

City Council Questions

October 16, 2018 Council Meeting

ITEM 6.1 ROWHOUSE DEVELOPMENT AT 828 TO 836 SIERRA VISTA AVENUE AND 1975 AND 1979 COLONY STREET

1. Can the developer satisfy the affordable housing requirement with 100% in lieu fees and still leverage the density bonus?

No, the developer proposed one very-low income unit to leverage a 20% density bonus.

2. Do lots 13 and 14 meet the row house guidelines as they are not facing a street or open space?

The two rowhomes face onto a paseo between buildings A and D which is also allowed.

3. What does the retaining wall in the Northwest corner look like from the Excell Court side of the fence? What is the height of the retaining wall? What is the height of the fence on top of the retaining wall? Why is a retaining wall needed?

The retaining wall height is six inches high at the corner property line at Excell Court, increasing to 2'3" 45' from the property line near the first guest space. The retaining wall is necessary to regrade the site and achieve a positive slope for drainage purposes from the far corner to the street (Southwest corner). The site is located within the flood zone so all proposed buildings are required to be at least 1' higher than the highest existing grade adjacent to the new structure to avoid flooding. The wall and fence cannot exceed 3' in the vision safety triangle (25' from back of sidewalk) or within the front yard setback (15' from the property line) and six feet along the remainder of the fence. The fence is proposed for safety along the wall and privacy.

4. Where is the pedestrian path? What is driving the higher grade for the pedestrian path?

Pedestrian paths are along the west property line (Excell Court side) from the common open space to Colony Street, along the entry driveway and from Colony Street between buildings B and C near the corner. The pedestrian path on the project site is higher than the Excell Court side because the site needs to be regraded for drainage purposes (see answer to question 3).

5. Page 5 of staff report, height row in table – is the 39’ to 42’ the maximum or the maximum to wall plate? If wall plate, what is the maximum height?
39’ to 42’ is the maximum building height which is below the maximum height of 45’. The wall plate height is 30’5” for all four buildings which is also below the maximum wall plate height of 36’.
6. Page 7 of staff report – where it says Public Comment None – what does this mean? The staff report says there was public comment at the joint ZA/Subdivision Committee meeting. Was there a meeting where there were no public comments? If so, what meeting?

The public comments received for the ZA/Subdivision Committee were discussed in that section of the report. As of writing the Council report, no additional comments were received.

ITEM 7.1 AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR 355-415 EAST MIDDLEFIELD TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR) GATEKEEPER PROJECT

1. What happens to the Summerhill project if the Los Altos School District TDRs don’t go through?

According to SummerHill, they anticipate still being able to move forward with the project if the TDRs don’t go through.

ITEM 8.1 EAST WHISMAN PRECISE PLAN POLICY TOPICS

1. Is open space “publicly accessible” if there is no visitor parking and there are no residences in the immediate vicinity?

The East Whisman Precise Plan will include a network of new public paths and streets, making more of the Plan area accessible to residents and employees within a walking distance. In addition, providing a range of open spaces accessible to employees may reduce demand on open spaces accessible to residents. In any case, the Precise Plan could include language targeting publicly accessible open areas to sites near residential.

2. When we discussed transportation in the East Whisman Precise Plan in June, we learned that we would need a 50%-55% trip reduction to minimize the impact of new office development. Did that factor in the LASD TDRs? What was assumed about a reduction in existing office space?

It did not factor in the LASD TDRs. Those projects would need to identify their own impacts and mitigations. In addition, existing office space would also need

to significantly reduce their trip generation (i.e., to a similar level). This is more difficult to achieve, but the Precise Plan will include trip-reduction requirements for small additions which could capture multiple sites. Many existing sites will “naturally” reduce their trip-generation through the addition of housing and public improvements.

3. Would linkage be linked when a development is approved, or when building permits are issued, or some other timing?

An agreement between an office and residential development would need to occur prior to approval of the office development, since the office development would need to show compliance with the linkage requirement. The residential development could be approved before the office development without the agreement. However, the Precise Plan will include an expiration date, after which the residential project may not be considered within a partnership. It may be upon building permit, or it may be a specific time period (i.e. 2 years). These are among the details that still need to be worked out.

4. What does parking cash out mean on page 11 of the staff report?

Parking cash-out is when an employer or developer provides cash to employees that do not drive to work.

5. What is the parking requirement for studio units under the model parking standard?

Studio units are required to have 1 parking space under the model parking standard. It should be noted that the smallest studio units in market-rate projects using the model parking standard have been 535 square feet, larger than the “micro-unit” area of 450 square feet assumed in the EWPP.

6. What does the EPC comment “Google at Mayfield has successfully self-enforced their employees” mean on page 13 of the staff report?

One of the EPC members described their experience working with Google in the Monta Loma neighborhood. Signage, monitoring, and neighborhood outreach have resulted in few, if any, parking impacts in the neighborhood.

7. Can staff create a chart the correlates trips per 1,000 sf with percent trip reduction with some examples or explanations? Something along this line would be good. More trips / 1,000 sf and more percent reduction examples should be added. If it is possible, can SOV be added to the chart?

Peak Hour Trips / 1,000 sf	Percent Trip Reduction (Peak Hour)	SOV % (Assumes 4 employees per 1,000 sf)	Comments
1.3 - 1.6	0%	~95%	Institute of Transportation Engineers, 9 th edition (baseline)
~1.1	~25%	~70%	EW area site with no mandated trip monitoring or penalties
~1	~30%	~65%	LinkedIn stated feasibility
0.9	~40%	~55%	Proposed EWPP near-term trip requirement
0.84	~45%	45%	NBSPP recent development
0.7	~55%	~35%	EWPP goal

Note: the equivalence is only good for peak-hour SOV. If off-peak-hour trips are not regulated, then the total SOV rate could be higher.

8. What internalization rate is staff assuming for the East Whisman area?

The internalization is not an assumption; it is an output of the transportation modeling. Based on preliminary modeling, it is estimated that between 15% and 30% of employed residents would work in the area. This equates to about 5% to 10% of East Whisman employees that would live in the area. A more precise number will be provided later in the process.

9. On page 17 of the staff report, in a mixed office and residential development, if the max FAR for office is 0.4 for ZA review, what is the corresponding max residential portion of a mixed use project for ZA review?

Mixed-Use projects would be allowed up to a total FAR of 1.0 with ZA review, of which the office portion may be no more than 0.4. For example, the following projects could be approved at the ZA level:

- 1.0 FAR residential, no office**
- 0.6 FAR residential, 0.4 FAR office**

The following project examples would require Council approval:

- 0.5 FAR office, no residential**
- 0.9 FAR residential, 0.2 FAR office**
- 1.1 FAR residential, no office**

10. On page 18 of the staff report, paragraph 1, when did Council provide direction to change the parcel on the North side of Middlefield, across Middlefield from the proposed Summerhill project, to mixed use transit oriented zone? Isn't this a new staff proposal?

Yes, this is a new proposal. It is proposed based on consistency of character.

11. If the new estimated total square footage of open space is 17 acres, what was it in the previous discussion?

The new mapped open space is estimated to be 17 acres. The previous map only showed about 8 acres.

12. In monitoring jobs vs. housing in East Whisman, how many square feet of office are projected per job, and how many employed residents are expected per household?

Generally, the City assumes 4 employees per 1,000 sq. ft., or 1 employee per 250 square feet of office space. City-wide, there are between 1.3 and 1.4 employed residents per unit. Households in East Whisman may be expected at the lower end of that range (1.3), based on the likelihood of smaller units in a multifamily setting.