

Marinwood Village Collaborative
Community Workshop #1: October 22, 2008
Meeting Summary

Community Workshop #1 of the Marinwood Village Planning Process was held at the Mary E. Silveira Elementary School Multipurpose Room on October 22, 2008. The Marinwood Village Planning Process is a grant-funded collaborative process intended to bring together the developer of the site, nearby residents and other community stakeholders to provide direction for development of the underutilized Marinwood Plaza site.

This workshop was advertised on the County Website, by email distribution and by a newsletter notification mailed to approximately 2500 residents of the Marinwood area. This workshop was well attended: 108 people entered their name on the sign-in sheets.

1. Welcome and Background. The workshop began with a welcome from District One Supervisor Susan Adams, who thanked participants for attending on a week night, described briefly the history of the project, and summarized her hopes for a collaborative effort. She also introduced the advisory committee for the planning process, the Marinwood Village Collaborative, and described the formation of the Collaborative from local residents, previous Marinwood task force members, and community leaders. She also mentioned that the meeting would be recorded on video. One of the committee members, Cyane Dandridge, a collaborative member and original member of the Marinwood Task Force, spoke about the previous planning process which took place in 2006 and resulted in a Concept Plan and a set of guiding principles. Cyane talked about the interaction between the Collaborative and the developer of the site, Peter Brandon of Trammell Crow Company. She said there had been good communication and she is looking forward to continuing the process.

2. Concept Plan Presentation. After the introduction, a presentation was made to the workshop. First was the consultant, David Early of Design, Community and Environment, who was also involved in the 2006 Concept Plan. He talked about the agenda for the evening: developer Peter Brandon, of Trammell Crow Company would talk about the latest Concept Plan, Leelee Thomas from Marin County Community Development Agency would talk about housing, John Templeton of Parisi Associates would talk about transportation issues, and members of the Marinwood Village Collaborative would provide their viewpoints. Following this presentation the floor would be opened to the public for comments. (Note – the entire PowerPoint presentation is available on the County’s website):

http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/BS/Main/sups/sdistr1/Marinwood_village.cfm

Peter Brandon’s presentation covered his background in development and his interest in the Marinwood Community, having been a resident for 12 years. He talked about the overall goal of creating a place to shop, live and meet neighbors. He then talked about work to date on the project, including schedule (entitlement early 2011) and environmental cleanup. He described the large number of architects he has worked with and site plans created. He then gave a presentation of the latest concept plan, which includes 92

units of housing and 25, 100 square feet of retail. Included in the presentation was a digitally animated walkthrough of the project.

Leelee Thomas then gave a presentation of affordable housing issues, including who would qualify for moderate, low and very-low income housing, and she showed examples of recent Marin County affordable housing. She talked about the goals from the 2006 guiding principles and goals from the 2008 Countywide Plan. She also talked about options for including affordable housing at Marinwood including for-sale or rental housing, deed restrictions on for-sale housing and professional management of rental housing.

John Templeton then gave a brief presentation of the goal of the Parking and Circulation study that his firm is developing as part of the Planning Process. This study will look at existing conditions as well as conditions after a proposed project, for the site, Marinwood Avenue and Miller Creek Road. It will look at vehicular traffic, bicycle and pedestrian connections, connections to transit, and parking issues.

3. Collaborative Viewpoints. Members of the Marinwood Village Collaborative then gave their viewpoints of the project and the process. John Hammond began by talking about his experience on planning this site from very early on. He mentioned the desire and need of the community for a gathering place and store and made the point that the only way this could happen on this site is to include housing. He talked about this as an ongoing process that will welcome community feedback. Dan Carraher gave a presentation cautioning everyone to stay on top of this process. He believes that during the EIR process is too late to make any changes to the project. He also stressed the importance of community, County and developer “laying all cards on the table” in a forthright manner, and negotiating from knowledge. Steve Rule then introduced himself as president of the Lucas Valley Homeowners Association, and said that he and his constituent’s interests are in having a place to go shopping and gather in the neighborhood rather than down the freeway and he has been supportive and appreciative of the collaborative process.

3. Comments and Questions. After the presentation there was a public discussion facilitated by David Early and open to all that were interested in speaking. Following is a summary of the questions and comments that were raised and answers that were given.

Would it be possible to get story poles erected on site?
Difficult because of existing trees. Developer will review.

Concerns about % affordable – is it 20% or 50%?
Guiding Principles state that the project will be 20-50% affordable.

What are height restrictions currently on this site?
In this area, 30’ height is typical in residential areas. The current commercial zoning also has a 30 foot height limit. However, flexibility in the height standard can be considered through provisions in the County’s Development Code (zoning ordinance) and the Housing Overlay Designation policy of the Countywide Plan. The specific building heights and how they relate to the current County regulations would be evaluated through the development review process.

What is the height of this project?
Concept plan height shown at approximately 45’

Was opposed to the 2006 Concept Plan, but this footprint is appealing. Would support if 2 story.

Can this project be 100% commercial?

Housing has been an integral component of the concept plan from the start of the Marinwood Village planning process for many reasons including economic feasibility. Moreover, the Countywide Plan states that this site should accommodate housing to meet County-wide housing needs.

Concern over wind generator – it would be noisy and the site doesn't get enough wind.

What is the height of units vs. trees? It looks like units are 60' tall.

The tree and the unit are drawn at 45' in the section shown at the meeting.

Concern over the car lift.

Shown was a lift by Wobr Co., which can operate at any time. The bottom space would belong to the same owner as the top space. There would be one lift per apartment unit for a total of two spaces per unit. Lifts are proposed for apartments only, and not to serve the townhouse units or the retail space.

Does the lift add height?

The lifts require a total floor height of 15.5', as opposed to typical ground floor of 12'. This height is depicted in the project drawings.

What is the relationship between affordable units and cost? Size, cheaper materials?

Units would be subsidized by state and federal funds. They would likely not differ outside. Interiors would likely be less expensive materials. Affordable units may be smaller units, but all of the units would be an adequate size.

Concern about high turnover in affordable units - would like to see families move here and stay here.

Residents of affordable housing in Marin don't move often because it is difficult to find affordable housing. Waiting lists are long and turnover is low.

Concerned about height of project.

How would parking work for retail/visitors?

Visitors would use on-site and on-street parking. Parking for employees and loading for delivery trucks would be behind the stores.

Concern about recreation facilities – who will run bocce court and pool?

Current thinking is that bocce court may be open to public, but managed privately by the homeowners. Landscape will be managed privately – and the pool will be private for residents only.

The Casa Marinwood wall should be removed.

Question for Dan Carraher – what is missing here?

We have three more meetings and have a lot to discuss. Concerns stated tonight will need to be resolved.

Community is excited by retail, not housing. Just because this is a Caltrans funded process - 90-100 units should not be seen as a done deal.

Supports building of a physical scale model to compare Casa Marinwood and new project. Can't relate to computerized model.

An alternative plan should be presented at the next meeting. It should be a "horizontal retail, horizontal housing" plan.

Concern about street parking appearance - Marinwood should be attractive - it is embarrassing now. Make sure appearance is compatible with Casa Marinwood; style should be set by Casa Marinwood. Concern about height.

Before this meeting, felt the project was too big and we should rein it in. Now it is even bigger, even taller and far too dense. This deal between County and developers should get a no vote.

Instead of funding this planning project, Caltrans should spend the money on landscape and maintenance of the freeway interchange please.

Will gas station site be tested for hazardous materials?

Yes, that work is going on now.

Story poles could go at south of site where there are fewer trees.

Concern about affordable housing. Would units be low or very-low income?

Could be a range including very-low-, low- and moderate-income. The 20% required by the County's inclusionary ordinance must be affordable for low- and very-low income households. Any additional affordable housing might be negotiated to include moderate-, low- and very-income housing, although the Countywide Plan sets a goal to focus on very-low- and low-income housing.

Concerned about rental management.

There are more restrictions on rental of affordable units than on market rate units. Not-for-Profit housing developers have strict lease guidelines and excellent management programs, so management would not be haphazard in the way that it sometimes is for privately-owned single-family homes.

Represents safe routes to school and wants to make sure best practices are incorporated - safe and separate bike/pedestrian access for all - kids and elderly, not just fast bikers. Should consider connections to surroundings such as Oakview connection to Lucas Valley Road, YMCA, McGinnis Park.

The project proposes a Class I separated bike path similar to that desired by the speaker.

Support for Peter Brandon but concern that the project is being forced to include housing because of the mandate from the State. Concern that this will further urbanize 101 corridor.

Supervisor Susan Adams is working with ABAG to give more local input on difficult issues such as water and housing.

Will PowerPoint presentation be available?

Yes, it has been posted to Supervisor Adams' website at

http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/BS/Main/sups/sdistr1/Marinwood_village.cfm

Will it be possible to see and work with an interactive traffic model?

Our process will be to take existing traffic and add project traffic to it to see the results, so there is not that much need for an interactive model. We will be glad to work with the public during this process.

Who should we send email to?

Christine Gimmmler, Marin County Community Development Agency, at cgimmmler@co.marin.ca.us.

Likes look of project, but concerned about parking on Marinwood Ave. Doesn't want it to look like a parking lot. Also, concerned about traffic – getting in/out of Casa Marinwood. Affordable housing will bring lots of kids – they should have a play area. Even though number of units have gone down, there are still too many units. Add trees to the project.

Concerned about charm – the look is very austere. Add more landscape/hanging baskets. Doesn't want it to look like Terra Linda (shabby). Also, disappointed with the appearance of the Pt. Reyes affordable housing development.

You may be reacting to the 3D virtual model, which is not detailed. Three dimensional architectural renderings have not been presented yet.

Doesn't like design. There will be kids/car conflict in public spaces. Also, it's unacceptable that this whole project may not work due to current economics. Bad way to plan.

Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is an important concept. This affordable housing is for people who work here. It will be sustainable because it will reduce VMT, units should be smaller and more affordable.

Design – likes preservation of store, but concerned with landscaping. The proposed alleys would be unappealing. Should try to be more of a village with intensity in the middle. This could be done with a podium, and then pedestrian area would be separated.

The developer agrees that a podium would be superior from a design perspective. However, it would require a much higher density to be financially feasible, with a minimum of 130 units.

Concern from a retired Fire Lieutenant - how this will work if there are not aerial ladders in the local fire department.

The County, developer and DCE&E will review this issue and consider it in future planning.

A local teacher supports the affordable housing, but can we have more focused meetings on housing? There is not enough information at this meeting. Perhaps there could be other meetings on Design and Traffic.

If you contact Leelee Thomas, she will be happy to attend a coffee or get-together to discuss affordable housing.

4. Next Steps and Adjournment. After this question, next steps were discussed. The Collaborative will meet to review comments from this meeting, and will hold a total of three more meetings. There will be another Community Workshop on January 7, 2009.