



UPTOWN PLANNERS
Uptown Community Planning Group
Special Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2011
Alice Birney Elementary School
4345 Campus Avenue

Present: 6:45 pm: Wilson, (Chair). Jaworski, Seidel, Liddell, Tablang, Ferrier, Bonn, Pesqueira, Dahl, Lamb, Grinchuk, Bonner, O'Dea, Winney, Adler.

Absent: Mellos, Butler

I. Board Meeting: Parliamentary Items:

Approval of Rules of Order/Agenda :

A Motion to approve the meeting agenda was made by Winney, and passed by voice vote.

II. Non-Agenda Public Communication

Pursuant to California Public Government Code Section 54954.3, as applicable to special meetings, members of the public will be provided the opportunity to make public comment regarding the special order of business on the agenda. There are no provisions for non-agenda public comment and no public comment was requested or made.

III. Potential Action Item:

- 1. PLAZA DE PANAMA CIRCULATION & PARKING STRUCTURE PROJECT BALBOA PARK MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT, CENTRAL MESA PRECISE PLAN AMENDMENT, SDP – Balboa Park – Site Development Permit (SDP) to implement the Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project. Project goals include rehabilitation of the Plaza de Panama consistent with the original vision of a ceremonial plaza and gathering space by eliminating vehicle traffic from Plaza de Panama, El Prado, Plaza de Panama and the Esplanade. Project elements include:**
 - 1. Plaza de Panama:** Eliminate automobile traffic from the Plaza de Panama and adjacent promenades and remove parking from the Plaza.
 - 2. El Prado and Plaza de Panama:** Allow pedestrian use of El Prado and Plaza de California by re-routing traffic to the bypass bridge.
 - 3. Bypass Road and Bridge:** Construction of a new two-way bypass road starting at the east end of the Cabrillo Bridge and continuing through the eucalyptus grove around the southwest corner of the Museum of Man to the Alcazar Parking Lot.

4. Alcazar Parking Lot and Walkway: Redesign the Alcazar Parking Lot to provide additional accessible parking as well as passenger drop-off, museum loading, and valet.

5. Esplanade & Pan American Road: Reclaim both the Esplanade and Pan American Road for pedestrian access by rerouting vehicle traffic west of Pan American Road.

6. Parking Structure and Roof-top Park: Construct a new parking structure with a roof-top park and garden at the location of an existing Organ Pavilion surface parking lot. The new multi-level underground structure would consist of 265,242 square-feet with 785 parking spaces on three levels. The new rooftop park would consist of 97,000 square-feet)

This special meeting was a continuation of the September 6, 2011 regularly scheduled meeting of Uptown Planners; at that meeting the board decided and announced this special meeting would be held on September 20, 2011, at 6:45 p.m., at the Alice Birney Elementary School Auditorium. The special order of business was completing the review of the Plaza de Panama project.

The Chair indicated to the applicant that since they had presented at the September 6, 2011 meeting, there was no need for a second presentation; instead the applicant was provide time to respond to various questions that had and would be raised at public comment. Bruce Coons and Alana Coons from SOHO were also provided time to respond to the public comments regarding the project.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of the Plaza de Panama project: Mick Hager, President of the San Diego Natural History Museum and Past President, Balboa Park Cultural Partnership favored the project and opposed closure of the Cabrillo Bridge, and stated project returned 6.6 acres of land for park purposes; Jay Newington, Sixth Avenue resident; favored the project, opposed closure of the Cabrillo Bridge; Dan Piper, Sixth Avenue resident, favored the project, opposed closure of Cabrillo Bridge; Sharon Gehl favored project because it eliminated cars from the plaza; David Gatzke supported the project

Speaking against project; Sol Schumer, University Heights, favors closing the Cabrillo Bridge; Alan Francisco, against bypass bridge; Dan Soderberg, Chair of the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition, indicated project violated Secretary of Interior's preservation standards, and that idea of bypass bridge had been considered in the past and rejected; Pamela Miller, a member of the Committee of One Hundred, opposed the bypass bridge; Alan Coons pointed out that 29 civic and community groups had opposed the Jacobs Plan; and encouraged Uptown Planners to take a position on the project.

End of Public Comment

Gordon Kovtun, on behalf of Civitas, the lead design firm on the project pointed out that the Jacobs Plan has the same grading as the Central Mesa Precise Plan. Furthermore, there is more traffic coming into the park and projected to come into the park than was the case when the Precise Plan was considered. The dramatic increase in the need for parking was therefore not considered in the Precise Plan. He stated also pointed out that Irwin Jacobs would be investing \$25 million of his own funds in the project, not \$15 million as some contend.

Bruce Coons pointed out that SOHO although possibly favorable to closing the Cabrillo Bridge in the future, SOHO at present endorses the Precise Plan which manages traffic using what they call the "Precise Plan Light:" a plan that is not the full realization of the already approved Precise Plan, but a plan that is a partial embodiment of the precise plan and would not result in any actions that would conflict with full expression of the Precise Plan.

Board members then each commented on the project. Chair cautioned that the board should not make its formal advisory recommendation regarding the project until after reviewing the draft EIR for the project.

Motion by Seidel; seconded by Winney, that That Uptown Planners conceptually support the Plaza de Panama project as proposed by Dr. Irwin Jacobs. The motion passed by a vote of 8-5-2; Voting in favor of the motion, Seidel, Winney, Tablang, Jaworski, Dahl, Bonner, Pesqueira, Grinchuk; against the motion, Ferrier, O'Dea, Bonn, Adler, Lamb; non-voting chair Wilson, and Liddell, a member of the Balboa Park Committee, abstained. Absent board member Mellos by letter indicated support for the project.

O'Dea made a motion to amend the motion by stating opposition to the bypass bridge; the motion failed for lack of a second.

A motion was made to adjourn by Dahl, and passed unanimously by a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

These minutes prepared
And respectfully submitted by Secretary Jaworski