

**SUMMARY MINUTES  
FOR THE  
TOWN OF CORTE MADERA  
GENERAL PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

*Meeting #23*

**JULY 31, 2003  
COMMENCING AT 6:30 P.M.**

**“[pacificmunicipal.com/cortemadera](http://pacificmunicipal.com/cortemadera)”**

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**LOCATION:** Town Hall Council Chambers, 300 Tamalpais Boulevard, Corte Madera, CA

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All the documents relating to the following agenda items are available for public review in the Environmental Services Department of the Town of Corte Madera Office at 300 Tamalpais Drive, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday; phone (415-927-5064). In some instances, packet materials for the General Plan Steering Committee may be produced and will be available on Tuesdays preceding the meeting.

One of the primary purposes of the General Plan Steering Committee Meetings is to ensure the public is provided with an opportunity to address the Committee on issues related to the General Plan Update. Each person desiring to speak on an agenda item will therefore be given an opportunity at the appropriate time. Please state your name and address as the meeting is being recorded.

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

The following Committee-members were present: Chair Condon, Alden-Crowe; Chin, Dill, Dupar, Fillpot, Gatlin, Harlock, Kunhardt, Vaughan.

The following staff were present: Tashiro, Weiss, Millar (PMC), Notestine (Mogavero-Notestine), Shijo (CCS).

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

The public is invited to address the General Plan Steering Committee on any matter in the Committee's jurisdiction for issues not on the Agenda.

None.

5. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY NOTES

July 10, 2003: Mr. Dill identified changes (additions) to the minutes relative to noting soils requirements for new construction, and issues regarding construction of a new community center. He indicated he would submit his additions in writing. The minutes were subsequently approved.

6. STATUS OF GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Millar indicated he would provide an update on next meetings at the end of tonight's discussion.

7. OLD BUSINESS ITEMS

Staff, including the General Plan design and transportation consultants, and the Committee discussed specific goals and policy approaches for the General Plan. Approximately 35 members of the public were also present. The following issues were discussed:

Old Corte Madera Square

- Mr. Shijo, from CCS Planning and Engineering, provided an overview of the Town's previous transportation studies, including analyses of the use of a traffic signal and roundabout at the intersection of Corte Madera Avenue and Redwood Avenue. While signal warrants had already been met, the Town had decided not to install the signals. He provided handouts on the use of roundabouts, while Mr. Millar provided copies of W-Trans studies of the intersection. While roundabouts could conceivably work to reduce traffic congestion and improve safety at the intersection, it would be land-intensive, requiring acquisition of existing building space. Mr. Shijo also reviewed the potential for making circulation around the Square one-way. He indicated that the Regional Transportation Plan for the County identifies a long-range (i.e., 25-year) plan for funding limited improvements at the Corte Madera and Redwood Avenue intersection.
- Mike Notestine, from Mogavero-Notestine, reviewed design options for the Square. He indicated the Square could be considered the heart of the community. The Square does not provide for "flow" between the upper and lower areas. He described the types of uses that could make the Square a "destination" location (such as addition of restaurants, pub/brewery, entertainment, civic uses, specialty retail, bakery, gallery, professional offices, etc.). Placemaking was emphasized via 1) taming traffic flow (perhaps with bulb-outs, use of diagonal parking, or even measures that would "cause congestion" as a means of slowing traffic, 2) enhancing the pedestrian environment (widening the sidewalks, addition of street furniture, use of specialized landscaping and shading, allowance for outside dining) and 3)

programming (holding fairs, sales, markets and even having movie nights during the summer). As to building design, Mr. Notestine indicated putting in place the Town's Design Guidelines would help provide focus, including focus on pedestrian orientation, use of appropriate signage, etc.

- Mr. Millar asked the Committee if the preliminary goal and policy statement previously agreed to by the Committee was still considered acceptable (which called for the preparation of a specific plan, focusing on issues of land use, design, transportation studies, etc.).
- Committee discussion followed regarding use of a roundabout and creation of a link to First Street. There was concern noted about cost for installation, and the extent to which a roundabout would function appropriately. At one point, the Town Council had tabled its consideration of this issue, seeking General Plan Steering Committee discussion on it. The Town's Transportation and Pedestrian Advisory Committee previously considered the issue and found the roundabout concept would not work.

Several members of the public spoke in opposition to the use of a roundabout. They indicated the key issue is slowing traffic down, and perhaps closing off vehicle through-access through the Menke Park parking lot. Jim Thomas read a letter into the record indicating installation of a stoplight at the Corte Madera/Redwood Avenue intersection would create traffic back-up, increase noise and air pollution, would be unsafe, and would hurt the local businesses.

The Committee discussed possible use of a four-way stop at the intersection, with a free right-turn onto Corte Madera Avenue heading north, as opposed to use of a signal. Public comment again indicated a desire to make the intersection safer. Traffic flow and vehicle/pedestrian safety in part is influenced by traffic from Larkspur and other areas outside of Corte Madera.

After continued discussion, the General Plan Steering Committee, by consensus, indicated 1) it would not further consider use of a roundabout at the Square, and 2) there would be no link (creation of a vehicle through-route) at First Street.

Mr. Tashiro noted that the General Plan update should only address the issue to a certain degree, and avoid attempts to resolve all the issues related to the Square.

- Mr. Notestine continued with discussion relative to design at the Square, focusing on creating a destination, placemaking and diversity in land use. Keys would be addition of streetscape improvements. Members of the public noted that traffic calming would be needed to create a quieter environment at the Square.

- A brief discussion followed about potential housing construction at the Square. The Town's recently adopted Housing Element was identified, including a policy that identifies potential for up to 20 units to be constructed around the Square.

#### Paradise/San Clemente Commercial Area

- This area, bounded by Paradise Drive and Highway 101 to the west and San Clemente to the east, was discussed as a possible gateway to the Town.
- Mr. Notestine discussed key issues from the Town's 1999 Draft Specific Plan for the area. He indicated some minor changes would perhaps be necessary, but that the document contained many good qualities. Mr. Millar provided handouts from the Plan to the Committee.
- The discussion turned to treatment of the San Clemente right-of-way. Mr. Notestine said that the median treatment should be extensive in terms of landscaping.
- Mr. Notestine provided a slide of a commercial building project with a 4.0 floor-area ratio (FAR). The Committee discussed possible FAR changes to the Draft Specific Plan. Mr. Millar indicated the Draft Specific Plan uses a .34 FAR, which the Committee previously indicated would be insufficient to attract new development. Traffic implications would be very important when considering FAR, since they could result in degradation to local levels of service.
- Mr. Shijo reviewed traffic findings from the Draft Specific Plan. He indicated several key issues could or should be considered, including: removal of the signal at San Clemente/Paradise; creation of an east-west linkage through the project area; a tear-drop intersection at the north end of Paradise; concerns about reduction in the level of service by the Highway 101 interchange. He also stated that the addition of a median along San Clemente could occur if space is made available along the east edge of the street (in an area now occupied by an unused pathway next to the traffic fence).
- Discussion followed about traffic volumes on San Clemente and Tamalpais Boulevard, and abilities to improve the streetscape on San Clemente. Mr. Tashior indicated some funds should soon be available in the form of a grant for widening or improving San Clemente.
- Access from San Clemente was a concern, including the number and location of access points, and whether there would be provisions for left-turn movements from north-bound San Clemente traffic into and out of the project area.

- Comments followed that the key will go back to the ability to readily move traffic in and around the Highway 101 interchange.
- A suggestion was offered that the Paradise/San Clemente center should also include plans for a plaza, square or other destination location for the east side of the Town.
- With little time remaining for the evening's discussion, it was agreed that discussion of circulation issues would be continued to the next meeting.

8. OTHER BUSINESS ITEMS

Mr. Millar discussed calendar dates for upcoming meetings. It was agreed that the Committee would next convene on Thursday, August 21, 2003 at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Millar also indicated an alternative date would need to be found for the planned September 11, 2003 meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.