



**NORTH VENTURA COORDINATED AREA PLAN
WORKING GROUP MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES
July 28, 2020
Virtual Meeting
5:30 PM**

Call to Order:

Roll Call:

Present: Lund Smith, Kirsten Flynn, Yunan Song, Alex Lew, Lakiba Pittman, Terry Holzmer, Heather Rosen

Welcome and Housekeeping:

Rachael Tanner Assistant Director of Planning Development Services explained the procedure that will be used for this meeting. The goal for tonight is part two of the review of the NVCAP Handbook, created by Angela Dellaporta, who helped order the remaining questions, so that items that haven't been touched on at all may be addressed tonight.

Ms. Tanner announced that they are in search of a date in August in which the entire working group can get together. Members were asked to reply to the email sent out to find out dates that would work. An additional time may also be set. The co-chairs and Rachael are meeting on Thursday to discuss another possible meeting to talk about housing and traffic for all who would like to participate; however, participation would not be required.

Ms. Tanner reminded the Working Group of the path the group is on, trying to work so that the August meeting can be dedicated to presenting back to the working group what has been heard regarding preferences for aspects of how the plan area might look and organizing those characteristics into two draft alternatives, to include the different poles and different ground the group has for those topics.

Ms. Dellaporta reiterated that the questions chosen are the ones needed in order to give the best information on what the group would like to see in the proposals to the consultant. This meeting is our last chance to do that. She asked members to be aware of the time and the number of questions to cover.

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She also explained that she is not trained in city planning, so the writing is in layman's terms, but she is here to clarify and explain any of the questions for tonight.

Ms. Tanner added that different people can use the same terms differently, so it's helpful to be able to clarify how we are reading or interpreting a question or term. Rachael noted that Keith Reckdahl is in attendance, just to listen in for a time, before leaving to attend the Park meeting.

Oral Communications:

Rebecca Sanders thanked Ms. Tanner and Chitra for the way in which they are meeting the public and stated that she loves hearing the voices of the Working Group members being heard and having an impact. She is excited about additional meetings to talk about transportation and housing. Having helped bring forth Alternative M, she referred to it as "an out-of-the-box, nutty possibility," but encouraged the group to discuss it if possible, during the discussion of affordable housing. She feels it offers potential for a lot of housing with no new commercial space. She again thanked the group for their hard work and long hours in the pursuit of building consensus. She would like to see some of the Working Group members as part of the conversation with the consultants and city staff when it is reviewed.

Discussion Items:

Discussion of topics in the NVCAP Handbook – Staff and Co-Chairs

Q 16. What configuration of parkland (and public plaza) do you support?

Mr. Lew didn't oppose a creek side park but ultimately preferred a focal point, an outdoor place in the middle of the site, like South Park. His concern is that a creek side park would be relatively hidden from the rest of the neighborhood. He suggests a centralized park, with possibility of a crossroads and a meeting place, basically associating his choice with options A and D.

Ms. Flynn would support B and E. She does elder care, and finds that grass is not accessible to everyone, depending on their ability to walk. A combination of grass and paved area provides a place for children to play, a place for activities like frisbee, while a paved area allows less mobile individuals an opportunity for outdoor experiences. She also advocates for pedestrian/bicycle mobility, which she feels is necessary to have the neighborhood function without gridlock, so E is her second choice.

Mr. Smith generally agreed with Ms. Flynn's comments and liked the focus on bike and pedestrian paths. His first choice would be E, followed by either A or B. He doesn't see a plaza as a necessity, depending on what happens with other parts of the site but thinks it's important to have green space and bike/pedestrian paths. He feels it comes down to viability in regard to the plaza, depending on the density

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of the site. There would be more need for green space separating buildings if it's lower scale. He doesn't see a plaza as necessary if there's not a lot of density.

Mr. Holzmer chose a combination of A and B depending on the density. He thinks one of the issues facing Palo Alto is the fact that there is already a deficit in the needed park space and that we should figure out ways to have more park space. He would like to see the creek maximized to its potential. He points out there are other developments going up in the area that will impact this area as well, so he would encourage more park space.

Ms. Flynn wanted to know more about the property across the street from the study area – the old Varian [phonetic] site, across ECR. She understands there are housing units planned for that site, making the area more under-parked. She wondered how many citizens will be involved in that project, because it will affect decisions on traffic and parks, and other amenities.

Ms. Song's first choice was A, with the large green space. Regarding a plaza, she prefers it to be just a park, since it is not a large lot. If unable to afford a big park, she would choose E, being near green space and with bike and pedestrian lanes. She also pointed out that in the Ventura area there is no medium or large sized park. So, to access any large park you need to cross El Camino to the ballpark or drive to another neighborhood park.

Ms. Pittman shared that she is flexible on this question, but did give A as her first choice, with B and E equally sharing second place. She likes the idea of a lot of space, being able to have a large park in this area.

Ms. Tanner suggested that these proposals are not mutually exclusive. She has gathered from this group as well as the other group that having a large park with gathering space and recreational opportunities, possibly along with a smaller park, is very important to almost everyone. She noted that letter A seems to be the most important to the members. Other options would be great, if possible, but not at the expense of losing letter A.

Ms. Flynn added that she likes the expression, "gathering space," and feels that building community, allowing people to connect with others they don't see regularly builds neighborhood and urban cohesiveness. The ability to get face-to-face and see your neighbors is a huge part of her vision for park space.

Mr. Smith pointed out that green space can be insular or open to others. It could be primarily for the housing unit community, or it can be inviting and welcoming to those around the community as well.

Ms. Tanner agreed and noted that this topic will be addressed in a later question.

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Mr. Lew pointed out that, although no one had brought up the option of pocket parks, Mountain View has built 8 to 10 of these over the past 10 years. They are approximately three-quarter acres each, basically in the center of each neighborhood, and they are very popular. They are sometimes developer-built and sometimes city-built.

Ms. Flynn has seen some of these, about the size of a city lot.

Mr. Lew prefers them when they are in the size of approximately three residential lots, making room for several components. If smaller, some uses must be cut out, detracting from the usefulness. These are all public parks, sometimes with land donated by the developer. Mr. Lew also mentioned two private parks in the area, in which lawns are open to the public, but do include private pools for the residents.

Question 17. If we have a large, contiguous green space with bike and pedestrian paths, where would it best be placed? Please vote for all you would be comfortable with.

Ms. Pittman asked where the center of the plan area is.

Ms. Tanner suggested that the Fry's Building is the center right now; perhaps not the technical center. Possibly the Fry's parking lot might be the center. Also, the center might be in the center, away from the main roads, like El Camino, or to one side or the other of the plan area.

Ms. Dellaporta advised she made a cross in the center of the map, and it is on the north side of the Fry's Building, at the edge of the railroad spur and the Fry's Building, around Ash.

Ms. Pittman did not have a definite opinion, but since she lives near the Cloudera parking lot, she thought it might be nice to have a park there, so that would be one of her choices. Depending on where everything else is located, another choice would potentially be the old Fry's parking lot, in the center of the plan area.

Ms. Tanner encouraged the members, for this question, to think in terms of the large, central park, even though there may be other smaller ones.

Ms. Pittman expressed that she would rather have a park in Cloudera, as opposed to housing. Therefore, she chose D and C.

Ms. Song agreed with choice D, based on the assumption we are looking to other opportunities with the Cloudera parking lot. She could also agree with option F because Matadero Creek is central to the area and close to Park Blvd, which would make it amenable for pedestrian and biking areas.

Mr. Holzmer liked F the best as, being along the creek, it could connect with Boulware Park. The creek offers opportunities, making it ideal for a park area.

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Ms. Flynn felt strongly that the Cloudera parking lot site park should be expanded to include some pedestrian/bicycle mobility, especially if there is a connection to the back side of Fry's. She suggested this would offer a mesh of permeability to pedestrians and bicycles. She liked either F or G but is fine whether the bulk of the park is on Park or on Matadero Creek, but stretching along the creek from Park and connecting to Boulware. It might require a few extra feet to include the green space and bio soil function, which is replenishing the groundwater.

Mr. Smith was generally in agreement with the ideas presented. He liked the idea of using the existing Boulware Park and expanding it. He feels it also makes sense to stay near Olive, whether the Cloudera site or the railroad spur. He thought both would provide opportunities to have a smaller, linear park in those areas and then some connectivity between larger parks.

Mr. Lew did not have a preference on this one. He thought the park should be where there is a diversity of uses around it, such as existing office, new residential, retail, that it is somewhere in the center of those pieces.

Ms. Tanner re-stated this as being wherever there's a mix of action, that's where the park should be, to face the most users.

Ms. Rosen said she would echo previous comments. She would vote for an F and G combination and also likes the idea of two smaller parks connecting.

Ms. Tanner asked about whether there's a preference between G and F. The at-grade suggested in F, is adjacent to Park Blvd, wrapping around the creek at grade. The distinction is that this has the plaza as well.

Ms. Dellaporta explained that G was put in because of those that really wanted to have the plaza on Park, not in the old Fry's parking lot.

Ms. Tanner added that a plaza is looked at as a place where certain types of activities are more easily facilitated than grass, more visible and not as hidden away, but visible to passersby. She summarized that she felt synergy around the Cloudera parking lot, whether for a large park or to have some connections, and also synergy around a creek side, but adjacent to Park Blvd, giving the park visibility.

Ms. Flynn was taken with the idea of the railroad spur as an opportunity for connection, since Fry's has been a barrier. The railroad spur would cut through if there was a way of going around the end of the Playground Global building. It would be a winding way through the site.

Ms. Tanner referenced Waldek Kaczmariski's proposal of having a strong north/south bike connection and today's suggestions regarding how to connect.

Ms. Flynn felt that with a network of greenways through the neighborhood, it could be a very desirable, world-class neighborhood, with unique characteristics.

Question 15. What types of park space should count towards the 4 acres/1000 residents?

Ms. Tanner explained that this goes toward two things – one, when tallying up how to calculate the plan and open space provided, what gets counted as public parks and what does not? Also, it would go towards requirements of developers. Would changes by developers require a land dedication, where they dedicate a portion of the land to be public parkland, verses a setup where the developer owns the parkland and development, but it is required that it be publicly accessible. This is how cities get parkland developed sometimes without owning it as a city.

Ms. Flynn originally chose A, but now thinks C might be acceptable. However, many times public amenities are not public, referencing the courtyard by the café on the access street to Page Mill, the public meeting rooms in the grocery outlet, the public spaces in the development behind grocery outlet, all of which do not feel accessible, except by the residents.

Ms. Tanner stated that it must be designed and maintained well.

Ms. Flynn adding there should be limitations of planting and enclosures that limit public access.

Mr. Holzmer favored B, being concerned with the parks deficit we already have. He would like to see more parks. Existing parks are in high demand, with lines of people waiting to use the facilities. He feels the demand will only increase, so B is the best choice for him.

Mr. Lew did not have a strong opinion on this question, but chose C.

Ms. Pittman initially chose B, but she wasn't clear whether there were benefits, or not, of A, stating she doesn't know enough about it, so she selected B.

Ms. Tanner mentioned one of the downsides, that it can often end up with a feeling of not being open to the public, making people wonder if they are supposed to be there. Things that happen over time can enhance that effect. The benefits include that the developer will sometimes pay for and maintain it.

Ms. Pittman then chose C as her second choice.

Ms. Song's initial feeling was B, but if privately owned space can be required to be publicly accessible, she could agree with A also.

Ms. Rosen favored C as long as it would be reasonably open to the public.

Ms. Tanner suggested it needs to be close to the street, abutting the sidewalk, with a pathway in and signage, with specifics spelled out to the developer ahead of time.

Mr. Smith was comfortable with the previous comments. He thought A could work, as long as there are parameters written into the details around it, making it feel accessible and welcoming. He was fine with C as well, or a combination of both. He remarked that, given that Boulware Park is already there, it will probably be a component of the design, extending that. He thought if another linear park were added, realistically it becomes private, but it does need to feel like it's open.

Ms. Tanner suggested that building on what is already developed, offered and maintained by Cloudera as a precedent would be beneficial.

Ms. Flynn observed that the linear park has a benefit to the property owner, so they might be a better candidate for A-type land, and the large park and/or plaza has a greater benefit to the community and thus, might be a better candidate for a B-type land use.

Question 11. What type of zoning should be considered for Olive?

Ms. Rosen advocated a combination, so E would make sense, to be able to have the most options available.

Ms. Tanner suggested that members think about the maximum they would be comfortable with.

Ms. Song was not sure what the current residents' preference is and thought they should also have an opportunity to address their concerns. Otherwise, she thought if the park goes through El Camino Real, there could be something like D, multifamily buildings. The rest could be A or B.

Ms. Tanner clarified what Ms. Song said, that the park closest to El Camino Real could be more like D, then as you go up the street, you get more B and A.

Ms. Pittman felt more flexible on this one than she was initially. She liked A; however, she liked Ms. Song's thoughts. She was uncomfortable with D, being more than she feels comfortable with, but perhaps C if it started farther away and then worked back to B, with an occasional A.

Mr. Holzmer shared that he learned at the last meeting that the lots along Oliver are very shallow. He thought about how that would impact a multi-family facility or building. He felt, if the lots remain the way they are, he would choose option A, or maybe B might be an alternative. A or B are the choices that seem to fit in with that neighborhood.

Ms. Flynn shared that she always advocates for lower income individuals and for diversity of income levels, so her choice was B through D, with the caveat that B must increase the number of units. In other words, if two lots are combined and only three units result, she would like that to be four to six units on two adjacent properties and three units on a single property. Also, with the caveat that she probably was for contiguous units close to El Camino, option D would be comfortable in that situation.

Mr. Lew echoed what Mr. Holzmer said about the shallow lots. The lots are typically 50 feet. The depth varies, but 119 feet is normal, which is not large enough for a parking lot to be built efficiently, so his answer was C. He might combine some of option D. Mr. Lew remarked that he saw noticed an area similar in size which contained a 4-million-dollar house next door to an affordable housing projects (four one-bedroom units) on the same size lot, built over time, and that they all fit in and looked good together, like a single family neighborhood. He also chose partly D, because the streets exist in the area that have 50-foot lots with three units on them, but have multi-family zoning. Mr. Lew clarified that the examples shown in the photographs will not work, but there are other projects downtown that are smaller that do work.

Mr. Smith remarked that the group has made a lot of smart comments that encompass how he feels. He pointed out that Sobrato does have a development on Olive closer to El Camino Real that is multi-family. He suggested that they are doing what is being discussed on a stretch of Olive. Mr. Smith indicated that the latest thought on this is that the lots on Olive are shallow, and it would be challenging to do a bigger scale development there. They are looking in the range of one to three single family units, because it is not feasible to do a larger scale multi-family development project. Additionally, it would not be in keeping with the neighborhood, among other things. Since the A option does allow for some additional units, that is what is being seriously considered.

Ms. Tanner asked if that might perhaps include C – possibly four units but on the scale of a “house.”

Mr. Smith replied that there are alternatives that work with the shallow lot sizes, but it has become clear that D, on their lots for the reasons given, is not feasible. He pointed out that, looking at number of units, A, B or C are not too different in terms of actual number of people and number of units provided – basically three to six. Mr. Smith, therefore, put himself in the A, B, C range.

Ms. Rosen stated she would stay with her previous answer but agrees that the bigger units might not be feasible, so the A through C combo makes the most sense.

Ms. Tanner observed the answers are varied, but in general, recognize the constraints of the location, which might make A through C more doable, even if D was allowed. She commented that D might work on the El Camino-facing part of Olive, but back a few parcels, it would go back to the smaller scale.

Most of the members indicated agreement with this assessment.

Question 21. Should Olive be connected to 340 Portage if agreement can be reached with property owners?

Ms. Tanner explained that this could go a couple ways. One, working with property owners to have an easement allowing bike/pedestrian path to go through their property, which connects from Olive to 340 Portage and to whatever is beyond that, back and forth. A more dramatic option would be to purchase a house from a property owner and demolish it to create a pathway. If it was to be a road, a wider passageway would be needed than for a bike or pedestrian to get through. It could be a connection for cars, or for pedestrians and bikes only. It could be no connection, or other something else.

Mr. Holzmer thought B would be best, if doable. He expressed that taking somebody's property is not desirable. His opinion was that the purpose would be to accommodate people moving from the California Avenue area to this area, and a bike/pedestrian path might be the best way.

Mr. Smith felt it wasn't necessary to have a path, although it might be beneficial, so he leaned between B and C. If it was felt that a path should be there, the question would be whether an agreement could be reached with the property owners. He expressed that if that is a necessary component, it would be possible, but it should be for pedestrians and bikes, not cars.

Mr. Lew chose B for this question. He added that 20 years ago Stanford decided to put in a street grid, but only for pedestrians, bikes and shuttles, and he thinks it has held up well over the past 20 years. It looks good and makes it easier to get around the campus, in terms of wayfinding. It also has kept the cars out of the main campus.

Ms. Pittman selected B, but was still wondering if it would be needed and if it would be for easing traffic or allowing pedestrians and bikes to have another outlet. She did not see it being used for cars. She was in the B or C area, but okay with B, as long as that could be worked out.

Ms. Tanner answered that the reason it is being suggested is partly about a north/south connection across the site, for people wanting to travel via bike or walking. They could not go across Oregon but would have to go to Park Blvd. This would depend on who we are working with in terms of property ownership. Ms. Tanner and Ms. Pittman looked at the possible routes through the area on the map.

Mr. Lew asked where the Mikes Bikes development is slated to be. The group discussed the location while viewing the map. Mr. Lew wondered if this might offer another possibility of some connectivity.

Ms. Song felt it would maybe be nice to have but is not a priority, so she chose option C.

Ms. Tanner agreed that if the opportunity presents itself, great, but if not we could think of other things

Ms. Rosen indicated that it depends on what the final plan looks like, but agrees with B, that it would be nice to have, although not necessary.

Ms. Flynn was strongly in favor of B, explaining that she is concerned about bicycle/pedestrian accidents with automobiles, which often result in death if the automobile is going over 35 mph. Ms. Flynn referred to the site on the map where housing is being added. The primary place to cross El Camino is that same crossing, Hansen and Portage which is slated to be improved for bicycle crossing. Ms. Flynn feels B is an essential connectivity from the train station to places of employment. She points out the more possible routes there are, the less density of bicycles and the less bicycle/automobile interactions. She is not happy with C and unsure about A, so is strongly in favor of B.

Ms. Tanner summarized that most members thought it was nice have but not essential. If it was included, it should be for pedestrians and bikes only, with no one supporting A.

Question 22. How much parking should be included for each housing unit?

Ms. Song chose C or D. She believes that we cannot assume people live close to the California train station don't need a car. In most cases I see they don't drive, but each family has at least one car and needs at least one space. In most cases each family has two cars. She chose option C because it is a number between one and three. She doesn't know the guideline for existing on multiunit buildings, but she always feels that people think this number is not enough and want more parking space.

Ms. Rosen tentatively favored E, but thought ideally there should be a way to incentivize the building managers or renters to not take a parking space and either cut rent or come up with another way to make that more popular.

Mr. Smith commented that he would lean towards B. His thought was that parking is changing, and some in the new generation don't even have a car, walking or biking to the train, although that is changing, too, because of COVID. He feels that parking is a constraint to development and if we want housing units here, we need to have a robust transit management program, where people forego driving as much as possible.

Mr. Holzmer favored a combination of E and D. Having lived in an apartment for a long time, he knows the demand for parking. With the current COVID situation and demands of certain jobs, he feels it

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inevitable that people will want to have cars. Also, he feels the transportation system is very weak, which drives people away from it.

Ms. Pittman, commented that, although she has empathy and thinks people need two spaces, she is leaning toward having one space, to keep the parking contained. She agrees with Mr. Smith that parking takes up a lot of the space.

Ms. Flynn advocated for parts of B and F. She likes the idea of one space per unit, guaranteed. She can see a three-bedroom unit needing two spaces. She offered the idea of creating an incentive to purchase an additional space, or also designate some spaces as car share spaces. She felt these types of things would give more flexibility in addition to a financial incentive for building the space.

Mr. Lew's thoughts were similar to Ms. Flynn's – B and F. He described downtown Berkley, where there is one parking space for three units, but free unlimited bus passes are provided to everyone in the building. There is a ratio of the number of car shares that are required to be in the building, which are provided free from the car share company, somewhat like paid membership fees. Just outside of that area, parking is one per unit. He mentions that Palo Alto is not there yet, but he hopes we can get there.

Ms. Tanner shared an idea from the last meeting, that of parking maximums, such as letter D or E, with the developer having the option, based on demand, of how much to build. This gives them a ceiling in regard to parking spaces, rather than a floor.

Mr. Smith liked this idea.

Ms. Flynn like the idea of developers having some parking spaces for sale, because they are paying so much for the land.

Ms. Tanner explained ways developers might do this. Downsides to this include a person who has a car and doesn't want to pay for the space, so parks the car on the street, which can lead to problems. There might also exist parking permit programs or other means of limiting that type of problem. She then summarized there seems to be support for one space per unit; openness to ideas for more than one (i.e. bedroom count, capping at two).

Question 19. If Portage Ave continues to exist between Ash and Park (going through an area that could include housing, parkland, and retail), how should it be designed?

Ms. Flynn found it difficult to answer this question in isolation and didn't choose any of the answers. She feels it's necessary to look at how the neighborhood breathes (e.g., traffic in, traffic out, across, etc.) before determining an answer. She thinks physically separating pedestrians from cars and a very narrow car thoroughfare, with Portage as a slow speed through road is important. Alternatively, she is concerned

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with what this would do to the Olive and Lambert intersection. Car-friendly from El Camino Real to Ash; then bike and pedestrian prioritized with some throughput from Ash to Park was her ultimate response.

Ms. Tanner suggested members keep in mind that there is support for trying to eliminate cut-through traffic. Schemes have included such things as certain streets being one-way. The other way to do this and prioritize Park as a bike boulevard would be to make Olive a cul-de-sac, and maybe even Lambert as well, so that people aren't trying to get from El Camino through there, to Park. If that were to happen (notwithstanding potential objections), then Portage would become the through street, which could be developed as a slow street, decreasing incentive to cut through. This would still leave other curb cuts, which could all potentially be closed and not have any vehicular traffic from Lambert, Portage or Olive.

Ms. Flynn felt that, given that the group has expressed a priority for some sort of neighborhood-serving retail, café, , etc. as part of the gathering function, she suggests that it is a lot to ask of people of all abilities to walk or bike to retail.

Ms. Tanner affirmed this response and encouraged members to offer any other such thoughts in regard to either this question, or a larger scheme.

Mr. Lew didn't have a strong opinion at the moment. He leaned toward a D solution, maybe allowing some cars into 340 Portage on Park to prevent people from doing the cut-through from El Camino to Park. More specifically, it would be possible to turn from Park onto Portage, but not to turn the other way. He also is opposed to dead-ends. Perhaps coming down Portage, there could be a loop road, making it possible to circle around the block, but not connect anywhere else in the neighborhood. Perhaps circling around a park and then getting back onto El Camino or Acacia.

Discussion included going in one way from Park and turning into Fry's.

Mr. Lew clarified being able to go through Portage at El Camino but not being able to do that the other way. Everyone now tries to avoid Page Mill and El Camino traffic, cutting through the neighborhood. He would design it to eliminate that possibility.

Variations of this idea were discussed.

Ms. Pittman thought if you could go in one way but couldn't go the other way, then traffic will continue to cut down Olive, which is what they do anyway. Traffic trying to avoid Page Mill takes a right turn on Olive and a left turn on Ash, so if you make it impossible to go in the other direction, it could potentially push more people to cut through on Olive and Pepper. She also pointed out that, for residents of the neighborhood, it is sometimes hard to get to El Camino to go south. They often cut through and go down Portage, because there is a light and it enables you to get out on the freeway. She confirms that traffic comes down Park Blvd and then through Portage, then turning to go south.

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The Working Group discussed ways to get out of the neighborhood to the freeway.

Ms. Pittman's choice depends on what is in the area. She selected B, potentially including them only on a limited basis, not knowing what would be in the area (housing, business, etc.) She also likes C if the need is for no cars in that the area.

Ms. Tanner affirmed that thinking about the circulation of current or future residents is important.

Ms. Pittman shared that from 2:00 to 6:00 or so, it is difficult to get out on El Camino, making it necessary to find a light, to either go right or left to do so.

Ms. Flynn added that at lunchtime, as well, it's very difficult to cross if one is trying to go south.

Ms. Song thought it would depend on how the area is developed, the Fry's lot, assuming there would be more residents. To be realistic, it has to be with vehicles; otherwise residents coming in and out would need access to El Camino and Park. She agreed that Olive and Portage, Lambert need at least one of them to have traffic lights to allow traffic to turn left, southeast bound. Her thought is that if we don't allow traffic from El Camino to Portage, much will be overflowed to Olive and Lambert. It would depend on how many residents will be located in this area.

Ms. Tanner affirmed the need to prevent overflow traffic going to Lambert and Olive. Limited traffic on Portage will cause the traffic to go somewhere else.

Mr. Holzmer agreed this is a tough question, and his thoughts have already been stated, essentially. Much depends on what the final design looks like. Having access out of Portage may be a necessary alternative, because people do have to go south and north. Ideally, B might be a good choice in terms of the homeowners in the area, not having a design for what the future may look like.

Ms. Rosen echoed previous comments, feeling it's difficult to make a decision at this point in the planning process, but it sounds like there will need to be at least some traffic, therefore, B is going to be necessary, if not A.

Mr. Smith agreed with Ms. Rosen.

Ms. Tanner suggested a common theme of a desire for some slower traffic if there is a park adjacent to the creek, something that enhances park use. At the same time, residents need to be able to get places and get out to El Camino. There is a need to be mindful of Lambert and the means for residents to use the street as well as those who use the area to cut through.

Ms. Flynn wanted the group to bear in mind there are more than residents in the area. If retail is desired, there must be a way for customers to get to it, including people with limited physical mobility.

Ms. Tanner suggested speed bumps, cobblestone streets as examples.

The group took a five-minute break at this point.

Question 24.1 The buildings at 340 Portage, the main building and the old dormitory/office building, have been found to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. What would you like the WG to recommend regarding the cannery buildings at 340 Portage?

Mr. Holzmer referred to an email he sent earlier today, explaining why this site is significant, not only to Palo Alto, but to California and even the nation. The Fry's Building is one of the last significant cannery sites in California. Mr. Holzmer spoke to the site at 340 Portage as a unique opportunity for Palo Alto. The Fry's Building is unique, and Mr. Holzmer wanted to emphasize that the Working Group understands what an important historical building this is and should not be overlooked. Therefore, he strongly supported option A.

Mr. Smith thanked Mr. Holzmer for the information he shared in his email. He agreed that the significance of the site should be commemorated. He doesn't feel as strongly about the physical building, but feels there are other ways to commemorate it, such as potentially retaining the current building, if it stays as office, the way it is. His opinion is that to readapt the building for apartment or retail use is probably not realistic or feasible, because retaining the structure in a significant way makes that almost impossible. His reservation is in regard to using the building for housing. Mr. Smith, therefore, leaned more in the direction of B or C, but could also go along with A, if office is retained at the site.

Ms. Flynn's opinion was that it is easy to erase history but very hard to remember history. Ms. Flynn suggests that to prevent succumbing to the latest trend might be to retain some of all periods of history. Thus, she advocated for option A, with the caveat that the section of Global Playground that is abutting on Park, because that is an opportunity for more height in housing, which would be difficult to attain while retaining the shell. Ms. Flynn's final preference was A, and a little B. Ms. Flynn clarified that she is open to keeping all of it if it is at all economically viable. She would be okay with adding some height on the end by Park Blvd in order to make it economically viable.

Mr. Lew agreed with Mr. Smith on this question, remarking that there are several other cannery sites that have already been redeveloped, whether it be all or parts of it. His example of Monterey's Cannery Row would be along the lines of D.

Ms. Tanner clarified with Mr. Lew that he advocated for C in some degree, as well as B, and also A in regard to his view on having housing in the Fry's Building.

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Ms. Pittman asked if there is housing on the Monterey Cannery Row.

Mr. Lew replied that he doesn't think so.

In general, Ms. Pittman leaned toward A in terms of keeping the history in some real form. She recognized the importance of marking spots of history and remembering.

Ms. Tanner discussed the idea of using the Fry's Building, Global Playground, and other areas where some portions could be kept (B) and some converted to other uses, including housing.

Ms. Rosen agreed with Mr. Lew and Mr. Smith. Although she would love to see A as the option, she doesn't believe it is feasible. She would like to retain as much as possible, but if not feasible in terms of housing needs, etc., then she was okay with option C.

Ms. Song found it hard to pick an option, but did choose A, since this is the only place that preserves history, while there are other places in Palo Alto which could provide housing. She suggested that in Middlefield there are empty buildings, such as Cubberley High school, as well as a vacated community building, which is an area which might have potential for development of housing. She also suggested that the North Ventura project doesn't have to be an isolated plan, but could be planned together with another area.

Ms. Tanner advised that there have been explorations of similar ideas, with mixed support. She affirmed that thinking "globally" with the rest of the city is a good point. Ms. Tanner concluded there is a support for retaining, at different levels. If retaining, there would need to be willingness to part with the idea of reusing it for housing. Group members are also supportive of keeping at least the most important historic sites, and as much of them as possible. In summary, there were a spread of opinions, generally between C and A, with a few members in the middle and most agreeing on the importance of commemorating and/or preserving the history to the greatest degree reasonably possible.

Question 24.2. What zoning policy for the 340 Portage property do you think would lead to the best results for the NVCAP?

Mr. Holzmer advocated for a combination of B and C, as there might be some room for retail and small offices or neighborhood-serving operations.

Ms. Flynn agreed with Mr. Holzmer but wanted to clarify that if C was chosen, we would be keeping 143,000 of office and R&D, and we are allowing use of the current 84,000 as retail. She would not be comfortable with that and would like assurance that the additional 84,000 would not be converted to office.

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Mr. Smith agreed with Ms. Flynn's comment.

Ms. Flynn worries about option C for this reason, because retail is not vibrant and that is a large area to find renters for.

Mr. Smith asked for clarification on B and C. If saving the current 340 site – basically meaning a large portion of the 11 acres would not change from office and retail – then if allowing 30 dwelling units per acre and it's an 11-acre site, are we saying that, for example, 6 of the 11 is going to stay the same and the remaining 330 units will be piled on four of the other acres?

Ms. Tanner replied that it could go couple ways. If B was chosen – a combination of the status quo – or a similar variation for option C, then, theoretically, there could be some types of housing developed in the parking lot area or squeeze some housing or townhomes around the edges. That may or may not get to 330 units, given the spatial limitations. That question could also be answered by indicating the site should just get scrapped, and assume the caveat that the building is not there anymore. Some may prefer that on the previous question, and therefore, carry it over to this question.

Mr. Smith thought either B or C is possible if the site was scrapped, to get to 330 units, plus keep the same office and retail that this there. He did not think 330 units is possible if the existing structure is retained and building around the perimeter of the site. In general, Mr. Smith was in favor of B and C in that they seemed to be reasonable proposals.

Ms. Pittman appreciated the explanations as she is not as familiar with concepts of acreage, how many units, etc. She also agreed with option B and C. She is in favor of small businesses but is comfortable with a small Target as well and thinks it could add some "excitement" in the neighborhood. She feels that Fry's is missed in the neighborhood more than she thought it would be, so having a store or small Target would be good for the area.

Ms. Song also chose B or C, echoing the previous comments.

Ms. Rosen preferred B and C as well, but had a strong preference for B, with the non-chain, small neighborhood stores, as opposed to the small Target. If there was a lot of support for a Target, however, she was also fine with that.

Ms. Tanner mentioned that there is not zoning for Target, specifically, but assumes that Target is proxy for somewhat of a draw beyond just a neighborhood store. Ms. Tanner perceived a lot of support for B and C. Generally, the support seems to be for a combination of the status quo and looking to see more housing as well in the future.

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Ms. Flynn offered that she checked on building typologies to estimate how many units could fit in a low rise building if some of Fry's was gone, and estimated 100-plus units into the little section of Fry's, felt the goals could possibly be met.

Question 9.1 Should the Cloudera site be zoned to allow for housing as well as office space?

All of the Working Group members answered affirmatively to this question, with little discussion, in the interest of time.

Question 8. Assuming that all new buildings are designed to reduce apparent mass (articulation, stepped back design, careful orientation, a variety of heights, appropriate materials, etc.), which building typologies do you feel comfortable with for new buildings in the NVCAP?

Ms. Rosen chose option B.

Ms. Song chose option A.

Ms. Pittman preferred A.

Mr. Holzmer preferred A.

Mr. Lew preferred A.

Ms. Flynn chose A, but added that she is okay with six stories, which may exceed 55 feet, but is not okay with 85 feet.

Mr. Smith agreed with Ms. Flynn and would be okay with going up to six stories, possibly even higher, although that's not realistic in Palo Alto, in this neighborhood.

Question 2. (re-written) Office square footage: Which option seems best to you?

Mr. Lew preferred either B or C but was worried about how B would be enforced. He added that he feels the employment density should be factored in, thinking it would support option C, as there is a huge amount of office space already, in the Research Park.

Mr. Holzmer thought option B sounds reasonable because it allows for the office square footage to remain. When the time comes that they move, then it could be converted to other neighborhood-serving businesses.

Ms. Pittman leaned toward option B, but wondered if option C would allow for the current building to stay.

Ms. Tanner explained that B would allow them to stay just as they are, but if Cloudera were to move out, the building would be converted. The Cloudera building is a difficult example because it is a large office built for a single tenant. Option C would allow Cloudera to potentially rebuild but could not exceed the current square footage. Therefore, Ms. Pittman felt she was in the B/C area.

Ms. Song preferred B and C, not wanting strict restrictions on how the office is to be used.

Ms. Rosen chose B or C as well.

Ms. Flynn noted that some types of structures are unsuited for B, and stated her choice was B, allowing C in structures that don't allow B.

Mr. Smith agreed with Mr. Lew on B but also wonders about enforcement. He would tend to go in the direction of option C or even D, although it may be unpopular. Perhaps not now, but zoning for the next several decades as the future is unknown. In the long run, option D would allow flexibility in the future.

Ms. Tanner felt synergy around B and C for this question.

Question 5.1 What average height for new buildings would you feel comfortable with in the NVCAP?

Ms. Rosen chose somewhere between B and C.

Ms. Song preferred B.

Ms. Pittman preferred B.

Mr. Holzmer went with A, but could, for special circumstances, go to 55 feet.

Mr. Lew preferred B.

Ms. Flynn chose B, because it allows six stories here and there.

Mr. Smith agreed on B, with an occasional C.

Public Comments:

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Ellen said thank you for the work that's is being done in the group and wished to address the subject of parking. She shared that some developments don't have enough parking, and thus, excess parking on the inlet streets impacts the surrounding neighborhood, and this is a big problem. She asked that future plans do include adequate parking. Additionally, she expressed support for being more contextual with the existing neighborhood, so is inclined to be more on the low-rise side.

Cedric also thanked the Working Group for their work. On height, he would vote for C to allow for five stories, or sometimes needing to go a little higher, such as an elevator, some walls on top of rooftop gardens that might exceed a little, or a ground floor retail that is a little taller than residential. For the office square footage, he is also a B or C, agreeing with Ms. Flynn's suggestion. He prefers option A for Question 8. For the dwelling units per acre, he feels the question is ambiguous because a one-bedroom studio is a dwelling unit and a five-bedroom apartment is a dwelling unit. In the plan he drew up, there are approximately 780 bedrooms, somewhere between 350 to 800 units, if these are multi-bedroom apartments or individual, tiny studios. Therefore, he would vote for the current office square footage and small non-chain neighborhood-serving retails and 30 to 100 dwelling units per acre, assuming it's designed well and respects the neighbors, such as the ones he designed. For the historic nature, he feels certain historic buildings should be retained and adapted, specifically the portion of the cannery that has the monitored buildings with the gray roofs and the old dormitory building. He feels if you retain all of the structures, then you have limited options for adding housing, but keeping just the two buildings would allow celebrating the history and also allow new housing. On parking, he feels option E is good, two spaces per unit. Realistically, people drive and people will have cars unless the contract states they can't have cars, and there will be issues with overflow parking into the adjacent neighborhood. He will send the rest of his comments in an email, since his time was expired.

NVCAP Comments:

[None]

Staff Comments:

(None)

Future Meetings and Agendas:

Ms. Tanner asked that members email regarding a date/time to get together. Another message will be sent, probably by Thursday, whether there will be a second meeting in August, hopefully before the meeting with the entire group. That meeting would be focused on traffic and circulation, as well as affordable housing, specifically.

Adjournment:

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Meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

Note: Copies of meeting materials will be posted on the City's project website: <https://bit.ly/2OtGFJG>.