



MEMORANDUM

TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY

TO: Town Residents and Other Interested Parties

FROM: Barbara Powell, Director of Administrative Services

DATE: September 9, 2003

RE: Reports from Town Center Citizens Advisory Committee (TC CAC)

Background

The Town held a Town Center Project Public Workshop on April 8, 2003 to:

- Inform residents about historic use of Town Center facilities, seismic evaluations conducted on the Town Center site, and committee planning efforts concerning the Town Center;
- Identify concerns and issues pertaining to structural integrity, disability access, seismic setback and building code requirements regarding existing Town Center buildings; and
- Provide an opportunity for dialogue between residents, Town staff and Councilmembers.

The workshop was well attended, and at its conclusion Mayor Driscoll asked for names of persons who would be interested in forming a committee to advise the Council as we move forward on the Town Center Project. The goals for the committee are provided as Attachment "A" to this memo.

At the April 23, 2003 Town Council meeting, the Mayor, with concurrence of the Council, appointed to the committee the members listed as Attachment "B" to this memo.

Overview of Committee Efforts

The committee met between May and August 2003. Each committee member was provided with a binder (also previously provided to Council members) of materials available at the Public Workshop. In addition, the committee heard presentations from

members of the Town Center Location Committee, a structural engineer from Biggs-Cardosa, and Carter Warr and Kevin Schwarkopf from CJW Architecture.

Early on, the committee formed 2 sub-committees: 1) Finance; and 2) Facility Function/Activities. The Finance sub-committee prepared a report titled "Finance Sub-committee Portola Valley Town Center Renovation Committee". The Finance Subcommittee also felt that the Town needs to engage financial counsel to provide advice on financing options.

Another task group prepared a questionnaire distributed to committee members, the results of which are titled "Town Center Citizens Advisory Cmtee Questionnaire Results".

The committee, formed as small working groups, also prepared 6 site reports, which evaluate potential sites for location of a New Town Center. These include:

- Existing Town Center Buildings at Front of Site
- Town Center Outside of Fault Setbacks
- Ford Park
- El Mirador/Town Center
- Nathhorst Triangle
- Stanford Wedge (letter from Arthur Graham)

At its August 28, 2003 meeting, the Town Council received the site reports as unedited documents authored by advocates of each site; no committee consensus was reached on the content of the reports.

Committee members offered the following additional recommendations to the Council:

1. Some members feel strongly that the Town should engage a consultant to prepare a risk analysis that would compare "everyday risks" (e.g. driving on the freeway, engaging in sports activities, etc.) with the possibility of a significant magnitude earthquake occurring at the Town Center site.
2. Some members felt the Town should engage in a citizen-participative "charrette" process in order to design the Town Center.
3. Some members felt the Town needs to further educate residents about the Town Center project, options, what has been done to date, etc.

At the August 27, 2003 meeting, Mayor Driscoll suspended the work of the committee, but did not disband it, pending potential further work the Council may wish the committee to perform.

Attached to this overview are:

1. TC CAC Goals
2. A listing of the members of the TC CAC
3. An excerpt from the Questionnaire Results that lists responses to the question, "What do you personally envision for the new town center? What features, style, etc. should the town center have?:"

Copies of the Finance Subcommittee report, Questionnaire results and 6 site reports are available upon request at Town Hall or by calling me at 851-1700, ex. 18.

Attachment “A”
Town Center Citizens’ Advisory Committee -- GOALS

1. Current Town Center Location

- Background information about the:
 - ✓ Historic purchase, intended use, occupancy, geologic studies and committee recommendations for Town Center
 - ✓ Limitations of the existing site (e.g. geologic, liability/insurance, inaccessibility for disabled residents & visitors, current building code requirements, inadequate/vulnerable records storage, non-tempered glass/skylights)
 - ✓ Current uses at Town Center and the square footage requirements needed to accommodate these uses
 - ✓ Short-term options to provide safe, accessible space for Town staff
 - ✓ Options to minimize the Town’s liability risks
- Identify additional information needed to:
 - ✓ Establish whether it is feasible to renovate the currently existing buildings (e.g. square footage requirements, geologic, liability/insurance, accessibility, building code issues)
 - ✓ If deemed feasible, estimate the costs associated with renovation

2. Alternative Town Center Locations

- Identify and evaluate alternative locations
 - ✓ Review the list of previously evaluated locations; add others, if realistic
 - ✓ Develop a list of criteria and a rating system for evaluating the locations and perform an objective evaluation
 - ✓ Identify top 2 priority locations

3. Funding Mechanisms for a New Town Center

- Gain an understanding of government financing mechanisms & limitations
- Estimate all potential costs associated with location and construction of New Town Center at top 2 priority locations
- Establish a timeline for completion of the project at the top 2 priority locations

4. Provide more information and periodic updates to all residents about the Town Center Project and the work of the Committee (website, mailing, Town Picnic)

5. Prepare Advisory Report to Town Council (presentation at August 13, 2003 meeting)

Attachment "B"

Town Center Citizens Advisory Committee -- Members

Virginia Bacon	Louise Hamm
Karl Bizak	Sue Jagers
Danna Breen	Bill Lane
Sheldon Breiner	Mary McCann
Allan Brown	Arthur "Chip" McIntosh
Bob Brown	Gary Nielsen
Christopher Buja	Ray Pestrong
Sue Chaput	Amber Ramies
Kristi Corley	Alvin Rathbun
Sue Crane	Sally Ann Reiss
Mark Dahm	John Richards
Stephen Dunne	Beth Shaw
Dorian Dunne	Rowland Tabor
Pierre Fischer	Steve Toben
Rebecca Flynn	Yvonne Tryce
Greg Franklin	Ellen Vernazza
Jane Gallagher	Nancy Vian
Arthur Graham	Linda Weil
Carol Graham	Ed Wells

Attachment "C"

Town Center Questionnaire (Excerpt)

What do you personally envision for the new town center? What features, style, etc. should the town center have?

The buildings should be spread out over the tennis courts and soccer field. Mediterranean or Arts and crafts style. The admin and corp yard should be apart from the rest of the buildings. The visitors to the admin are very different than those to the library (contractors vs. town residents). The parking and driving should be kept separate for the 2 groups. The core of the buildings (library, fitness center, classrooms, lounge(s), maybe MUR/bball court) should be placed in a pleasing plaza with the fabulous views for the library and lounge(s), and swimming pools. The parking should be discrete and not take up major view corridors and not be in the middle of the buildings, instead should be on the sides or behind the buildings. The library should be easily accessible to parking for the elderly. The schoolhouse should be linked to the redwood grove by a series of outdoor gardens, outdoor pavilion, outdoor lounge, the swimming pools of the fitness center, the playground and tot area. The buildings should have wide overhangs on the west side (and no skylights) to prevent heat buildup in the buildings while maintaining the views. Green building principles should be followed if cost effective. Rooms should be multipurpose as possible (classrooms, dance studios, meeting rooms, and lounges should be interchangeable.) A sidewalk should be built from the Sequoias to town center.

A basic building of some physical grace as well as utility and attractive in atmosphere for social events.

Let's use the design standards we have in town –not only useful guides, but it would be an extremely corrosive message that the town is above the design standards that everyone works to meet and uphold.

It's a place where paths intersect as residents of all ages come together in work and play. On my way to the library I run into a neighbor bringing his children to a ball game or an art class. I pass others sitting on benches admiring the view or reading a book. Town employees come and go, enjoying casual encounters with the residents they serve. The center will have been laid out so as to accommodate special outdoor events, such as Blues & BBQ. Attractive landscaping & lingering places with park benches are very important. Good lighting at night is important, but should be subdued. We have some excellent architects in Town who understand the "look" of the community, & on whom we can rely for good design.

An updated, modernized facility. Use our present town center site, but expand the concept with up-to-date input. Listen to the needs of the new residents.

We should look at numerous other facilities like Woodside, etc. We should consider “green” construction, i.e. Hewlett Foundation building. Give lots of thought for an attractive, rural theme.

Several locations, one story, rural setting including a sorely needed full capacity post office!

Low profile ranch style compatible with the environment and characteristic of and building in the town. Ranch style. Single story California ranch style.

I see the new town center used for all types of recreation set up to be safe for children and accessible to all.

Our town center should make an architectural statement of our values and beliefs. Stylistically buildings might be eco-centric and contemporary in style and build with native materials. Most people would probably prefer the use of lots of glass focusing on the natural environment and potential views. Practically speaking spaces should be utilitarian and designed for multiple uses where possible. The most important parts, however, are unique design, a community plaza focus and architectural integrity.

Too complicated to answer

I have heard several people comment, “If we’re going to do it, let’s really make a statement!” Like what? The Sydney Opera House? I feel the statement P.V. should make is that we appreciate the beauty of the site and anything we construct on it should blend in, harmonize and compliment – it should be an understatement.

One story craftsman style, wood & glass, deep overhangs. Our present MUR & classrooms housing art studios are beautiful – have an ageless grace and strength. I will mourn their loss and hope for something equal.

I feel that as a community based on the open space objectives our Town Center should be attractive and distinctive, but NOT pretentious. ...Use landscaping with native plants as possible modest maintenance requirements can go a long way to create a feeling of a “community plaza”...and a “Sense of Place”.

Style: A grouping of buildings with a theme...How about buildings that match the schoolhouse? Features: I would love to see the town center buildings have the facilities for meetings of classes, groups (young and old). I expect this new facility to be modern. However, it does not need to have the detailed quality of products some houses in the area have. Really looking forward to having better bathroom facilities.

Center “plaza”, MUR replacement, photovoltaic array for emergency center/admin., perhaps a well/fountain as plaza focus/emergency water source. Style should be consistent with regional ranch architecture, some contemporary features to bring us into the 21st century.

Context-sensitive design: rural, open, one story. Single floor ranch type. Single story, craftsman style

Architecture-low, wood frame structures, several small structures as opposed to a few very large structures. This also allows staging of construction. Library and Administration as close to parking and to Portola Road as possible. Corporate yard in least visible location. Include a public meeting area, plaza, etc. Consider accommodation of Town events like Blues and BBQ and Town Picnic.

Destination meeting place, old barn look, access, safety, reinvigorating commercial.

Minimal intrusion on landscaping – wood blending into natural setting – design should be dictated largely by utility and structural stability.

I would like to see facilities that are useable and accessible to EVERYONE in the community (young and old).

