

Marinwood Village Collaborative

Meeting #6: February 23, 2009

Meeting Summary

The sixth meeting of the Marinwood Village Collaborative was held at the Marin Civic Center on February 23, 2009. In attendance were:

- ◆ Collaborative members, including Peter Brandon, Juliette Anthony, Cameron Case, Dan Carraher, Brian Crawford, Cyane Dandridge, Christine Gimmler, Dave Green, John Hammond, Andy Hyman, Steve Rule and Joe Runco. Marge Macris was present as an advisor.
- ◆ District 1 Supervisor Susan Adams and aide Rick Fraites
- ◆ County Staff Leelee Thomas from CDA, Eric Steger from DPW and David Rzepinski from Marin Transit
- ◆ Consultants David Early and Bruce Brubaker of Design, Community & Environment

1. Summary of Progress

Brian Crawford summarized recent developments concerning plans for the site. The County has been discussing with Peter Brandon the possibility of purchasing about 1 ½ acres of land at the south end of the Marinwood Village site to develop workforce housing as part of a mixed use infill project envisioned for the site by the Countywide Plan. This purchase would help Peter with the financing of the development of a market and other retail at the northern and central parts of the site. This plan would address most of the concerns voiced in the October 1 Community Workshop by reducing the overall residential density from the previous proposal, reducing the height of the housing from four stories to three stories and including more retail space on the northern part of the site. Specific questions regarding the site plan were to be addressed later in the meeting.

2. Site Cleanup

Peter Brandon gave an update of the environment cleanup on the site. Behind the retail building, the drycleaning chemical TCE is present in the soil and the soil will probably need to be removed. The area behind the building is fenced off to prevent exposure. At the previous gas station site, there was some dumping of paint thinner that will involve cleanup of the soil. The overall site cleanup will cost around \$1.25 million and will take 12-18 months after plans are approved and work begins. Peter said the owner of the property is responsible for the cleanup. A question was asked about the gasoline additive MTBE at the gas station site and Peter said that they did not find evidence of MTBE.

3. Economic Conditions

Peter said that Trammell Crow Company has closed the San Francisco office and that the financing of development projects has entirely dried up. Despite this, Peter is interested in continuing the effort to develop the site and he is seeking investors and a market operator.

Peter made it clear that without support from the Collaborative he will not be able to continue the project. A key part of making the project work is the idea of selling part of the site to the County as Brian explained. The entire site including the retail and the housing would be entitled as a single master plan. The site is currently zoned for commercial uses, however, the Countywide Plan designates the site to require housing.

Peter was asked if the retail market will work by itself, without the housing. He said the retail rents alone will not support the total cost of the land. He also said that upgrades to the building and the site are critical to making the market successful.

4. Potential Housing at Southern Portion of Site

David Early and Bruce Brubaker presented a conceptual plan for housing at the southern part of the site. In this plan, the buildings would be three stories and would be a combination of townhouses and apartments. This housing would likely be rental units with an on-site manager for the housing component. Some of the housing entries would face Marinwood Drive, making a pedestrian friendly edge. There would be a courtyard in the center for residents that could incorporate a play structure.

The northern part of the site would be developed as Peter had previously proposed, with new retail buildings surrounding plaza spaces and parking. There would be six units of employee housing incorporated into the plan for this area. The existing market building would be renovated into a new market. The existing retail building next to the market would also be renovated, and the site circulation, landscape and visibility from surroundings would be improved from existing.

After the presentation there was discussion about details and affordability issues, but in general the Collaborative thought that the project had greatly improved from earlier proposals and addressed the majority of concerns from members of the community. The Collaborative thought that if it was properly presented to the community, refinements could be made to gain acceptance and support for this version.

5. Next Steps.

This was the last meeting of the Collaborative under the Caltrans grant-funded process. The Collaborative discussed next steps and decided that they would like to support the latest version that Peter, the County and DC&E had come up with, and show it to the community. However, Peter prefers to identify a market operator and financing to move the project forward before the Collaborative begins to work with the community. Peter said he will do his best, and it will be about three months before he knows if he can continue and he will provide updates to the Collaborative during this timeframe.

Members of the Collaborative then discussed what to say to those outside the Collaborative asking for updates. After some discussion, this list of bullets was developed as talking points to use with the wider community:

- ◆ The Caltrans funded process is now complete
- ◆ There is still a project
- ◆ The grocery store is a priority
- ◆ The latest site plan shows less housing density, more retail, and three stories maximum
- ◆ There will be an interactive community process coming, with local coffee gatherings
- ◆ Affordable housing issues are being worked out
- ◆ Site cleanup assessment is complete and there will be a 12-18 month remediation effort starting before the end of 2009