



UPTOWN PLANNERS

Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 1, 2005 – 6:00 p.m.

Attendees: Steve Satz, Marilee Kapsa, Ernie Bonn, Hirsch Gottschalk, Leo Wilson, Erin Matthews, Roy Dahl, Ian Eply, Mike Singleton, Alex Sachs, Max Stahlman, Mary Wendorf, Paul de la Houssaye

I. Parliamentary Items

i. Introductions

Vacancy on the board will be filled in December, if you want to run we need you to fill out a membership form either here or on uptownplanners.org. We will accept applications up to vote. Everyone gets 3 minutes to speak. Written ballot. Win if you receive 50+% of the vote, if not 50% run off between 2 top candidates.

ii. Adoption of Agenda and Rules of Order

MOTION to approve agenda. (1st Steve, 2nd Ian) **Passed: Favor 9**

iii. Approval of Minutes: Defer until December meeting

iv. Treasurer's Report Current balance \$719.98.

v. Chair/ CPC Report

Condominium Conversions:

As everyone knows, the City Council is considering revisions to the City's condominium conversion ordinance. The City Manager made some excellent recommendations (July 20, 200, City Manager Report), which can be found on the City's official web site. Unfortunately, the City Planning Commission issued its own recommendations that would badly weaken the City Manager's Office proposed changes (for example, the new parking regulations would only apply to projects built after about 1991, rather than every project as the City Manager recommended).

The CPC supported the City Manager's position, and made some additional recommendations. Attached is the text of the motion -- which I authored. The full text of the motion was approved by a vote of 16-7, except for Section 2(b), which was voted on separately. In the initial proposed motion, I had put language in Section 2(b) indicated the new ordinance would apply to all projects "not vested" (having a legal right to build: the end of the pipeline) -- the CPC instead replaced this with language that stated it applied to projects in the pipeline whose processing was "not substantially complete." The compromise section 2(b) was passed 19-4.

A motion by North Park to enact a moratorium until the new regulations went into effect was defeated 10-12. I voted for the motion, but can see the argument by opponents that the push for a short moratorium could detract from getting a strong condo ordinance passed.

General Plan Update

The CPC will be looking at the General Plan update over the next several months. A Subcommittee has been formed, which I was named Chair. This is an important process, since it effects the amount of new housing, density, and timing of facilities for Uptown and other communities.

I have serious concerns that the state is increasingly taken over planning in California, and is pushing unrealistic new housing requirements on municipalities like San Diego -- which over the last year, has shown very little real population growth.

Portland has always considered an example of the success of the "smart growth" concept; yet a lot of those initially supportive in Portland are now having second thoughts. Richard Carson, who was the former Director of Portland Metro made a good comment -- "*Gridlock is simply a function of too many people living in an area, and no concurrency policy or dollar outlay can fix it.*"

- vi. Planner, Max Stahlman:

Workshop “What to know when reviewing projects” November 30 6-8pm on Topaz Way. Policy 624 changed and distributed to Board. Ernie: one more meeting for administrative guidelines – we don’t need City Council approval. (Ernie is Chair of our Bylaws Committee)

Steve: bounce of the board and see if hey support this idea: Addressing cumulative impact of local projects – Laura has stated that the City doesn’t do them (also said this in COW). Alex: if I may interrupt, the City Attorney office has just issued a report on cumulative impacts under CEQUA. I haven’t read it, but I think it addresses some of the issues that we are interested in. There are state guidelines in CEQUA about environmental guidelines. Steve: The issue is that the guidelines are being ignored. Alex: I don’t think this is an appropriate forum for us to discuss this, and I have not been tasked with follow through with the City Attorney’s Office with you. I don’t think it’s appropriate for me to communicate with you here. Leo: Ms. Hammond is in charge of Land Use. Steve: does the Board feel that the follow-through with Planning Review is important? Alex: Ask the Planner what the Planning Dept does with this. Peggy: I think the issue is raised, I think that some of us should get it touch with Max and read the report, and come up with some kind of position of where we’d like to go. We need to talk about specifics – traffic, infrastructure. I think we should look into this and gather up some data. Leo: 1st issue is report, and I agree with Alex, this is not his department. Max: I think we would like to know what we should be evaluating when looking at cumulative impacts, and we’d like to see what the City Attorney office has to say about it also. Max: Steve, give me a call so that I can follow through. Leo: this is part of CEQUA review and I’d like this to be handled in a scholarly manner without personalities coming into it. Max to give us a 10-minute review in the December meeting.

II. Public Communications - Non-Agenda Public Comment (3 minutes each).

Ruth Harrison: Asst Director of Hillcrest Biz Assoc – we are now a PROW. (Public Right of Way Enhancement Program). Hillcrest Assoc is performing a subcommittee and we will be doing a presentation to you.

Alex: changes in transit system in uptown area – on the 15th of Nov MTS will be at North Park Community Center 5-7:30 Proposed changes of transit in the area. MTS increasing buses on 4th and 5th Ave, cut backs on Route 3, Route 16 and some enhanced on 908. In effect January 1, 2006.

- **Elected Official Representatives (3 minutes each)**

- i. Todd Gloria, Hon. Susan Davis, Member of Congress

Consent Agenda

(members present at DR Subcommittee on October 17: Mazzella, Kapsa, Bonn, Wilson, Epley, Hyde, Satz, Sachs)

MOTION to Approve (1st Marilee 2nd Peggy) Passed Approve: 9 Abstain 1 (Alex recluses himself on number 3.)

CAFÉ CARPA DIEM S/W CAFÉ – (Process Two – Neighborhood Use Permit) – Hillcrest – Neighborhood Use Permit for a 216 sq. ft. sidewalk café at 3401 First Avenue in the MR – 800B Zone.

3989 RICHMOND STREET TENTATIVE MAP – (Process 4 – Tentative Map) – Hillcrest – Tentative Map to convert 24 existing residential units to condominiums on a 0.375 acre site at 3989 Richmond Street in the MR -800B Zone.

1086 HAYES MAP WAIVER – (Process 3 – Tentative Map Waiver) – University Heights – MW application to waive the requirements of a Tentative Map to convert two existing residential units to condominiums on a 0.120 site at 1086 Hayes Avenue in the MR-3000 Zone

- **Action Items—Special Reviews**

FRONT STREET VACATION – (Limited Issue Review) -- Bankers Hill/Park West – Request for clarification regarding a prior approval by the Board. Regarded the vacation of a portion of Front Street on the south side of Fir Street. Bordered on the west by Interstate 5.

City of San Diego says Uptown Planners approved this about 2 years ago, but some else came to Uptown on behalf of this issue. We need consent again because it’s been over 6 months. Peggy: table this item to come back with more information. Leo: what we need is the Planning Department’s paperwork. We need explanation from Planning Department, and then we can make an informed decision in December. Max will help us with this. **MOTION: Come back for UP to review (1st Peggy 2nd Alex) Passed Favor: 12**

FABULOUS NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY (Request for Letter of Support) – Hillcrest – Request for letter of support for New Year's Eve event on Fifth Avenue between University and Robinson Avenue.

Went in front of Special Events in the Police Department, but they asked us to move to Friday, because they could not guarantee availability of 8 police officers. The Resolution Party will now start at 7PM. The businesses on 5th Avenue are fine with closing the street. Sound engineers will do their best to mitigate, but we will go door to door in 4-block radius to inform them. Will check noise level during the event.

Public comment:

Warren from Hillcrest Association went to all the meetings. Stepher has made an effort. We don't have any objections as long as businesses on 5th are accommodated.

Board comment

Alex: The music will be shut off at 12:30, the City did not ask for a decibel level? Ans. No

Peggy: Street Scene is now at Qualcomm stadium because it caused a mess, and I don't why you can't do it in Balboa Park where it doesn't impact anyone. Ans. Street Scene moved because of Parking and street fees as well as other issues.

Ian: I lived in the middle of Street Scene and I look forward to this. What I didn't like is the guards and staffing of security and how they restricted some residents' movements. Please make sure that Security doesn't get an attitude. Ans. Now putting Security through Stepher Customer Service training.

MOTION: Issue Letter of Support **Passed Favor: 8 Against 4**

HILLCREST FARMERS MARKET (Request for Permanent Signage) – Hillcrest – Request to place permanent "No Parking" signs on Normal Street indicating parking prohibited during the time on Sundays the Farmers Market operates. Will replace need for weekly posting of temporary signs.

We've been putting temporary signs up for 14 months now and it's a hassle and if we can have permanent signs it's less of a nuisance for everyone. Mike: a lot of this is angled parking, so please make sure the signs aren't in pedestrian flow patterns. Ans. That's up to the City

MOTION: To grant letter of support. (1st Roy 2nd Steve) **Passed Favor: 12**

ALBATROSS STREET -- (Request for One-Way Street) – Mission Hills -- Petition to make Albatross a one-way street west bound between Front and Lewis Streets.

Next to UCSD hospital, strong base of neighborhood support to make the street one-way. Peggy: has the City spoken? Ans. We have a letter of support from City Traffic. Now use street as short cut to hospital. One homeowner was not in favor of signing the petition, but not against the idea. This is a very narrow street, developed in 1928 and the other half in 1940. These have no sidewalks and narrow driveways. Parking on street is restricted and drivers have to do a u-turn, and because we don't have sidewalks vehicles drive over our landscaping.

Mike: the whole medical complex area is full of one-way streets. There was some talk in the past of SANDAG putting plans in place to coordinate traffic in that area, but it never came to fruition.

MOTION: To grant letter of support (1st Marilee 2nd Hirsch) Passed: **Favor: 11.**

Action Items— Projects

A. **1030 ROBINSON AVENUE TENTATIVE MAP – (Process 4 – Tentative Map)** – Hillcrest – TM to convert 40 existing residential units to condominiums at a site located at 1030 Robinson Avenue in the MR-1--1000 Zone; 40 parking spaces.

City letter never came back to applicant. Issues: we are moving trash enclosure from NE side of property to NW side of property – should appease homeowner that live East of the property. Adding 4 feet of soft scape in front of the property. Can now fit two larger type trees, doing stamped concrete so that it softens. If curb cuts need to occur, and there's more than 2% grade on the driveway so it does it will be within ADA guidelines. Preserve historic stamps on sidewalks. Alex: I want to make sure the applicant is clear on what he needs to do for historic sidewalk stamps.

MOTION: (UP Standard Motion for Tentative Map Waivers and Condo Conversions with additional conditions: The driveway be adjusted to provide no more than a 2% cross slope on a 4-5 foot wide portion of the sidewalk (with a saw-cut grid put into this sidewalk to match the typical historic pattern). The driveway from the curb to the sidewalk can be made steeper. Request that the width of the curb-cut be reduced as much as possible without reducing parking. Colored or textured parking spaces should be added. 4 trees should be added in the public right of way or setback area.) (1st Mike 2nd Roy) **Passed FAVOR: 12**

B. 4560 NORTH AVENUE TENTATIVE MAP – (Process 4 – Tentative Map) – University Heights -- TM to convert 18 existing residential units to condominiums on a site at 4560 North Avenue in the MR-1500 Zone

They were here in June, and thought he was denied, but he wasn't he just wasn't approved. Detailed list of improvement was provided. Asking for waiver of underground utilities because there is no nexus in the area. Mary: asking for improvement in driveway? Ans. Doing an improvement of the walkway, but we will give a stamped treatment and try to soften the exterior and use some outside landscape lighting. Alex: there is some concern of the use of the river rock and it's sort of backwards. Ans. This is a Huffman style building with flat stucco walls, what do you do to soften the exterior? We are going to modernize the structure. Roy: what style are you trying to adhere to? Will it fit the style of the neighborhood? Ian: You need to get a designer for the outside to make sure our Community goes forward in a good aesthetic way. You're trying to get this in because you know what the regs are now, you don't know what the regs will be in the near future. Peggy: I don't think our job is to try to determine what you are going to do in the future. I recommend that you hire a professional in the neighborhood so that you can do it up right. Leo: please understand that we want to see what it's going to look like and now you're asking us to approve something we can't see. Applicant: the owner wants to hold this property in family trust. Alex: Suggestion – the applicant on Robinson addressed our concerns about what the project looks like and brought us a rendition, and that's what we want from you. Applicant: for the record, I've listened to what you've wanted in the past and made the changes and asked

MOTION: Denial of project for tentative map based upon concerns over the elevation and design although the landscaping is improved. (1st Alex 2nd Peggy) **Passed Favor: 8 Against: 2 Abstain: 1**

C. PRADO WALK – (Process 3 – Site Development Permit and Tentative Map) – Bankers Hill/Park West – Site Development Permit to reduce: (1.) the required front yard setback on Grape Street, (2) open space requirements AND Tentative Map to construct 24 residential condominium units on a 0.57 acre site at 526 Grape Street in the MR-800B and CV-4 Zone. Airport Approach, Airport Approach Environs.

Appeared in subcommittee in September. Issues with site – 2 zones, not evenly split CV-4 and MR-800 B. Meetings with Chris Larsen and Pat Cooper. We are requesting a tentative map; we are asking for 5 deviations, City supports all of them.

Board:

Peggy: Explain FAR – Ans. Asking for deviation of .18. Proposed is .75, required is .93 for 40% of site. Peggy: I am happy that someone is appreciating 6th avenue for its view and we don't have to talk about heights on this project, it's park oriented. I like the walk up aspect of it. My interest is on the corners, we'd like to see some green, plaza, and community type of things and I don't see any of that. Other than that, you can't have everything, but I'd like to see some community space and for it to be more engaging. Ans. There's no common area here, and there's no commercial so no watchdog to ensure security. We thought a large open space would cause problems.

Mike: concern that notes on planting schematics are hard to read, supposed to put double row of Queen Palms along 6th Ave side. On the 5th Ave side the 2 trees that are there will be removed because they are not doing well, but notes say that no trees will be removed.

Ian: are these zone 3 condos with no HOA? Ans. Standard condos with HOA. Ian: then it's R1. Ans. Units are paired, 2 units share a floor.

Roy: which color scheme is correct? Ans. Our architect reserves the right to change them.

Hirsch: I presume you have enough parking? Yes. What about noise? The planes fly overhead. Ans. Insulated and will comply with City noise mitigation requirements.

Mary: clarification of deviations... Enough parking? Ans. 22 units, 22 2-car garages that are tandem, but no guest parking. Plenty of on street parking. CC&Rs require residents to park in their garage.

Alex: something in our notice about open space requirements. Ans. We are not deviating from open space requirements we are using patios and decks.

Ernie: Affordable housing units? Ans. No, in lieu fees

Paul: Only requiring deviation in front because of CV zone. Ans. The MR 800 allows us to go to 50 feet. Stairways are internal for each unit.

Peggy: What is the height of the elevation at Grape? Is it over 3 feet? Cannot tell from schematics. Ans. Patrick Cooper has approved this. Peggy: Where are mechanical units? Ans. On Northern side concealed. Peggy: Please watch the lighting on the building and don't do what Park Laurel did.

Alex: disapproves of demolition of 15 affordable units

MOTION: The project to be approved as presented with the following conditions:

- Sidewalks on 6th Avenue to be a minimum of 8' in width with historically scored grids included. Parkway along 6th to be 6'-8' in width.

- Remaining sidewalks to be a minimum of 6'
 - A double row of queen palms (one on each side of walkway). Retain as many mature queen palms as possible and/or transplant. Minimum 12foot brown trunk for these new palms will be required.
 - Existing mature trees along 5th Ave to be retained with root pruning, root barriers unless City Urban Forester agrees with health problems.
 - Site walls along the public right of way that are about 3' in height must include at least 50% transparency.
 - All mechanical units and ducting to be screened.
 - All exterior lighting attached to the building should be wall mounted or recessed.
 - Approval of color board to occur in the future.
- (1st Mike 2nd Ian) **Passed: Favor: 8 Against: 4**

As the next project set up, Jeffrey Thom wanted everyone to know about the sidewalk project on 1100 block on University that should be completed by Thanksgiving...Wants representative to be involved in a DIF funded pop-out. Will be Mike Singleton.

D. 3812 KEATING RESIDENCE TENTATIVE MAP – (Process 4 – Tentative Map) – Mission Hills – TM to convert 13 existing residential units to condominiums on a 0.46 acre site at 3812 Keating Street in the MR – 1500 Zone.

Came to subcommittee, and made some of the suggested changes. Trying to make something aesthetically pleasing coming up Washington. Doesn't meet parking requirements, only one space per unit.

Alex: they have been responsive.

Ian: I think you have been very responsive, removing the shutters, landscaping. Go with metal railings it will be more attractive.

Mike: I thought the banding was appropriate, I don't know if it should be that high. What about ADA issue?

Ans. He was trying to get a ramp up to the stairs, but it wasn't required, and they dropped the idea.

Peggy: I don't like that "eroding pebble walk" look.

MOTION: Project be approved with addition of ADA ramp on the corner and update full planes of enhanced materials and use metal railings. (1st Mike 2nd Roy) **Passed: Favor: 8 Against: 3**

E. 4046 NORMAL STREET TENTATIVE MAP – (Process 3 – Tentative Map) – Hillcrest – TM to convert seven existing residential units to condominiums on a 6653 sq. ft. site at 4046 Normal Street in the MR-800B Zone.

Roy: where is the parking? Ans. In the rear, I don't know how many spaces.

Ian: Do you know what your tentative map is? I guess you will provide it in the future.

MOTION: Deny approval of project based on the fact that we have no finite information or tentative map.

(1st Peggy 2nd Erin) **Passed Favor: 10** (Steve and Hirsch are absent)

F. 4043 FIRST AVENUE TENTATIVE MAP – (Process 4 – Vesting Tentative Map) – Hillcrest – VTM to convert 15 existing residential units to condominiums on a 10,800 sq. ft. site at 4043 First Avenue in the MR-800B Zone.

This project has gone to a tentative map.

Ian: I walk past this every day, looking toward the future too – the empty lot is a 4-unit project. I really like this little period piece. It's not a regular Huffman; I think it's fine the way it fits in the neighborhood. I'd replace the lap siding. We wanted a contiguous sidewalk.

Mike: I don't know, the driveway is kind of steep, but I'd try to keep it to ADA standards, I'm not sure it can be done. Ans. We will rebuild driveway aprons.

Alex: Have you looked at narrowing the curb cuts so that you can make a wider curb in the middle? We should add to motion: Attempt to minimize curb cut without eliminating parking.

Marilee: Any affordable housing? Ans. No, we're going to be paying in lieu fees.

MOTION: When driveway is rebuilt, meet ADA requirements, to score the walkway with historical pattern, and to attempt to minimize curb cut without eliminating parking. **Passed: Favor 6 Against: 3**

1. 4134 FOURTH AVENUE TENTATIVE MAP: HILLCREST SUMMIT – (Process 4 – Tentative Map) – Hillcrest – TM to convert 78 existing residential units to condominiums on a .073 acre site in the MR – 800B Zone. 55 2-bedroom units. 23 1- bedrooms.

Subcommittee wanted this a little “more earthy”, craftsman like. We tried to meet the feel of the current look of the community. 124 parking spaces. We do listen to the committee and the Community.

Leo: what schedule are you looking at? Ans. It's not going to be for some time. We're actually not going to be started until 1Q2006. Have given 180-day notice to current tenants.

Alex: Have you met with the tenants? Ans. No, not yet. We don't do that until we know we have a project. We will help them with information about purchasing the unit, and relocation assistance using Housing Commission rules. We also make it a point to meet with each tenant. We believe in doing well by doing good. Alex: there are a lot of tenants here that stayed to hear this presentation, so I'm hoping that you will remain in contact with them. Are you under grounding utilities? Ans. No. Alex: If you're requesting a waiver, that's something we oppose.

Ernie: Low income housing? Ans. No, in lieu fee.

Paul: You don't have enough parking? Ans. I know we don't, and we can't add and have it be economically feasible.

Mary: I like the changes that you made, it looks really nice.

Ernie: Do you know how many section 8 people are in your project? Ans. No we don't, but we do work with them.

Mike: No site plans or tentative map? Ans. No we don't have anything with us. Mike: Can we tell what is going on at the street level? It's worth it to put underground in, it will really make a difference to the look.

Roy: when was the building build? Ans. 1988.

Ian: for the tenants – go to SanDiego.gov for a process map for condo conversions and how they work.

Public Comments

1) They handed in a petition signed by 90 residents, who are elderly with fixed incomes, interns, law students, families, all these depend on affordable housing within Hillcrest. It's hard to ask 90 residents to relocate. What are they doing with the internal upgrades? We keep our complex clean and attractive – this is not a blighted apartment complex.

2) My concern after listening tonight – you're all looking at the outside. Not the inside, which has bad plumbing, mold, very little storage. And they are going to do superficial changes. They sent a 1st letter, then a 2nd letter, which said it wasn't going to happen; now it's on again. The communication has been bad; Parking in the area is very difficult. Ramifications about parking and traffic congestion. Medical profession lives here so that they can be close to the hospital. I am most discouraged by the hardship borne on us. There is a lawsuit pending. I had not heard anything from Tony Atkins, so I called Donna Frye and then Tony Atkins called me and they weren't very nice, they said if they want to do it, then they are going to do it.

3) The median price of a condo in this area is \$485K. You need to make \$83K to \$92K. The median income in this community is around \$40K. The American Dream of buying a home is not attainable in San Diego; the reality of the Dream is the profits made by developers who flip these types of units.

Board Comments

Leo: you don't have a tentative map or site plan. Design subcommittee saw the map.

Alex: I don't see where we would postpone making a recommendation based on a site plan.

Leo: We asked another project to come back that had a similar situation.

MOTION: UP recommends denial for tentative map unless the applicant returns with the minimum of 8 affordable units, commits to due diligence to committing to under grounding (which given the size of the project should be doable) and the applicant will commit to meeting with the tenants to help them relocate and purchase units. (1st Alex, 2nd Marilee)

Passed: Favor 9 Against 0

Adjournment (10:15 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Matthews