

Fort Bragg, California
September 2, 2009 (Special Joint Meeting)
Town Hall

The City Council of the City of Fort Bragg, Fort Bragg Redevelopment Agency, and Fort Bragg Planning Commission met in special session on the above date at the hour of 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 363 North Main Street, Fort Bragg, California.

Present: Council/Agency Members Dave Turner, Meg Courtney, Dan Gjerde, Jere Melo, and Mayor/Chair Doug Hammerstrom; Commissioners Scott Deitz, Becky Ellis, Milt Kuhl, Georgia Lucas and Chair Mark Hannon.

1. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

A. Receive Oral Report and Discuss Mill Site Specific Plan and Provide Direction to Consultants and Staff

City Manager Ruffing noted that the discussion this evening will focus mainly on the southern portion of the site. Items were discussed in the following order:

1. Welcome and Introductions

Steve Mattas, Meyers Nave attorney firm, was introduced; Mattas has been on the coordinating committee working on the mill site since the beginning. Chip Hilarides, Georgia Pacific (GP), Project Manager for the mill site noted that GP is the proponent bringing forth this Specific Plan; their objectives are: 1) environmental remediation; and 2) determining the anticipated future land uses to make sure the remediation process is successful.

2. Presentation – Lynette Dias

Dias began by noting that statements specific to the southern district are draft statements based on comments from the City Council and Planning Commission at the last study session and will be amended as the Specific Plan is further defined. She reviewed the PowerPoint presentation, which included the following:

- Revised Draft Goals, Planning Principles and Objectives
- Review of Revised Southern District Illustrative Vision Plan
- Summary of Coastal Commission Meeting
- Draft Development Limitations

3. City Council/Planning Commission Questions and Clarifications

- Dias stated that they would take a closer look at the commercial figures in Table 1 in the Draft Development Limitations to verify that the figures add up to 1.7 million square feet.
- This plan does not have the level of detail that would indicate a certain percentage of jobs will be at higher wages; there can be policies developed that encourage higher wage jobs be developed.
- How will it be determined how much of the land is developed as commercial and how much as light industrial? Concern was expressed that commercial will be built rather than industrial since light industrial has a lower value per acre; no one will build light industrial on property that is so expensive when they could build commercial. The Ad Hoc Committee discussed including a chapter on implementation in the Specific Plan that would discuss phasing and what can occur within certain timeframes; that chapter could include a requirement that a certain percentage of light industrial development or job creation occur before other types of commercial development occurs. Dias noted that when that issue was first discussed they hadn't figured out what the next steps would be; after working with the Ad Hoc Committee and the Mill Site Coordinating Committee (MSCC) they designed specific land for light industrial rather than having it all as mixed-use as a way to resolve those concerns.
- Assumptions were made in Table 1 for areas that aren't specifically designated for one specific use by using industry standard Floor Area Ratios (FAR) and job creation. A detailed spreadsheet was developed; the Council/Commission is only being provided with a summary.
- It was suggested that the five small ponds in the middle of the southern district be separated as it was hard to imagine development occurring between them.

4. Public Comment

Public comment on this agenda item was received from Jim Tarbell, Noyo Headlands Unified Design Group; Thomas Wright, Pomo Indians (who provided a plan for the property and a petition asking to be involved in the decision making of the GP property and asking for recognition as owners of the GP property); Ebo Thorbas (who provided his comments in writing); Fay Yee; George Reinhardt (who provided written comments on State level initiatives that will impact Mill Site development); Mike Thomas; and Gabriel Quinn Maroni. Items noted during public comment included:

- What happened to the land banking idea for the southern district? Why not leave it zoned as timber industrial and then change it when a project comes forward.
- The Noyo Headlands Unified Design Group (NHUDG) is working on a mid-term report card on the Specific Plan by looking at the public survey on what they want to see out there; the public stated that they want to see a lot of open space and research and education facilities.
- What kind of housing is being cut out of the Plan to reduce it from 610 to 500 units, and where is it being cut?
- Concern regarding the carbon footprint or overall energy impact of the development was expressed.
- The public is very interested in having visual corridors from town through the site to the ocean; some of the streets are angled in a way that will prevent views of the ocean. Wider public streets and public easements were suggested.
- There are several State level initiatives that will impact the Mill Site development regarding energy efficiency in buildings, new standards for water efficiency in landscaping, and reduced vehicle miles traveled.
- More open space would be better; suggested leaving a larger buffer along the northern part of property.
- The riparian dotted line which is presumed to be an artery from the riparian area to the coast is much too small.
- There is no indication of including a secondary treatment marsh around the sewer treatment plant.
- An educational facility is a very important element of this development as it would be a good anchor to creating higher wage jobs.

5. City Council/Planning Commission Recommendations

- Farmers market area is too small.
- Preserve option of running railroad to the light industrial area.
- Johnson property doesn't have specific access.
- Bullet point indicating that a grocery store would not be a permitted use in the Northern or Central district was a concern to Planning Commissioner Hannon; while people don't want to see a big store, he felt a smaller store would be acceptable.
- View corridors from the streets going into the site, especially Redwood Avenue, need to be maintained by including more landscaping and less buildings.
- Concern was expressed about the riparian area being blocked behind the light industrial zone.
- Parking is not addressed for the southern district. Dias noted that the level of detail has not yet been worked out for the southern district that there is for the northern and central districts; these will be worked out during future planning meetings with MSCC and the Ad Hoc Committee.
- There is nothing specific about alternative energy resources such as solar or wind power.
- The priority needs to be finding a way to create higher wage jobs; push for high tech jobs in the southern district.
- Concern was expressed about the auto-oriented commercial areas designated on Main Street as Main Street will be more crowded that it is now.

Mayor Hammerstrom recessed the meeting at 7:24 p.m.; the meeting was reconvened at 7:36 p.m.

- Need design standards for the corridor coming into town.

- Mayor Hammerstrom noted that the issue of land banking vs. zoning was discussed at the last meeting and at the Ad Hoc Committee meeting. He stated that he was willing to go with zoning changes now as long as there is language dealing with phasing and sequencing development types; without that language he stated he would rather go back to the land banking idea.
- Vice Mayor Turner didn't believe the educational/institutional square footage on Table 1 should be considered commercial. Dias noted that number was included as they were looking at commercial as anything that was not residential.
- There is a conference center in the southern visitor serving commercial of the revised illustrative vision plan; that shouldn't be in there as the conference center needs to be near the downtown commercial district.
- Where will the light industrial go if auto-oriented commercial is developed in the mixed-use area of the southern district?
- Development should be LEEDS or better as this development should be ahead of the curve, not playing catch up with what is happening in the rest of the State in terms of green.
- There is the beginning of an educational center out there – the Noyo Center for Science and Education – that will help create good wage jobs. Nobody is against educational facilities on the site; they just don't know how to attract them. The idea of a naturopathic college is a good opportunity to connect to the raw food industry and woodworking already here.
- It was suggested the southern reserve be designed as urban reserve rather than light industrial, mixed use, and auto-oriented.
- Land forming should be used in the wildlife corridor and the corridor should be enlarged to include the ponds.
- A wastewater treatment marsh as a secondary treatment plant should be included.
- There is a delicate balance of encouraging what the City wants while not encouraging what it doesn't want.
- If the existing mill ponds are eliminated will the Coastal Commission require a 2-for-1 mitigation?
- There is no indication of how much space will be available for a central park; people want to see the area within the central park large enough for the carnival to come here 100 years from now. Need to look at the central park area from the perspective of what is left after the new wetlands footprint is determined.
- The higher density residential at Pine Street terminates the interior bicycle/pedestrian trail coming in from the north.
- In defense of the 3-story buildings, Councilmember Gjerde stated that the biggest problem, besides the lack of architectural detail, is that there is not enough residential close to commercial areas; residential zoning needs to be intensified close to Redwood Avenue if that is where the commercial zoning will be.
- The curve on Madrone and Cypress Streets eliminate the view by curving the road and putting buildings at end of the road.
- Councilmember Melo stated that he put some of his comments in writing; those dealt with some of the policies.
- There needs to be a philosophical discussion on whether the City or a conservation organization will be responsible for the riparian area. It will be difficult to sell uses around that area if the private purchaser has to take over responsibility for the open space.
- Gjerde suggested taking the conceptual plan developed 2-3 years ago about alternatives for the mill pond and get some feed back from the Coastal Commission staff. Hilarides stated that GP's approach is to deal with the mill ponds on a programmatic basis because of the uncertainty of the ponds and the clean up required.
- Desire to have open space all the way down to Soldier Bay was expressed.
- A large park area in the northern residential area, that could include ball fields, was recommended.
- Designate open space around ponds and through the light industrial to connect to riparian area.

- The mixed-use park area on the illustrative plan is about 3 ½ acres and would accommodate an event for about 1000 people.
- 6. **Summary of Direction**
 - **Job generation uses are preferred for the southern area, especially an educational facility (Noyo Center) and higher paying jobs.**
 - For light industrial uses, provide a floor for the total acres dedicated to light industrial so that if all the space in the Auto Oriented Commercial goes to non-light industrial uses, those lost acres for light industrial would be acquired in the Mixed-Use Employment Zone (MUEZ).
 - **Include dry shed #4 as alternative for central area.**
 - **Some ambiguity about land banking vs. zoning on southern district; need to have more discussion about tradeoffs and triggers.**
 - Interest in keeping land values low in southern area.
 - Explore land bank idea and urban reserve to preserve growth opportunities in the future.
 - Need to think about long term horizon for development on southern parcel (20 years).
 - **Preserve option of running rail connections from the Skunk Train to the light industrial area.**
 - **Conference center should be in central area, not at southern hotel/resort area.**
 - **Concerned with auto-oriented commercial uses along highway.**
 - Interested in design standards for development along highway.
 - Important to protect views from Highway 1 to ocean.
 - **Support for more consideration of energy generation, especially wind generation on site.**
 - **LEED certified facilities or better; concerned with energy consumption and climate change.**
 - **Protect and expand view corridors, specifically at Cypress and Madrone Streets and possibly at Oak and Alder Streets. Consider straightening out the streets around the mill pond to preserve views. Open up the views from Redwood by removing the development on the eastern edge of the park.**
 - **Higher density residential at end of Pine Street needs to show open space connection going through.**
 - **Support for three stories and level of residential development.**
 - **Interest in more clarity about central park and mill pond area.**
 - What level of mitigation will be required and how much space will be left for public events?
 - **Need to add more open space to the plan.**
 - Larger wildlife corridor protecting riparian area.
 - Land forming along the wildlife corridor.
 - Need to include the five little ponds in the open space area.
 - Provide a buffer space between the riparian area and industrial uses.
 - Treatment marsh.
 - Include ball fields.
 - Need an event space that can accommodate Fort Bragg's big events.
 - Need to determine who is responsible for maintenance of open space and riparian areas.
 - **Desire to see a visual analysis of alternatives to see how they might address Coastal Commission concerns regarding open space, riparian corridors, and intensity of development.**

Mayor/Chair Hammerstrom adjourned the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

DOUG HAMMERSTROM, Mayor/Chair

ATTEST:

Cynthia M. VanWormer, CMC
City Clerk/Secretary

INDEXED: _____ (____)

IMAGED: _____ (____)