FOR DOCUMENT HELP CONTACT: Planning & Development Dept. /Placemaking Division in Room 3065.



Wednesday, January 30, 2019 Meeting Summary - DRAFT

Steering Committee

Joseph Martinez Jeff Roberts

Eric Payne

David Pena, Chairperson Deep Singh, Vice Chairperson

Tiffany Mangum John Kashian Gurdeep Shergill

Tina McCallister - Boothe, Alternate

Dennis Gaab Cathy Caples Bill Nijjer

The Steering Committee met on Wednesday, January 30, 2019, 6:00 p.m. at Central High School - East Campus, Cafeteria/Multipurpose Room, 3535 N. Cornelia Avenue.

# Voting Session.

# 1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson Pena called the Steering Committee to order at 6:17 p.m. An announcement of translation services in Hmong, Punjabi and Spanish was made by Orchid Interpreting, Inc. Staff provided a brief explanation of the meeting protocol and the plan process to the Steering Committee and meeting attendees.

## 2. MASTER ROLL CALL:

## MEMBERS:

PRESENT 7 - Chairperson David Pena, Vice Chairperson Deep Singh, Joseph Martinez, Cathy Caples, Eric Payne, Gurdeep Shergill, and Jeff Roberts ABSENT 4 - Bill Nijjer, Dennis Gaab, John Kashian, and Tiffany Mangum

# OTHERS:

Sophia Pagoulatos, Planning Manager, DARM Talia Kolluri, Supervising Deputy City Attorney, CAO Michael Andrade, GIS Specialist, DARM Rodney Horton, Planner, DARM

# 3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chairperson Pena opened the floor to the public and received the following comments:

Letha Oergel 3256 N. Grantland Avenue Ms. Oergel, with her daughter, expressed their concern about the lack of privacy and disruption caused by new development surrounding existing rural residential dwelling units.

Bill Robinson 906 N Street, STE 100

Mr. Robinson delivered a letter to the Steering Committee, he expressed opposition to the proposed planned land use change from Business Park to Medium-Low on a site located on the east side of Grantland Avenue south of the Grantland/Ashlan intersection. He stated the land is owned by Derrell's Mini Storage.

Roger Day 7206 W. Menlo Avenue

Mr. Day expressed opposition to the proposed planned land use change from Low Density to Commercial-General on a site located on the east side of N. Annapolis Avenue (south of W. Menlo Avenue). He proposed returning the site to the General Plan's planned land use designation of Low Density.

# 4. AMENDMENTS TO DRAFT LAND USE MAP:

LAND USE MAP CHANGES

The Steering Committee made the following changes to the draft land use changes by unanimous consent:

- a) Removed proposed Commercial-General planned land use designation on the parcel located on the east side of N. Annapolis Avenue, and replaced it with Low Density planned land use designation
- b) Removed proposed Low Density planned land use designation on the parcel located on the northeast corner of Barstow/Grantland, and replaced it with Community Commercial
- c) Removed proposed Medium-Low Density planned land use designation on the parcel located on the northwest corner of Barstow/Grantland, and replaced it with Neighborhood Mixed-Use
- d) Removed proposed Medium-Low Density planned land use designation on the parcel located on the north-side of Barstow between Grantland Avenue to Parkway
- e) Removed proposed Medium-Low Density and Commercial General planned land use designations on the quarter-section parcel bounded by Gettysburg, Grantland, Ashlan, and Garfield, and replaced it with Medium Density

- f) Added Medium-Low Density as a dual designation on the parcel located on the southeast corner of Garfield and Dakota
- g) Removed Commercial-General planned land use designation on the parcel located on the southwest corner of Ashlan/Grantland, and replaced it with Medium-Low Density
- h) Removed Community-Commercial and High Density planned land uses on the parcels located on the south-side of Ashlan at Grantland, and replaced it with Office-Employment
- i) Removed Medium-Low Density on the parcel located on the northwest corner of Shields/Grantland, and replaced it with Community-Commercial
- j) Tentatively removed Medium-High Density on the parcel located on the southeast corner of Barstow/Grantland, and replaced it with Community Park (pending research on vested entitlements)
- k) Tentatively removed Community Park designation on the corner of the proposed Veterans Boulevard and Shaw Avenue, and replaced it with Neighborhood Mixed-Use
- Removed Corridor/Community Mixed-Use on all parcels located east of the proposed Veterans Boulevard to Polk Avenue, and replaced it with Neighborhood Mixed-Use
- m) Removed Corridor/Community Mixed-Use on the parcel located on the northeast corner of Gettysburg/Grantland, and replaced it with Neighborhood Mixed-Use
- n) Removed Commercial-General on the parcel located on the northeast corner of Blythe/Ashlan, and replaced it with Neighborhood Mixed-Use
- o) Accepted the proposed changes by community member Daniel Brannick except the following:
  - removal of Commercial-General on the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of Blythe and Dakota
  - ii. removal of High Density on the west side of Blythe near the intersection of Blythe/Ashlan
- p) Removed the High Density and Commercial-Recreation planned land use designations on the parcels located on the northwest corner of Blythe/Dakota, and replaced with Medium-Low density

The following changes were tabled:

- a) Changes to the parcel located on the northeast corner of Shaw/Grantland
- b) Changes to the parcel located on the west side of Blythe near the intersection of Blythe/Ashlan
- c) Changes to the parcels located on the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of Blythe/Ashlan
- d) Changes to the parcel on the west side of Grantland Avenue, near the intersection of Ashlan/Grantland

## OTHER PROPOSALS

- a) Through unanimous consent, the Steering Committee decided to select up to three potential locations for the proposed flagship Regional Park to be studied during the EIR process.
- b) Through unanimous consent, the Steering Committee supported the proposal to extend the Sphere of Influence to include the area bounded by Garfield, Clinton, Grantland, and Shields, and to include the recommendation within the Specific Plan document.

# 5. TABLED AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAFT GUIDING PRINCIPLES: HOUSING

Moved by Member Payne, seconded by Vice Chairperson Singh to add the following item as a guiding principle under the housing section: "Reaffirm the City's commitment and obligation to affirmatively furthering access to fair and affordable housing opportunities by strongly encouraging equitable and fair housing opportunities to be located in strategic proximity to employment, recreational facilities, schools, neighborhood commercial areas, and transportation routes."

## **ROLL CALL VOTE**

CHAIRPERSON PENA	AYE
VICE CHAIRPERSON SINGH	AYE
MEMBER MARTINEZ	AYE
MEMBER CAPLES	AYE
MEMBER PAYNE	AYE
MEMBER SHERGILL	AYE
MEMBER ROBERTS	NV *

ROLL CALL TALLY: 6 - AYES, 0 - NOES, 0 - ABSTENTION, 1 - NOT VOTING

#### 6. STEERING COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

Member Caples discussed her proposal for the name of the West Area to be Terre Vista (view of the land). After discussion, the Committee recommended a community workshop on brainstorming the name/identity for the Plan Area.

4 | Page West Area Specific Plan Steering Committee Meeting Summary Staff informed the community and Steering Committee about the February 20, 2019 community meeting in regards to the Community Landscapes Plan project. Staff informed the Steering Committee that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at Glacier Point Middle School.

## 7. UNSCHEDULED COMMUNICATIONS:

No comments from the public were heard under unscheduled communications.

## 8. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m. on an adjournment motion offered by Member Caples, with a seconded by all.

(VOICE VOTE TALLY 6 – AYES, 0 – NOES, 0 – ABSTENTIONS, \*1 – NOT VOTING).

Respectfully Submitted,

RSHET WA

Rodney Horton

Staff Representative

\* Member Roberts is recorded as Not Voting due to leaving the meeting early.

Enclosures: Letter from Bill Robinson

Letter from Daniel Brannick



CORPORATE OFFICE: 3265 W. ASHLAN AVE., FRESNO, CA 93722

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FAX: (559) 224-1884

January 30, 2019

West Area Specific Plan Committee c/o Mr. Rodney Horton, Planner Development and Resource Management Department City of Fresno 2600 Fresno St, Room 3065 Fresno, CA 93721

Moonbak L. P. dba Derrel's Mini Storage, Inc 3265 W Ashlan Ave Fresno, CA 93722

Subject: APN: 512-050-56; Property Address: 3670 N. Grantland Ave; Acreage: +/- 18.95;

Purchased: 11-04-2005

Dear Mr. Horton,

It has come to our attention that the subject property owned by Moonbak L.P. dba Derrel's Mini Storage, Inc with a current land use designation of Business Park has been proposed to be changed to a Medium Density Residential land use.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our strong opposition to any change in the current land use designation of Business Park. Derrel's Mini Storage worked with City planners during the last General Plan Update to maintain the BP Zone on this parcel and had a motion by Steve Brandau to honor the request. The land use designation was voted on by City Council with the last General Plan Update in December 2014. Derrel's Mini Storage purchased this property at a price over \$2 million dollars because it was already zoned BP which is a "by right" use for a mini storage and we respectfully request that this land designation stay as is.

Thank you,

Karen Kendall

Development Manager Derrel's Mini Storage, Inc

559-224-9901 Ext 3028

kkendall@derrels.com

January 10, 2019

To: Rodney Horton, Planner III
City of Fresno, Development and Resource Management Department

#### Subject: West Area Specific Plan – Draft Land Use Map Comments

Rodney, below are my comments regarding the Draft Land Use Map for the West Area Specific Plan. The underlined headings denote different geographic locations within the plan area for which I have remarks. Also included are some exhibits to help better articulate the changes I am recommending.

(Note: While the comments are focused on recommended revisions, I do want to acknowledge that the Draft Land Use Map includes some good changes from the existing General Plan designations. In particular, the changes made to the residential densities in the southwest portion of the plan area seem like they do a better job of aligning land use designations with the character of existing development while also encouraging a more consistent urban-to-rural transition that people have sought to promote and preserve.)

#### Ashlan and 99 Area:

As a general comment, I feel the current draft of the Land Use Map has misinterpreted the character of development and types uses that I and others advocated for along Ashlan Avenue towards Freeway 99. Specifically, the proposed map neglects the development of commercial/retail uses and other community amenities at Ashlan and 99 while overemphasizing new residential development. Quoting the draft Guiding Principles, Catalytic Corridors are intended to "encourage the orderly and consistent development of civic, parkland, retail and commercial, mixed-use, and multi-family uses." While the Draft Land Use Map included revisions that would add more mixed uses further west along Ashlan, the revisions made near Ashlan towards 99 would arguably impede development of a mixture of uses and exacerbate the condition where it feels like the area has a lot of residential development and not much else.

I would recommend comprehensive revisions to the draft land use designations in this area. I have included an exhibit that displays recommended changes to the land use designations from those presented in the Draft Land Use Map. The exhibit also includes a few proposed local street/roadway alignments that would ideally help improve access and circulation throughout the area (including pedestrian travel) and encourage high-quality development (e.g. running an east-west local street south of Ashlan that could encourage a structure to be designed to look good from multiple street views). The overarching theme of these proposed changes is that the Draft Land Use Map should be revised to include more commercial and/or community amenity designations along Ashlan while reducing the amount of residential designations overall and scaling down some of the proposed increases in residential densities.

#### Residential Land Uses

The proposed changes here include reducing several areas from High Density Residential (30-45 DU/acre) to a mix of Urban Neighborhood Density Residential (16-30 DU/acre), Medium High Density Residential (12-16 DU/acre), and Medium Density Residential (5-12 DU/acre). Higher-density areas remain concentrated near Ashlan toward 99, but the highest overall density is now Urban Neighborhood Residential. While I am generally more concerned with aesthetic form over density, the residential densities shown in the Draft Land Use Map would be exceptionally high in comparison to existing development and would create difficulty in promoting smooth built-environment transitions with existing development – both in terms of density and of form. I feel the proposed configurations would accomplish this "transitioning" more effectively, would be more consistent with the plan's Guiding Principles as well as with the preferences of residents in the area, and would still realistically allow for future development to occur in the area.

I also should note that the Medium High Density Residential designation appears to allow for more flexibility in the development of housing types (ranging from single-family detached to multi-family) while promoting greater

residential density – both of which are things I think are good to promote for infill development in the area – which is why it appears on the map as a buffer between existing single-family residential development and areas designated for the highest density. If another residential land use designation offers that same kind of buffer/transition quality, it could be appropriate to use instead.

Also attached for reference are some pictures to help guide the form which I am seeking to promote through the density changes, i.e. what my ideal "transitional" density might look like and what my ideal "highest level of density" might look like.

#### Commercial Uses

My single biggest goal for the West Area Specific Plan is to encourage desirable commercial development on the vacant land at the south side of Ashlan between Blythe and 99. It is a highly traveled, highly visible, well-connected area that has enough space to accommodate uses like a supermarket and gym/fitness center which are generally seen as desirable amenities and that the area currently lacks. Because of those characteristics, I feel it provides the best area to focus on to initiate a "Catalytic Corridor" along Ashlan. I would go so far to say that any attempt at successfully catalyzing Ashlan Avenue in the West Area will hinge on the quality of development that starts just west of 99 – it is that much of a focal point for the entire corridor.

The type of commercial development I would hope to see here would be something like the commercial/retail phase of the Park Crossing development located at Friant and Fresno – which is anchored by a Trader Joes', a Petco, and a Sportsmen's Warehouse sporting goods store, and supported by a number of restaurants and smaller stores. The proposed amount of red "Commercial" land on the map is intended to roughly correspond with the size of Park Crossing.

The area shown as Neighborhood Mixed Use, I should note, is entirely contingent on construction of a local street running south from Parkway and joining Brunswick; without a local street to offer some additional frontage, the area could be designated for either commercial or Urban Neighborhood Residential use. The intent of this demarked area is to provide space for smaller-scale commercial uses (e.g. barber shop, nail salon, cafe, small professional office) that could be beneficial to have in the area but perhaps not a good fit in the larger "Commercial" designated area, while also providing a density/intensity transition toward existing single-family residential areas. The same general idea might be accomplished through a Commercial Main Street designation.

The corners of Blythe at Dakota are shown as replacing commercial areas with Medium Density Residential designations because commercial uses at this location seems problematic. Placing commercial here would detract from focusing activity along Ashlan, and the immediate vicinity seems poorly suited to accommodate commercial uses, given the limited road capacity of both Dakota and Blythe as well as the concentration of existing rural residential parcels along both streets. (Some kind of very low-impact commercial use may be reasonable on one corner)

Overall, the proposed space and locations for commercial areas would ideally provide commercial development of an appropriate size and mix of uses that would serve people in the area and people passing through but also not cannibalize or undermine development of the proposed Shaw Town Center or at existing commercial uses toward the southern portion of the plan area (e.g. Clinton/Brawley and Clinton/Marks).

#### Parks and Public Facilities

The two proposed changes here entail adding a small park site and adding a Library or Community Center. The proposed park site (north side of Dakota, east of Brawley) is located on a vacant, awkwardly shaped parcel surrounded by a relatively high level of existing residential development. The site seems unlikely to be developed with any kind of other use in the foreseeable future, and its location would provide improved park access for residents near Dakota and Brawley. The proposed Library/Community Center site is somewhat arbitrary (i.e. no especially unique or compelling reasons for the site) and may be viable for some form of residential development, but it would be situated in accessible proximity to existing and proposed development in the area, and setting aside a portion of public/civic use land in this area could be useful for meeting future community development

needs. Because the General Plan provides that all new parks, open space, and public facilities carry dual land use designations, both sites would carry an alternative land use designation to allow for alternative development if such an opportunity arises.

#### Dakota/Polk:

I recommend changing a portion of the southwest corner of Dakota and Polk from Medium Density Residential to a commercial use designation. This property is currently occupied by Fig Garden Packing, and it has been developed with "ag-styled" buildings used in the processing and distribution of figs and other dried fruits. Aesthetically, these "ag-styled" buildings seem to present an opportunity where, if the packing operation ever ceased or relocated, the buildings could be repurposed as a thematic commercial building, plaza, or something similar. I think a project like this, if developed, would forward the Specific Plan's Guiding Principles related to agriculture and Agri-tourism.

#### Park Sites near Herndon and 99 Area:

It may be worth considering an alternative to the proposed park site on the west side of Grantland between Sierra and Bullard. Notably, the site appears to be developed with an existing residence; it is adjacent to an enclave of large rural residential properties whose owners may potentially oppose a park site here; and it may require reconfiguration of existing medians on Grantland to allow access to the site. These factors may present challenges towards actually getting a park developed at this location.

As an alternative, there is a large amount of currently vacant land near the southeast corner of Herndon and Garfield. The area is currently designated Low/Medium Low Density Residential, but the parcels have remained undeveloped for a number of years (possibly due to the shape of the parcels and their proximity to Herndon). Casually viewing the site using Google Earth, it seems possible to develop a park site here along with some kind of buffer between a park and the nearby residential enclave so as to not unreasonably disturb existing residents. A park site here might also offer a locational benefit based on its proximity to the San Joaquin River.

#### Shaw Town Center:

The proposed Shaw Town Center would ostensibly bring retail/commercial amenities west of 99 and the railroad tracks, thus improving access and convenience to these types of amenities for residents in the West Area. On balance, I am in support of its development. However, I have two primary concerns about the planned Town Center:

- 1) As expressed by several different people throughout the community input process, there are major concerns about the traffic conditions that would result upon the Town Center's buildout. More specifically, traffic is already very congested at times in this area, and this is largely because of some really inadequate sections of the roadway network in the area that are complicated and expensive to improve (e.g. the intersection of Shaw and Polk, and the constrained Shaw bridge over 99). Even with the completion of Veterans Boulevard to offer some circulatory relief, the proposed Town Center would likely exacerbate the poor conditions at this segment of Shaw.
- 2) The proposed Town Center could result in blight and vacancy further east on Shaw Avenue, similar to the conditions seen on Blackstone Avenue as new commercial development has historically trended northward. Sections of west Shaw already experience some amount of blight and long-term vacancy. From my subjective view, the current conditions on Shaw are not as bad as the commercial blight/vacancy along Blackstone, which seems to be due to the presence and arrangement of some major anchor tenants along the stretch of Shaw between Golden State and Marks (e.g. Costco, Walmart, Target, and to a lesser extent Home Depot). Development of the Shaw Town Center (particularly the "RMX" areas) could end up drawing some of these existing anchor tenants out of their existing facilities, via either immediate relocation or more indirectly through development of new stores while older stores decline. If that eastern segment of Shaw were to lose those tenants, commercial blight and vacancy might rapidly accelerate without some kind of planning to repurpose/redevelop these spaces for non box-store uses.

These two concerns may be more appropriate to consider at stages other than the Land Use Map planning phase (and may also go beyond the scope of the West Area Specific Plan process), but I feel they are related and significant enough to contemplate during the process of refining Land Use designations for the plan area.



Remove the proposed commercial at Dakota and Blythe (some low-impact, small footprint of Commercial at N/W corner may be OK)



