

Glen Park Association Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes – June 8, 2011

Special Meeting – Review and comment on Glen Park Community Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report

400 Sussex Street.

Call to Order 700 pm

Present:

Michael Rice, President

Carolyn Deacy, Vice President

Heather World, Recording Secretary

Sally Ross, Membership Secretary

Nicholas Dewar, Zoning and Planning Chair

Lewis Lem, Transportation Chair

Tanya Treis, Zoning and Planning committee member

The meeting had a quorum of elected officers (Rice, Deacy, World, Ross)

Review of Glen Park Community Draft EIR and consider GPA Board of Directors comments to the Planning Department.

President Rice opened the meeting. He stated that comments on the Draft EIR should address the technical adequacy and completeness of the analysis. The goal of an EIR under the California Environment Quality Act is to disclose information on the environmental impact of a project and is the document adequate, complete and objective? The board must submit comments by June 13, 2011, the close of the Draft EIR public comment period.

The board members discussed the following topics that appear to require further analysis or information as part of the EIR:

Aesthetics

1. Scale of development with proposed rezoning and height limits and potential height limits on the BART site (in terms of aesthetics).
2. Glen Park is a small-scale neighborhood: small buildings on small lots. Anything that is out of proportion with that is going to stand out.
3. The Community Plan proposes allowing a five-foot height bump for first-floor commercial space, but given the existing scale of the neighborhood, the visual impact could be significant, and are mitigation measures are necessary: Set-back above the second floor along the street; require wider sidewalks on major development sites.
4. For the BART parking lot site, the 65-foot height limit could have a significant impact. The EIR should analyze the impact of a 45-foot height limit on the BART site.
5. The design guidelines in the 2003 draft Community Plan that were very specific have been removed. These should be part of the plan, to mitigate visual impacts.

Cultural and Historic Resources

1. The EIR found that the BART station and surrounding features were eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources. Implementation of pedestrian and traffic improvements at Diamond and Bosworth plan may require changes to the BART plaza and the effects should be addressed in the EIR. The goal of improving the access to the BART station may require physical alterations to the character-defining features of the station.
2. The mitigation measure presented seems inconsistent with the analysis and too onerous for the very limited potential for occurrence of fossils, which could unnecessarily add costs to new development. Radiolarians are fairly common in the chert in this region and would likely be out of context in the village. We recommend removal of this mitigation measure.

Transportation

1. The EIR evaluates the effects of the proposed improvements to Bosworth Street at its intersections with Arlington and Lyell Streets. The EIR should evaluate the impacts of the proposed improvements (roundabout or speed tables) on pedestrian and bicycle safety. It is not clear how bicycle movements through the Arlington intersection would be routed without conflicts with vehicle traffic.
2. The Community Plan should consider re-configuring Bosworth Street between Diamond and Elk to one westbound lane. Turning lanes and bus stop space should be retained as needed. The right-of-way change should provide a 15-foot wider, more level open space corridor contiguous with the existing steeply sloped green space on the north side of Bosworth Street. In addition, diagonal parking on the north side of Bosworth between Diamond and Lippard may be feasible, and would increase the number of short-term spaces available to visitors to the center of Glen Park.
3. The BART station bus loop design proposal is difficult to understand. How would non-BART passengers using the bus loop platform access nearby streets? Request further analysis of the impacts of the proposed improvements on pedestrian and bicycle safety versus the benefits of the bus loop, including left turns by buses to the loop from Bosworth and from the loop to Diamond. The bus loop involves a 14 percent exit grade. Could this grade constitute a design hazard?
4. Bosworth Street/Diamond Street Intersection Improvements would affect pedestrian, bicycle and automobile circulation (DEIR pp. III.E-38 to III.E-40). However, there is insufficient analysis of the pedestrian safety impacts of the various alternatives.
5. The J-Church access options show circuitous plans. Both plans would appear to conflict with the bus loop plan and the practicality of the plans is questionable. It is difficult to conclude that either would provide a practical improvement to access to the J-Church line, particularly given the physical infrastructure required. Other alternatives for access to the J-Line should be developed and analyzed.
6. The DEIR describes traffic conditions at the Bosworth/Lyell intersection, and the Transportation Improvements include a Variant that would signalize that intersection. However, the DEIR should address morning and evening peak hour westbound traffic back-ups into the eastbound left lane of Alemany at Rousseau (traffic from Silver). The cross-town route and from Alemany to Bosworth Street along Rousseau, Still and Lyell Streets are not adequately addressed in the DEIR.

Air Quality

The corporate shuttle bus use of the BART Station probably impacts air quality. We recognize that the shuttle buses are part of the existing conditions in the project area; however, the Community Plan may encourage additional use of corporate shuttle buses. Limitations on the use and idling of the shuttle buses during construction would also reduce overall air emissions.

Daylighting Of Islais Creek

The “daylighting” of Islais Creek is noted as being covered at a program level of analysis in the EIR; however, the analysis in the EIR is sparse and insufficient to inform decision-making about this proposal. Additional analysis should be presented in the EIR, even though it is only addressed at the program level, to adequately frame future project level CEQA analysis.

The board also identified general comments on the Community Plan to be included in EIR comment letter:

Transportation

1. We generally support any measures that calm traffic in the Glen Park core.
2. The Community Plan, as analyzed in the EIR, shows many instances where the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists is weighed against the speed of automobile traffic through the neighborhood. We support the measures that improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and access even if they result in slower speeds for automobiles. Level of service for automobiles is less important than pedestrian safety in Glen Park.
3. The Plan should include certain changes on Bosworth Street that would meet Transportation goals, open space improvements, and possible parking changes., noted above; reduced lanes and diagonal parking could have a traffic-calming effect on this artery.

Aesthetics

The previous version of the Community Plan included Design Guidelines for in-fill development. These guidelines have been excluded from the current draft of the Plan. We recommend that design guidelines be incorporated in the current Plan. Smaller-scale development is more consistent with the existing community feel of the Glen Park village. Any design restrictions that will help preserve or enhance the existing small-scale aesthetic are supported.

Utility Undergrounding

The Community Plan should identify a goal for the entire area in the plan to have any remaining overhead utilities undergrounded, particularly as the major in-fill sites are developed.

The board agreed that the comment letter will be drafted by Nicholas Dewar, Zoning and Planning Chair, and circulated to other members via e-mail and revised. The final letter will be sent over his signature to the Planning Department by June 13, 2011.

The meeting was adjourned at 930 pm.