



City of Burlingame

BURLINGAME CITY HALL
501 PRIMROSE ROAD
BURLINGAME, CA 94010

Meeting Minutes Planning Commission

Wednesday, July 11, 2018

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

General Plan Study Session

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. Staff in attendance: Community Development Director Kevin Gardiner and Planning Manager Ruben Hurin.

2. ROLL CALL

Present 5 - Sargent, Loftis, Comaroto, Terrones, and Tse

Absent 2 - Kelly, and Gaul

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes to approve.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS, NON-AGENDA

There were no public comments.

6. STUDY ITEMS

a. Draft General Plan and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Overview

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)

[Exhibits A and B: Comments Logs](#)

[Draft General Plan - August 2017](#)

[Draft EIR - June 2018](#)

Community Development Director Gardiner introduced the consultant team: Dan Amsden, Laura Stetson, and Lillian Jacobsen of MIG.

Dan Amsden and Laura Stetson made a presentation to the commission.

Commission questions/comments:

- > *In the General Plan list of figures in the Table of Contents the figures noted under Community Character (CC-63, CC-64, CC-65) are mislabeled.*
- > *CC-17 "Badlands" should be "Baylands."*
- > *CC-46 discusses Broadway mix of uses but the diagram shows downtown. Should show the Broadway diagram.*

-
- > EIR inconsistency with 2017 Clean Air Plan and 2017 Scoping Plan is noted, with updated Climate Action Plan underway. Does the Significant Unavoidable Impact need to go to Council? (Stetson: It is a process issue. The Climate Action Plan is not finished but it will be finished by the time the plan goes to public hearing. The mitigation is to do a Climate Action Plan, so the impacts will no longer be significant and unavoidable.)
 - > EIR page 210 indicates two alternatives, not three. (Stetson: That is a typo.)
 - > Recalled in previous discussions that environmental justice is an emerging element. Where is it referenced? (Stetson: The Legislature has passed legislation to require General Plans to address environmental justice. If there were census tracts that were identified as disadvantaged it would need to be addressed, but Burlingame does not have any of those areas that would be considered impacted due to income or exposure to environmental hazards. As such there is not an explicit addressing of environmental justice in terms of complying with State Law, unless the Commission or Council sees an issue that requires policy to be addressed.) It is addressed under Community Character in the plan, so is there something that should clarify in the EIR why it is not included? (Amsden: It is a clarification that can be made in the Final EIR.)
 - > The amount of land designated for Institutional development is being reduced because of redesignation. What does that mean? Particularly since the Existing Land Use Map does not have an Institutional designation. (Jacobsen: It relates to whether the Mercy property should be designated as Institutional or Residential. Ultimately it was decided to designate it Residential, which would provide them with more flexibility. The base line is what is on the ground, not what is shown in the previous General Plan.)
 - > Would Institutional uses be allowed in those neighborhoods with a Conditional Use Permit? (Gardiner: Yes. There were discussions whether or not to designate an Institutional use with the underlying land use. The decision was made to retain the underlying land use to allow more flexibility in the future.)
 - > Table 12-81 on page 12-8 mentions Policy CC-3.1 - comprehensive historic surveys should indicate policy CC-3.2. (Stetson: Will fix that.)
 - > Page 17-7 Burlingame School District should be abbreviated as "BSD" not "BUSD."
 - > Regarding wastewater collection and treatment, are the cumulative effects of growth in the Town of Hillsborough included? (Stetson: Will need to check. Does not anticipate Hillsborough will have significant growth.)
 - > Page 21-11 of the EIR mentions noise impact on Broadway between El Camino Real and Bernal Avenue, and attributes it to new residential units in the hillside neighborhood west of the road segment. Is that really the reason, the right description? Or is it better described as hillside residents accessing Broadway and the Broadway interchange? (Stetson: Correct, it is the latter. It is due to regional traffic.)
 - > Does Policy CC-3.1 indeed require historic resource evaluation of any project that significantly alters a building that is more than 50 years old? Is it really intended to be that broad? (Stetson: CC-3.1 addresses the City initiating surveys for historic districts to get a baseline for evaluating projects rather than continuing to do things on a case by case basis. The aim is to have a more rigorous assessment of projects for buildings that have been designated as potentially significant.)
 - > If the requirement is to evaluate every building over 50 years old that would significantly effect everything that is done in the city. It would be a waste of money and time. (Stetson: The commission can provide guidance on this if it is not clear or providing the desired direction. Can tie the two historic measures together.)
 - > How would traffic be reduced through the bicycle network? (Stetson: The idea is to make it easier for people to do a mode shift. If someone is hesitant to ride a bike, the bicycle master plan and the associated improvements to the network might encourage them to make more trips on bikes.)
 - > What would be the potential impact to circulation with shifting to more bikes? (Ollie Zhou, Hexagon Transportation Consultants: The traffic model analysis assumes bike mode share would remain 2 percent of the total. Traffic is projected to increase overall, and the bike share would increase proportionally and remain at 2 percent.)(Stetson: The potential could be greater, but the analysis is conservative.)
 - > Not clear what the Rollins/Road mixed use live/work zone would be comprised of, and how successful it has been in other areas? (Stetson: There are emerging examples of live/work. The district would not need to be fully mixed use buildings, but the district itself could have a mix of uses. For example a small office or commercial building with a residential building adjacent. Or it could be where there is a work

space on the ground floor and a residence above, with the same owner of tenant using both. It has been shown to work in urban areas.)(Amsden: The proximity to the BART station would allow the area to become more urbanized, with a live/work mix. There could be either horizontal or vertical mixed use.)

> Would it just be a change to the land use designation in Rollins Road, but it would be up to the land owner to make the application for the development project? Or would the City do anything to encourage that change? (Stetson: It is up to the property owner. The City could be proactive in education if it wanted to move it along, but could not force anything. An example is the "funk zone" in Santa Barbara, which is an older industrial district that is changing fairly quickly. There is re-use of industrial buildings, as well as new buildings. There are wineries, restaurants, and maker spaces mixed in with residential uses.)(Amsden: Fourth Street in Berkeley, and the west side of Santa Cruz are other examples.)

> Could a use such as an artist studios, cabinet shop, and furniture shop go into one of the spaces, but also have an apartment associated with it? (Gardiner: The approach would acknowledge the existing industrial uses and allow those uses to stay if the property owners choose. However multiple uses could coexist, so the environment would be different than a more conventional residential neighborhood which would expect industrial uses to be phased out. In this instance the expectation is the residential and live/work uses understand they are moving into an area with eclectic mix of uses. It could evolve over time organically, or could be more defined through the zoning and possibly a specific plan.)

> The San Francisco design area is slowly seeing tenants being pushed out by new housing and commercial buildings. If there was a design center like that here, there would be a number of gallery spaces and design spaces to support the showrooms. Would the FAR be sufficient to support that type of development? (Stetson: The FAR may not be as high as in San Francisco, but we can re-evaluate it to make sure it could accommodate the concept.)

> Ferry service is mentioned. Is it being considered as a transportation option for the Bayfront? (Stetson: It is not excluding the possibility, but because of the dredging that would be considered it would be a fairly complex undertaking. It could be considered in the future but the implementation would be a challenge.)

> Rollins Road has high-power lines requiring development to stay away from power lines. How far does development need to be from the power lines to accommodate housing? (Stetson: Can bring a more detailed response back in the public hearing.)

> Could the threshold for historic review be 100 years, not 50? There were so many homes built in the 1950s and 1920s. (Gardiner: There is the CEQA threshold, versus a city policy threshold. A 100-year threshold would be a city policy choice.)(Stetson: 50 years is a standard threshold used throughout the country.)

> Would be difficult to have a 50-year historic evaluation threshold since most homes in Burlingame are more than 50 years old. (Stetson: Some communities have begun designating mid-century homes such as Eichlers as representative of certain eras. While 50 years is a standard practice, a community could decide to have a two-tiered system.)(Gardiner: The framework in the plan intentionally emphasizes historic preservation. This was the direction of the Community Advisory Committee, to have a higher, more rigorous level of evaluation than exists currently.)

> There is a difference between historic and nostalgic. Believes it would be hard to make the case that many of the buildings that are more than 50 years old are actually historic. In the Burlingame Park neighborhood, most of the evaluations have come back as not being eligible. If this practice is applied citywide, it would have an impact that would unnecessarily constrain the city.

> Believes the intent is have a more comprehensive analysis of the city. Right now there is a limbo that there was an historical evaluation survey of Downtown, and then Burlingame Park has a status where each individual project has to prepare its own evaluation. The goal here would be to have a more comprehensive evaluation, sponsored by the City, which would remove the burden from the individual property owner.

> Earlier the modest 2 bedroom/1 bath houses were the ones being torn down and replaced, but those are all gone now. Now those being torn down include some very nice houses. The potential tear-downs now include more substantial houses that could be potentially historic, but there is no recourse to ask for something other than allowing it to be torn down, or to consider incentives for the homeowner to preserve and add on instead and do something through the Mills Act.

> Even the properties that have been determined to have historic merit have been allowed to do substantial projects, while maintaining their historic nature. Historic designation does not mean that

something cannot be done to a house.

> Would prefer to look at the historic issue more holistically. Concern with the existing practice of individual evaluations; does not feel like there is a lot of return, and it is a burden. Only a handful end up being deemed significant.

> The focus should be on the character.

> Has anyone looked at the typical lot sizes of lots in Rollins Road for the types of projects being intended? Should make sure the FAR being proposed is going to work for the types of projects envisioned. (Stetson: There is no typical lot size in the area, but the FAR would likely apply only to the non-residential development.)

> Given the water table in the area, underground parking may be difficult in the Rollins Road area. Not convinced 1.0 FAR will be sufficient to encourage change.

Public Comments:

> Florence Wong: Is on the School Board for the Burlingame School District. Demographers project for every 100 new single family units there will be 20 more students, with 7% middle school students. If by 2040 there would be 3,000 new housing units, that would be 600 new students. Even with the new school recently added, all elementary schools are at capacity except for Franklin. BIS already has 1,100 students. Is not opposed to adding housing units, but in the future will need some help from the city to identify land for a new school, a big school. There are rules for where schools can be located, minimum distance from highways. Could not build a school in the North Rollins area. Needs to be able to have the funding and be able to identify land for future schools.

> Kamran Ehsanipour: Owns land at corner of Adeline Drive and El Camino Real. Property was originally zoned R-3, and surrounding area is R-3. Property was used as a commercial use as a grandfathered use. In 1984 the zoning changed to C-1. At that time mixed use was allowed in C-1, but not allowed now. Wants to be able to develop mixed use. Mixed use can add to quality of life and beauty to city. Opinion is C-1 should be considered to allow mixed use. Would like the North Burlingame Mixed Use designation for this property.

> Cynthia Cornell, Housing for All Burlingame: Concerned with 3,000 units. Burlingame Point will bring 4,000 new jobs. The old Hyatt movie theater redevelopment would add more jobs, as well as possibly two new hotels and Top Golf. Jobs will be low income. Burlingame continues to develop commercial properties without housing. Needs to consider where people will live in the future, and will need another school. Renters are at risk of losing their housing once Burlingame Point opens.

> Jennifer Pfaff: Concern with not having a height limit on the northern end, concerned how the city intends to handle design. How to get good design with overreach from the State, which does not allow design standards to be imposed on projects? Not understanding how the two pieces will go together. Historic preservation was a concern of the Community Advisory Committee given how much is being torn down and the character changing; Burlingame Park was treated in a certain way from its characteristics. Different areas of the city are treated in different ways, which is not equitable. There are older areas of the city besides Burlingame Park, but they are not being treated the same. In Burlingame Park while most of the surveys have shown the building to not have significance, there were more than a couple that were designated as special. There were also some that were considered contributors to a district, but we do not consider districts. Would like to look at what other cities do; some of it is legal. Should be equitable but not be a nuisance to owners and developers.

> Tim Donnelly: Impressed with the plan: it is comprehensive and well thought out. A lot of effort has gone into it. Don't let it get watered down.

> Leslie McQuaide: Has lived in Burlingame for 41 years, and was on the Community Advisory Committee. Has fear of the city losing its character. People redevelop houses but then move on. Concerned with traffic; there is a line of cars on Broadway heading to the freeway. Needs another way to

get to the freeway. Rollins Road will add more traffic. SFGate had an article quality of life, with South San Francisco and San Carlos featured as being concerned with changing quality of life.

Community Development Director Gardiner noted that there will be meetings in the future to provide further input and discussion.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Planning Commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Community Development/Planning counter, City Hall, 501 Primrose Road, Burlingame, California.



City of Burlingame

BURLINGAME CITY HALL
501 PRIMROSE ROAD
BURLINGAME, CA 94010

Meeting Minutes Planning Commission

Monday, September 10, 2018

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

a. General Plan Update - Historical Preservation Policies

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)

[Attachments](#)

Dan Amsden, MIG, made a presentation.

Commission Questions/Comments:

- > *Are the options presented "both/and" options or "either/or?" Could there be a mix and match of options, versus choosing one approach over the the other? (Amsden: The examples shown illustrate different ways cities have addressed historic resources. The loss of a potentially historic resource is a potentially significant impact under CEQA. There is some discretion for local jurisdictions to avoid the significant impact from a historic resource being destroyed. It could include local registrations, for example.)*
- > *Right now there are two triggers for conducting a historic evaluation: location in Burlingame Park, and anything in the Downtown area that is on the list from the survey prepared for that plan. However there is no trigger for anything outside of those two areas to determine historic eligibility? (Gardiner: Correct. CEQA does not allow categorical exemptions for potentially historic resources, but there has not been pre-screening for areas outside Downtown or Burlingame Park. If an application comes forward that could impact a potentially historic resource, we won't necessarily know whether it may qualify without some type of pre-screening.)*
- > *The current practice in Burlingame treats some applications very different than most others.*
- > *How was 50 years determined to be the threshold for review? Soon 1970s homes would qualify, as well as all of the Mills Estate. (Amsden: It is a standard CEQA threshold, and is also used as a threshold for State eligibility. The intent is not necessarily the age itself as the criteria; a property less than 50 years old might qualify if it was designed by a famous architect, for example.)*
- > *Could a different threshold be established, such as 75 years? (Gardiner: There are two aspects. First is CEQA, where 50 years is an initial screening criteria for determining potential environmental impacts. The other is community values, which may identify a different threshold than 50 years but would not be tied to CEQA. For example, Redwood City has a threshold of 1940 based on designating pre-war development to be an era of interest, which would be regarded differently for purposes of community character. A community could identify a threshold based on its own history, such as a particular subdivision. However that would not address the CEQA element.)*
- > *There is an Eichler development in Burlingame, worth preserving and maintaining.*
- > *If someone is coming into town and purchasing a home, could the historic evaluation be prepared in conjunction with the sale of the home? Similar to the sewer lateral report that has to be completed prior to selling or purchasing a home. (Gardiner: Could look into it further. The current trigger is an application for a discretionary development permit before the Planning Commission. Not sure a city could make that requirement as a policy matter, however it is a disclosure. One aspect of CEQA is that it discloses potential environmental impacts. Sometimes real estate professionals will inquire about the historic status of a property when preparing a listing because they are preparing disclosures.)*
- > *Real estate agents in Burlingame Park are often already aware of this, and advise an evaluation as part of the disclosures.*
- > *Needs to clarify to the community that just because a structure is over 50 years old, it is not*

automatically considered historic, or could be designated as historic, unless and until it goes through an evaluation that deems it to be potentially eligible for a State or other register. There is a high threshold for determining the significance, beyond the 50 year threshold.

- > Would think many could be ruled out without doing the full research. A major renovation, for example.
- > The historical society database information can provide guidance on whether a building could be ruled out.
- > Evaluations are not cheap. There needs to be a streamlined process for determining yes or no.
- > The threshold cannot be subjective. It needs to be definitive in how it is applied.
- > Are there different approaches for how this is achieved? There could be a staff member who is trained to make an initial determination. (Amsden: That could be an option. However the draft as written requires the evaluation for any discretionary permit. It could be implemented by staff, or could be prepared by an outside consultant.)
- > Are there statistics for how many buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places? Statistically, there is probably a low number of buildings that meet the standards to qualify for the registry. Concerned that a lot of people will be paying \$3500 to determine their house older than 50 years is not historic, since the great majority of buildings in the city are not historic.
- > Concerned if something is written into the General Plan that forces people to spend more money than they already have to spend to do renovations.
- > Could have evaluations of areas with high potential for historic properties. Even in those areas, would not expect to have many eligible.

Chair Gaul opened the public hearing.

Public Comments:

Jennifer Pfaff: Historical society members are not licensed to provide evaluations. A licensed professional looks at certain criteria, including special aspects of a property that may not be evident. Never ceased to be surprised by some of the evaluations. There are areas with older homes that are more in tact, which is why Burlingame Park is treated differently. However there are properties that would be of interest in other areas too. The determinations cannot be dependent on specific historic society staff. Has advocated for the trigger to be where an application is submitted for a major project. Maybe Page & Turnbull can provide a tiered approach. Would not recommend it being at staff level, as pressure would be put on staff members. If someone is buying an older house and does not plan to do a major project, should not need to conduct an evaluation, so would not suggest the evaluation be done at time of the sale. Focus should be on the trigger; a teardown would absolutely be a trigger, but if the home is being left alone or is just having minor changes, does not see a need to have an evaluation prepared.

Leslie McQuaid: Examples of cities with historic resources: Amsterdam, Washington DC, Savannah, Chicago. The focus is on the outside of the building; alterations can be made on the inside as long as the outside maintains the historic qualities. Each of these cities is a tourist destination. Would prefer a district where they are all together, as these other cities have done.

Chair Gaul closed the public hearing.

Commission Discussion:

- > If an application requires discretionary review, it is a potentially significant project. There are not that many \$5,000, \$10,000 to \$15,000 projects that come to the Planning Commission as discretionary reviews. The applications before the Commission typically are much more substantial, and therefore the approx. \$3,500 cost for the historical determination represents a smaller proportion of the overall project costs. The trigger that determines that something should go to the Planning Commission is important. In the past the older, smaller houses were candidates for teardowns, but now most are all gone. Now the teardowns involve more substantial houses, and there is some angst to see the house go away.
- > Should not rely on the historical society to make designations. Could be difficult for staff to be

required to be arbiters for making the determination. The detached professional analysis may help with applicants who are resistant to the process.

> Something needs to be done, since some properties are being treated differently than the rest of the City.

> The economics drive the demolition of houses; a house has a certain life. Perhaps there could be an incentive to restore them. One of the examples shown in the presentation had a tear-down fee to deter or discourage demolitions, or perhaps a reduction in other fees to allow for a professional evaluation. Or if the house character could be maintained better than just tearing it down.

> Could have other language to stipulate when a home would be categorized, to meet the CEQA requirements without stating the number of years.

> Wants the process to be fair, objective, and definitive.

> Likes good old buildings; doesn't like bad old buildings. Just wants to be careful so it does not become misguided. Would want the city to keep data to track the evidence, rather than just nostalgia.

This was a Study Item so there was no action from the Planning Commission.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The **CITY OF BURLINGAME PLANNING COMMISSION** will hold a public hearing to consider adoption of the Burlingame General Plan Update and Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The Planning Commission will review the proposed General Plan and Final EIR, and make a recommendation to the City Council.

The hearing will be held on **Monday, October 22, 2018**, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, 501 Primrose Road, Burlingame, California.

The Draft General Plan and EIR may be viewed at www.burlingame.org/generalplan. The staff report and draft documents may be reviewed prior to the meeting at the Community Development Department, Planning Division, Burlingame City Hall, 501 Primrose Road, Burlingame; and on the City's website at www.burlingame.org. For additional information please call the Planning Division at (650) 558-7250.

To be published by Friday, October 12, 2018.