

**Downtown Working Group
Meeting #5 – April 3, 2013
Suite Z, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Meeting Notes**

Attendees: DWG: Bill Taylor (BT), John Vereuck (JV), Jo Bacon (JB), Mickey Brown (MB), Bruce Woodward (BW), Jim Smith (JS), Dave Harvey (DH), Jay Deinken (JD), Tom Cage (TC)

Public: Elizabeth Tenney (ET)

Staff: Sandra Moberly (SM), Jessica Morriss (JM), Noré Winter (NW), Abe Barge (AB), Cheney Bostic (CB), Jamie Licko (JL), Martha Miller (MM), Katy Cole (KC)

Agenda Item 1: Meeting Agenda and Purpose

The DWG approved the 3-6-13 meeting notes with no changes. Jo Bacon makes the recommendation that agenda items 2a and 2b be taken off of the agenda in the interest of time. Jessica Morriss approves. Jessica outlines the objective of the meeting which is to discuss the public process and initial implementation strategies for the Main Street Plan and to gain consensus on the Draft Commercial Zoning Use Regulations concepts and direction.

Agenda Item 2: Main Street Implementation Plan (Winter & Co.)

Abe Barge, Noré Winter and Cheney Bostic of Winter & Company summarized the work done so far in preparation for the Main Street Workshops. Framework maps and ideas based on the Downtown Concept for Main Street (DCMS) and the General Plan's draft Mobility Element (ME) were created and include: existing signage, notable gateways, grade issues along the western end of Main St., primary and secondary frontage areas which were incorporated from the draft commercial zoning code and also a new element developed by the consultants called "perforated frontage areas" which are defined as areas that are densely lined with trees, a key asset identified by the team, which might require different regulations and standards for development. The maps presented to the Working Group are for the most part considered to be the foundation of the draft report, to which additional content resulting from the stakeholder and public workshops, will be added.

The consultant team explained that developing a more fine-grained circulation network for pedestrians and bicyclists is one of the key goals which the workshops will set out to accomplish. They described that one possible method for achieving this is by implementing "backage roads" behind the buildings to manage parking and business access while still creating a more intimate, pedestrian street front. They cited Center Street as a good example of the backage road concept. They explained that circulation improvements should also consider improving connections between neighborhoods, which doesn't necessarily have to be done with full access streets but can also be done through alternative measures like shared driveways. They said they have heard consensus from the public who have expressed concerns

about the idea of increasing neighborhood connections with Main St., which is something which the team will consider as well.

A transportation connectivity map produced by the team lays out existing circulation in and around Main St. and makes suggestions for where additional parking could be located which was another major constraint identified by the Working Group early on as something for the workshops to work on. The idea of district parking is also introduced and shown on the map as a way to address parking supply and management issues. In response to Jo Bacon's inquiry about an inverse correlation between transit and parking, Noré explains that increasing transit can help alleviate the demand for parking and may provide the ability to reduce parking as long as flexibility is incorporated into the planning process. He said that maintaining an appropriate number of parking stalls that are conveniently located is vital to phasing in Main St. development. He described that phasing of redevelopment would involve buildings moving up towards the street front, while parallel parking stalls in the front of buildings and newly-formed parking districts would replace what is lost as properties redevelop.

The Working Group made the following comments:

- BT – It is important to provide clear directions to new parking areas, particularly if they are behind buildings. We should consider providing on street parking on backage roads too.
- TC – We should also consider the impetus of shade on the north side of buildings as it creates icy parking situations.
- NW – Covered walkways hugging the buildings are a possible solution to this. Raised walkways at the Luxury Outlets have received a positive response.
- JM – Katie Cole of Fehr & Peers is scheduled to meet with Caltrans to see which solutions are feasible in terms of maintaining access to property. Caltrans agreed for the most part with the DCMS, so the team is just looking for approval to refinements of those accepted ideas.
- KC – Caltrans so far has described several requirements for the Main St. design. One is that lane widths must remain 12 feet wide. Another is that Caltrans wouldn't be responsible for snow removal on the cycle tracks or sidewalks. But they are supportive of the cross-section concept.
- TC – Question: will the team recommend how many square feet of retail and the number of units that will be tied with the recommended number of parking spaces?
- JM – No. That is beyond the scope of the project and that is driven by the market.
- MB – The town does own some key pieces of real estate which could be great opportunities for parking. The lot next to the courthouse would be one example, as well as the existing Park-and-Ride on Old Mammoth Rd.

Cheney Bostic presented the character map, which divides Main St. into 4 zones, mapping out the potential for civic areas, recreational areas, a more traditional downtown and an area characterized by more lodging-oriented uses. She described that sign clutter has been identified as a street-level issue brought to the team's attention by members of the public. As the Town

continues in its sign program, the issue of wayfinding along Main St. can be addressed as part of the overall streetscape improvement program.

Winter & Company presented the Working Group with the 3 preliminary street design concepts that were prepared in advance and described the feedback that was received at the community workshop held the previous evening. Option 2 received the most positive response and seems to be the appropriate option to work with the workshops.

Option 2 (Preferred Concept):

- Keep the curb lines of the existing highway and everything found in between them in place, be creative outside of the curbs, which is currently the area of the frontage roads. This is the least expensive way to redevelop a transportation corridor.
- Provide a narrower median than was recommended in the DCMS for landscaping and sense of arrival - provides protected turn lane opportunities and protected areas for pedestrian crossing.
- Maintain 2 travel lanes in each direction.
- Provide on street parallel parking.
- Move the bike lane and attach it to the sidewalk (cycle track), 8 feet wide.
- 130 foot cross section

Katie Cole from Fehr and Peers provided additional detail regarding the cycle track concept:

- Considered an off-street facility, abutting the sidewalk.
- Can be designed to be one way or two way, although a one way facility is considered to be the safer option as it has less exposure approaching the intersection and less conflict with pedestrians.
- Treatments are installed at the crossing locations.
- Bicycle-specific signals can be used along with regular signals.
- Cycle tracks are very conducive to families with less riding experience.
- Would be at the same grade as sidewalks, but are delineated with different pavement, bollards or planters. This will better suit the Town with regards to snow removal.
- Cycle tracks will integrate very easily with the established MUPs and meandering promenades in Town.
- Sparks, NV has successfully implemented a cycle track connecting its downtown with the Marina.

The Working Group made the following comments:

- MB – Looking at the proposed cross sections for Main St., Mickey Brown asks how conducive 130 feet is to short-term activity like grabbing a cup of coffee across the street. While it is still a wide cross-section, it is much more manageable than the existing section.
- NW – Buildings are closer together, distances and crossing distances are reduced. The median will also provide a protected refuge point for pedestrians.
- NW – Utilities buried in the frontage roads may influence where the building line can be in terms of avoiding the cost of moving them.

- BT – An APA article highlighted the idea that as long as land uses and circulation are thought of in a holistic manner, you can minimize likely “pinballing” from one side of the road to the other.
- NW – If you can clarify the symmetry of the street better than how it is now, you can make it more natural for pedestrians to circulate down the entire length of the road, cross once, and continue back.
- MB – Santa Barbara’s Main St. is a good example of these principles.

The group discussed that snow removal has been identified as an obstacle for future Main St. development which should be solved early on. The working group discusses all of the possible snow removal solutions for Main St., which include trucking it away, melting it with geothermal power, and collecting it in shared parking areas between businesses, which could provide for a more efficient use of storage space. Jessica Morriss cites that many businesses already pay to truck snow out after Caltrans and the Town move it after each storm. She suggests that pulling these resources together could ultimately save everyone money.

Noré Winter described the current state of the existing transit stops on Main St. and described them as currently not being effective and lacking cohesion. He said that transit stops can act as important street elements, being rendezvous locations and visual markers that can be seen down the road. Incorporating public spaces at the transit stops can not only provide an opportunity for these elements but will also give an opportunity to provide better bicycle parking locations and more functional transit usage.

Noré Winter described potential phasing of the Main St. project, saying that certain elements can be phased in the short-term in order to incentivize property owners to take part in more substantial change. Median can be built first with turn lanes. The existing bike lanes can remain while the new cycle track is built and the cycle track can be used as the pedestrian space. Once buildings start to phase up to the curb, existing bike lanes can be converted into parallel parking stalls and more integrated parking areas can be pushed back behind the buildings.

Agenda Item 3: Draft Commercial Zoning Districts Chapter (Martha Miller, Dyett & Bhatia)

Martha Miller provided a summary of the comments she received from the Working Group regarding the draft use regulations on commercial districts. The comments included:

- The definitions and terminology need to be more consistent.
- The scale of use types described in the purpose statements needs to be more clearly expressed.
- The code should allow more permitted uses (as opposed to administrative and use permits.)
- Should consider appropriateness of uses in each district.
- Uses not directly on Main St. frontage (i.e. rear of the lot or in upper stories should have more flexibility in what’s permitted.)

- San Carlos and Mill Valley allow auto retailers as long as they're kept to a boutique-level size. This could be the same standard for the Town. This use could also apply for recreational type vehicle sales.
- Recycling uses will be taken out (due to existing restrictions regarding franchise agreement).
- Uses that are similar should be treated in the same way. For example: Artisan shops, supermarkets and furniture stores should all be treated equally. Other examples include recreation facilities and conference centers with hotels, i.e. accessory uses.

The following comments were made by the Working Group:

- MB – Did Jessica discuss with you the need to make sure the GP land use designations are consistent with the Zoning Code?
- MM – Yes, General plan is more of a vision statement whereas zoning is more specific, but we will review for consistency.
- JS – What about the types of general commercial type uses that are existing in “commercial general/G2”? Uses don't seem to be included in commercial zones districts.
- JM – Those uses are still captured in use tables, just under the new district designations.
- BT – Question: If we want to create the desired end product, can we define the uses on a parcel level to get it?
- MM – Answer: the Code cannot be specific on a parcel level. Uses should be flexible. Just because a use is permitted in some districts doesn't mean it is not allowed in others.
- JB – If it's in the use table, how do we prioritize it to get the end product we want in the area we want it?
- MM – The market really needs to determine the final mix, we need to think of which uses are complimentary to walk-in activity, and encourage these on ground floor in certain districts.
- BT – We have to be careful that too much flexibility may erode the confidence of investors. They want certainty. For example, they won't want to put in a row of storefronts that won't be placed in a very active environment where they will receive associated business.
- BT – Certain uses may be more appropriate in specific areas of a block. For example, Convalescent homes on the east side of a block facing the hospital make sense. It doesn't make sense for them to be on the west side facing Old Mammoth Road. But you should still provide flexibility and let the market decide.
- JV – If there's something that the Town wants in a particular location, it can always incentivize.
- JM – Staff will make sure that the market has the ability to provide uses which are better fit in other districts in those districts.
- MM – Footnote (1) in the table provides the ability to specify active uses on ground-floor in walking districts.
- JB – We need to make sure it is clear for developers.

- BT – We can also consider using a frontage overlay.
- JS – As long as we make sure that the permitted uses are for the things that we want, that helps to filter what we want and what we don't want in those locations.
- MM – Final Determination: we're on the right track with the use regulations. The major change is shifting the discretionary actions now embedded in the use permit process into the design review process. Development standards for building envelopes "white box" will be the next discussion.
- JB – Does this give me, as a commercial developer, the ability to build to specifications and not own and operate? Is that built into the Code?
- JM – Yes. You receive your "white box" approval or it it's a permitted use you just are permitted.
- TC – What about the relationship between changing uses and parking? Caldwell building: many agents in a small building, requires 14 parking spaces, too many for that size building, inconvenient for adjoining buildings, needs to be solved with parking district or structure. The KFC building has gone through many uses over the years as well.
- MM – There's always going to be a balance between flexibility of changing uses and providing parking. For example, restaurants require much more parking than other uses.
- JM – We want to provide flexibility for changes to use, so that we don't create a barrier to businesses that want to open in existing spaces.
- JS – Will there be a redline version?
- MM – No.
- JS – How about a revised draft?
- MM – Yes, and Jessica will provide collective comments and responses.

Agenda Item 4: Next Steps/Meetings

The Working Group agreed to meet on Wednesday, May 8th, 9 am, to discuss development standards as part of their review of the Commercial Zoning chapter.