

Uptown Community Plan Update

CPUAC Meeting #3, 1/27/10

Meeting Summary (DRAFT)

Overview

On Wednesday, January 27, 2010, the Community Plan Update Advisory Committee (CPUAC) held its third meeting. The following information summarizes the:

1. Meeting process
2. Meeting agenda
3. Meeting comments

1. Meeting Process

Per the Brown Act (open meetings), the meeting was publicly noticed and open to public attendance and comment. 23 CPUAC members attended; in total, the CPUAC has 32 members. 22 members of the community at-large attended. The room was arranged so that the CPUAC members were seated at rows of tables. The community at-large was seated at rows of chairs. The room arrangement recognized the formal role of the CPUAC to sustain the public discussion throughout the community plan update process.

City Staff facilitated the meeting and gave a presentation that included a review of the agenda, recap of the CPUAC Meeting #2, and a debrief of the self-guided tour. Originally, the agenda also included a General Plan discussion on the Land Use Community Plan Element and CPUAC debrief, but these two items were removed to allow for more time to debrief the recommended stops at the self-guided tour. Throughout the meeting, comments were charted on large sheets of paper that were displayed on easels. These charted comments summarized the ideas that were shared during the meeting and are summarized in this document.

2. Meeting Agenda:

The meeting was organized into these parts:

- Welcome and Introduction
- Review of agenda
- General Announcements
- Recap of CPUAC Meeting #2
- A Debrief of the Self-Guided Tour

The bulk of the meeting was dedicated to the debrief of the self-guided tour. A supplemental slideshow presentation showed the recommended 13 locations of the self-guided tour. The city team introduced each location, gave some background information on it, and posed the audience to answer a question or invited comments. This interactive debrief discussion will serve as part of the basis for discussing future conditions that are desired for the Community Plan Update.

3. Meeting Comments:

Throughout the meeting, participants were able to comment on the meeting's agenda topics. Their comments were charted by two outreach team members. The following pages provide a summary of the comments received as well as the requests or action

items that City Staff will track and add throughout the CPUAC process. These comments are summarized in the following order:

- a. General Announcements
- b. A Debrief of the Self-Guided Tour
- c. Additional Public Comment

3.a. General Announcements

- Uptown Planners Announcement:
 - February 2nd is the next meeting
 - Informational item: Vons Project in Hillcrest, adjacent to Mission Hills
 - Other items: Medical Marijuana Task Force making recommendation to City Council and other projects. Refer to agenda on Uptown Planners website.
- Agenda clarification regarding public announcements at beginning of meeting.
- Hillcrest Business Association:
 - Business forums as companion meetings to this meeting to engage business community in this process.
 - 1st forum on November 18th
 - Topic: Economic Development
 - Meeting summary available.
 - 2nd forum on February 25th
 - Topic: Mobility and Transportation

3.b. A Debrief of the Self-Guided Tour

- #1 Juan Street Turnaround Concept (Slide 5)
 - Where is the turnaround?
 - At halfway up the hill.
 - Stuart White submitted it.
 - At Juan towards historic homes.
 - About two-thirds up the hill is level and where cars turn around.
 - Also at top on Juan Street, you can turn around there.
 - Are you talking about the actual circle, like Pacific Beach?
 - City- Yes, like a roundabout.
 - Community- it's very small street and very narrow. But, there's a paper street. You have a little room to wiggle.
 - How about a sign for tourists that they are entering a residential area?
 - If you are going to control tourist traffic at Juan Street, there should be signage down there not to go up the hill because it's a residential area.
 - I walk that street a lot, there's a lot of parking. If someone wants to go up the hill to park, it's not residential at the first half of the hill because there's a hotel and park.
 - If you could fit a turn around, it should be halfway up at where the area flares out to a paper street.
 - What about emergency vehicle access? Would this turn around make it more difficult? And, it takes away extra parking.
 - There's a paper street, so there's a gap between homes making a wider area on the street. Someone would need to do good engineering to make this turnaround.
 - Part of being a tourist is being lost and discovering areas.

- Sunset and **Winapee**- there is a turn around.
- A simple sign saying “Leaving Old Town” might be better.
- Has someone proposed this? Is there a study saying this is a problem?
- City: No studied done at the City. When folks came up with likes and dislikes, this was an opportunity that was brought up.
- Did Stuart White propose this? He lives on top of hill.
- City: Yes, he did.
- My understanding is that there would be a tasking of some land out of Heritage Park to provide turnaround there.
- I agree with Janet, this is a huge budget issue. But it’s probably possible to evaluate the space and check on the right of way.
- A lot of the turnaround activity might be people just looking for parking.

- Compatible Density (Slide 6)
 - Single Family Residence zoning is an oxymoron.
 - Older structures had no parking.
 - Before hardly any cars on street, now more cars.
 - Take into consideration→ why have single-family homes?
 - University Heights has single-family homes on Maryland, Cleveland, Campus North, and now 3-4 units on every lot.
 - Councilmember Atkins had brought up: we should have less density in the canyon areas because there is only 1 way in and out. Safety issue because of fires.
 - Already Uptown is the densest community, no spot for it.
 - There is good density (Paris, Sienna, Coronado).
 - Illegal now to have another unit built on the right side because the City changed the coded.
 - Need to handle density by neighborhood.
 - The issue is losing older home style.
 - Compatibility is the main issue and it needs to be addressed.
 - Key word is compatibility and not density.
 - Keep density and historic neighborhoods.
 - Single or 2-story are fine because it’s what everyone expects and it’s traditional.
 - Everything feeds into the corridors.
 - Density is built up into 4th/5th, which are the main corridors.
 - Contribute to density: foliage, cars, trees, sidewalks = feel of density. Example: Patterned Language book.
 - Agree with multi-housing to single family neighborhood is oxymoron.
 - Example: 1st slide not zoned in single family.
 - Other houses had granny flats, which are here to stay, but multi-family into existing single-family housing is bad idea.
 - Granny flats are expensive.
 - Granny flats (Cypress Way): an example with extra curb cut that is now 1-private spot instead of a public spot. That is a disaster.
 - New York, San Francisco, Paris with density has good transportation.
 - Already overburdened with the number of people we have.
 - Infrastructure cannot take more density.
 - San Diego County 4200 square miles and City of San Diego is huge.
 - No use for 24/7 transportation.

- Population growth is not the same in other areas.
 - Need to create villages.
 - There are examples of multi-family as single family in character.
 - South Mission Hills are all multi-family homes.
 - Multi-family came after single-family.
 - Maybe fix zoning in other places.
 - Examples were nice, but all old.
 - Granny flats: there are 2 in 1 block.
 - Need to get deed restriction to put a sink in her home, but granny flats illegal? Need clarification. What's the difference?
 - City can provide info.
 - 2nd/3rd Ave. = historical homes.
 - Up-zone that area for small apartments.
 - South Mission: multi-units, but appear single-family.
 - Put granny flat if can accommodate based on lot size.
 - Should have lot requirement otherwise parking problem.
 - Mission Hills
 - Slide 7 are original.
 - Maps in last plan, multi-family housing were planned around the trolley.
 - Houses built without garages (until the 20s) because there was supposed to be public transportation.
- Robinson and 1st Avenue Multi-family Development (Slide 10)
 - I can't believe this project was approved. They used the alley, which is used for trash, dumpster, cleaning carpeting, and utilities. Whole building was made of plywood. There were 3 beautiful homes; one day they were there, then they were gone. I would have never allowed to happen because of having to use the alley to access all those condos.
 - There are structures around it that are historical. I would never recommend this.
 - My comment is more about the appearance; this fits more than some of the examples that are out there. Seems better design than others I've seen.
 - What I see is new construction, but crumbly sidewalks, streets, pipes, and more cars.
 - They were significant examples of turn of the century historic architecture. It could have been one of the top 10 "could have been" historic places.
 - "Dollin up" a 4-5 story building as a craftsman bungalow is just not right.
 - I can't believe they took part of building on left and rebuilt it with new material and called it a "saved" building, and building on right with the mockery of the roof and called that preserving architecture is appalling.
 - The last sentence on the slide predicates that we need more density. We should check that with SANDAG. That premise on the last sentence, I don't agree with.
 - We do need density. This is along the corridors, the main business corridors. This is where you put. On Uptown Planners, everyone loved this project. (Whoa! Laughter). Higher density near the alley. Historic houses were in disrepair, adaptive reuse for older structures. You can't please anyone.

- Some of this newer construction is huge, but it doesn't necessarily accommodate more people. My question is how many more people are they adding? Maybe there's not much more.
 - I think the very fact that it is close to the corridor argue against it. Robinson and Upas are gridlocked streets. Do we really want more traffic here?
 - That whole area is 1-2 story, has been for a long time. This was totally out of place even though it was set back. It tries to fit in, but it doesn't.
 - One nice thing about this is that it maintains existing front single-family homes, builds on back, and has parking in the alley. Need to modify land use development code and planned district ordinance zoning regulations to maintain the historic development patterns that have defined the historical neighborhoods. Look at original built-environment as the standard and maintain what was there for street patterns, height set back, floor/area ratio of original sub-divisions.
 - Also, no lot consolidation.
 - Need to look at discretionary review of all multi-family projects in Uptown area and have no ministerial projects.
- Plaza/Water feature at Scripps Hospital (Slide 11)
 - Hillcrest 2.0 forum (50 business people) liked concept of a place to sit and mingle, not necessarily moving people from point a to point b
 - Want vibrant, colorful areas, water fountains or public benches and not pure transportation.
 - Photo speaks to the interest of business people.
 - Well use of plaza centers at dense business centers because there's people in that environment.
 - This is great; need this model for urban parks.
 - Mini parks/pocket park: need to put ideas on paper or master plan.
 - Like this for open spaces, not all open spaces need to be public-owned parks.
 - Could include public art in public spaces.
 - Good example of private space.
 - Hillcrest could wall off a park in a space owned by AT&T, and would like to be able to use it.
 - In thinking about the height restrictions that have been made, consider a bonus system to allow the developer to have public space occur at the ground level in exchange for going higher or above the height restrictions.
 - Need trade off/incentive or developers may build up to the edges.
 - Lovely fountain and only fountain in Uptown.
 - Need more parks in business area.
 - How do businesses fund or invest the fountain?
 - Wish we had more fountains, but not to do a cost of density.
 - Take density allowed at the spot and shift density around in order to create public space.
 - Beautiful, but austere.
 - Don't need too many of these here, no shade.
 - There are walkways behind the fountain.
 - Who is the audience?
 - Places to meditate in, gather around, and help others.
 - Could City get some easements for look out areas in canyons?

- West Lewis = put a bench there.
- There are opportunities to have places where we can get people in nature.

- Bridges (Slide 12)
 - Washington is a fast street, and there has been talk to have a bridge to connect Medical Center to business district.
 - Pretty bridge to bring medical community into Hillcrest.
 - Over Florida Canyon to Park Blvd. is another idea.
 - We need to plan the ideal community we want. The next step is the Public Facilities Financing Plan.
 - It's nice to have a wish list. Right now the money we are getting from **DIF**, isn't covering what's in the Plan. It may be the bench over-looking the canyon is all we can afford. There has to be some realism.
 - Another thing that I've brought up:
 - North-west corner of Balboa Park, along 6th Avenue from Upas St. along 163 there needs to be a path along the fence and serve as pedestrian route through the park into the neighborhood. Take pedestrian and bicycles off 6th.
 - Hillcrest doesn't have any bicycle lanes. It's sad.
 - Washington Street where it crosses over 163 and all the way down to Richmond: sidewalks end. Might be able to bridge over the off ramp.
 - Bridges are great examples of "found space". It's a matter of funding it. Perhaps its taxable. Robinson to Washington, if it were capped, what would be the trade offs?
 - Connection to Mission Valley would be a great thing. Improving Texas Street with walkways, trams, trails, or bike lanes into the valley.
 - With the open space idea, if you have 4 or more units, require onsite open space (ex. dog run or maybe have an outdoor café area).

- Normal Street (Slide 13)
 - Congratulate Mike on the broken lot made into the additional parking and the partnership with DMV.
 - Additional diagonal parking and trees is 1 way to improve area.
 - A suggestion for the park would be to add more greenery.
 - One of common requests from business community is for more parking.
 - Parking close to University.
 - Find way to use center median for more parking while preserve farmers market.
 - Look at photo – Monstrous parking around that building, not highest and best use for that site.

- Balboa Park Interface (Slide 14)
 - Create a community garden (Balboa Park Master Plan); may need to coordinate with Balboa Park.
 - Active neighborhood (Marston Hills) neighborhood needs to be consulted.
 - I live there and there is a lot that can be done there.
 - Marston Hills has to be considered.

- On street side (pkwy area), if trees framed the path there, it could be attractive.
- For 15 years, I've been trying to get Richmond sidewalks.
- Sidewalks would allow access to park.
- Opportunity to do something with bicycle paths.
- Escape from Hillcrest and go somewhere, like to the park.
- Infrastructure is neglected (problem) worst roads:
 - Potholes need to repave road and blacktop be redone.
 - More inviting and should add trees and sidewalks.

- Alicante (Slide 15)
 - I live in area. People look at this and think this is how you don't want to do it. Better to have 1 building small, open space plaza and also a smaller building.
 - If you compare this to project at 1st and Robinson, at least the scale shift was 1-2 stories to 4-5. This is 1-2 to 14-16 stories. This is huge shift. This is a very literal terracing; the one on 1st and Robinson is more subtle. This one is stark and abrupt.
 - I'll never forget my friend saying, "I don't know where I am at". It is such a shock. Something like that is so radical. Do we want to go that extreme?
 - I wanted to comment on Atlas on 5th, at least it has some street level activity. For this one, there's no real activity.
 - It does have a corner café.
 - Articulation and step backs can't hide the ugliness of building. I do prefer Atlas. You just can't hide height here.
 - I think it's an example of why density and height have to be a key focus of this CPU. Otherwise, it will make it impossible to deal with design.
 - The wind comes right off of the south side, Redwood side. It's very bad.
 - When we worked with developer on this (Uptown Planners), we did a good job. There are walkups on 4th Ave. The idea that it steps up, because it's a different zone, much heavier zone on 5th Ave. I don't know why everyone is so freaked out about height; this is where it goes. This is where height is put, on the main corridors, not in Balboa Park or Mission Hills. The style may not be to your liking, but it's what you do with 1st two levels; that's the pedestrian experience. Forget about the height. There are shops on east and residential on the west, this is a good example of how to fit it in a neighborhood.
 - There's nothing like that on 4th Avenue. It's built across the street of open space (Maple Canyon). This is butt ugly and doesn't belong there.
 - It's (the building) empty.
 - In this new CPU, I hope we get credit for the density we've already taken. Maybe we need a hold on density?
 - Give us credit for the density we've taken. Maybe we are there, at least for 10-20 years.
 - When the building went up, remember it was a density transfer. The glass build next to it is a County building. It's high because the density of County building transferred to that tall one. In the future, the little building stays the height that it is.

- 4th/5th/6th Avenues (Slide 16)
 - Open bike path at west side of 163 to allow bikes and pedestrian to access Hillcrest is a good thing.
 - Uptown Planners took action for stop sign and still waiting for installation.
 - Pedestrian and bike experience are key issues in this corridor.
 - The problem with the mobility plan is that it's about rapid transit buses.
 - Counter statement, the plan was about traffic management. It was about:
 - Shared bus lanes
 - Pedestrian mobility
 - Increasing pedestrian safety
 - On park side, trail ends. No crosswalks painted. Should be 1 lane = bike lane and crosswalks in that area.
 - Physical change is paint.
 - And stop signs.
 - We have 3 freeways going through Bankers Hill/Park West up to Hillcrest: 4th, 5th and 6th. Don't need 3 lanes on 4th and 5th in that area. Don't see the volume on 6th Ave.
 - Through traffic goes through 163 to downtown = is the problem.
 - Should have pedestrian refuge island at crossings at streets like 5th Ave.
 - There is a median along 6th Ave., could put crosswalk there.
 - There is one at trolley at the park and people use it because Adams Ave. has a lot cars.
 - How many accidents were up to in that area? Over 100 in a year.
 - There are 6 blocks unimpeded straight away and accidents happen.
 - Speed limit story: Going 30 mph and using cruise control. Cruise control in urban area not a good mix
 - Promenade plan.
 - Lack of ability to use 63 as it was intended. We're focusing on surface streets, but there is a major corridor challenged by opinion from both ends. Is there a way to fix that? If fixed and pull traffic from 4,5,6th Avenues, will that alleviate traffic problems?
 - Can use park space for bike lanes.
 - Fix 163 and thoroughfare would solve lots of problems.
 - Deal with symptoms not the problem.

- Colonel Irving Solomon/Henry Hester Apartments (Slide 17)
 - I like them. I'm glad they chose to keep that building there. They preserved exterior and tried to preserve interior.
 - I want to live there. Eyes on street, landscaping enhances the area.
 - The Mayfair homes on 5th is blocking the sun.
 - I agree, it's to scale and made of quality materials. I'd rather see less massing/scaling and instead put more quality in materials.
 - It's got it all. It's a part of San Diego. Everyone who sees it says I want to live there. It's about quality, built solid. It's a plus.
 - Ultimate in sustainability. Takes something that was there and reused it and made it better.
 - Developer who did this, also developed a project at 1st and Robinson.
 - The one at 1st and Robinson is Del Mar Heritage. The quality there is totally lacking. Already paint chipping, boards are warping and it's less than 5 years old.

- I'm glad you showed this. It's a positive. It's an entirely eclectic neighborhood. When we talk about character and compatibility, it runs the range.
 - I second that.
 - It respects Balboa Park.
 - This is actually the site of San Diego's Greene and Greene. This one is well loved. What happens on some modern styles, they are not necessarily of the same quality. What is sad is when something has been in the neighborhood for years and they take it down and put something in without the same quality.
 - Change in attitude: big and cheap isn't all that good. Maybe we need to focus on what's "saleable" and how valuable quality is. Less is more.
- India Street/Washington Street (Slide 18)
 - Good luck! (Laughter)
 - Down the hill and into India: you get through it, but have to be careful.
 - If the street that is next to Gelato Vero is somehow formatted, you can have cars parking on north side of the street. Maybe knock out curb to make room.
 - As far as bikes, I haven't ridden my bike there in 20 years. It's not safe.
 - India Street with parking improvements are okay, but Washington Street is crazy. Can do plants in middle and a sidewalk because to get from Mission Hills to Saffron or businesses, there's only one way through Kringle and down wooden steps through liquor store, but there are homeless people always there and not safe.
 - Need Washington Street to be more walkable.
 - Angle parking and speed limit sign are traffic-calming techniques. Are they working? (Mixed reactions: a lot better, can find a parking spot, signs not work).
 - Bankers Hill: people test the speed limit.
 - Good example of the isolation getting from Hillcrest/Bankers Hill to Mission Valley.
 - Bike paths and walkways can help with isolated neighborhoods and open up areas.
 - This is a local issue: It's critical to consult business owners.
 - Need something done on Washington.
 - Need a safe connection to Mission Hills to the businesses.
 - Would love to be able to walk there.
 - Safer before density.
 - Washington linkage could be an opportunity. Mission Hills is kind of divided into 2.
 - Restaurants near freeway: Is there a way to buffer them from the freeway traffic?
- Reynard Way Potential Park and Olive Street Park (Slide 19)
 - I used to live right there. Really nice open space. The building in the middle is odd, but maybe you could reuse it for something beneficial.
 - Existing Community Plan, according to SANDAG, says there's capacity for 20,000 more people. This is the only 4-5 acre parcel in our

community. This should be a non-negotiable item with the City. We cannot get by with just mini-park. You have to find out a way to acquire parcel.

- I worked on this several years ago. At the time, older gentleman not from the city owned it (maybe from Seattle). Carved out from hill and graded to fill I-5. Double the market value and I'll sell it to the City.
- Great opportunity for park. We could actually do something here.
- There was a variety of active and passive uses. Things change. Property owner may have passed away. It's a lot cheaper to buy this than to buy built-out space and tear down houses.
- There's another location, slightly down Henry Way. Across Falcon Street, see the pool, there's some really nice historic element to an apartment there.

- Olive Street (Slide 20)

- Turko covered this area: Upper 1/3 is owned by city and building on the upper north, the parking lot was supposed to be a park. The rest of it is for sale. Negotiations with the City now. One of the highest density areas of Uptown.
- Medical center parking lot was supposed to be park.
- Hopefully within 1 year to move forward and make an urban park.
- Space over an acre.
- Can connect to canyons? Yes.
- Would be an active use park.

- Alternative Alley Uses (Slide 20)

- The problem is when you are "selling an alley," you're giving it away. In Hillcrest, we don't have the luxury of blocking an alley for artwork. Alleyways are small. Where would dumpster trucks going to go? They are going to have to use other street where is used to be quiet. We aren't going to give these up for developer greed.
- In business discussion, there's an attractive alleyway between 4th and 5th, and Upas along Cathedral, behind the restaurants. We've been thinking about doing a pilot experiment to see how good we can make it and how many uses (including traditional use) we can do there. There are examples in Seattle.
- I notice in Europe and other parts of the world, they have central places where people dump recyclables. I wonder if there is some place in Uptown, so that you might not need the alleys for these things. Maybe we talk about other ways to do things.
- I spent a lot of time on Colorado Ave. in Pasadena. Wonderful use of alleys. It's a design issue. The idea kind of like taking a whole block, like what Paseo Mission Hills did with Paseo entrance in Washington, there is a great opportunity. Colorado Ave. has wonderful shops in the alley and wonderful feeling/scale. There is opportunity to work with SDG&E and developers for undergrounding these areas too.
- Could we do with no alleys? Yes. Downtown San Diego has no alleys. It works (laugh, but Hillcrest is better).
- Can we do without alleys entirely and survive? Yes, we can.

3.b. Additional Public Comment

None.

Follow-up Items List

Due to the decision to eliminate the CPUAC debrief in order to allow time for more discussion on the self-guided walking tour; there were no follow-up items or comments made.

Description	From Mtg.	City Update	Status
N/A			

Summary of Public Comment received Post-Meeting:

Topics received by email: N/A.