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SAN ANSELMO TOWN COUNCIL & PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF JUNE 15, 1988 GENERAL PLAN WORKSHOP

Workshop on Preliminary Draft Land Use, Circulation and Open
Space Elements of the General Plan.

Mayor Sharp convened the workshop at 7:15 p.m., with Councilmembers Chignell, Colteaux, Walsh (arr. 7:25) and Zaharoff present, and Commission Chairman Hayes and Commissioners Harle, Julin, Sias and Yarish present.

Planning Consultant Roberto explained that his objective this evening was to familiarize the Council and Commission with the preliminary draft. Following meetings by the General Plan subcommittee, a summary had been prepared that was intended to be a concise overview of the primary goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures contained in the document.

Roberto gave a summary of the revisions included in the draft that resulted from the public workshop, including revising the Land Use Map to more effectively implement the goals of the general plan, reducing densities in the Mixed Residential land use category, providing commercial policies to encourage a healthy business environment, providing guidelines for hillside and ridge development and policies on access issues, including policies and programs to reduce traffic on local residential streets, and incorporating the recommendations of the Open Space Committee to allow for broader citizen review of its report. The next step will be to conduct public hearings on the preliminary draft.

Sharp asked the Councilmembers and Commissioners to comment on any major items that were missing or that should be removed from the document before it is sent to public hearing. The comments made included the following:

Land Use Element

1. The Town should consider applying R1-H hillside development policies to properties that are current excluded because they are smaller than one acre.
2. There was support for having a strong business community but in terms of encouraging the greater health of the existing business community rather than expanding its borders.
3. On page iii of the summary, #3 includes a statement favoring elimination of "current unnecessary procedures which delay new businesses from starting...". A question was raised as to whether there were any unnecessary procedures. Roberto responded that this pertained to the issue of parking variances.
4. Growth in the business community should not imply intensity of use; an increase in intensity of use exacerbates traffic problems.
5. Infill development is preferable to annexation, but annexation should be pursued in cases where the property is being developed and access is through San Anselmo. In other words, the Town does not want to encourage development, but if a property is going to be developed anyway and the access is through San Anselmo, the Town should pursue annexation.
6. Having rezoning of adjacent County lands at the County zoning as an option, as long as it is lower density.

7. On page 7, policy 6.2 should be clarified to imply contiguous storefronts, not storefronts interspersed with residential units.
8. On page 8, policy 8.1 should be amended to add: "...in a manner consistent with countywide plan policies on annexation and rezonings."
9. A 40% ratio for low and moderate income housing is high; 10% is more typical.
10. Regarding the categories of "Mixed Residential - Primarily Single Family" and "Mixed Residential - Primarily Multiple Residential", is there a way to clarify the value of having a mixture of single family and multiple residential in these categories?
11. There should be more of a definition of affordable housing objectives and housing opportunity sites in Objective 6 on page 7.
12. Residential over commercial units has proven successful and should be encouraged.
13. Low and moderate income housing should be encouraged through increased density.
14. On page 3 of the summary, the use of the word "promotes" in the heading for the Land Use Element may be an overstatement.
15. On page 2, in paragraphs 3 and 5 regarding the statements that the "Available Lands Survey did not take into consideration the development potential of sites where the existing use of land was no longer an economically viable enterprise..." and that "sites and buildings which are likely candidates for reuse should be identified, and their future land use options discussed.": the reference to designating new uses for existing sites and buildings should be deleted. The Town should not tag certain properties for different use.
16. On page 13, regarding re-use of surplus school land: the Town should zone surplus lands with specific zoning for what is going to happen to those properties. Roberto noted that the plan now says that San Anselmo will not encourage the sale of surplus land, that the Town would like to keep the land in public ownership and is willing to consider other uses of the property by the school district. The Town could identify the school properties separate from public facilities; he recommended that they be zoned for public facilities except if the Town has a feel for what it wants there, then it could be zoned for that use.
17. There should be an ordinance to support the housing opportunity policies.
18. Increased intensity of use in the business community is currently undesirable because of parking problems. If the parking problems are ever solved, the Town allow may want to allow increased intensity of use.
19. There was concern about lowering density levels; there should be higher densities for affordable housing.
20. Staff should work closely with the Town Council and Planning Commission regarding the budget to implement the General Plan.

There was not a consensus on whether the summary included in the preliminary draft should remain a part of the final document. There was consensus that the subcommittee and planning consultant had done a good job in preparing the summary and revised draft elements.

The public comments on the Land Use Element included the following:

Sarah Nome: The allowed uses for school district property should be limited to library, museum, artistic or education; non-commercial.

Gay Kagy: Lower densities are preferable. The population density of 50 persons per acre should be just for apartments. Surplus school sites need rezoning. The service area should be labeled "intended service area" so as not to be misleading. Allowing 2-1/2 and 3 story commercial buildings could create parking problems and a different character for the town.

Robert Epifano: Downzoning is a good idea. The Town should not allow commercial properties to be converted to residential use. Allowing buildings higher than 2 stories would create visual blockades.

Circulation Element

1. On summary page iv, the designation of Scenic and Redwood should be changed from "collectors" to "residential."
2. On page 31, circulation goal #3 is ambiguous.
3. On page 35, regarding policy 10.5, there was concern that the Town may be put into a position of taking the initiative to plan for the improvement of roadways prior to development.
4. There should be a statement opposing the road extension off either Butterfield Road or San Francisco Boulevard into San Rafael.
5. There are alot of one-car garages in San Anselmo and the Commission reviews many variance applications for parking structures in the setbacks. The Town should make it easier for property owners to build off-street parking in order to get cars off the road.
6. A regional traffic plan for the use of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard should be initiated.
7. Traffic safety can be promoted by restricting through traffic on certain streets.
8. Policy 3.3 on page 33 regarding level "D" traffic may be considered for deletion.
9. On page 35, in policy 10.5, delete the words "narrow and circuitous."
10. There appears to be a push to make bike paths a separate network; where this is not possible at this time, bike paths should be allowed on existing roadways as long as they are well-marked.
11. Not allowing through traffic is implied in the General Plan.

Public comment:

Nome: Center Boulevard should not be considered a major highway. Options should be kept open for another north-south route.

Kagy: Regarding policy 3.3, how is level "D" measured? What is intended by policy 4.1 in using techniques to direct traffic flow away from residential areas?

Open Space Element

1. On page 43, regarding policy 2.7, is it more appropriate to keep the definition of the ridge zone in the R1-H ordinance?
2. Regarding policy 2.8, there may be occasions when for reasons other than health or safety it may be preferable for the development to take place on the ridgeline or within the ridge zone (such as due to the location of a group of trees that would block the structure).
3. There also was support for having a definition and map of the ridge zone in the General Plan.
4. The summary should be worded more positively; e.g. replace "prohibition" with "preservation."
5. On page 44, policy 4.1: add "bikes in open space land should abide by the rules applied on lands owned by the Marin Municipal Water District."
6. There was concern about the legal ramifications of #1 and #3 on summary page v, and about the hillside and ridge protection standards.

Public comment:

Jonathan Braun: Will the countywide trails plan be incorporated into the Open Space Element?

Kagy: Acquisition for open space should be included in the goals in the summary.

Staff will prepare a checklist of the issues raised this evening. The first public hearing by the Planning Commission on the preliminary draft was scheduled for June 27, 1988, 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Beth Calamar