about removing surface parking to push people towards transit. I just finished a zip-code analysis of workers and 80% come from the north. The trolley will make it more attractive to live downtown for people coming from San Francisco and Cambridge, but maybe they will want a single family home so I don't see this changing. We should encourage developers who want to add density to include underground parking. Removing parking will not be attractive for the next 10-15 years.

IK: The goal should be to minimize single occupancy vehicles over the next time interval. If you come from other areas, like Boston, London, or LA, you don't want to drive to work. So we need to get our transit agencies to figure out how to serve these areas, even in the next 15 years.

LP: This is a dead-end, a cul-de-sac, with a high chance of wildfires, so this needs to be included in our safety plans.

KJ: I'd like to ask what the mobility hub is (coaster or trolley)? Is there some thought about how access from it would work?

DV: We're really talking about micro-mobility hubs; we did not consider coaster/trolley to business locations, but lower level mobility. Our focus was bikes and shuttles rather than light rail.

6:15 Focus Area 4: La Jolla Village Square and the Shops at La Jolla.

DV: We have the trolley station and garage completed. The idea is to build up the edges on Nobel Dr. and establish a main street that runs north-south across Nobel. We might be able to do this and keep the mall. We want to locate housing near existing residences, compatible with what's already there. The parking structure can serve as a buffer to I-5. We can wrap the parking structure with different active uses. I have had my UC San Diego students work on the design for Nobel Square to allow for gathering spaces, large and small. We want to activate the transit station with a plaza and mobility hub. This leads to connected and attractive spaces, even with a height limit.

What do you think you need?

Discussion:

LP: It feels transactional. The trolley transit stop is the closest one to La Jolla. Do we imagine people will want to take the bus from downtown La Jolla? Drive and park? Is this a concern?

DV: I wondered why the parking structure is so large. But if you think about how LP described it, it makes more sense. It would bring in people from outside the area.

AB: I have observed from living in other places that stations like Nobel promote nearby housing. What percentage would parking be? Is parking the best use of this space?

DV: With redevelopment there might be housing over retail as a possibility, but we don't want to reduce commercial too much. Maybe 25% could be residential. We would try to have as much "structured" parking as possible.

AW: Note to ourselves: two hours is not enough for this discussion. We need three hours for the next couple of meetings.

We need to recognize we are drawing designs for private land. How do we encourage owners to make these spaces? Can we? What planning tools do we have to ensure that any of our proposals are incorporated? There is an equivalent amount of parking and shopping on the north side of Nobel. Safe crossing of this street is critical and we need to understand how a 'main street' would cross it safely.

JS: A bridge across Nobel would help to create a main street concept. There is lots of back and forth between the two shopping centers; this is a major cause of increased traffic and pedestrian safety issues. The usage of both shopping centers faces away from Nobel. I don't know if 'facing' Nobel is correct.

KR: I think this area should be exempt from the 30' height limit. It's a transit stop primed for mixed use and I think we need to consider this as a group, like Midway.

DK: The SANDAG parking garage is large since they wanted to encourage use. UC San Diego gives students transit passes allowing them to park and take the trolley, avoiding parking charges. The community is stuck with this decision. Just some background.

GL: In my opinion, this is the most important site as we try to figure out how to plan for University City. This location has a trolley and parking structure and we need to look at this like the City looked at

Horton Plaza. I don't think it works as commercial. How about office and residential? Look at Costa Verde. We should get rid of the 30' height limit. Look at UC San Diego transit stop to see what welcoming opportunities look like.

AW: What height limit is reflected in the renderings, Diego?

DV: Assumes 30', but it looks higher. I'm not sure we're ready to be definitive about that.

AW: We need to address the 30' height limit factually and realistically, so we need to see what building heights look like, 30' or 45', or whatever.

DV: It's not easy to design for the 30' height limit.

Focus Area 3: Executive Drive and UTC station.

UTC Station concepts:

- Build up the street edges on La Jolla Village Drive and Genesee.
- Reinforce mall promenade north and south ("southwest to northeast").
- Locate housing near to existing residential.
- Wrap the parking structure with something more active.
- Provide community gathering spaces.
- Activate the transit station with a plaza and mobility hub that opens to the mall. Have a lot of vehicle oriented use in the "west" end.
- Establish a local circulation "loop" as a residential neighborhood use.

Executive Drive Station concepts:

- An exciting concept: a promenade, a link to UC San Diego housing and facilities. On the north edge there could be restaurants and shops.
- Build up the street edge on Executive Drive.
- Break down the superblock.
- Provide community spaces for gatherings, large and small, internal to the block, another circulation network.
- Activate the transit station with a plaza and mobility hub that orients to Executive Drive.

For the promenade two concepts are shown: could think about moving the promenade to the north side of Executive Drive and could improve what might activate the promenade. [North Side: Promenade/traffic/traffic vs. North Side: traffic/promenade/traffic.]

LP: I am having some trouble following you on the south side in UTC. The pocket park across from Renaissance would be good for drawing people through UTC more invitingly towards the transit stop.

DK: Where would you add residential?

DV: Southeast side as part of the mall.

DK: South of Nobel are condos?

DV: Apartments.

DK: If you add residential, where are the public parks?

DV: We were thinking that parks could be developed within developments and made fully public.

There is also Mandel Weiss Park (MWP). For now, we want to demonstrate that parks can be developed within and around new blocks and buildings.

GL: Concerned about the MWP buildings along Eastgate Mall.

DV: They support the park.

GL: That entire block is all owned by the City and is designated for parks. JCC leases area, police and

fire, too. The two religious facilities at Genesee and Eastgate Mall: what about them and how important are these facilities to the city? I do like the ideas for Executive Drive.

DV: We will have to explore and consider regulations. We need some development intensity along Executive Drive.

GL: The southeast corner of Executive Drive and Executive Way has been sold for biotech development, which is much, much, much denser.

AW: I don't see a use for buildings to the north of MWP. There is a hazmat-posted building at the SW corner, but over the next 25 to 30 years this property should be on the table for rezone/reuse. I like the promenade spaces so it would be used year 'round with the north side (less shaded) as the promenade. If a "rambla" is to succeed in UC, we need to have housing all around it; you need pedestrians.

Looking at SW corner of Genesee and Nobel, the apartments in this area are the most affordable housing in UC. Redeveloping will displace moderate income residents: we should take stock and recognize what we are doing here. We should avoid designing for a particular socio-economic class of people. 'Restaurant row'? Removal of affordable housing? Westfield main entrance on LJVDr for valet parking, while they designed the west side of UTC and the trolley as the 'back door' for workers and transit riders through the parking garage. I'm glad you are recognizing it as a front door.

IK: What do the dots mean on the drawings?

DV: Green is open space of some kind. Green dots are trees. Purple dots are accent trees. White area is a potential building. These are just concepts, not a proposal.

IK: Doesn't a rambla go to somewhere? What's the destination, plazas or spaces?

DV: Connects to stations and is an easy connection UCSD, compared to the bridge across La Jolla Village Drive at Villa La Jolla.

IK: Here is what's missing: the central green areas are tremendous at Liberty Station with a variety of activities. We could use that kind of focus here.

DV: MWP could help the surrounding areas achieve that.

IK: Any way to connect Rose Canyon to this area as a counterpoint to the density?

#### Focus Area 5: South UC.

DV: Focus on University Village (Governor and Genesee) site as a neighborhood center of the future. It has a grocery, a drug store, and shops, so it is important to the community. What's added, and changed, over time? You want better community connections, particularly to the UC library from University Village. What about adding some housing, over the stores, or to the side? What about outside areas? How should transit be treated?

#### Discussion:

AB: To the extent it's possible or can be encouraged it's important to attach outdoor spaces to businesses and separate businesses and parking using the outdoor space.

KR: There should be more outdoor spaces with second level residential. Do we need four gas stations?

BB: Get rid of two of the gas stations.

RRW: I have shopped there, and the parking lots are used for school parking overflow. Perhaps Diego could help here.

AW: I like the design you drew for the Von's plaza using a mixed land use. Flexibility for the gas stations makes sense. We need to look across the street to the school and connect better. Governor should be calmed and minimize the fast left turns from the shopping center, making people less nervous for their kids' safety. I like the interior corridor from Genesee to the UC library. This is a place for

housing, community, and activity. It's exciting and we should go big in idea terms.

RC: The capital improvement suggestions by the community show the importance of improvements to the area along Genesee and Governor. Not much for schools here at present: kids have their face buried in their phone instead of interacting with others. I want to see changes near the schools from Spreckels elementary to Genesee and Governor and see how we might reduce social isolation for kids.

AW: In north UC we have a variety of recommendations for breaking up superblocks and it would be useful to see how to do this here. (Vons plaza).

DV: Thanks to all, your comments are invaluable. We will have to make more 3-D drawings and think about what might go where with mixes of activities. I really enjoyed tonight.

AW: With that, meeting adjourned at 7:40