



MEMO

To: GENERAL PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

From: Brian Millar

cc: Lorraine Weiss, Environmental Services Director
Mike Notestine, Mogavero-Notestine

Date: April 7, 2003

Re: Summary of March 29, 2003 Field Trip

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Following are summary notes from our field trip, which was devoted to issues of community design. We had about 20 people in attendance, including six Steering Committee members. Lorraine and I were joined by Mike Notestine, Principal from the design firm of Mogavero Notestine in Sacramento. We departed from the Town Hall parking lot at 10:00 a.m., and made three stops, noted below. Also attached are Mr. Notestine's summary notes from the same meeting.

It was agreed that the planned **April 24, 2003 Steering Committee meeting will be devoted to design** issues as a follow-up to the discussion points covered below. This meeting will get underway at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall Council Chambers.

The summary notes offer a general range of the comments received from the Committee members and the public.

Stop #1 – Old Corte Madera Town Square

- o There is a noted mix of uses present, as well as a range in architectural styles
- o Need for more circulation and/or other physical enhancements to the area
- o Give the Square and its architecture an historical identity
- o Lack of foot traffic has caused problems for some businesses on the Square, particularly those on the south side
- o Vehicular traffic is too fast – need to limit in order to create pedestrian friendly atmosphere
- o Traffic is too noisy for this Square to function as a desirable gathering location
- o There are grade differences between the west and east sides that needs to be considered with respect to design; this area does not function as a cohesive one
- o Parking availability is not a problem at the Square
- o Providing nearby housing may increase foot traffic to the businesses
- o The character of the Square draws upon the range in design character, along with the range in uses
- o Keep the park and parking intact; no development within the Park should be allowed
- o Consider a pedestrian over-crossing for ease of access
- o What would a traffic light do this area? Traffic calming is necessary in some fashion

- We should consider this a successful area, rather than one in need of repair. It works well given the range of design and land uses
- Don't sell any Town lands in the area
- The area works 'as is' from a design standpoint
- Create a path from east to west to provide greater connection for foot traffic from surrounding residential neighborhoods to the Square.

Stop #2 – San Clemente/Paradise Drive (Gateways and Commercial/Mixed Use Area)

- Create a “Gateway” at Paradise and San Clemente Drive that enhances Town identity and serves as a visual focal point
- This area is arguably the most important piece of land in Town given its visibility and vital location
- Uses in this area are viable and may not be changing for quite some time
- Start a street tree program – plant trees along San Clemente
- Place design aspects facing the street
- Widen the sidewalks – too narrow in some locations leading down Paradise Drive
- Add a median to San Clemente Drive (currently a dangerous street)
- Reduce or eliminate left turn movements off of San Clemente Drive (this may be difficult to achieve due to existing arrangement of parcels)
- The Town pump station along San Clemente needs to be improved in terms of design
- Keep building height limits in this area and along SR 101 low
- Consider increases to the Town's Floor Area Ratio provisions that allow greater building sizes (larger building footprints) to increase market interest in development of key sites
- Plan a crossing path to the east (maybe a pedestrian activated crossing signal) since San Clemente Drive functions as a pedestrian barrier
- Eliminate the guardrail along the west edge of San Clemente Drive (along the linear park)
- In this same location, eliminate the bike path closest to the street since it is unnecessary, and the space (right-of-way) could be used for better purposes

Stop #3 – Mariners Cove (Residential Design)

- Second stories should be stepped back from first story (recessed)
- Windows, privacy should be prime considerations for new construction or additions/substantial remodels
- Keep variety of design; don't dictate design approaches through Town guidelines. An individuality in design is desirable
- There is no reason why the Town should consider prohibiting or discouraging second story housing – the key is in keeping yards open, preserving privacy of neighbors, and in view protection
- Consider issues of views on a case-by-case basis
- Square footage (size and mass of homes) needs to be considered
- Floor Area Ratio (FAR) approaches may not work in all neighborhoods (e.g., hillside areas)
- Traffic impacts should be considered; preserve neighborhood character and sense of place