

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #2 | SUMMARY NOTES

CORTE MADERA COMMUNITY CENTER

APRIL 6, 2016 | 6:00 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.

PROJECT TEAM

Town Staff: Adam Wolff- *Planning and Building Director*, Phil Boyle- *Senior Planner* and Doug Bush- *Assistant Planner*

Consultants: Dave Javid- *Principal Planner and Urban Designer*, Heather Hines- *Principal* and Jacqueline Vance- *Associate Planner (M-Group)*

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

The Corte Madera Tamal Vista Boulevard Corridor Study project team held a second Community Workshop at the Corte Madera Community Center on Wednesday, April 6th, 2016, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. There were approximately 25 participants that attended the workshop.

The workshop provided an overview of existing development patterns and zoning standards within the study area, as well as a recap of the input received thus far from past community outreach efforts and events. The Town, with assistance from M-Group, sought feedback concerning the following three items:

1. Confirm the Draft Planning Principles that were derived from the community input received to date;
2. Identify the desired land use mix, particularly with respect to allowable uses in addition to currently allowed uses within the study area. The three potential land use scenarios for any future new development that the Town sought feedback on included, 1) leaving the highway commercial permitted uses as is, 2) permitting only locally-serving commercial uses, 3) permitting only residential uses, or 4) permitting a mix of both residential and locally-serving commercial uses; and
3. Identify the desired intensity of development within the study area, using Floor Area Ratio (FAR), setbacks and heights to frame the discussion. The three potential development intensity options that the Town sought feedback on were to keep existing 0.34 FAR, or considering higher FARs that are currently represented in development along the corridor. The other two options were to increase the FAR to 0.5 or 0.75.

WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS

Adam Wolff presented an overview of the background and objectives of the Corridor Study. He also provided a summary of the existing development patterns and standards within the Corridor and surrounding areas for context. Dave Javid with M-Group presented a summary of the community input received to date and the corresponding Draft Planning Principles.

Dave then provided an overview of the small group exercises that were designed to allow meeting participants to provide direct feedback on the workshop contents. Participants were divided into two small groups and asked questions including the following:



- “Did we get these planning principles or common theses right? Have we forgotten any core principles?”;
- “With the understanding of the 2009 General Plan policies supporting a mix of commercial and residential uses in this area, and the range of currently permitted uses in the Highway Commercial (C-3) District, what type of new uses would you like to see, if any, over the next 20 years?”; and
- “Recognizing the existing development standards for the C-3 District, the examples of buildings currently along the corridor, and the intensity considered in the General Plan (0.34 FAR for commercial + 25 (31 w bonus) units/acre for residential), what level of development intensity would you like to see along the corridor?”

Many participants provided input during these discussions and comments were recorded on flip charts, including common themes such as:

Planning Principles

The following Draft Planning Principles, while all potentially carrying equal weight, were prioritized through an online survey administered in the weeks leading up to the workshop (45 participants completed the survey on line at the time of the workshop) and presented to the workshop participants for feedback:

1. Preserve the small town character along the corridor by ensuring that building massing is of similar scale to existing development and takes into consideration residential uses across the street.
2. Address broader traffic issues in and around Tamal Vista Boulevard, including consideration of additional vehicular traffic resulting from the opening of the Tam Ridge residences.
3. Ensure that new allowable uses do not negatively impact local streets and neighborhood parking.
4. Enhance Tamal Vista Boulevard as a safe, comfortable, and attractive street for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians by making physical improvements to the public right-of-way and incorporating similar improvements in proposed redevelopment projects.
5. Promote improvements to the corridor that calm traffic and enhance connections between the residential and commercial sides of the street.
6. Encourage high-quality architectural design and value-added development that enhances the character and desirability of the corridor, and supports existing businesses.
7. Facilitate new bicycle and pedestrian circulation opportunities that enhance access and strengthen connections within Corte Madera and to regional transportation networks, including the Ferry Terminal and future SMART station at Larkspur Landing.
8. Encourage the retention of valued community assets, such as certain local or neighborhood-oriented uses if redevelopment occurs within the area.

9. Encourage a broader range of commercial uses, including locally-serving retail, entertainment, community, and cultural uses, that complement the existing setting and land uses along the corridor.
10. Emphasize greenery along and within the corridor through landscaping and streetscape improvements that supplement the natural environment.
11. Allow residential uses if they are compatible with the scale and character of development along the corridor.

Generally there was support for the planning principles as they were written. The following is a summary of the comments that were received:

- Support for new bicycle and pedestrian circulation opportunities, described as a win-win for everyone;
- Consider specific types of residential uses or housing under certain conditions that are compatible with the existing scale and character of development;
- Ensure Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accommodating facilities are considered within the Corridor;
- Support for encouraging a broader range of commercial uses (and discouraging some C-3 uses), including locally-serving retail and other neighborhood and community-oriented uses along the corridor;
- Recognize that a synergy occurs in concentrating local resident-serving/retail uses and residential uses close together;
- Encourage alternative transportation options (E.G., shuttle buses and new pedestrian connections to surrounding areas);
- Consider limiting automobile use through reduced parking standards, and encourage shuttle buses;
- Ensure new land use mix assesses traffic congestion and parking; and
- Consider consolidating some of the Planning Principles to reduce repetitive themes.

Permitted Land Uses

- Strong support for permitted uses that refines the existing permitted C-3 uses and allows uses consistent with those in the existing C-1 (Local-Shopping Commercial) district.
- Support for residential uses within mixed use buildings on the second-story above locally-serving commercial uses. Stand-alone residential uses generally not desired.
- Introduce senior or other housing to the area that is associated with reduced parking needs and traffic generation;
- Activate the corridor with locally-serving commercial uses; and
- Study the impact on parking and traffic for all new potential residential and commercial uses (as noted with the review of the Draft Planning Principles).

Intensity of Development

- Overall there was a general support that a FAR of 0.50 could be reasonably accommodated on sites in the corridor with specific development standards in place to

make sure buildings are appropriately set back from the street and articulated to respect the massing and scale of commercial and residential uses currently in the area.

- Other comments included the following:
 - Important to require adequate setbacks from Tamal Vista Boulevard to allow for public realm improvements:
 - Ensure views of Mt. Tamalpais are protected;
 - Ensure that the Corridor is not designed for cars; and
 - Recognize that if future FAR or other standards are too restrictive for property owners/developers, there will not be much incentive to redevelop sites into desirable uses, and undesirable buildings may become outdated (eye-sores).

The following are a few photos from the workshop's break-out group discussions.

