



MARIN COUNTY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
BRIAN C. CRAWFORD, DIRECTOR

**STAFF REPORT
TO THE MARIN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

**GOLDEN GATE BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
STRAWBERRY COMMUNITY PLAN AMENDMENT (PA 11-2),
MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT (MP11-1), AND LAND DIVISION (SD11-2)**

Item:	1	Project ID:	2011-0030
Applicants:	HartMarin	Owners:	Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary
Property Addresses:	201 Seminary Drive, 300 Storer Drive, 133 Chapel Drive, 169 Chapel Drive, and 130 Mission Drive, Mill Valley	Assessor's Parcels:	043-261-25&-26, 043-401-05&-6, and 043-402-06
Hearing Date:	December 19, 2011	Planners:	Ben Berto and Scott Greeley

RECOMMENDATION: Conduct a workshop and provide direction to the applicants

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

Due to the legislative nature of the project approvals requested, staff is requesting that the Planning Commission provide preliminary feedback on key aspects of the project. Issues on which Commission feedback is requested are discussed at a broad project and policy level and do not focus on specific project merits since a final, in-depth analysis of the project and its environmental impacts has not occurred.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project sponsors, HartMarin, on behalf of the owners Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary (Seminary) are seeking a Community Plan Amendment, Master Plan Amendment, and Tentative Map (Land Division) approvals to subdivide existing remainder on-campus parcels to allow 93 net housing units (117 housing units total) on 37 new parcels (not all of the units would be on separate parcels). Of the net additional 93 housing units over existing, 72 new units are proposed as market-rate, for sale housing. A net increase of 21 student and faculty housing units is also proposed, with a total of 45 new student/faculty housing units (24 new units would replace 24 existing student units proposed for

demolition. All development is proposed on the approximately 94- to 100- (dry) acre Seminary site located in the west-central portion of the Strawberry peninsula. Areas proposed for development have been designated by the applicants as Seminary Point, Seminary Knoll, Seminary Vista East, Seminary Vista West, and include a number of other locations on the Seminary campus, further described as follows:

Seminary Point is in the southeastern portion of the campus and contains 20.1 acres. Three existing student dormitory buildings containing 24 units (8 units each) would be removed. Thirty eight market rate, for-sale units are proposed over approximately 10.5 acres of the total, on 36 parcels ranging in size from 0.15 acres to .45 acres, plus a 9.53 acre common area that includes a common pool. Chapel Drive would be upgraded and extended to accommodate the lower development area, and a new road named Chapel Loop would circumscribe the upper development area. Housing is proposed to include 23 single family detached residences: 19 would contain 2,400 square feet each, and 4 would contain 3,900 square feet each. Fifteen attached residences are also proposed, contained in five 3-unit structures of 5,430 square feet each. The residences would be comprised of 10 multi-level 1,750 square foot townhouses and five 1,930 square foot flats (two townhouses and one flat per triplex).

Seminary Knoll is in the northwestern corner of the campus and contains 9.32 acres. An existing maintenance building would be removed (and a new, larger maintenance structure developed elsewhere on the Seminary Campus). Access to this proposed development would consist of an upgraded, realigned, and extended Shuck Drive, with a new roundabout cul-de-sac called Amanda Lane extended to the knoll west of Shuck Drive. Thirty-five new townhouse units are proposed, consisting of 9 triplexes, one fourplex, and two duplexes. Of these residences, 16 are proposed as market rate, for-sale condominiums of 1,600 square feet each, 7 would be market rate, for-sale condominiums of 1,400 square feet each, and 12 would be faculty dwelling units containing 1,200 square feet each.

Seminary Vista is also in the southeastern portion of the campus and contains 4.72 total acres, divided into Seminary Vista East (SVE) on 0.76 acres fronting Mission Drive, and Seminary Vista West (SVW) on 3.96 acres fronting Chapel Drive. Eleven total new market-rate for-sale units are proposed on 7 new parcels. In SVE, three single-family detached, 3,900 square foot residences are proposed on three lots ranging in size from .23 to .29 acres. In SVW, two 3,900 square foot single-family detached residences are proposed on two lots of .84 and 1.46 acres, and 6 residences contained in two 5,430 gross square foot triplex buildings, consisting of two 1,750 square foot townhomes and one 1,930 square foot flat in each structure, on lots of .82 and .85 acres respectively.

In the northern portion of the campus, additions to the student village are proposed consisting of four new student apartment buildings containing a total of 33 living units. The four apartment buildings consist of: 8 units of 960 square feet each, 6 units of 960 square feet each, 10 units of 555 square feet each, and 9 units of 555 feet each.

A new 4,200 square foot maintenance building is proposed on the northerly side of the site. A 25,000 square foot chapel was previously approved in the 1984 Seminary Master Plan (MP) on top of the graded knoll at the highest elevation on the site, off Chapel Drive towards the southeasterly side of the property. The chapel is currently proposed at 16,000 square feet, a 9,000 square foot reduction in area.

Amendments to the Strawberry Community Plan (SCP) and the Seminary's Master Plan (MP) are required and proposed for this project. The campus is located in a planned zoning district and was the

subject of a Master Plan approval in 1984. Proposed project changes from approved uses and locations in the SCP and MP include the following:

- Types of residential development swapped on a one-for-one basis from campus student housing to for-sale residential for 73 of the proposed housing units;
- Locations of a majority of the housing from the central portion of the campus site to several locations on the campus periphery;
- Proposing development in areas that in the current SCP and MP have either been: designated for a lower level (number/intensity) of development; not specifically designated for development, or designated as non-development areas;
- Proposed multi-unit residential structures in areas identified for single-family detached;
- Reduction in size of the chapel from 25,000 square feet to 16,000 square feet; and
- Increases in traffic generation above levels previously anticipated.

A Tentative Map is required because the project is proposing to subdivide 37 new lots.

Affordable housing is proposed to be addressed through the 45 various very-low to above-moderate-income housing units proposed for Seminary students and faculty, a proposal which would require amendment of the County's affordable housing regulations prior to being considered consistent with those regulations.

The applicants have conducted a feasibility study for the site, and various elements of that study are included in the application materials. A two-mile public recreation trail that was previously part of this application is no longer included in the project.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Countywide Plan

Land Use Designation: MF2 (Multi-family, Residential, 1-4 units per acre), maximum density approximates Strawberry Community Plan and Zoning

Community Plan: Strawberry Community Plan, amended in 1982 to allow 90-100 additional student housing units, 24 single family detached residential, and 36 attached residential

Zoning: RMP-2.47 (Residential, Multiple, Planned, 2.47 units per acre)

Lot sizes: Assessor's Parcel 043-261-25 (~ 50 acres)
Assessor's Parcel 043-261-26 (~ 23.6 acres)
Assessor's Parcel 043-401-05 (~ 4.0 acres)
Assessor's Parcel 043-401-16 (~ 16.1 acres)
Assessor's Parcel 043-402-06 (~ 0.8 acres)

Adjacent Land Uses: Single-family residences, multiple-family residences, Richardson's Bay

Vegetation: Mixed forest (Monterey pine, California live oak, and non-native trees, grasslands, turf, shrubs)

Topography and Slope: Slopes on the site vary between 0% to >40%

Environmental Hazards: The site is within the Wildland and Urban Interface (WUI) fire hazard zone, and approximately 7 miles to 15 miles from the San Andreas, Hayward, and Rodgers Creek Fault Zones, and would be subject to strong ground shaking during a proximate seismic event.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The Environmental Coordinator determined that an Environmental Impact Report is required for this project pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act and Section 15064 of the CEQA Guidelines because there is substantial evidence that the project may have a significant effect on the environment insofar as it entails a Community Plan amendment, Master Plan amendment, and Land Division to change the intensity and location of residential and institutional development on the subject site.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

The Community Development Agency has provided public notice identifying the applicants, describing the project and its location, and giving the public hearing date in accord with California Government Code requirements. This notice has been mailed to all property owners within 300 feet of the subject property.

BACKGROUND

The Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary has been located on the Strawberry peninsula since they purchased the property in 1953. Original academic, administrative, and housing areas were clustered, and a well-designed landscape plan was developed for all areas of the site. The campus was first occupied in 1959.

The Strawberry Community Plan was originally adopted in 1973, and amended in 1982. According to members belonging to the former Strawberry Community Plan Review Citizens' Advisory Committee (Committee), the Strawberry community was experiencing considerable growth pressure in the early 1980's when the Strawberry Community Plan (SCP) was amended. At that time, development was proposed or considered for De Silva Island, Watertank Hill (later renamed the Strawberry Vista development), Strawberry Spit, and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. According to former group members and planning consultant Matt Guthrie, County staff recommended to the Board of Supervisors that a citizens committee be formed to amend the SCP to guide the Strawberry peninsula's future development. Members of the community, including representatives of groups such as the Strawberry Point Homeowners Association and Strawberry Recreation District, were formally made part of the Committee by then County Supervisor Al Aramburu. Planning Consultant Matt Guthrie was also hired to help facilitate the group through this process. Meetings were open to the public and the County assisted with noticing.

The Committee crafted the amendment to the SCP that includes policy and development recommendations for all the above-mentioned properties. The document was formally adopted as the current SCP plan by the PC and BOS. The SCP's Seminary provision are found in Section III, Development Guidelines, and includes an area diagram (see attachment 5).

The Seminary subsequently submitted for a Master Plan and Rezoning for their property, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors, along with a Negative Declaration pursuant to CEQA, in March 1984 (see attachment 6). The 1984 SCP Master Plan closely comports with the 1982 SCP's Seminary guidelines. The SCP Master Plan includes approvals for both Seminary and market-rate housing, and market-rate housing sites were subsequently sold off and developed under a variety of entitlement processes (such as the Seminary Cove condominiums). Prior to the current submittals, none of the

1984 Master Plan-level approvals for on-campus development, including 93 additional student/faculty housing and various campus structures (including a 25,000 square foot chapel/auditorium) have been pursued further.

The Seminary applied for and were approved in October, 2009 for an extension to their Master Plan approval (see attachment 7). The Master Plan approval is valid until January 1, 2013. The applicants have also submitted a Pre-Application, which fed into their current project applications originally submitted on January 28, 2011. The current project was found complete for merits purposes on September 12, 2011, but as of the date of this report has not been found complete for environmental review. Staff is continuing to process the applications pending complete submittal of environmental information.

PROJECT ISSUES

A number of substantive topical issues associated with the proposed project are discussed below. Following discussion of each issue, staff has included questions relating to that issue, upon which the Commission is requested to comment.

1. Strawberry Community Plan Amendments

The applicants are proposing a number of text amendments to the 1982 Strawberry Community Plan (SCP), highlighted in red in the applicants' SCP text (see attachment 1). The applicants include references to existing (already developed) housing in their proposed text changes. Since the current SCP's guidelines on the Seminary site are closely tracked by those in the Seminary's current Master Plan (MP), and the SCP is the key public policy document governing development of the site, staff will primarily refer below to the proposed SCP changes.

Key requested SCP amendments include:

- Allow one-for-one substitution of 72 units for-sale, market-rate housing units for 72 units of Seminary student housing. The SCP currently references the housing development potential for the Seminary property as 90-100 additional student housing units, a number that is further refined in the MP as 93 student and faculty housing units. The project's market-rate units are proposed as a combination of both attached and detached single-family residential housing as follows:
 - 34 single family detached
 - 38 single family attached
- Changes in the location of the 49 proposed new market-rate, for-sale housing units from the interior (central portions) of the Seminary property to various locations on the periphery of the Seminary property. The SCP currently reads:

In general, it is recommended that Seminary religious, educational buildings, and uses and student housing be located on the central portion of the property. The areas located at the periphery of the Seminary property would be appropriate for a limited number of single family detached residences which would not be part of the Seminary's student and faculty housing. Development in these areas should be planned and designed to blend into the existing community."

This is followed up in the SCP as: “24 single family detached residences located on the periphery of the Seminary.” The 24 single family residences have subsequently been developed.

- Development of 38 new market-rate, for-sale housing units (14 net increase) in the “Forested Knoll”, which the SCP currently states “*should remain undeveloped because it is a prominent visual landmark in the Community*” (also see Area 8 discussion below).
- Reductions in undeveloped portions of two areas (the Forested Knoll/Seminary Point, and off upper Chapel Drive) stipulated in the SCP to remain as open space. Open space vistas would also be reduced, due to development of the two areas being on property periphery locations that are quite visible from a number of public viewpoints.
- Development in areas stipulated in the SCP to remain as open space will also necessitate the removal of substantial numbers and percentages of current tree cover in the proposed new development locations, particularly the SCP’s Forested Knoll called out to “remain undeveloped because it is a prominent visual landmark” (see *Visual/Aesthetic* and *Tree* issue discussion below).

The SCP guidelines on the Seminary site divides it into eight separate areas (numbered 1 through 8, see SCPA area diagram in attachment 5). The applicants are proposing language governing specific developments allowances in certain of these areas as follows:

- (Area 1) 3 additional new market-rate, for-sale detached single family residences in the “Storer Drive Extension” (fronting on what is now called Mission Drive).
- (Area 5) 2 additional new market-rate, for-sale detached single family residences, 6 new market-rate, for-sale attached single family residences. The SCP states “*A Band of open undeveloped land should extend from Chapel Drive to Seminary Drive.*” The proposed development would reduce the open space so it terminates below the new development area.
- (Area 6) The “Forested Knoll” is currently part of Area 6 and is proposed to be transferred into Area 8 (see Area 8 changes below).
- (Area 8) Now includes the “Forested Knoll” area. 23 new market-rate, for-sale detached single family residences are proposed as “Seminary Point”, as are 15 additional new market-rate, for-sale attached single family residences. The text changes include the 3 existing units on Willis Drive. It doesn’t mention (but the project includes) demolition of 24 existing attached student housing units in three 8-plexes.
- Location of Development now proposes that only the “top of the” Forested Knoll should remain undeveloped - the project would leave a “sacred circle” alluding to possible native American spiritual values.
- Traffic/Circulation section proposed text changes from “*Traffic generated by this development will add to the unacceptable level of congestion projected to occur at the intersection of Highway 101, Seminary Drive, interchange ramps, and the Redwood Frontage Road*” to “*As*

shown in the 2011 Harrison Traffic Study, traffic generated by this development will not add to the unacceptable level of congestion...”

Text changes are also proposed from current language “*Traffic generated from this project will add to the safety problems for pedestrians walking on East Strawberry Drive*” to “*As shown in the 2011 Harrison Traffic Study, traffic generated from this project will not add to the safety problems for pedestrians walking on East Strawberry Drive*”.

The SCP text changes were developed and submitted by the applicants without any community participation. In prior Notices of Project Status (NOPS) , planning staff has expressed reservations with the applicants’ proposed SCP Amendments, particularly those requesting allowing the scope of additional development proposed in the Forested Knoll (see *Development Type and Location, Visual/Aesthetic, and Trees* issue discussions below) and other current open space woodland areas.

Questions for Commission feedback:

1. How should the SCP address the change from student/faculty to market-rate, for-sale housing?
2. How should the SCP address development of the two areas set forth as open space or undevelopable?
3. Should the SCP further clarify policies governing the Forested Knoll/Seminary Point?

2. *Development Type and Location*

The development proposed by the applicants in their current submittal would entail substantial changes in its character and location from what is envisioned in both the current Strawberry Community Plan (see above) and the Seminary’s current Master Plan. Proposed changes include:

- The most significant development on the site perimeter from a visual/aesthetic and landscape standpoint is the market-rate, for-sale housing proposed in the Forested Knoll/ Seminary Point (see *Visual Aesthetic* issue discussion below). This is a perimeter location that is designated as open space in the SCP. It is also the closest location on the Seminary site to Highway 101, Development of the area may also result in widespread tree removal (see *Visual Aesthetic* and *Tree* issue discussions below).
- Another development component proposed in a highly visible, perimeter open space location would be Seminary Vista West. The development is on the upper skyline portion of Chapel Drive (see *Visual Aesthetic* issue discussion below), where development will also involve removal of mature trees.
- Seminary Vista East is in an area dominated by grassland and groundcover. It is not designated as open space in the SCP.
- Seminary Knoll is proposed in a less visible development area, one that is not designated as open space in the current SCP.

A number of issues are present concerning the proposals for new locations and types (for-sale) of housing. First, traffic generation is likely to be considerably higher for market-rate housing than student/faculty housing (see *Traffic* issue discussion below). Second, proposing for-sale housing in various locations on the periphery of the campus site will result in development being more visible from

important offsite locations than campus housing directed by the SCP to be located more towards the central portion of the campus proper (see *SCP Amendment* and *Visual/Aesthetic* issue discussions). Third, market-rate for-sale housing would result in development scale and intensity increase versus student/ faculty housing. The size of the proposed for-sale units and buildings versus the smaller size of campus housing indicates there will be some difference. Even if occurring at the same general location, independently owned housing is likely to may have more visual presence than student or faculty units, and that visual difference could increase over time as independent homeowners decide to add to their homes, remove trees, repaint with brighter colors, etc.

Questions for Commission feedback:

1. Should additional weight be given to factors such as location, visibility, traffic, non-open space location, tree removal, building size, community character, additional community amenities with the new development (other factors?) to determine where and what level of market-rate, non-campus housing should be allowed?
2. If some level of non-campus housing seems acceptable, to what extent should it be directed to areas that do not have significant off-site visibility?
3. To what extent should non-campus housing be sited to minimize tree removal?

3. *Visual/Aesthetic*

One of the changes associated with the current project would be to the visual and aesthetic tableau of the campus property as viewed from various exterior locations.

Probably the most prominent visual change would be development of what is described in the SCP as the "Forested Knoll", and is termed by the applicants as "Seminary Point". This wooded knoll represents the furthestmost southerly extension of the site into Richardson's Bay and towards Highway 101. The knoll/point, the largely undeveloped peninsula located immediately to the east of De Silva Island, is visible to the right when driving northbound on Highway 101 north of Sausalito, and certainly still retains the largely undeveloped, woodland character referred to in the SCP 30 years ago.

Currently the Forested Knoll area contains 24 student housing units in three 8-plex apartments inconspicuously nestled on the southwest side of the knoll. The three 8-plexes are proposed to be demolished and the Knoll developed with 23 single family detached and 15 single family attached market-rate, for-sale residential housing units.

As noted above, the SCP currently states in its Land Use section on the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary (p.9) "The Forested Knoll (Area 8) above Seminary Drive should remain undeveloped because it is a prominent visual landmark in the Community."

The knoll's existing woodland character is largely as a Monterey pine forest, with a limited number of Italian stone pines. The applicants' arborist considers the Monterey pine forest to be in serious decline, and no protection efforts are called out for Monterey pines. However, widespread removal of the Monterey pines to accommodate development could take a generation to reestablish equivalent wooded visual character, if it is even realistically attainable with the proposed level of development.

Other nearby residential developments on the Strawberry peninsula illustrate how development could appear on the knoll/point site. Nearby single-family detached development to the east has an average density of approximately 2.8 units/acre (15,549 square foot average lot size for homes along Great

Circle Drive, Starboard Court, and Century Drive) with an average house size of 2,895 square feet) Where development is proposed, Knoll/point development is proposed at a higher density of 4.4 units/acre (9,976 square foot average lot size (excluding the common area parcel) and average house size of 2,524 square feet). The view from Highway 101 of existing south-facing Strawberry point development is of residences separated by landscaped yards (see attachment 2). The De Silva Island development directly to the west of the project site demonstrates the challenges of maintaining forest screening even with a substantial structural setback from the waterline. If some level of development were to occur at Forested Knoll/Seminary Point, one of the challenges is whether and how to maintain the forested character and recede into it (see applicants' rendering, attachment 2).

The applicants are also proposing to place eight units in the area off upper Chapel Drive called "Seminary Vista West". This will take place in a portion of the area described in the SCP as Area 5, and for which current SCP text states: "A band of open undeveloped land should extend from Chapel Drive to Seminary Drive." The SCP is proposed to be modified per the applicants' text changes to allow development in this area. Development would be by the skyline of the property, and would entail removal of an unknown number of trees.

The applicants have put some effort into managing their proposed development's potential view impacts from residential development on De Silva Island and Strawberry Peninsula to the west of the project site. For example, proposed development of the 38 units on the Forested Knoll/Seminary Point leaves a substantial wooded buffer on the portion of the knoll sloping to the northwest, to reduce development visibility from housing to the west.

A substantial 35-unit mixed market-rate and student/faculty residential development is proposed for "Seminary Knoll" on the northwest side of the site. The structures appear to largely be screened by existing mature trees from existing neighboring residences to the west. Existing development to the north is also at a substantially higher elevation, so their primary vista views will not be affected. The south faces of the southerly townhouses have the potential to loom over the Strawberry Cove condominiums (albeit behind the condo's carpark and not in their primary viewsheds).

Questions for Commission feedback:

1. What emphasis should be placed on siting development to minimize visual impact?
2. What factors should govern development of more visually prominent sites on the periphery of the Seminary property?
3. To what extent should any development emphasize preserving woodland visual screening?

4. Trees

Volume 4 of the applicants' materials includes a Section entitled "Oak Woodland Restoration, Tree Protection, Removal & Pruning". The Section's stated objectives are to:

- "Transition the existing pine stands to native oak woodland and grassland habitat over time
- Minimize native tree removal to provide filtered views into and out of the site
- Design built improvements around existing native trees to the extent feasible"

These are all laudable objectives, and a challenge will be how to best integrate them and potentially other tree-related objectives in the context of the proposed development.

Information on the numbers and locations of all of the tree removals contemplated in the various development areas, particularly the knoll/point area is important. Almost all of the knoll/point woodlands is comprised of Monterey pines or other non-native to the site trees (certainly within proposed development areas). The Monterey pines date back to the Seminary's earliest days, being planted and potentially partially colonizing several areas of the Seminary, most prominently in Forested Knoll/Seminary Point. The pines comprise the forest named in the SCP statement "The Forested Knoll (Area 6) should remain undeveloped because it is a prominent visual landmark in the community." Habitat values are present in the Forested Knoll/Seminary Point grove (for example, multi-year White-tailed kite nesting).

The majority of the site's existing woodland character is largely attributable to Monterey pines, plus a limited number of Italian stone pines (for example, at Seminary Vista West), and various other species around the site (including some Coast live oaks). The applicants' arborist considers the Monterey pine forest to be in serious decline and their vegetative focus is on re-establishing a combination native oak and grassland landscape (see *Tree* issue discussion below). In their forest management plan, entitled "Oak Woodland Restoration, Tree Protection, Removal & Pruning", no protection efforts are called out for Monterey pines.

If widespread removal of the Monterey pines occurs, or even if the disease/decline problems continue unmanaged and unchecked, it could take a generation or so to reestablish equivalent wooded visual character. The current Monterey pine trees will not be present on the site 100 years from now. However, some Monterey pines in Marin can live for considerably longer than 50 years, and not all of the pines are declining or even of the same age. Some younger trees appear to be voluntarily establishing.

One of the project's above-stated landscaping objectives is to transition away from the Monterey pine woodland and towards a combination of grassland and oak woodland. The Coast live oak stated as the preferred tree planting is also afflicted by Sudden Oak Death.

Based on experience staff has with development in existing mature conifer stands, adverse impacts on trees can extend beyond those immediately attributable to development. In addition to tree removals from new structures, roadways, other impervious surfaces and cuts and fills, impacts result from soil compaction, drainage changes, and new hard edges created by tree removals. Windthrow of remaining, newly exposed trees is a real issue that has led to additional removals in similar situations elsewhere in the County, and will receive further study.

The applicants have used the term succession planting in the description of their landscape approach. Landscaped areas proposed for development that contain a substantial percentage of declining trees demand a long-term, comprehensive landscape strategy. The overall lovely visual character of this property over the long term is at stake, and this Master Plan is an appropriate opportunity to do so.

Questions for Commission feedback:

- Should the existing Monterey pines and Italian stone pines be given greater consideration for management and preservation?
- Should preservation of habitat values in the non-native grove be a development factor?
- Should succession of existing mature woodlands towards grassland and oak woodland be a desired long-term objective?
- Should the Master Plan comprehensively address the health and preservation of all (native and non-native) trees on site?

- If preservation of the non-native trees is important, what are the implications for development proposed in current pine woodland areas?
- How important is preserving the Forested Knoll's existing visual character as a virtually undeveloped Monterey pine woodland?

5. Traffic

The Department of Public Works has noted several additional areas requiring further study beyond the applicants' traffic consultants work to date, including level-of-service at additional intersections, traffic signal warrants, sight distance analysis, student/faculty/staff traffic characteristics, school congestion, and parking demand. In addition, a group of neighbors are very interested in evaluating potential use of a gate to control through traffic on upper Reed Drive. The SCP contains extensive provisions relating to controlling traffic.

The SCP estimates traffic generated by Seminary housing would be approximately one-half the level generated by independent, market-rate housing. The applicants' traffic consultant report concurs with this relative weighting. Lower average daily trip (ADT) traffic levels for on-campus student/faculty housing is intuitive, insofar as the primary daily destinations for such individuals is also on-campus.

One issue is the additional traffic that would be generated due to the proposed change from to 72 for-sale market-rate housing units. If typical residential household average daily traffic ADT is about 10 trips, and student/faculty housing is one-half that, or 5 trips, the proposed market-rate housing would generate several hundred of trips per day more than would the same number of Seminary housing units. Potential impacts from the project's traffic, including from such an increase could be assessed in the context of the various traffic study components requested by DPW as broadly summarized above.

Questions for Commission feedback:

1. How important is a comprehensive review of this project for traffic considerations?
2. What is the role of traffic studies in informing proposed amendments to the SCP?

6. Affordable Housing

The applicants are proposing to provide a considerable number of housing units (45) earmarked for Seminary staff and students that fall into the very low to above moderate income range. The applicants attest that total housing costs will not exceed 30% of total household income. The proposed 72 units of new market-rate ownership housing will trigger Development Code Section 22.22.040 requirements for a 20% inclusionary requirement. This requirement results in 14.4 units of ownership housing affordable to households at 60% of area median income, which translates to 14 units and .4 of an in-lieu fee. Instead, the applicants are proposing to count proposed student and faculty housing to meet their inclusionary requirements (similar to a previous Seminary proposal for its 1984 Master Plan). While County policy supports the development of employee housing, the proposal does not meet the County's inclusionary policy which states that inclusionary housing will be available to the general public (please see Section 22.22040 D and 22.22.070 B). In addition, inclusionary units shall be affordable to low and very low income households, restricted as affordable in-perpetuity, and eligibility for the units shall be determined by the County of its designee and shall be advertised to the general public.

State housing law requires each County and City to zone land sufficient to accommodate future residential development. To accommodate the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), the Marin County Board of Supervisors convened a Housing Element Task Force for the purpose of identifying potential housing sites in the City-Centered Corridor that might be suitable for increased densities. Over 35 locations were selected for evaluation, according to a combination of quantitative and qualitative criteria, including proximity to services and community amenities, environmental constraints, and development considerations.

The Seminary site was identified as an affordable housing site in both the County's 2009 Draft Housing Element and by the Marin County Housing Element Task Force during their review and evaluation of sites in the unincorporated City-Center Corridor.

Next steps related to affordable housing on the sites list will be to initiate environmental review of the selected sites as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The review will consider the individual and cumulative impacts of increasing densities to a minimum of 30 units per acre on all evaluated sites. Following environmental review, staff will recommend a group of sites to be included in the current (2007-2014) Housing Element, and additional sites to be considered for the following 2014-2022 Housing Element. The County has a strong interest in achieving affordable housing consistent with the County's policies and regulations.

Question for Commission feedback:

1. What issues are involved with the applicants' proposal to provide staff and student housing in lieu of the required inclusionary units?
2. Should the applicants be directed to coordinate their proposal for employer-directed housing with County Housing staff?

7. Green Design

Several interesting green design concepts are proposed by the applicants. For example, the Drainage sections of both Volume's 4 and 5 of the applicants' submittal materials references an intention to encourage onsite water infiltration to the maximum extent feasible. This is a laudable goal, and one which staff supports. This concept will need to be evaluated against an independent geotechnical assessment of ground conditions to ensure its feasibility on the individual lot basis proposed for the knoll/point area. The applicants are proposing to utilize the current athletic field as an overflow detention basin for potential surplus runoff for runoff from the "Seminary Knoll" area on the site's west side. It will be important to the extent to which development proposed on sites on or in the proximity of unstable soils (e.g., earthflows) or drainage concerns, for example Seminary Vista East, might impinge or preclude onsite infiltration. If so, project development in those areas might be forced to rely to a greater extent on the site's existing V-ditch and culvert system that appears to discharge directly into Richardson's Bay. Richardson's Bay is currently subject to a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Plan requirement from the State Water Resources Control Board intended to achieve the near-pristine water quality necessary to harvest shellfish for consumption. If individual onsite infiltration isn't feasible, staff would encourage an analysis of a more broad-scale system directing runoff towards more suitable flatter, more stable areas where infiltration can occur without adverse effects.

Question for Commission feedback:

1. Should development be directed to emphasize green building design and sustainability principles?

8. Other issues

Staff requests Commission feedback on any issues which heretofore have not been raised but upon which the Commission cares to provide comment at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission review the administrative record, conduct a public workshop, and provide direction on the issue questions.

- Attachments:
1. Applicants' submittal materials, 1/28/11, and resubmittal materials dated 6/13/11, and 10/20/11 [note: project description materials are submitted in paper format. The remainder of the materials were provided electronically, and are available at the Community Development Agency upon request]
 2. Seminary point development photo and Seminary Knoll visual simulation
 3. Location Map
 4. Assessor's Parcel Map
 5. 1982 Strawberry Community Plan Amendment [excerpt] with diagram
 6. Marin County Ordinances 2818 and 2819 (Seminary Rezoning and Master Plan)
 7. Seminary Master Plan extension, 12/21/09
 8. Ben Berto and Scott Greeley, CDA Planning, Notices of Project Status, 11/18/11, 9/12/11, 4/29/11
 9. Leelee Thomas, CDA Housing, 7/1/11
 10. Mitra Moheb, DPW Land Development, 8/26/11
 11. Fred Hilliard, Southern Marin Fire Protection District, 3/11/11
 12. Strawberry Design Review Board Meeting notes and minutes 6/21/11, 7/20/11, 8/2/11
 13. Joseph Eischens, Marin Municipal Water District letter, 2/16/11
 14. Nute Engineering for Sewerage Agency of Southern Marin, 4/28/11
 15. Rick Peters, PG&E, 6/22/11, and Brian Cox, PG&E, 5/3/11
 16. Gary Arnold, Caltrans, 11/3/11
 17. Barbara Salzman, Marin Audubon Society, 2/22/11
 18. Public comments [note: the public comments listed are available at the Community Development Agency on request, and will be posted with the staff report on the Community Development Agency projects website, accessible through this link: http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/CD/Main/comdev/CURRENT/major_projects.cfm]
 - i. Bruce Corcoran, 3/24/11,4/12/11, 6/30/11
 - ii. Marjorie Siegel, 5/27/11
 - iii. Marin Economic Forum, 3/25/11
 - iv. Riley Hurd, Esq, and Scott Hochstrasser, 3/22/11, 6/30/11

- v. Neighborhood petition 3/27/11
- vi. Josh Sale, 6/30/11
- vii. Chris and Silvia Marino, 6/30/11
- viii. Riley Hurd et. al 9/21/11
- ix. Josh Sale et. al 9/26/11
- x. Anthony Gaas, Seminary Cove Neighborhood Association, 7/5/11
- xi. Meme Hurd, 3/30/11
- xii. Jerry Shlegel, 3/27/11
- xiii. Judie Liebling, 3/17/11
- xiv. Elizabeth Goodwin, 3/14/11
- xv. Eric Andrewsen, 3/6/11
- xvi. Kay Moore, 2/28/11
- xvii. Tirrell Graham, 2/23/11

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