



general plan and zoning ordinance update

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #14 SUMMARY

CITY OF BURLINGAME GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

*February 22, 2016 | 7:00pm – 9:00pm
Burlingame Recreation Center, Social Room, 850 Burlingame Avenue*

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

The fourteenth Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting was held on Wednesday, February 22, 2016. The meeting began with a welcome by Kevin Gardiner, Planning Manager with the City of Burlingame. In attendance at the meeting were approximately 12 CAC members, four members of City staff, and Burlingame Mayor Ricardo Ortiz (as an observer). No members of the public were in attendance.

Mr. Gardiner provided a brief status update on the General Plan process, and then Laura Stetson of MIG facilitated a conversation on two draft elements of the General Plan: Community Character and Economic Development. CAC members were provided copies of the draft elements in advance, and the conversation was an opportunity to provide feedback on the two documents. Lilly Jacobson of MIG recorded written notes of the discussion.

DRAFT COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

The CAC was asked to provide comments and questions about the draft Community Character Element structure and content. The following summarizes key points from the discussion.

Height and Density

- CAC members expressed some concern about State mandates (density bonuses) that would allow taller buildings than would be permitted in the General Plan, and a suggestion to have a lower baseline in the General Plan. Some CAC members disagreed and felt that more height and density are important to accommodate future housing needs.
- Several CAC members would like to see a higher FAR for the General Commercial designation: 1.5 or higher.
- Participants expressed a desire for a glossary of terms and images that provide examples of different densities.

Sustainability

- CAC members expressed a desire for a stronger stance on sea level rise and specific development regulations and guidelines to mitigate potential flooding issues.
- One person suggested to include flexibility within the sustainability policies to anticipate future change in sea level rise projections.



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Urban Forest

- Several CAC members and some City staff discussed the need to include policy about “long-term funding mechanisms” for tree maintenance because funding ebbs and flows with economic cycles.
- There was a suggestion to include policies that increase the tree canopy along public streets, such as reducing curb cuts.
- Specific to the proposed Invasive Tree Removal policy, someone suggested to modify language to say, “*when appropriate, consider removal of invasive trees*”
 - This policy should also explain criteria for “appropriate” tree removal, and explain the process to remove trees.
 - The policy should also include trees that are eligible for historic registries.

Historic Preservation and Neighborhoods

- The existing historic resources survey was omitted in the Community Character Element and should be referenced; a policy should be established to maintain the survey.
- CAC members expressed a strong desire to provide more nuance to the concept of “historic buildings” and to expand it to encourage the preservation of neighborhood character (not solely buildings that are eligible for historic designation).
 - One policy suggestion was to establish a higher FAR if an applicant proposes an addition to an existing home, and a lower FAR if an applicant proposes to demolish and construct a new building.
- Some CAC members would also like to encourage preservation of historic trees during remodeling and new construction processes.
- There was concern about developers assembling multiple parcels of land for residential development and the impact it has on the fabric of the neighborhood. Some CAC members would like to see specific design regulations for assembled parcels.

Broadway

- There was disagreement amongst CAC members about the appropriate height, density, and mix of uses for Broadway.
 - Some members would like to see higher density buildings with mixed uses wrapping around onto side streets.
 - Others do not want to see heights over two stories, and believe the current lack of activity along Broadway is related the landlords and tenant mix.
 - Some CAC members were in support of “gateway projects” at Broadway’s intersections with El Camino Real and California, while others were opposed.
- One CAC member stressed the importance of maintaining 20-foot setbacks on El Camino Real to preserve the trees.



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Bayfront

- Several CAC members appreciated the flexibility established by the Bayfront designations, but also want to see more structure around surface parking lots and infill development.
- Several CAC members raised the idea of ferry service at the Bayfront. The group decided the concept should be included in the Mobility Element.

DRAFT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

The CAC was asked to bring comments and questions about the draft Economic Development Element structure and content. The following summarizes key points from the discussion.

- There was a desire to increase Burlingame's entertainment uses because retail will no longer be a major economic driver with the rise of internet retail.
- Several CAC members discussed the need to promote local businesses more proactively.
 - The City could have "shop local" cards.
 - The school district should encourage parents to buy supplies locally.
- The introduction to the Economic Development Element should be inspirational and talk about Burlingame as a major economic player.
- There were questions about how the City is dealing with Airbnb/vacation rentals and the transit occupancy tax.
- Some CAC members expressed desire for more concrete policies with direction about how to encourage the types of uses that will further economic development.
- Some additional Economic Development policies could include more flexibility for ground floor uses to accommodate the changing nature of brick and mortar retail.

NEXT STEPS

The next CAC meeting will be held on March 29, 2017 to review the Mobility Element and the Healthy People, Healthy Places Element.