

San Quentin Reuse Planning Committee Minutes

Tuesday, February 19, 2002

Marin Community Foundation Board Room

Committee Members Present:

Alex Amoroso
Phil Frank
Paula Gutierrez
Huey Johnson
Steve Kinsey

Larry Lanctot (8:10)
Dana Miller
Annette Rose
Jessuina Perez-Teran
Bill White

Committee Members Absent:

Al Boro
John Dupar

Stephen Roulac
Sim Van der Ryn

Staff and Consultants Present:

Kristin Collins, Marin County CDA
Dan Dawson, Marin County CDA

Alex Hinds, Marin County CDA
Dan Potash, DVP Associates

Telling our Stories

Those in attendance introduced themselves and outlined their interests in the process. The relationship of the San Quentin process to the Countywide Plan update process was explained.

Department of General Services Report Presentation

Paula Gutierrez of the State Department of General Services and Dan Potash of DVP Associates showed a presentation summarizing the findings of the State report prepared in early 2001. Key points were:

- Closure of the prison is tied to the relocation of inmates and programs
- The report serves as groundwork for this committee and is not intended to be a suggested land use plan.
- The actual site land area is approximately 275 acres with nearly 200 buildings.

Major issues for any reuse of the site include:

- Hazardous materials – there have been many activities on site over the years and specifically around the prison industries buildings including dry cleaning, furniture manufacturing, and vehicle maintenance.
- Historic Structures – there are some buildings on site that date to 1854. These and many others are eligible for historic designation.
- Traffic – East Sir Francis Drake serves as a connector route between the Richmond Bridge and 101 south of the Cal-Park hill.

- Economic Viability – to close the prison would require legislative action. Closure would need to be a worthwhile venture to the State from a financial and community/regional benefit perspective.

The methodology in the report focuses on the physical plant and site and is policy oriented. For analysis purposes there were three scenarios created which vary in order of magnitude. Impacts, costs, revenues, and alternatives were evaluated.

Findings

The findings assumed Marin County as the lead agency for reuse of the site if the prison were to be closed. Also assumed were a proportional amount of affordable housing, the loss of 73 acres of land area where the County's ridge and upland greenbelt policies would apply, inclusion of a multi-modal transit center, and residential height limitations.

Historic Buildings

Most of the site could be eligible as a Historic District, including 15 non-residential buildings (includes cell blocks) and 86 homes. The two most significant buildings are Buildings 18 and 22.

Hazardous Materials

Remediation could cost from \$5-19 million with the primary contamination area in the vicinity of the prison industry shops. There is also a filled area in which the source of the fill material is not known. It is likely that there is lead contamination in the vicinity of the shooting range on the west side of E. Sir Francis Drake.

Traffic

Costs to mitigate range from \$0.5 to 5.4 million, depending on ultimate land use. This range does not include cumulative impacts which might trigger offsite improvements such as new interchanges nor does it contemplate the potential reduction in trips resulting from a mixed-use proposal.

Utilities

There is an adequate supply of water, while sewer and electric service to the site is sufficient. Redevelopment would not result in significant demand increases, especially in light of existing uses on the site.

Demolition and Replacement

The cost to demolish the facility is estimated to be between \$22.6 and \$25.1 million. This does not contemplate costs associated with preservation/rehabilitation of historic structures. Constructing replacement facilities elsewhere for the existing programs is estimated to be \$450 million for a two-to-six story tower on 40 acres for a reception center, \$350 million for a 480 acre general population facility, and \$50 million in relocation costs.

Preliminary Issues Identification

The Committee took an initial pass at issues of importance and identified items for which more information is needed.

Issues:

- Design to minimize the presence of automobiles
- Techniques to buffer San Quentin Village from the site
- Think of your favorite neighborhoods, places, etc. – what makes them attractive?
- Preserve landscape, ridgelines, natural vegetation
- What kinds of businesses are appropriate/beneficial?
- Improve the regional highway infrastructure, specifically the Highway 101/580 interchange.
- Design to not increase project impacts over existing levels

More Information Needed:

- What are the adjacent land uses and plans (San Rafael and Larkspur)
- Uses of the site before it was a prison
- Brainstorm on other institutional uses of the site.
- What is density and what does it look like?
- White paper on housing need.
- Relationship of other plans to the site.
- Visit model projects
- Larkspur's Level of Service (LOS) figures for East Sir Francis Drake Blvd.

Administrative Items

The Committee agreed that the second Wednesday of the month would be the most workable time to meet. The State report appendices were distributed.

Public Comment

- The hillsides have been left relatively untouched since they have been off-limits to the public. The pristine features of the hillside areas should be preserved.
- It is hard to believe that water consumption will not increase with reuse of the land, even if there are the same number of residents as inmates because the inmates' living arrangements do not involve significant water consumption.
- It is unlikely that the programs offered at San Quentin could be replicated elsewhere given the proximity to educational institutions and broad local volunteer support.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, March 13, 2002, location to be determined