

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

Meeting #20

**MAY 15, 2003
COMMENCING AT 7:00 P.M.**

“pacificmunicipal.com/cortemadera”

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

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.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Steering Committee members present: Alden-Crowe; Chin; Dill; Dupar; Fillpot; Gatlin; Harlock; Katz; Kunhardt; Marquardt; McLean.

Staff present: Lorraine Weiss; Brian Millar (PMC); Mike Notestine (Mogavero Notesine).

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.

Roland Ladell, a member of the Hilldweller's Association, stated that opinions on the General Plan update offered by individuals should not be considered reflective of those of the entire Association.

5. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY NOTES

- A. The minutes of May 1, 2003 were approved after clarifying the intent of “green building” materials (relating to use of quality construction materials that are also energy efficient and environmentally sound).

6. STATUS OF GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Millar indicated that the June 5th meeting would include an overview of Draft General Plan goals and policies that are based on previous discussions with the Committee. The meeting would also include an overview of the General Plan table of contents (allowing Committee members to see how and where policy issues would be addressed in the General Plan). He also asked that Committee members come to the June 5th meeting with a list of the top three items of interest to them as part of the General Plan update, acknowledging that some of the items may have already been discussed. Finally, the June 5th meeting would provide a glimpse at the agenda discussion topics for the next three meetings, as the Committee moves to closure on this phase of the project.

7. OLD BUSINESS ITEMS

8. OTHER BUSINESS ITEMS

Continued Discussion on Community Design. This item entailed a continued discussion on a wide range of community design issues stemming from the Steering Committee’s field trip held on March 29, 2003. Mike Notestine, principal in the firm of Mogavero Notestine, the General Plan Update design sub-consultant, was present to discuss issues involving neighborhood design approaches and use of design guidelines, commercial development design, use of floor-area ratio standards, and related matters. Items addressed:

Residential Design:

- ◆ Infill development can be contextual and pick up elements of an established community, and can include raised first floors and designs to minimize visual impact of parking.
- ◆ Second story additions can include use of varied roof pitches, and stepped-in wall placement relative to the first story.
- ◆ Design Guidelines will not necessary equate to good design; that process still requires a good design perhaps combined with a sound design review procedure.
- ◆ Where floodplain designs are used, the elevated habitable floor can be combined with a front porch and other features to add texture to the design.
- ◆ New design projects can be positive for an established neighborhood. However, compatibility with neighboring properties need not be the overriding concern, especially if the neighborhood has no defined design character. More at issue may be design questions about placement of a garage relative to the street and general street appeal of the design.

- ◆ Additions should include landscaping as a means to soften any existing design flaws of a structure. The Committee discussed design review thresholds, including how and when such a review process may occur. Perhaps a range can be established allowing staff review, with larger or more complex projects going to the design review board or equivalent body. The key is to allow creativity and flexibility in the design process.
- ◆ Rand Dill provided an overview of photographs of varied architectural styles from around Marin County. He indicated that many different types of design could work in the proper context.

Commercial Design:

- ◆ Key issues focused on rehabilitating older structures, how to make a “place” out of a previously non-descript site, and pursuit of design excellence.
- ◆ Slides focused on animating buildings; use of trellises; moderating rooflines; variation in building colors and wall planes; use of landscaping and public art; window articulation; addition of pedestrian seating areas; solar orientation; traffic calming and other measures to collectively make commercial designs work well.
- ◆ Site design issues focused on placement of parking internal to a site; creation of pedestrian access connections; clustering buildings; use of planting strips by sidewalks and similar features.
- ◆ Commercial designs can be quite exciting and may be less restricted to “character” issues compared to residential development.

Connectivity:

- ◆ Stresses ease of movement, safety and creating a visually pleasing environment.
- ◆ Related issues can include ADA compliance; trail use; transit stops; signage (for safety and identification); an east-west connection for Corte Madera was also discussed.

Streetscapes:

- ◆ With so many diverse areas in the Town, there are a wide variety of streetscapes present.
- ◆ The discussion focused on use of sidewalks; shade trees; and benches.
- ◆ Hillside areas of town, with restricted rights-of-way, can be particularly challenging to designing a desired streetscape.
- ◆ Traffic calming devices can include use of a closed tree canopy; bulb-outs; narrow traffic lanes; and use of parking on-street.

Old Corte Madera Square:

- ◆ Issues included how to support existing businesses; safe and easy pedestrian movements; range of desired land uses; character of historic structures; how to create a pleasant experience for visitors to the Square and place-making.
- ◆ Suggestions stemming from the discussion included slowing traffic; widening sidewalks; using bulb-outs near intersections to slow traffic; making crosswalks more visible.

- ◆ The Committee also discussed traffic flow in and around the Square, and options to consider. A related issue focused on the noisy environment at Menke Park due to vehicle noise.
- ◆ Mr. Millar indicated that this issue warrants further discussion with Mr. Notestine and also with the traffic consultant present.
- ◆ Committee-member Kunhardt discussed a handout that he and others had worked on that reflects underlying goals for the Square.
- ◆ Nancy Barnard provided copies of a plan for the Square that redirects traffic (for both vehicles and buses) essentially in a counter-clockwise one-way direction around the Square and includes more crosswalks and marked transit stops.
- ◆ Other comments suggested that any plans need to account for water lines under the old rail line right-of-way and ways to improve bicycle access and movements in and around the Square.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.