



**NORTH VENTURA COORDINATED AREA PLAN  
WORKING GROUP MEETING  
DRAFT MINUTES  
Thursday, October 8, 2020  
Virtual Meeting  
5:30 PM**

Call to Order:

Roll Call:

Present: Angela Dellaporta, Kirsten Flynn, Terry Holzmer, Gail Price, Heather Rosen, Yunan Song, Tim Steele, Alex Lew, Keith Reckdahl, Doria Summa, Waldek Kaczmariski

Absent: Lund Smith, Lakiba Pittman, Siyi Zhang

Welcome and Housekeeping:

Rachael Tanner, Assistant Director of Planning explained how this meeting will be structured.

Oral Communications:

Arthur Keller believed the staff's proposal seemed to generate more traffic, but there is no traffic study. Second, the proposal ignores the number one housing need, affordable housing, which is a top City priority. Third, the staff proposal would take land away from affordable housing and is unacceptable. Fourth, it doesn't preserve R-1. It would rezone single-family home parcels leading to residents having to leave. Fifth, it doesn't address loss of businesses.

Keri Wagner lives in Charleston Meadows and is excited about the development in Ventura. She brought up a proposed bike underpass at Loma Verde and the creek that was approved by the Palo Alto Bike and Pedestrian Transportation Plan in July 2012. It was also looked at in the Midtown Connector Feasibility Study in June 2016. It hasn't been engineered yet, but with

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housing going into Ventura and the need to get to Midtown, this would create a connection between Ventura, El Camino and into Midtown. In addition, currently South Palo Alto has no protected bike/pedestrian paths. She hoped this Group could put a place holder for this underpass or overpass to plan for it in the future.

Jeff has lived in Ventura for many years and knows this neighborhood very well. He has read through the Staff Report and is disappointed to see some major problems. There have been traffic problems in Ventura for many years and he found no mention in the report about what the traffic impacts would be with this new development. It would have been better if the traffic study had been done at the beginning to explain how much more traffic the area could tolerate. Then plans could be developed based on those guidelines. Regarding affordable housing, the goals given for affordable housing, one of the top City priorities, is to produce housing for those at the 80 percent and under level of earnings. There is nothing in the Staff's proposal that would achieve that. It would have been better to start with looking at how to meet those goals and then see what could be done.

#### Discussion Items:

##### Staff Introduction of Draft Alternative One

Clare Campbell, Development Services Permit Manager, started the Staff Presentation. She informed the purpose of this meeting is to have the Working Group review the three draft plan alternatives that have been worked on since the last meeting, and to provide feedback to Staff for further consideration. In the last few months, the City has conducted six public meetings with the Working Group Member since May. In June and July there were four subcommittee meetings that were focused on key issues. The idea was to try to find some common understanding and ground to move forward. In August there was a Working Group Meeting that focused on transportation and circulation along with affordable housing goals. In preparation for this meeting, Staff looked through all the notes from those Working Group Meetings and they consolidated and reviewed those to determine what the common themes were to help develop this evening's alternatives. In the Staff Report some policy strategies are outlined for consideration. These included up zoning, anti-displacement measures, parking management and placemaking.

Jean Eisberg, Owner and Operator of Lexington Planning continued the presentation, how each alternative estimates the different number of jobs or housing units. The potential opportunity sites were looked at, the tier 1 sites being the highest potential sites, where an owner has

either expressed interest in development or the parcels are greater than 10,000 square feet which are generally more feasible sites for development, and contiguously owned parcels that add up to more than 10,000 square feet. The first map showed those sites. The tier 2 sites were a little less feasible in terms of redevelopment, the parcel sizes were a little less than 10,000 square feet or multiple tenants requiring relocation and contiguously owned parcels that would allow for consolidation to a site greater than 10,000. Sites excluded were if a parcel had redeveloped in the last ten years, single-family homes, commercial condominiums, creek easement areas and parcels with approved or in-progress applications. The second map showed these parcels. The tier 3 sites were the lowest potential sites for redevelopment, parcel sizes less than 10,000 square feet or where site acquisition or lot consolidation would be required to get to 10,000 square feet. She moved to how the buildout was calculated with another table. In the Staff Report, a maximum amount of buildout was estimated, then a more realistic amount of buildout. The realistic capacity just used the tier 1 sites in general, and did not include the major large sites, the 340 Portage, 396 Page Mill, 440 Portage and also did not include the tier 2 and tier 3 sites that were less easy to develop. Going through the three alternatives, assumptions were made with increasing building height and decreasing the unit size. As a result, higher density is seen in alternative 2 and then higher density in alternative 3 in terms of the overall unit yield and the overall amount of jobs generated.

Ms. Tanner took over the presentation. She explained to get from the opportunity sites, they took all the feedback from the summer and all the items from the Working Group Members. That information was sorted into the three alternatives to try to understand what things would look like under scenarios and that is in the packet. Some things they did across all alternatives were relocating some of the taller densities on El Camino and along Page Mill. That is a location with busier streets, larger scale of streets and larger scale of buildings would not overwhelm the pedestrian environment and would better match the scale of that street. They also proposed a height and density bonus for 100 percent below market rate or 100 percent workforce housing on parcels fronting on Page Mill or El Camino. That would not guarantee the housing would be affordable, it does encourage developers to build either market-rate housing or more affordable workforce housing. Workforce housing could be deed restricted and, in this case, would be to get the bonus. This would really be affordable to families within the 120 to 150 percent AMI on those who aren't reached by the traditional affordable housing and would be a way to provide a bit of higher height, but only for those projects that meet the goals the City as set out. In some areas, it has been proposed to remove the current 35-foot height limit for mixed-use development when it is within 150 feet of residential use. Instead, landscape setbacks were proposed along the property lines to create the buffer space between the single-

family home area and a higher density housing development. There are different open space schemes throughout the proposals. These were built in to think about how to build more parks and recreational areas with more development in the plan area. All of this information was shown on slides. The transportation improvements were similar for all the alternatives. These were not shown in the alternatives, but these are on a separate layer. On Park Boulevard the proposal is to remove the street parking in order to provide a better bike and pedestrian environment, reduce the number of curb cuts overall and widen the bike lane there. It was noted at that intersection improvements would be needed particularly for better infrastructure for bikers. There would be no street parking on the north side of Olive Avenue to enhance the pedestrian and biking environment. There would be consideration of a one-way south-bound at Ash Street and some pedestrian and bike signaling and crosswalks at Page Mill. This would need approval by the County. If that is not possible, look at what else could be done to help facilitate pedestrian crossing at Ash Street. Some traffic-calming interventions are looked at for the next intersection, such as some speed bumps approaching the stop sign or a raised intersection or traffic circle. The proposals for the Cloudera parcel are new improved bike and pedestrian connections. There have been a number of interventions studied for this corner, trying to make sure there is good pedestrian and bike infrastructure and discouraging vehicles from using these streets to cut through by using slower speeds. The proposal for Acacia is to see it become a proper street with sidewalks so bikes and pedestrians can use it safely. A curb cut from Acadia onto Park Boulevard is discouraged to reduce the number of vehicular access points on Park to enhance it as a bike and pedestrian thoroughfare. The proposal encouraged some connections across the site for bikes and pedestrians. There is a bike and pedestrian path along the creek and a safe crossing to and from the park. There is a note that at El Camino Real, under the design guidelines currently in place, there is a 12-foot sidewalk width and a 12-foot setback of buildings.

Alternative one, as Ms. Tanner explained tried to think about much of the feedback on how to enhance the site with maintaining the Cannery Building. The proposal for the Cannery Building at 340 Portage is to retain the building and possibly used for office and retail or adaptively reused into multi-family housing. There is also a proposal to allow town homes on the surface parking lot up to 35 feet in height. Looking at the Cloudera site, allow that current office building to remain in its existing use and to have town homes in the parking lot area. She noted redevelopment may not be likely under that condition based on information from the property owner but that may change in the future. Some landscaping would be retained and added. The multi-family, retail mixed-use corridor is shown on the outer edge and the landscape buffer between the single-family home areas and these buildings. There is a mixed-use district of

office and commercial currently there that could remain until no longer used, then could convert to residential with ground-floor retail if desired. There is a proposed 35-foot height limit there to ensure there is no net loss in density. No changes are proposed for the R1 zone properties on Pepper and the block between Pepper and Olive. R2 zoning would be allowed for the single-family homes along Olive. The parking garage and surface parking lot would remain on the 340 Portage site. The proposal for the creek is a walking path along it within the creek easement and ways to raise funds to do some restoration will be looked at. On the Miro Board are the details that were provided in the Staff Report regarding the development potential of the alternatives. The 1.2 acres may seem low, but it is assumed there would be additional open space on site at some of the orange areas. At the Park and Portage intersection it was proposed to remove one of the driveways and this stretch of Portage would be very bike and pedestrian friendly with cars discouraged.

### Feedback on Transportation Improvements

Waldek Kaczmarzski's comments were directed at the transportation improvements. He thought a significant amount of time was spent on Park Boulevard, that this was not just a bike connection but also a very nice pedestrian connection of the whole Ventura neighborhood towards Caltrain and California Avenue. He did not see that indicated clearly enough. There is a green buffer, but that doesn't necessarily mean a large pedestrian connection that would allow larger groups of people along there. He also did not think enough attention was given to the traffic improvements and traffic through the neighborhood.

Ms. Tanner reminded everyone traffic studies were not done and there would not be any at this point in the planning process.

Tim Steele appreciated the diversity in the three alternatives. Alternative 1 particularly called out that the existing Cannery Building at 340 Portage would remain as it is for now and potentially be repurposed at some point. The idea of moving towards closing down the curb cut onto Park on that side of the building over time, is an unrealistic expectation in either the existing building or repurposing of the building with other uses. The building has had as many as seven tenants. It is not a street going through that parking lot today, it is a parking lot. To expect someone that has frontage off this existing building onto Park not to use their frontage and to have to go back out through the parking lot is not practical or safe while using the building as currently configured.

Terry Holzmer commented that not having a traffic analysis and understanding of the traffic impacts is frustrating, especially in the Ventura neighborhood and those living on Olive and Pepper is shameful. One of the Goals of City Council is to mitigate traffic concerns.

Angela Dellaporta agreed with Mr. Kaczmariski about focusing on pedestrians and bikes. A wide sidewalk on the west side would be ideal and that needs to be included. She also noted, there are streets. Olive, Portage and Lambert that would be used as cut throughs to Park Boulevard, encouraging more traffic on Park. Some needed to be done to reduce traffic not increase traffic on Park. One thing would be to encourage the car traffic to go on Acacia and not on Portage, possibly by putting a traffic light at Acacia and El Camino.

Ms. Tanner responded it is unlikely there would be a traffic light at Acacia so close to a light at Portage. El Camino is a State Road so there is limited ability to impact the traffic flow.

Alex Lew had no comments on transportation.

Doria Summa agreed with Mr. Holzmer that it is hard to make recommendations without understanding the traffic impacts. Also, anything done here will impact one of the worst intersections in Palo Alto, which is Page Mill and El Camino. She also agreed that this Group should do as much as possible to improve Park Boulevard for pedestrians and bikes, removing cars and do something to improve the clover leaf getting on and off Page Mill. Care needed to be taken with one-way streets. A 12-foot sidewalk would not all be 12 feet because it would be interrupted by tree planters and she asked what the functional width would be.

Gail Price asked if any of the improvements already identified in the Bike and Pedestrian Plan?

Ms. Star-Lack replied the Park Boulevard was identified as a bicycle boulevard. She did not know if any improvements were identified in this stretch and did not think anything was done internally to the NVCAP site.

Ms. Price noted this study area has a five to twenty-five-year development potential. She inquired if, in the plan itself, will there be a section that addressed emerging trends in transportation and mobility, assumptions about car usage, parking management, since the site is so close to transit?

Ms. Tanner responded that was something that could be looked at. Right now, the focus has been on bikes and pedestrians and potentially reducing car parking standards. The Office of Transportation is working on enhancing the transportation demand management. She did not know if there would be a discussion about shuttle service and potential improvements.

Ms. Star-Lack replied they are very early in the TDM Ordinance. She was sure it would reference shuttles.

Heather Rosen had nothing to add.

Keith Reckdahl liked the one-way on Ash, but recommended outreach to the neighbors. Regarding Park traffic, there are always parked cars there. It is not just the cars turning through the curb cuts, but also the volume and speed. This is a bike boulevard and the car traffic on it should be treated as if it is a bike boulevard and currently it's not.

Kirsten Flynn heard that the connection between Acacia and Portage near El Camino might allow cars, and that is essential because the light can't be move on El Camino Real. She liked the idea of raised crosswalks because that is a pedestrian zone. She especially liked the idea of a future Alma/Loma Verde underpass connection.

Yunan Song had nothing to add because there is no data available on the traffic.

Mr. Reckdahl liked the Loma Verde crossing. Connections to Gunn and through the Stanford Research Park would also be good.

Ms. Star-Lack remembered that the bike plan does mention the overcrossing or undercrossing of the rail. Getting an east-west connection to the areas Mr. Reckdahl she believed was explicitly talked about in the bike plan.

#### NVCAP feedback on Alternate One

Mr. Waldek thought the requirement that office buildings cannot be redeveloped undermines this scheme. If the idea is to lessen the square footage of office space the worst possible way is to say it cannot be redeveloped. He would like some other language used to achieve the goal of limiting office square footage.

Mr. Steele had no comments.

Mr. Holzmer noted this alternative retained the Cannery Building which he supports. He has some concerns along El Camino and Page Mill. For the residents of the Pepper and Olive area there should be extremely tall buildings next to an R1 neighborhood. He is concerned about the effects of shadows and traffic, but also this would impact the residents. Whenever an area is up zoned, people are displaced and that should not ever be a goal. Sometimes that is forgotten in this process. He also noted a creek report was never received.

Ms. Tanner responded there are some provisions of SB330 which do require some protections for current tenants if redevelopment of a property they are renting occurs, relocation and rights of return to mitigate displacement concerns.

Ms. Dellaporta inquired about how the comments made today will be used and how will comments about placemaking and things that don't fit into the three alternatives?

Ms. Tanner indicated placemaking will apply to any of the three. An online survey will be available to provide more detailed comments. Placemaking would be overarching on any of the alternatives that could fit as a design standard. From here this goes to one alternative going to the Planning and Transportation Commission recommending a preferred alternative to Council, then Council selecting a preferred alternative that will have more study and refinement.

Ms. Dellaporta asked if the alternatives would be changed based on the comments received today?

Ms. Tanner responded if there was something that had an overwhelming consensus a change could be made.

Ms. Dellaporta clarified that if there were any comments members agreed with, that should be made clear to get a sense of if there is a consensus. She agreed with Mr. Holzmer that the tall buildings along El Camino and Page Mill Road are concerning. Stepping back from single-family homes might be a solution. Also worrisome for her is that there are only 1.2 acres of park space planned, when for that number of new residents, it should be 4.8 acres. The Council needs to find the money to live up to their Comp Plan which would be 4.8 acres.



Mr. Lew responded in Alternative One it seemed like it was down zoning for the mixed-district area. Those are also the tier 1 more likely candidate for development and that didn't make sense to him. Regarding the south side of Olive, that is shown as duplexes, but looking at the new State and local codes regarding ADU's, it would be more advantageous as R1 regarding setbacks and the 800 square feet of bonus floor area. Thirdly, along the creek at the 340 Portage site, two different zoned districts are shown. He understood that was one parcel.

Ms. Tanner indicated on her map there were separate parcels on the creek.

Ms. Summa agreed with Mr. Lew, going to R2 from what is R1 did not make sense. The Fry's site extends beyond the creek. Retention of the historic resource, which is the second smaller building is not mentioned. She questioned having very tall buildings along Page Mill and El Camino because the transition zone is really needed. On page 4 of the Staff Report, bullets 2 and 3 directly contradict each other about the retention of the transition zone. Housing in this area is underutilized in general by not using the train side of Park Boulevard and continuing the current pattern starting with the Hohback Building and rezoning that. Higher buildings could go there and there would be no objections to multi-family housing. Workforce housing is not compatible in any sense to below market rate housing. She had a question about the density for the plan area on page 26. She thought aspirational density meant population density.

Ms. Summa suggested asking that question later.

Ms. Price asked if there would be a clarification regarding the easements and restrictions regarding development close to the creek in the session on Matadero Creek?

Ms. Tanner replied there is an easement.

Ms. Price commented that she was not in favor of this option. The restriction on the office space and small retail issues limit the possibilities for this area. This is a subregional area that is close to transit, commercial and retail. It is a site that needs a variety of housing for different income groups. This alternative seems to be very far from that goal. This alternative would not begin to address the RHNA numbers that will be assigned to Palo Alto. It is not the most valuable plan for this area.

Ms. Rosen had no comments.

Mr. Reckdahl agreed if people are added, parks need to be added. Second, he agreed that R1 with ADU is probably a better answer for Olive. He agreed with Mr. Lew about more housing in the orange areas, particularly there should be a sunset date for redeveloping the mixed district to 100 percent housing. Fourth, he is not in favor of tall buildings next to Olive and Pepper. Near Portage is fine. Workforce housing is not a replacement for BMR.

Ms. Flynn's opinion that having no parks in this area is a bit punitive. This plan does offer some benefit to the property owners, some development potential. She felt more work was needed to make this into an option that could get built and would meet some of the City's needs. This could include micro parks at Portage and Park and at Olive and Park and a play-sized park on the Cloudera site. To make that happen, more density could be allowed on the northwest side of the lot at Ash and Portage, the lot between Portage and Acacia and the northwest side of the lot at Ash and Page Mill. She also felt the lots around El Camino Real and Portage near Park are better locations for retail than the lots adjoining Portage between Acadia and Lambert.

Ms. Song liked the idea of keeping the Cannery Building. More parks are needed. She felt the orange and red colored areas should be reversed. The very high buildings should not be put next to Pepper and Olive and the buildings are for residential mixed use. The orange areas are inside some blocks and these are listed as mixed-use office or commercial. She feels these two are opposite.

Ms. Tanner noted some Members said they agreed with what other Members said and that is helpful. These comments can be posted and if there is a comment someone else supported, this could be indicated.

#### Staff Introduction of Draft Alternative Two

Ms. Tanner explained Alternative Two. There were some similarities to Alternative One. She pointed these out on the slides, the residential/retail mixed-use corridor along Page Mill and El Camino Real. She thought some Members would like to see the area near the single-family home zones with a shorter height to protect the buffer zone currently in place. At the Cloudera parcel there is a new office building which retains the current floor area of the existing office building. There would be more retail at that corner because it is more adjacent to the Caltrain corridor. There would be bike and pedestrian paths through. There are residential buildings with the 70-foot bonus for the workforce or the affordable housing, then stepping down to 40, then 30 feet allowing four-plexes on the Olive Street corridor then allowing duplexes where

there is R1. There is a mixed-use district with a 50-foot height limit, then a 40-foot limit more proximate to the R1 height limits. The existing office can remain or be rebuilt into a new building, but there is no increase in office space. The 340 Portage Cannery site is reimagined into an office building, then residential buildings with ground-floor retail and commercial space. The Ash office building is retained in all of the alternatives.

Ms. Star-Lack clarified on the four-plexes, the idea is that on Olive where there is contiguous ownership, there could be consolidation of lots.

## NVCAP Feedback on Alternative Two

Ms. Song preferred this alternative because it had more open space, but had the same concerns as with Alternative One, the high density building close to the residents along El Camino and Page Mill. For the building on the Cloudera site, she would rather keep one building along Page Mill and make the green space bigger.

Ms. Flynn liked this plan quite a lot. If the monitor roof, if retained on the existing new building will create a powerful sense of place, especially combined with the park. She could accept this if the bulk of the Monitor building is retained for this purpose. This plan is still under parked with open space but didn't feel so. All the open space is very much needed. Step down on the buildings near 395 should also step down towards Ash as it moves in that direction. This option should also have woonerf between Portage and Acacia in the cut-through west of the new office building.

Mr. Reckdahl did not like the tall buildings. A stepdown is needed at Olive and Pepper. He agreed with Ms. Flynn about the stepdown on the yellow buildings as they go towards Ash. There are still not enough parks. The new office should be resident-serving offices, not tech offices. All the offices should have a sunset time. In the long-term this should all be residential.

Ms. Rosen liked the main street on Portage. He agreed the blue office space in the center feels odd given all the residential space around it. She didn't mind the high rises on El Camino but agree the L-shaped on could be better placed somewhere else. It would be ideal to have more park space.

Ms. Price remarked the issue of the location of the tall buildings, the report says near El Camino and Page Mill. She agreed but believed there were exceptions depending on the overall site

plan of the NVCAP area. Her concern is that it limits the office and retail. Development is a source of funds for the Affordable Housing Fund, unless dedicated housing funding is created in some other way. The more opportunities are compressed opportunities, that also makes it very hard to do affordable housing. The community benefits from this alternative are a little better than Alternative One. She questioned the economic feasibility and the balance between the intensity of the uses. The housing shortage is critical and getting worse.

Ms. Summa had some of the same problems with this alternative as with Alternative One. A much better place for tall housing is in the back of the project along Park. She agreed with retention of transitional heights between low-density residential uses and commercial uses. She questioned the areas along Olive and Pepper called landscape setbacks which are shown as cutting into the single-family home residential lots. She pointed out in any scenario, the City will have to acquire land, unless land is given to build parks, so the potential for parks is about the same across the plans. The purpose of this project is to create a residential neighborhood or restore this to that pattern and adding office is going backwards.

Mr. Lew questioned the height bonus for 100 percent affordable or workforce housing. He understood other cities allowed the height increases for projects that only had 15 to 20 percent affordable inclusionary housing and he requested more information about the 100 percent requirement.

Ms. Tanner explained this was building on the HIP Program and continue to enhance that. If the affordable housing developer did purchase that, they would be able to have more affordable housing on that site. This also looked at some information regarding some workforce housing developers who were able to make progress in developing even in the Bay Area.

Mr. Lew also commented he thought a lot of 100 percent affordable projects usually tried to avoid having ground-floor retail and they often could not afford to do underground parking.

Ms. Dellaporta also like the retail on Portage and the idea of Portage as something of a main street but only if it is a woonerf, if it is rarely used for cars. She also is concerned about the lack of park space and with the number of residents there should be 11.3 acres if the Comp Plan is followed. She liked the idea of, just to the east and the south of the dormitory, if the City Council could figure out how to meet their Comp Plan by buying those two parcels for parkland.

Mr. Holzmer liked the additional park space in this plan and agreed a better way of adding more parkland was needed. He was concerned about some of the buffer areas around Olive and Pepper but that was explained. Another concern was the additional office space, which is not needed in this area. The demolition of the Cannery Building has not been discussed in any of the meetings, how that would be conducted and no feasibility studies have been presented.

Mr. Steele remarked this alternative somewhat suggestive of making a choice of parkland over affordable housing by suggesting the Sobrato partials at 340 Portage be redeveloped and contributing about one-third of that property for park for the lower amount of residential units that the existing building would be removed to build. He was not sure that was an obtainable combination on a single developer's ownership.

Mr. Kaczmariski's comments about this alternative were along the lines of Mr. Steele's. He did not like the requirement for parking along the R1. That should be left to the people who will design this in the future. Because this is a higher development scheme, certain compromises should be allowed.

#### Staff Introduction of Draft Alternative Three

Ms. Tanner presented Alternative Three which is somewhat similar to Alternative Two. The biggest difference is allowing additional office space. The Cloudera Building is a little bigger, the housing buildings are a little smaller. That is trying to incentivize development to occur by allowing those owners and operators of work places to have more work space and office space to get the housing built. The border is the same on El Camino Real. Duplexes are allowed along Olive and Pepper and some six-plexes. The mixed office district remains with the same heights, but more office space is allowed in those buildings with housing. At the 340 Portage site there is an office building with expanded office space. The green circles are meant to be little circle plazas to enhance the gathering space along the street. There is parkland along the creek.

#### NVCAP Feedback on Alternative Three.

Ms. Summa asked if the number of units was calculated that could be achieved on the train side of Park Boulevard?

Ms. Eisberg answered some of those on the east side of Park Boulevard showed up in the tier 1 sites, so hypothetically they were included in the realistic development potential in Alternatives Two and Three. In Alternative One it was assumed that would stay as office.

Ms. Summa remarked to the point of sunsetting some of the uses that would not be wanted, and knowing that is where there could be extended heights that would not negatively impact people, that area is not taken seriously enough for rezoning.

Ms. Summa reiterated that is a place where higher buildings would not have negative impacts on existing and future residents. She felt the data provided made a lot of assumptions. Council just received a new study about how to get more housing. What pencils out is small units. There hasn't been a discussion about dwelling units per acre, understanding that the dwelling units inside the buildings are not as important as long as the impacts of the building are mitigated. There is also the assumption about office. There is a lot of financial unpredictability and other reasons people want to build or not build. What is needed is concentrating on making a place where new residents will want to live and existing residents don't feel their neighborhood was sacrificed.

Ms. Price liked this alternative, but it is still a little modest, because it continues to go back to the issue of the 50-foot height limit with a few exceptions with density bonuses. More creativity is needed with the opportunities here. To look at FAR and transition as they do in Mountain View to address this issue, this has greater community benefits, it's economically more feasible, it tries to develop the area in a way that provides vitality and sustainability and would work for residents nearby, commuters and it is near transit. The residential unit yield is not where it should be.

Mr. Holzmer did not like this alternative. It adds more offices to the area which he is not in favor of. This project is trying to create housing, but for those who need it the most, below market rate. That is where this should be focused and he would like to see more emphasis on that.

XCAP Member Flynn liked the mini-plaza parks. There are single family residences next to Griffin Music. No more offices. This option is unacceptable because of the data on Table 2 on page 7 of the packet. It could be acceptable with mitigation efforts that would acknowledge that in burdening one neighborhood of Palo Alto, there is also a need to provide benefits to present and future inhabitants. It could be accomplished through an assessment district.

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Mr. Kaczmariski emphasized the focus should be on finding differences rather than trying to make all the alternatives the same. This is supposed to be a high-density scheme. This should maximize the density of the whole site so he did not see the point of leaving the middle of the site undeveloped along Olive Avenue.

Ms. Song felt Alternative Three was not much different than Two. It has more buildings but less parkland. To increase density, the parks could stay, but increase the height of some of the buildings. She felt all three alternatives were based on the same scheme.

Mr. Lew asked about the proposed six-plex building for Olive Avenue. It seemed between the accessibility requirements and Palo Alto's elevator requirement, that it might be very expensive. Regarding the mixed district and the 50-foot height limit and the note about the extra height bonus, in other cities, the total is 55 feet high when there is ground-floor retail. If you try to do the retail within 50 feet, the ceiling heights are too low.

Mr. Steele noted the rental apartment rates for market rate units are down 15 to 18 percent and vacancies have been dropping. The context of rental apartments paying for extra other things such as affordable units within that project or substantial parkland on the same parcel will be difficult for a long time. It will be a while for the economics return, whereas the lower density ownership kinds of opportunities to provide for enough returns to build them and provide for substantial affordable units within that.

Mr. Reckdahl agreed with several Group Members especially no more offices. This is a residential area. More parks are needed. The area near the railroad is a good place to put height. Below market rate housing is needed and none of the options really had any. The planning seems to be a lot of hope. There has been no traffic study and there is hope the traffic will work out, hope the parking issues will work out.

Ms. Rosen agreed with Ms. Song with this alternative but echoed what others said about no additional office space and the comments about BMR and more parks.

Ms. Dellaporta agreed that affordable housing is necessary, and make sure the Council hears about the many difference ways to achieve that. There is too much office space in this alternative and agreed that near the railroad is a good place for height. She agreed much more park space is needed for the density.

## Preference for alternatives

Mr. Kaczmariski preferred Alternative Two. It balances the need for development the best. He liked having three alternatives but disagreed that all the parameters needed to be the same. The consequences of each level of development need to be understood. More density would allow for more parks, but buildings covering more territory would mean less park space.

Mr. Lew did not have a preferred alternative. He had many questions about all three alternatives and how viable they are. He watched the recent Council hearing on the feasibility of different housing types and the affordability requirements. His goal would be to try to get as many housing units in as possible as well as maximizing the park space.

Ms. Dellaporta preferred Alternative Two.

Ms. Summa thought there were too many questions about each alternative, but there are good aspects to all of them.

Ms. Price liked Alternative Three. He had the most promise and provided the best opportunity. She felt the number housing units should be higher, in the range of 2300 to 3200. This is the five to twenty-five-year plan, so the planning effort should be much bolder.

Ms. Rosen preferred Alternative Two.

Mr. Reckdahl noted without modification he did not like any of the alternatives. With requested modifications such as more park space and more step downs, Alternative Two was the best starting spot.

Ms. Flynn preferred Alternative Two with a strong advocacy for retaining the historic placemaking elements.

Mr. Holzmer preferred Alternative One.

Mr. Steele leaned towards Alternative One because as a developer he thinks of things in practicalities and the potential of actually getting built. It could be a combination of all three



alternatives, reorientating different pieces as developed out, but today his preference would be Alternative One.

Ms. Song responded without modifications her preference would be Alternative One.

Ms. Tanner reported five Members preferred Alternative Two, three preferred Alternative One, One preferred Alternative Three and two had no preference.

Mr. Kaczmarski remarked Alternative One respected the historical aspect of the site and tried to keep very little contrast of the buildings along El Camino and the buildings behind. He felt this alternative should be low-balled and allow for more development. He would like to change the parking between the Fry's Building and the buildings on Olive. He would like to give the developers more flexibility on how they want to develop this whole area. Regarding the podium parking along El Camino, he felt that would be a mistake because El Camino should have the presence for retail at ground level.

Ms. Flynn felt there was some value to seeing some of the history of a city and that creates place. Seeing the railroad tracks and the parking area would allow vision of the history of the railroad tracks and that is of value to her. Keeping the surface parking lot would allow retaining the look of the original railroad tracks.

Mr. Kaczmarski noted that was already there in Alternative One.

Ms. Flynn remarked she liked Alternative Two because it adds a lot of density and the ability to add many more housing units than Alternative One, but still allows a hybrid.

Ms. Dellaporta agreed with Ms. Flynn about placemaking, but she was not as concerned about the railroad spur as the Monitor roofs. She liked the description of these in the alternatives and preferred keeping them the same as they currently are especially looking near Ash and Lambert. The Monitor roofs more than the buildings give that sense of place in history.

Mr. Kaczmarski agreed with that.

Ms. Flynn liked the way the parks lined up in a rhythm in all the alternatives.

Mr. Kaczmarski also agreed with that.

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Ms. Dellaporta encouraged more park space with more residents.

Ms. Flynn emphasized she really wanted affordable housing and workforce housing but the City needs to recognize this is done for the City and mitigation needs to be done in terms of traffic, adequate parkland, minimizing parking overflow.

Ms. Dellaporta was concerned about putting park space a quarter mile from the NVCAP rather than in that area.

Ms. Flynn remarked the Group realized there are market pressures that might make this unfeasible, but the Group would strongly prefer the parkland is within the NVCAP study area or possibly a quarter mile safe walkable distance by a child.

Ms. Dellaporta responded across Bryant would be fine, but not the railroad, El Camino or Page Mill. She did like the idea of ADUs and four-plexes on Olive.

Mr. Reckdahl agreed ADUs are good. With the small lots he thought it might be better to keep it at R1 and have ADUs? ADUs do give good low-income housing.

Ms. Tanner noted the rates are not known, but are thought of as more naturally affordable than a house.

Mr. Reckdahl felt ADUs should be considered, but they would not be required in R1. When talking about changing to a four-plex, consideration should be to keep it as R1 with ADUs which may be a better option for getting affordable housing than four-plexes.

Mr. Steele advised adding the word “encourage” ADUs and leave it R1.

Ms. Flynn asked if four-plexes are allowed, would combining lots be allowed to do this? That is actually doing less with an R1 with an ADU and a JADU.

Ms. Eisberg relied yes, if four lots are consolidated and which only had four units, that would not increase unit size. But with the 10,000 square foot lot, some attached town homes or some stacked flats could be done. Under State law there are some provisions to add an ADU or JADU to a multi-family building.

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Mr. Kaczmarski commented there are more pedestrian connections going from south to north which creates two sides.

Ms. Tanner advised if any sites were redeveloped, an easement for a bike and pedestrian connection could be looked at across a parcel in that area but that is not guaranteed.

Mr. Kaczmarski asked if a desire for that could be added.

Ms. Tanner replied it was noted to try to get some connection in that area.

Ms. Dellaporta asked what happened to the idea of cottage courts?

Ms. Tanner responded the four-plexes could be that in terms of the style and that was included in the first alternative.

Ms. Summa commented regarding Alternative Two on page five, it says “assume significant demolition of Cannery Building with retention of the Monitor roofs, either incorporated into a new building or relocated on site in a new feature”. She questioned how feasible that would be. She indicated SP330 does have some protections for displacement. It doesn’t guarantee that the people who are displaced would be able to afford the new housing so any up zoning will likely result in displacement.

Ms. Dellaporta agreed with Ms. Summa. She thought there was a section that described right of refusal and also that the rental rate would be protected under certain circumstances. She asked if that protection could be extended to all current renters there.

Mr. Kaczmarski inquired how this would affect all other renters in Palo Alto? Why are those few houses in this area are more protected than anyone else in Palo Alto.

Ms. Tanner advised that is a discussion beyond the scope of this meeting. Council and other decision makers could choose to extend it. She encouraged discussion of Alternative One and related a modification she clearly heard was perhaps on the El Camino, Page Mill corner near the single-family homes, to retain the setback height requirement of 35 feet within 150 feet of single-family homes, but perhaps have the higher height in the orange area because it is farther from the single-family homes.

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Ms. Dellaporta liked that idea.

Mr. Kaczmarski did not like that.

Mr. Holzmer emphasized that the building in the heart of the NVCAP area is significant for many reasons. This is probably the last cannery production facility that exists maybe in all of California but also, for the significance of Thomas Foon Chew, probably the first Chinese American intrapreneur in California, this site is worth preserving for all time. He felt it was critical that gets into the report and goes to Council. It is also important to never forget the residents, particularly those on Olive and Pepper. The buildings along El Camino and Page Mill will have a significant impact on those residents. He would like these residences retained as much as possible so they can remain affordable. Displacement of residents is a critical issue.

Ms. Song noted in Alternatives Two and Three some of the Cloudera area can be made into open space park.

Ms. Tanner related part of why that is not a park is because there is not that much development happening. If the office use is kept and the parking, that could not be a park.

Mr. Kaczmarski responded for Alternative One, he agreed with everything Mr. Holzmer said.

Ms. Summa agreed that the transitional heights are important to keep. There is just as much need for a park here because the whole Ventura Neighborhood already is under parked, so park land would most likely have to be bought. The west side of Park should have taller housing, should be rezoned and find a way to sunset some of the uses there not including the Hohbach Building or the new building. Based on the Staff Report and the parcel report, she feels what the baseline zoning could provide here hasn't been calculated properly.

Ms. Tanner asked if anyone else supported the suggestion to have redevelopment of the parcels near the train tracks?

Ms. Flynn agreed, as did Mr. Reckdahl, Ms. Dellaporta, Mr. Kaczmarski.

Ms. Summa also commented there are applications and prescreenings at 340 Portage, 2951 El Camino, 3300 El Camino. Also, several other locations have been called out on this map that

have permitted properties which are asterisks on the map. Unless the requests for these projects are compliant with what NVCAP is intending to do, perhaps there should be a freeze on new permitting until a preferred plan is in place.

Ms. Tanner indicated it is difficult to do moratoriums currently because these cannot be done that prohibit housing development.

Ms. Price asked what the underlying zoning was for the area on the east side of Park?

Ms. Tanner replied GM.

Ms. Price asked if it was then feasible to redevelop those?

Ms. Tanner just asked who might be in favor of it being included as redevelopment parcels in Alternative One.

Mr. Lew clarified under the GM zone, housing is not allowed.

Ms. Tanner explained it would be rezoned to allow housing.

Ms. Summa continued the assumption that parkland would have to be bought which is the same in all scenarios. She thought, based on the parcel report, that the potential for the existing zoning, especially in the mixed-use areas was under estimated in the Staff Report.

Ms. Tanner responded for the parkland, there was an assumption in the other alternatives of parkland dedication being required, for rental housing as well as ownership housing. It would be part of the development agreement, not that the City would purchase it from the developer.

Ms. Summa did not agree with the assumption that open space on private land that is not dedicated as parkland should be counted as park.

Ms. Tanner related that is why it would be required that the developer would dedicate it as parkland in the development.

Ms. Summa noted there was a comment in the other alternatives that the City would have to acquire land.

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Ms. Eisberg believed this was related to not meeting the goal of open space, so the suggestion was made that some park dedication would be required as part of the redevelopment of some of the larger sites. In order to get the 4 acres per 1,000 residents, other ways would be needed which could include the City acquiring parcels.

Ms. Tanner advised Staff will send out a general questionnaire with space to make comments and ask questions. This will be aimed at keeping to more towards things to be enhanced or changed about any of the alternatives, based on what the Working Group Members said. The miro board will be made available to Working Group Members also.

Ms. Price comments on Alternative Three were, she felt Alternative Three was a start in terms of an opportunity for a site that has all the assets, including the existing neighborhood where something could be developed that had retail, commercial, office, open space, compact development which as environmental and public health benefits. It could be designed in a way to have real community benefits that the immediate area would enjoy. There are parts of the economic feasibility that need more discussion. The area of Olive and Pepper, she felt, should have a range of different possibilities, and encourage occasionally consolidation of parcels, so there is a range of opportunity. She felt strongly that on many of these parcels the orientation of the buildings, the design elements, the setbacks all could make this an extremely creative and wholesome site. If this moves only to the middle of the road, not imagining a variation in heights that will create space for housing and community benefits nothing particularly creative or innovative will be done. These are legacy decisions affecting our colleagues, friends and grandchildren. The Group needs to be creative and visionary.

Mr. Kaczmariski encouraged one option that redeveloped the portion of Olive Avenue and the parking behind for both the parking and housing.

### Public Comment

Kelsie Bains noted she was at an earlier meeting of this group and she is disappointed with were the process has gone and today's discussion. This is an opportunity to do something transformative and create a plan that is inclusive and beautiful and she doesn't see that happening with this group. Of note, this is a majority renter neighborhood and she asked how many renters are in this Working Group. Renters feel the pain of the housing crisis. She stated she has no future in this region if things don't change. She was bothered by Ms. Summa's

comments about displacement and felt she was misinformed. She has lived in three neighborhoods in three years in Palo Alto and has been displaced twice with no up zoning. The status quo displaces people, the Comp Plan displaces people. More housing is needed in all income levels. She would like more enthusiasm about five to seven story buildings. They can be beautiful. She noted 87 percent of the residential land in the City is R1 and an ADU and a JADU on an R1 lot provides no new opportunities for ownership.

Rebecca Sanders did not care for the previous comments calling out Ms. Summa. Everyone is entitled to their opinion. She enjoyed the conversation and could hear all the different points of view. She thought the Group was working hard to getting to the greatest good for the greatest number of people, including those living in Ventura. She hopes when this goes to other commissions and boards, this Group will be treated with the respect deserves because of the hard work done to try to come to a consensus as much as possible.

Kevin Ma is a renter in the Ventura Neighborhood. He asked the Working Group focus on creating the most amount of housing for all levels of society. The housing crisis is still here, evictions have started as of October 5. Recently there was an article that R1 zoning does have racist roots. This is the best shot at trying to make some dent in the RHNA numbers. Progress also is needed on the environmental goals. Ventura is near the Cal Ave station and an effort should be made to reduce driving. If things don't improve, the only residents will be those who were born here and the means to stay here or the incredibly rich. Measure O tried to retain residents. The housing crisis and poverty are inextricably related in Palo Alto that has to be addressed.

#### Future Meetings and Agendas

Clare Campbell announced there is a meeting planned on November 5 with the Parks and Rec Commission, a joint meeting. That will be specifically focused on the creek and the Matadero Creek Renaturalization Document. That meeting will be available for the consultant to share how they have put everything together and what the analysis showed for that document. The next meeting would be a pre-Planning Commission Meeting with the Working Group the week of November 30, then targeting going to the Planning Commission on December 9 to present the alternatives that have been worked on. The idea is the recommendation from the Planning Commission will be forwarded to Council.

#### Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM

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