



**Wednesday, April 20, 2017, 6:30 PM**  
*Santa Clara Civic Center – City Council Chambers*

## **1. Attendance**

The meeting was chaired by Councilmember Debi Davis. Councilmembers Teresa O'Neill and Kathy Watanabe were also in attendance.

City staff present included Ruth Shikada, Assistant City Manager, Andrew Crabtree, Director for Community Development, and several members of the Planning Department were also in attendance to help facilitate the workshop.

Approximately 25 members of the community were attendance with most participating in the workshop. (This included Chris Shay of Santa Clara University, Adam Thompson, President of the Old Quad Resident's Association, and Dan Ondrasek and Rod Dunham of the "Reclaiming Our Downtown" community group.)

Urban Field Studio, the urban design firm leading the visioning process, presented to the community and facilitated the workshop discussions.

## **2. New Business – Presentation, Discussion & Observations**

Urban Field Studio began the meeting with a presentation led by Frank Fuller, Heidi Sokolowsky, and Jane Lin. The presentation reviewed the results of the previous workshops, ongoing streetscape improvements at Santa Clara University along Franklin, and highlighted the Preferred Plan that resulted from comments about three alternative plans from the February 22, 2017 workshop.

The names of the alternative plans presented at workshop #6 on February 22nd are: Alternative A: Focus on Infill, Alternative B: A Meandering Main Street, and Alternative C: Downtown Grid.

The Preferred Plan (similar to Alternative C: Downtown Grid) focuses on returning the Downtown Grid with Franklin Street restored from Lafayette to Monroe Street. Additionally Jackson, Main and Washington Streets are reintroduced from Benton Street to Homestead Road. In this plan, Franklin Street acts as the commercial spine to the new downtown. A mix of residential, retail, office and cultural spaces (theater and museum) along with a market hall, and small hotel are all part of the preferred plan.

The presentation listed the following key things needed for the Downtown (as based on work and comments from previous workshops)

- a. An open space for gathering and events
- b. A street that can be called Main Street
- c. Ease of movement as a pedestrian, but also accommodation of cars
- d. Diversity of activities and uses, including people living in downtown
- e. Shared cultural facilities, such as a theater with the University

At the end of the overview presentation, community members were broken into three small workshop groups to review the preferred plan and to offer comments and suggestions on the design.

The presentation is available for viewing on the Santa Clara City website: <http://santaclaraca.gov/government/departments/city-manager/downtown-revitalization-project>.

### 3. Discussion

After approximately 60 minutes of small group discussion each of the three groups chose a member to present a summary of their comments. Overall the three groups were universally in favor of the Preferred Plan that reinstates the Downtown Grid.

A summary of each group's discussion followed along with some final observational notes from the facilitators, UFS. Each group was asked to discuss the following topics: Preferred Alternative (pro vs. con), Previous Alternatives, Vision (is this the right vision for downtown?), Priorities, & Challenges.

#### **Table 1:**

##### *Preferred Alternatives*

- Liked that it goes through, that there's a natural flow and that it breezes through.
- Liked the idea of a quaint little downtown.
- Like that there is a "plan" that is people friendly and incorporated students.
- Liked the walkability and hopes that it will attract people, a gathering place for events
- Liked that services were provided to a lot of different groups of people
- Disliked seeing parking. Wants the new downtown to be like Campbell. We have ample parking.
- Like housing on Benton (stays quieter) and more density.
- Liked that Homestead is the commercial street and is more active.
- Liked that the Post office and the fountain would stay.

##### *Vision*

- University has special interest for the hotel.
- Incorporate an affordable "Bronco Center".
- Keep the price-point of living here affordable.
- Provide a place for students to hang out.
- City hall location could be multiple stories, placed at the edge of the area to make it more accessible. Can City Hall be located at Lafayette where Office building is?

- You can use elements of the old downtown like their facades. Restore the stores that used to be there.
- Make parking invisible (put it underground).
- Connect with BART when it comes and reconnect with the Caltrain Station using “old streetcar” or a robot car.
- BART extension and development will attract businesses. Transit lines already present in the area - how do we reconnect and reutilize them?
- How walkable will Franklin Street be? European streets have pedestrians and cars. Cars should be on the side street but not on Franklin.
- Take into consideration the already established stores and restaurants.
- Vision has varied with big stores coming.
- Museum: what kind? Anyone moving over.
- Attract the seniors from senior housing already in place.
- Densities for housing - 4 stories is high, but it is preferable for 3 stories. At Monroe and El Camino it's 5 stories.
- Improve safety at the corner of Franklin and Lafayette. Build pedestrian bridge on streets with higher traffic.
- Affiliate theater with the University to promote multiple uses.
- More dining desired, such as a coffee shop that opens 24/7
- This is a Gathering place. It's Dog friendly. There's a place for Music/Entertainment, events on streets and restaurants.
- People would prefer to hang out here instead of Campbell or Santana Row. Businesses will start coming in as the area develops.

#### *Priorities*

- Challenge: How do you acquire the properties to make all happen?
- Challenge: Timing
- Start at Franklin and Main and make Franklin with commercial facing on it
- Start development from Lafayette
- Relocate Franklin Mall Businesses

#### **Table 2:**

##### *Preferred Alternative*

- Liked the Central plaza, visual landmark
- Liked the Market Hall
- Liked the mix of residential and retail (as it once was historically)
- Liked re-establishing Franklin Street and the Street Grid
- Liked the relationship with Santa Clara University and creating an arts district
- Liked the 4-5 story residential, important for activity and critical for financial feasibility from developer's perspective. Underground parking on one level. Liked that it had a high-density to attract retail.
- Liked that blocks have their own green space
- Liked walking scale and pedestrian oriented
- Liked the fact that Downtown is a destination
- Liked the theater
- Work with owners of existing building to use new plan
- Dislike Existing office tower, prevents connectivity with SCU and it's out of scale

### *Vision*

- Complimenting SCU's art district with distinction between the two
- One-story along Franklin Street to reflect history
- Continue gateways/historic/story
- Complimentary cultural uses between SCU and downtown
- Varying architectural expression and mixture of eras
- Mix of expensive and inexpensive so design is heterogeneous
- Visual and stylistic connectivity to library
- Main street continuing streetscape
- Cross interaction between library, theater
- Franklin - pedestrian dedicated only (deliveries ok)

### *New Ideas*

- Franklin Street is pedestrian only or mix-mode occasionally
- Parking on side streets only
- Underground Parking (large)
- Rooftop gardens
- Density important to make underground parking work
- Replace law firm with more residential
- Ground floor retail / parking garage on Lafayette and Homestead
- Small performance venue / coffee shop

### *Next Steps*

- Encourage quality and type of retail - small, independent, big variety
- Establish progressive development standards
- Planning to encourage eclectic uses
- Iconic landmark like a sign or theater

### *Challenges*

- Current Prometheus development
- Assembling Parcels
- Enough residential to make it financially feasible

### **Table 3:**

#### *Preferred Alternative*

- Liked open street concept
- Liked mix of uses – including multi purpose theater and market hall
- Liked the hotel, University would very much like
- Liked market hall
- Liked the open space, though think there could be more for families in the residential areas
- Like there is good connection with University
- Like a street share with cars and pedestrians

### *Vision*

- Family housing (should have)

- Create an Arts district with Low cost housing for artists (live/work) plus gallery space and performance spaces
- Having parking structures and have them near the core of downtown not on edges
- More gathering spaces for families
- Make sure sidewalks on Franklin are wide for cafes and people
- Architectural style that reflects Santa Clara (but not only mission, maybe warehouse style as well)
- Wrap retail to the side streets
- Make sure that people know the downtown is there when going down Homestead or Benton
- Museum shouldn't be at center because they tend to close down early and don't offer active street front.
- Max height 3-5 stories (max 50ft)
- Side streets activity to draw you in (have an European street character)
- Hotel to draw in Alumni and a connection to university activities.
- Millennial housing on top of retail, family housing out back.
- Relocation of City Hall

#### *New Ideas*

- Commercial above retail
- Downtown Sunnyvale as a good example transitioning tall housing to 1-2 stories to meet existing neighborhood on one side
- Hide parking, wrap with retail frontage
- Incorporate historical elements without "Mickey Mousing" it.
- Think about ways to capture the importance of history, industrial elements

#### *Challenges*

- Phasing

#### *Key Priorities*

- City to purchase street to ease overall development
- Money is a challenge
- Develop areas that intersect with University first
- Financial partnering

## **4. Observations by Facilitators**

Near to the end of the meeting, some of the key concerns and ideas of the Preferred Plan were summarized:

- Organize the plan into big themes
- Some building height is necessary for development feasibility
- Underground parking is expensive
- There needs to be flexibility in vision (as the project will take many years and many things will necessarily change)
- The potential for feasibility- how to get there, what steps to make it work
- Biggest hurdles are land purchases and swaps

## 5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM. A date for a future meeting was to be determined and would likely include a format of several brief presentations by participants in the workshops, followed by discussion and next steps.



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