



**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DRAFT MINUTES
LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT**

Tuesday May 17, 2016

Mitchell Park Community Center – El Palo Alto Room
3700 Middlefield Road
Palo Alto, CA 94303
5:30 PM TO 8:30 PM

Call to Order: 5:31 PM

Co-Chair Garber: I'd like to call the meeting to order and ask if Robin would take roll. It's 5:31 on Arthur's official clock.

Present: Filppu, Fine, Garber, Glanckopf, Hetterly, Hitchings, Keller, Kleinhaus, Levy, McDougall, McNair, Moran, Nadim, Packer, Peschcke-Koedt, Summa, Sung, Uang, Uhrbrock, van Riesen, Wenzlau

Absent: Emberling, Kou, Titus

Co-Chair Garber: Welcome, Hillary.

Oral Communications:

Co-Chair Garber: First, we will have Oral Communications. We have one speaker, Rita Vrhel. You'll have 3 minutes.

Rita Vrhel: I'm Rita Vrhel. I live over on Channing. I've been very concerned about the rising home inequity in Palo Alto. Fortunately, I bought my little bungalow in 1983, so I don't have to worry about rents or some of the problems that many of our public safety workers, teachers and tech workers worry about. Last night, if you were at the City Council meeting, there was a very raucous discussion about mostly Palo Alto Forward, I believe, demanding that the City Council make available housing to people who on average make \$120,000 but cannot afford the average cost of a Palo Alto home, which was given as \$2-\$3 million. If you have been looking at house prices over the last several years, \$2-\$3 million in Palo Alto will not buy you very much anymore. What I am seeing is these three-bedroom/one-bath, three-bedroom/two-bath traditional homes built before 1980 being purchased, torn down and made into mega-mansions which then sell for anywhere from \$5-\$7 million. The question is how can we make the buying field a little bit more equitable. I would like to plead with your group, as I will plead with other groups, to consider adding all basement square footage into the floor area ratio on all new development. Currently, I believe only the garage counts in the floor area ratio, and I'm not quite sure why this occurred, but I believe it started in the 1980s when basements were traditionally some place where you put your heater. If you go over to 736 Garland, my favorite

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1 basement, this basement is 3,543 square feet. On top of that sits a 3,500-square-foot house.
2 This was a traditional three-and-two in a residential area which has been pretty much made
3 over. When this house comes on the market, it will be out of reach for most people living near,
4 working in or commuting to Palo Alto. Also, this makes housing for lower-income workers
5 impossible, and I think it's probably impossible at any rate at this point. That's another thing. I
6 would really ask that you look into the floor area ratio and remedy the situation by adding all
7 basement space to the floor area ratio. If you know Bob Moss, he has also spoken quite
8 eloquently regarding this floor area ratio inequity. Maybe I can get him to come to one of your
9 meetings. Thank you very much.

10

11 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. I see no other speaker cards. Shani, who has to leave now is
12 going to spend 3 minutes and give us some of her comments on some of the topics.

13

14 **Shani Kleinhaus:** I gave public comment at City Council last night asking to put a hold on the
15 EIR. I said to them that the EIR, as is, now is premature for many reasons. One is that I don't
16 know how many of you have had a chance to look at it; I haven't. Another is that a
17 supplemental EIR is already scheduled, which means that if we wanted to make comments, we
18 have to do it twice, which puts undue burden on all of us and the public who wants to comment
19 on the EIR. Another thing is that there is a lot of things moving forward that seems like we are
20 discussing them right now. Why don't we put a hold on that until these things are resolved,
21 and then do an EIR on everything at the same time? Right now, there is four alternatives; they
22 are considering a fifth one. Maybe some of the alternatives that are there now can be
23 dropped, and then we don't have to waste money on continuing analysis of things that really
24 make no sense based on discussion here. I would like you to add that to your discussion and
25 love to know what you decide to recommend to the City Council. If you haven't had a chance
26 to read it, the comments are due on the 6th. It's not a lot of time to read that big document
27 and then make reasonable comments and then get another one of the same kind. Thank you.

28

29 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you, Shani.

30

31 Staff Comments:

- 32 1. Recap of May 16 City Council Meeting on the Fifth Scenario and Revised Schedule

33

34 **Co-Chair Garber:** With that, I believe Staff has some comments to make.

35

36 **Hillary Gitelman:** Thank you. Dan, Arthur, everyone, I just wanted to start this off and then
37 Elaine and Andrew are going to help with staff comments this evening. Just kind of picking up
38 where Shani left off. The Council had a good conversation last night. It was late, so some of us



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1 are a little blurry-eyed today. They had a conversation about the idea of adding a scenario to
2 the EIR. As Shani indicated, we have a draft EIR on the street. It's actually been out there since
3 early February. If you haven't taken a look by now, you have a couple more weeks left.
4 Comments are due by June 8th. The Council has already indicated their desire to analyze a
5 scenario in addition to those that are analyzed in the Draft EIR. The discussion last night was
6 about what would that scenario look like. Surprise, surprise, they didn't decide they wanted to
7 analyze one more scenario; they said, "We want two more scenarios." We're still figuring out
8 how to respond to the Council's direction last night. I do think it's clear that the Council, in the
9 course of their conversation—every conversation in fact that they have about these issues—
10 they offer insights that are useful to us in the planning process. All of you are aware that we're
11 complex thinkers here in Palo Alto. We're trying to do a few things at once. We're trying to
12 make sure that the EIR process is moving, and that it's informing what we're doing as a CAC and
13 at the City Council on the planning issues. At the same time, we're trying to take the
14 information and the comments that are gleaned from the environmental review process and
15 feed that back into the planning process. It's not unusual to have interaction between these
16 two things, but the thought that we're doing it—the simultaneity of it makes it challenging; I do
17 recognize that. The staff and I are happy to help you with any additional questions that you
18 have about the issue. I think we're going to find it continues to be important that we think in
19 an integrative way, that we take from Council discussions what we can, and that we do what
20 the land use subcommittee has really started doing in a fantastic way which is articulate what
21 options are for the Council, so when we bring the CAC's work products to the Council, we're
22 clearly outlining some options for them. Specifically in terms of what we learned last night, we
23 got direction to look at two different scenarios: one on the big side and one on the small side.
24 I think if I were going to interpret—I invite those of you who heard the discussions to offer your
25 thoughts when we get into the land use discussion, but if I were going to interpret what I
26 thought the Council's direction was saying to us, it was saying, "Don't be afraid to put out there
27 some options that are really quite different in terms of scale and in terms of the amount of
28 growth and the changes that you would think of in terms of policy. Articulate those options
29 and ultimately at the end of the day, we'll make a decision based on all of the data we have in
30 front of us and the recommendations of the CAC and the Planning Commission." One of the
31 options was in response to folks arguing that we should go big on housing, and it suggests that
32 we would accelerate the rate of housing production over the next 15 years. The other one is
33 more about staying small in terms of growth or relatively small in terms of growth, but really
34 maxing out the potential of performance measures and kind of sustainability practices to
35 address the impacts of development that happens. Those are both kind of themes that we've
36 already been talking about as a group, and I think that we'll continue to talk in the land use
37 discussions this evening and in the months ahead. Next steps on the EIR schedule. As I
38 mentioned, your comments, if you're submitting written comments, are due on the 8th of June,

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1 by the 8th of June. Then, the Council will be holding a public hearing on the EIR, if you want to
2 just provide written comments, on June 6th. I expect at that point there will be a little bit of
3 follow-up discussion on these scenarios that they posited last night. That's kind of what I
4 wanted to say. Now, Elaine is going to offer some thoughts on the schedule, and Andrew's
5 going to do a little preview of where we are with the packet and what we expect from this
6 evening.

7
8 **Elaine Costello:** It's been a pretty hectic time over the last month. Those of you who came to
9 two meetings in one week, we had a bunch of weeks like that. We've been looking at the
10 schedule and trying to keep it moving, keep the momentum going but add a little bit more
11 breathing room, a little bit more time for just being able to meet with you and get back and
12 produce the kind of product that we're all proud of. What we're going to be doing. We're not
13 changing the meeting for the next CAC; that will be June 21st. That will be focused on
14 transportation, and it will include comments from the sustainability committee that has already
15 met and a future meeting of the transportation committee. I think that there is a Doodle poll
16 out for June 2nd or June 7th. Then, we will move on to the land use issues. The way that'll
17 work is we'll meet with the transportation subcommittee, then we'll meet with the CAC on the
18 transportation issues. Then, we will also continue to work on land use. We are scheduling a
19 sustainability committee meeting on the land use issues to really explore those policy links
20 between the S/CAP and land use issues. We have a Doodle poll, or will shortly, for June 13th or
21 14th. Then, we'll come back with that information to the land use subcommittee later in June
22 and move the discussion of land use with the entire CAC, again, in July or the summer meeting.
23 All you'll be looking at in June is transportation. We're preparing for that. In July, you'll be
24 looking at land use. We're trying to make sure that there is no more than one meeting a week
25 for your benefit and for ours, because we discovered that two meetings a week and being able
26 to digest and get back and really think that through and give you time was just not working out
27 ideally. Any questions on that? That sounds good to everybody? Great. I'm going to turn it
28 over to Andrew. In terms of today's schedule, the schedule for this afternoon, we had some
29 comments and some additional information on land use that we wanted to introduce when we
30 get to the land use issue. I think we can defer Andrew's discussion until that point and move on
31 now to the recommendations on the Community Services and Facilities Element. If the Co-
32 Chairs would be willing to hand it back to us for a little bit on land use so we can fill-in some
33 information and give a little bit more background, that would be great.

34
35 **Elena Lee:** If I may, I just also wanted to add that Kristen O'Kane is here, Assistant Director of
36 Community Services, to speak on the CSF Element. She's here to answer questions as needed.

37



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1 **Co-Chair Garber:** Welcome. The other thing I will add is I think Elena may want to take a break
2 between the two items to take a photograph. Andrew.

3

4 **Elaine Costello:** We can move on to community services?

5

6 **Co-Chair Garber:** Yes. Andrew.

7

8 **Elaine Costello:** Andrew, you guys can move on with community services. I think we want to
9 get a bounce back to Andrew and I at land use.

10

11 Agenda Items:

12 1. Report from the CSF Element Subcommittee

13

14 **Elena Lee:** I can also add that the CSF Element was revised following multiple meetings with
15 our community services subcommittee. We've had multiple discussions as well with our
16 Community Services Department, with Kristen and Rob. There are portions of it that relate to
17 employee training. We've also consulted with Rumi, our Chief People Officer. What you have
18 in front of you would be the result of a lot of work based on direction from both the CAC as well
19 as the last City Council hearing in terms of reducing and consolidating the policies and programs
20 within this document. With that, I'll turn it back.

21

22 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you.

23

24 **Co-Chair Garber:** In your packet, you have the most recent draft of the Community Services
25 Element. Perhaps, it would be appropriate for the subcommittee to first weigh in. I'd also be
26 interested in learning how many people have comments on it. After the subcommittee weighs
27 in, we'll look for hands. Who would like to speak from the subcommittee? Anyone? Don.

28

29 **Don McDougall:** I don't think there's much more to say than Elena said. I think it's been
30 reduced quite efficiently. I think that it's not the length of the verbiage that's left in here as an
31 issue. I think it might be the actual words themselves that may need to be edited at this point.
32 I think that we've had good collaboration, and we've done our best to consolidate what we
33 heard from the CAC and from the Council. I think it's getting very close to be a work product
34 that we can publicize.

35

36 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you, Don. Jennifer, thank you.

37



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1 **Jennifer Hetterly:** I just wanted to add a couple of things. I agree; I think it's in pretty good
2 shape but needs a little bit more editing, (inaudible) couple of (inaudible) things like that.
3 There's a map on the first page that shows the parks and open space and a big picture of the
4 City, page C-17, I guess. Parks and open space should be separated out. I think we discussed
5 that several times. A couple of things like that to follow up on. Also, I wanted to clarify on page
6 C-35 where it talks about the National Parks and Recreation standards, we did not discuss that
7 policy in this committee. I think Council reserved it for future discussion. Just to keep you up
8 to speed on what the Parks and Rec Commission is thinking around that policy is to retain those
9 standards as a guide, but eliminate the distinction between district and neighborhood parks
10 because it doesn't quite fit the way we use our parks. I think the direction they're likely to head
11 for the Parks and Rec Master Plan is to retain the 4 acres per 1,000 standard with a policy that
12 parkland will expand with population, that it'll be widely distributed, that it'll be of sufficient
13 size to meet the needs of neighborhoods as well as the broader community and at probably a
14 half-mile radius. Just to bring you up to speed on what they're thinking is going on there.

15

16 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Anyone else from the committee? If not, does—Bonnie.

17

18 **Bonnie Packer:** I think our remarks at the last meeting, we said what we had done and what
19 we consolidated and streamlined and emphasized the new emphasis on inclusivity and diversity
20 and reaching out to all people. I wanted to ask Jennifer. Elaine submitted something just a few
21 minutes ago about parks and different ways to think about parks. I just wondered if the Parks
22 and Recreation Commission is looking at other places for guidelines that would be applicable to
23 Palo Alto and if there's something we might want to say in the Comp Plan that gives us some
24 flexibility over the next 15 years in thinking about parks.

25

26 **Jennifer Hetterly:** I haven't seen Elaine's comments yet. I'd be happy to pass them on to the
27 Commission and make sure they (inaudible).

28

29 2. Action: Review and Recommendation of the Revised Draft Community Services and
30 Facilities (CSF) Element

31

32 **Co-Chair Garber:** Also, Robin, if you'd reflect in the minutes that Bob Wenzlau has joined us.
33 Anyone else have comments on this Element from the committee or anyone else? Doria.

34

35 **Doria Summa:** I'm not on the committee, but I have comments.

36

37 **Co-Chair Garber:** That's fine. Then Arthur. Anyone else? Annette, Elaine. Whitney.



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1 **Doria Summa:** I agree with Jen's comment about the map. There needs to be a distinction. I
2 would like there to be something in it about libraries, that says we should have them all open
3 the same amount of time. There's no reason that College Terrace should not be open more
4 hours, at least as many as the Downtown. That was an austerity thing during the recession.
5 There's no need for that any more. I think that there's a weird typo—I'm sure that'll just be
6 fixed—on Policy C-3.6. It doesn't make sense, what it says there. Policy C-3.1, where
7 appropriate maintain existing community facilities in public ownership. I would just take out
8 "where appropriate," just say maintain it. Finally, on the very last page, Policy C-5.10 and C-
9 5.11, I find those to be—increase opportunities for access to healthy food including fresh foods
10 and encourage and reward healthy eating for City employees. I find that to be fairly (inaudible)
11 about people's personal habits and shouldn't be in the Comp Plan.

12

13 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you, Doria. Annette and then Elaine.

14

15 **Annette Glanckopf:** Just to highlight the comments that I made. There are two places that
16 have maps that indicate neighborhoods. I think that there's never any mention of
17 neighborhood associations; I think they need to be added under community partnerships and in
18 a couple of other places. It just seems odd to have them just stuck out there without any
19 explanation. I really was fascinated with this idea of working with property owners for meeting
20 spaces. I'm not really sure that I think the policy is necessary; it's sort of a mission impossible.
21 Looking at this and a lot of the other elements, it seems like a lot of clauses are just stuck in to
22 be comprehensive for everyone and anyone. I'm sure that will be true with a lot of the
23 sustainability issues and certainly true with a lot of these healthy choice kinds of things. For
24 example, a policy that I don't think works is senior services and the school system.

25

26 **Co-Chair Garber:** Which number? I'm sorry.

27

28 **Annette Glanckopf:** It is Policy C-1.15. It's working with schools to do a number of things.
29 Senior services doesn't seem to be a fit for me. Senior services and parks, I'm not really sure
30 what that means. I've never seen any—maybe that's my limitation. It's great to have that, but
31 they're certainly not advertised. I'm not sure what programs are in parks; I had a question
32 about that. In Goal C-4, there is a very lofty goal which is great, to have new public facilities
33 serve all neighborhoods. I think it should say "serve all residents," because there's some
34 discussion about what is a neighborhood, is it a homeowners, is it a defined neighborhood.
35 Some of the neighborhoods are very, very tiny; they're miniscule, only a couple hundred houses
36 perhaps. I like the idea of a more expansive idea. That's probably it.

37

38 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Elaine and then Whitney.



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1 **Elaine Uang:** Thanks, Bonnie, for alluding to my comments. I'm sorry I sent them so late. I'll
2 just share the quick parks thought that I had. I just wanted us to consider to include other
3 types of community gathering spaces, parks, public gardens, what I would call small-scale public
4 landscapes that might also fall under the—it could be construed as a park, but in effect it's a
5 landscaped intervention. I'm just worried that when we set—I don't know the specifics of the
6 National Recreation and Park Association standards, but I just worry that if the minimum
7 threshold is half acre, we're precluding a lot of different types of nice landscape interventions
8 that can be great places for people of all ages to rest, relax, gather. Just speaking for myself,
9 when I was a new mom with a kid, it was always nice to kind of wander around and find this
10 unexpected little oasis that wasn't half an acre but might have been a few thousand feet. I
11 think people who work from home or people who may not have jobs but are out and about
12 during the day, it's always kind of nice to kind of stumble upon these things. A good example I
13 can think of is the water tower park Downtown right across from the train tracks. It's a
14 wonderful, wonderful place if you just need a few minutes to clear your head, but it's definitely
15 not half an acre. It's probably a 10,000-square-foot lot. I hope that we don't preclude some of
16 these really thoughtful, wonderful landscaped, park-like places out of the Community Service
17 Element just because it doesn't meet a certain size threshold.

18

19 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Jen, did you want to respond?

20

21 **Jennifer Hetterly:** I just wanted to respond quickly. I agree. We should be looking at all the
22 spaces we can think of. Certainly we do have some parks now that are under half an acre. We
23 have Lytton Plaza, Cogswell Plaza. I don't know if they're over—I don't know exactly their size.
24 We have a variety of different settings that are parks; it's not just a place where you have grass
25 and a playground. The water tower is another great idea. I think we should be eying places like
26 that to dedicate as parkland to preserve that exact function regardless of what the size is.

27

28 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Whitney and then Alex.

29

30 **Whitney McNair:** Under planning for parks and community facilities, there's a goal, C-4. It's
31 plan for a future in which our parks, open spaces, libraries, public art and community facilities
32 thrive and adapt to growth and change in Palo Alto. I just had a comment on—it's Policy C-4.8.
33 It's written partner with property owners to facilitate public access to privately owned open
34 spaces and facilities. As its written, this is allowing public access across private property. Think
35 of this, if this was your property. There's a lot of legal issues with it from a liability standpoint
36 and legal issues about access across private property. I would suggest changing the language
37 from "facilitate," which could get misused over time, to "encourage."



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1 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Alex and then Arthur. Is there anyone else who would like to
2 speak? Adrian.

3
4 **Alex van Riesen:** I just had a question on C-27. There was Policy 1.28, supporting a provision
5 funding for services for persons with disabilities. It says it's eliminated. It says previously this
6 was Policy C-19. One of my questions in general—I apologize not for reading this more
7 thoroughly. When we see something like this that's removed, how are we to understand if it's
8 been picked up somewhere else or whether it's being completely removed from the part of the
9 Plan? Is that the case here?

10
11 **Co-Chair Garber:** Elena, maybe you could help us with that one. Elaine, either one. You're on
12 page 27, Policy C-1.19.

13
14 **Alex van Riesen:** C-1.28.

15
16 **Co-Chair Garber:** That used to be Policy 1.28, which has been stricken. If I'm paraphrasing
17 correctly, Alex, you're wondering are the concerns of that particular policy being picked up in
18 other policies or other parts of the Comp Plan.

19
20 **Jennifer Hetterly:** It looks like it's just been moved to the next page, Policy C-1.23.

21
22 **Andrew Hill:** Can I make a comment?

23
24 **Co-Chair Garber:** Yeah.

25
26 **Andrew Hill:** Just to clarify as well. At the end of the Community Services and Facilities
27 Element, there's an errata sheet that lists some of the policies that were in the version that
28 went to City Council, that the subcommittee has proposed or recommended to shift to other
29 elements. If you don't see one of your ideas in the current redraft, it could be that it's on this
30 list, and it's been recommended to be shifted to another place for inclusion in the Comp Plan,
31 just not in this particular element.

32
33 **Alex van Riesen:** Thank you.

34
35 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you, Andrew. (inaudible) I did not. We'll do Adrian and then Bob.

36
37 **Adrian Fine:** Thank you. I think there was a really good job in reducing this whole section by a
38 fair bit which is generally helpful. Two quick comments. I'm somewhat skeptical of policies



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1 without programs. I think it allows a bit too much leeway. I would encourage us to look at a lot
2 of these policies which don't have programs to back them up. I think it's too easy to attribute
3 City business to a general policy when there's no program to actually say what that means and
4 how it should run on the ground. Just one programmatic which I'd like to see added back, C-
5 1.10. It's just asking the City to include metrics to measure various departments on their
6 performance. I think this integrates pretty well with some other efforts amid the City right now
7 and general trends in public government. I'd personally like to see that added back in. Thank
8 you.

9

10 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Bob and then Arthur, if there's no other comments.

11

12 **Bob Wenzlau:** My comments are—no good deed goes unpunished. My remark is just to
13 remind staff or whoever the writers of this were towards comments I had made a while ago on
14 the usability and the format of the document. I'm concerned that the structure of this is taking
15 final form, and I don't like the form of the document. I find that it's way too much white space
16 in it. I don't understand why there's so much margin. I find the little pictures with cute little
17 captions confusing and had shared a model of a presentation a little bit like the Santa Cruz
18 model, which I think we felt had better usability. The usability of the Comp Plan is unclear. I
19 think the use case is not—I feel like this is being written like a welcome to Palo Alto. It shows
20 up in your packet when you arrive, that you want to read the Comp Plan. Instead, I feel like it's
21 use case is more like use by Council, use by staff, use by people who are trying to make
22 decisions. The design of it should be a little bit more expedient and oriented to the people that
23 are using it as opposed to this. There's sort of a self-flattery aspect to it that turns me off a bit.
24 I still wanted to remind staff about that. It feels, again, like those remarks have not been
25 factored into what I'm seeing now. It's not merely a web presentation, but it's how it comes
26 out. Thank you.

27

28 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Any other comments? If not, Arthur—Don, forgive me.

29

30 **Don McDougall:** Just a question. Elaine or Elena, do we have another community services
31 subcommittee meeting scheduled? There are a lot of comments here. Do we need to meet to
32 discuss them?

33

34 **Elena Lee:** No, we don't have one scheduled. Certainly if there are certain items that the CAC
35 would like to delegate to the subcommittee for us to bring forward, similar to what we did
36 before, that's certainly a possibility.

37



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1 **Don McDougall:** I'm looking at all the comments that were made. It would seem that there
2 was enough that we should go through as a subcommittee and do something with them.

3
4 **Elena Lee:** We can do that.

5
6 **Don McDougall:** Does the rest of the subcommittee agree? The important people on the
7 subcommittee.

8
9 **Co-Chair Garber:** Or even the unimportant ones. Bonnie.

10
11 **Bonnie Packer:** I don't know if I could look at this thing again. I kind of glaze over. I think staff
12 and consultants can take these in. They're good comments; they're not really controversial.
13 There's so much other work to be done, I would hate to burden the staff and the subcommittee
14 members with the comments. I'm sure they could—what we saw today was another tracked
15 version. It certainly isn't the final version. People pointed out where programs or policies were
16 repeated, and there are some words missing. You can fix that. You don't need the
17 subcommittee to put a rubber stamp of approval on it. That's my personal feeling. I'd rather
18 focus on the rest of the elements.

19
20 **Co-Chair Garber:** Are there other comments there? Len.

21
22 **Len Filppu:** I agree. I think that the consultants can insert that information and let us see it,
23 share the document with us so that we can ensure that it is done appropriately. I don't know if
24 another subcommittee meeting is necessary on this one.

25
26 **Co-Chair Garber:** Perhaps before we continue discussion of procedure here, I'd like Arthur who
27 has comments on the content, and then let's return to procedure. Maybe Elaine can weigh in.
28 Arthur.

29
30 **Co-Chair Keller:** Thank you. A couple of things. First of all, I think that the idea of having small
31 parks makes sense. I think the wording of this indicates as small as a quarter acre. I don't think
32 that's restrictive to exactly how small they are; it's an example. I think the ratios are important.
33 I think that policies without programs are still important, because policy lives on even if the
34 program completes. I think that makes sense. There are a number of important things, I think,
35 in the narrative. I look most closely at the narrative. The narrative says that the issues about
36 payment for these are moved into the Land Use Element. They're not in the Land Use Element;
37 they are in the Community Services and Facilities Element. That part of it on page C-2 is
38 erroneous. There's a paragraph that says in addition the City is committed to providing new

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1 facilities in areas that are underserved, etc. That paragraph should be reinstated. I don't know
2 why that paragraph was deleted. That was not a discussion that we had at the CAC level.
3 Paragraph on the bottom of page 9. It says in addition the City is committed to providing new
4 facilities in areas that are underserved and in areas where change is expected in the future. In
5 particular, I think there should be a sentence, which we've talked about. The idea is add a
6 mention for the need of additional parkland to support increased housing density. As you
7 increase density, you need more parks because people with single-family residential have
8 backyards. People in dense housing with limited private open space don't; they really need to
9 have shared space like shared parkland. In addition, just a—I think that we should make sure
10 that what's distributed is not merely a tracked changes version but also a clean version.
11 Sometimes there are inconsistencies, and it's hard to figure out exactly what the corrected
12 version is. There are underscores and strikeouts. I noticed in the earlier thing, in the Land Use
13 Element, there are things that were struck out that were actually still in the text, so I'm kind of
14 confused about that. We need to make sure there's a clean version. Also, I noticed that
15 somebody did an editorial change and removed what is called the serial comma. I think that
16 does not help readability; I think that's an editorial change. The serial comma is when you have
17 three items, you say x comma y comma and z. I think removing that is an editorial change that
18 actually hurts readability rather than improving it. Thank you.

19

20 **Co-Chair Garber:** Let's get back to the procedural topics. Elaine, not Elena.

21

22 **Elaine Costello:** That's going to be part of the fun. We just wanted to point out that we have
23 planned in the schedule in the future a time to bring back the final kind of revisions, pull all
24 these things together. We also had heard the comment at the previous meeting and have
25 noted it about format. I think at some of the subcommittee meetings too. There are some
26 issues that are scheduled for the future, and those fall in that. If the subcommittee would like
27 to see it again, that's completely up to the subcommittee; however, we do have it in the
28 schedule that there will be a time where you kind of pull them altogether and look at them in
29 the context of how each of them has been—it's a chance to look at the format, look at the
30 integration and take a final run through the policies.

31

32 **Co-Chair Garber:** That's, I think, next spring or thereabouts, at least today.

33

34 **Elaine Costello:** Yeah, yeah.

35

36 **Co-Chair Garber:** With that, may I hear a motion to support the subcommittee's draft and
37 incorporate the comments that will then return to the larger CAC for review and approval to
38 move to Council? Someone is most welcome to wordsmith my suggested motion.



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1 **Elaine Uang:** I move to do that.

2

3 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you, Elaine. Is there a second? Don. Discussion, would either of you
4 like to speak to your motion? Don.

5

6 **Don McDougall:** I think the idea that it goes back to the staff with these comments and
7 submitted written comments is important. The only one that, I think, is maybe not contentious
8 is this whole idea of gathering spaces, small parks. What I've written is instead of just talking
9 about 12 or 14 percent growth in the community or whatever it is, we need to look at the fact
10 that the forecast is the population of children is going down. The population of retirees is going
11 from 12 percent to 20 percent. I think in planning parks, some granularity in this document
12 needs to be considered. If staff can do that, I'm happy with that. If it doesn't come out right,
13 then I would suggest that we do need the subcommittee again. For now, I'll support the
14 motion this way.

15

16 **Co-Chair Garber:** Bob.

17

18 **Bob Wenzlau:** I'm not as good on the procedural stuff, but I just kind of had a question. Arthur
19 was worked up that a paragraph in the introduction was taken out and wanted it put back.
20 What I'm trying to understand is do those paragraphs mean anything, do they have any force
21 where it goes, "This is a principle." It was more just I haven't been thinking of the introduction
22 as binding, and then Arthur brings that up like this is binding. What's the point of the narrative
23 and how does it get applied in the planning? I thought it was the policy, the program and the
24 element, and nothing else operated. Thanks.

25

26 **Hillary Gitelman:** In general, the introductory text doesn't have the weight of the goals,
27 policies and programs. We think it's useful. Oftentimes, the Council or the staff can look at the
28 text to help interpret the policies and programs, but it certainly doesn't carry the same weight.

29

30 **Co-Chair Garber:** I'm not sure that helps you, Bob. I think that—staff is welcome to weigh in
31 here—staff will take that comment, evaluate it relative to the overall thrust of the narrative,
32 and make a recommendation. If it is excluded, they should tell us why. If it's included, they
33 should tell us why. We'll review it about a year from now.

34

35 **Bob Wenzlau:** It was more just—I think the clarity helped me because I didn't want—part of
36 me had an aspiration to remove nonessential text because it would bungle the public decision
37 because, if all of a sudden someone comes up and goes, "It says this in the introduction, and
38 that conflicts with the policy," then you go, "What are we doing here?" That was my concern.



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1 That would be my input. I don't think it affects the motion on the floor. I apologize for bringing
2 it up.

3

4 **Co-Chair Garber:** No worries.

5

6 **Bob Wenzlau:** It was just a little confusing. Thank you.

7

8 **Co-Chair Garber:** Bonnie.

9

10 **Bonnie Packer:** Looking at the language that Arthur was concerned about and is deleted. It
11 wasn't deleted. It's someplace else in the narrative. You'll see the language or similar
12 language. I think the direction from Council was to make things a little shorter. Look around. If
13 you see something that was deleted, maybe it's been rephrased elsewhere. I hope when staff
14 hears the comments that came from us like that, you'll say, "Somebody made that statement,
15 but their concern is addressed." You'll know that.

16

17 **Co-Chair Garber:** Again, I think staff will make an evaluation, make a recommendation, and
18 we'll learn about that. Sorry.

19

20 **Bonnie Packer:** One other comment. Annette mentioned something about seniors and parks.
21 Seniors use parks, and parks could be designed to accommodate the needs of seniors. The
22 Magical Bridge Playground was to accommodate certain needs. There may be an opportunity
23 for that. I would not delete references to seniors when talking about parks or PAUSD.

24

25 **Co-Chair Garber:** Annette and then Arthur, then I'd like to get to the motion.

26

27 **Annette Glanckopf:** I don't think there is a program. Currently seniors enjoy parks (inaudible)
28 like everyone else. I was just talking to Jen (inaudible) came out with this Magical Playground,
29 which is wonderful. That really does address the disabled (inaudible). I think it'd be great. I
30 don't know if we could add a specific program in here to develop some sort of space in parks
31 for seniors. Actually, other cities—I've got a wonderful picture of a park in England (inaudible)
32 just for (inaudible). I think it'd be awesome to have a specialized area within a park. This might
33 be a place to include it. That would make me feel better about having items in here that talk
34 (inaudible) programs just (inaudible) something to that effect. I'm not great on wordsmithing
35 (inaudible) investigate the (inaudible) I don't know if anyone else agrees with that. It sort of
36 talks (inaudible) but I think it'd be awesome.

37

38 **Co-Chair Garber:** Great. Arthur.



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1 **Co-Chair Keller:** A couple of things. First of all, operationally I would suggest that the way that
2 this be handled is that staff take the comment; they produce a draft; they circulate it among
3 the subcommittee who may have comments that they want to circulate back with staff, and
4 then this come back as a clean document next time with also track changes. One of the
5 problems—in the past we've had disposition tables indicating what happened with which. This
6 time there was a lot of changes with no disposition table. I found myself making comments,
7 saying I don't want it deleted, and then I read three pages later that it's there. Therefore, it was
8 hard to figure out where things got moved to. It made it hard to understand what the
9 comments were and how things were addressed. I'm not sure how to deal with that issue of
10 disposition. I think there is a legitimate question of what we expect the differences in
11 demographics for Palo Alto to be versus the demographics for Santa Clara County. I think that
12 people have predicted many times that the student population of Palo Alto will go down. It
13 seems to have been increasing. I noticed the School District has basically said that they expect
14 the population to go down, but they're predicting a lot fewer homes than Palo Alto's lowest
15 scenario predicts. Maybe the percentage will go down if we have the population going up. I
16 would expect that the amount of the school-age students will probably not go down. It'll
17 probably be slowly increasing depending on what kind of housing we build. I don't think we
18 should expect the schools to get any less crowded than they already are.

19

20 **Co-Chair Garber:** Again, Amy, you had your flag up. Then, we'll get to the motion.

21

22 **Amy Sung:** I just went back to this draft Comp Plan that was dated April 2014, and I found that
23 there's a table that's very useful. It's a disposition table. On the table, it tallied the all existing
24 policies and programs and has a table that says did it move to another element, is it complete
25 or is there no change, is it edited, is it split, is it merged, the status change. Then, it maps to
26 where the new policies are. I found that to be very useful. I thought that maybe that is
27 something it would be helpful if we incorporated that into what we are currently using, so that
28 we don't just find a program has disappeared and don't know where it goes to.

29

30 **Co-Chair Garber:** Andrew.

31

32 **Andrew Hill:** Just to speak to that. Actually Council has also asked for the same thing. A
33 crosswalk table at the end of the data lets them know where the policies in the current adopted
34 Comp Plan have ended up. When the element gets presented to—

35

36 **Elaine Costello:** Not in every draft.

37

38 **Andrew Hill:** Not in every draft, for something that goes to the Council.



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1 **Elaine Costello:** I think the plan would be from what the existing Comprehensive Plan is to
2 what's recommended but not every version we would do a table like that.

3
4 **Co-Chair Keller:** Since the Council saw the last draft, you may wish to have a crosswalk from
5 the Council's draft as well as from the current Comp Plan. In fact, it may be as important to
6 do—they've seen it, they want to know what happened to it from there. If you don't give them
7 the draft from the draft that they've seen, it'll be hard for them to understand whether their
8 direction was followed.

9
10 **Co-Chair Garber:** With that, will you all raise your hand if you're in agreement with the
11 motion? We have—I think the motion was to support the subcommittee's draft element and
12 for staff to incorporate the comments today into a final clean draft that will then be reviewed—
13 I am going to amend it with Arthur's suggestion—and then that clean draft be circulated among
14 the subcommittee for review, and then ultimately back to the full committee about a year from
15 now when we come back and look at the formatting and the rest of that.

16
17 **Elaine Costello:** I think we can bring it back somewhere between now and the—I'm not sure
18 we can guarantee for the next meeting because of the work flow. We'll bring it back. We want
19 to give the subcommittee time to take a look at it. We could bring it back on an interim step.

20
21 **Co-Chair Garber:** Doria.

22
23 **Doria Summa:** I'd just like to add to that that the subcommittee, if they need to, can have
24 another meeting.

25
26 **Co-Chair Garber:** Absolutely.

27
28 **Doria Summa:** That's in the motion.

29
30 **Co-Chair Garber:** That's fine. Jennifer, and then we're going to vote.

31
32 **Jennifer Hetterly:** I just want to clarify. Is it going to go back to Council then? The
33 subcommittee reviews it, makes sure everything is as we discussed, and then it goes to Council
34 before it comes back to the full CAC a year from now. Is that correct?

35
36 **Elaine Costello:** Correct me if I'm wrong, Hillary. No. I think the plan is to circulate it to the
37 subcommittee, then send it to the entire CAC, this entire committee, and then hold it and do a



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1 consolidate, and then send it to the Council. That plan could change in the meantime, but
2 that's the current plan. It wouldn't go to the Council until the whole thing was consolidated.

3
4 **Don McDougall:** The amendment to what we're voting on says that if deemed, we can have a
5 subcommittee ...

6
7 **Elaine Costello:** Right.

8
9 **Co-Chair Garber:** That is correct.

10
11 **Don McDougall:** Because circulating it, and then writing three pages of comments probably
12 takes longer than ...

13
14 **Co-Chair Garber:** All understand what the motion is here? All those in favor raise your hands. I
15 have 18. Did I get everybody? Eighteen. All opposed. Any abstentions. We have three people
16 missing. Thanks very much. We will take a break for—what do you need, Elaine, 5 minutes?
17 We'll take a brief break for 5 minutes. Forgive me, your name again was? From the Community
18 Services. Kristen, thank you for coming.

19
20 **Lisa Peschcke-Koedt:** Do you care that ...

21
22 3. Report from the Land Use Subcommittee

23
24 **Co-Chair Garber:** I think we are essentially all here. Let's reconvene. Andrew, you want to give
25 us an overview, an introduction to the land use discussion we're about to have?

26
27 **Andrew Hill:** Since the April CAC meeting, the land use subcommittee met twice, and they did
28 a very detailed review of the programs and policies under Goals L-1 to L-3, which is where
29 several of the most complex issues are. In a minute, we're going to ask the land use
30 subcommittee members to speak and provide a summary of their discussions. I wanted to take
31 a minute here to highlight the good work that they did. They reached consensus on—they
32 focused primarily, I think, on streamlining and clarifying the details of the policies and programs
33 under these three goals. They reached consensus on several important areas including the
34 need to include policies and programs that contained development within the urban service
35 area, that enhance the livability of neighborhoods, that address housing affordability and
36 housing diversity. They agree that performance standards that addressed the adverse impacts
37 of growth including traffic and air quality and noise would be a valuable addition. There were,
38 however, two areas where there was not a clear consensus. What the subcommittee did was

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1 to try and develop a range of options which are included in your packet for consideration.
2 There were two areas like that. The first was building heights, which the full CAC has discussed
3 at previous meetings in depth. What the subcommittee did was to develop four options.
4 Today we feel that we would like to poll you on your preferred option. Shortly, the Co-Chairs
5 are going to explain the procedure. I think we're going to have a discussion of the options, and
6 then the Co-Chairs will explain a procedure for voting or polling on the preferred option or
7 options for building heights. The second topic was nonresidential growth management. This,
8 of course, really refers to Policy L-8 from the current adopted Comp Plan, which establishes
9 that cap of 3.2 million square feet of nonresidential square feet in nine monitored areas, and
10 Program L-8 from the current adopted Comp Plan, which establishes a cap of 350,000 square
11 feet in the Downtown area. Again, here the subcommittee was not able to reach a consensus,
12 so what they did was to develop a range of options. The full committee hasn't discussed those
13 caps on this particular issue in as much detail. We don't feel that at this point we're ready to do
14 polling or voting on the options developed. Please consider them as preliminary options. We'd
15 like to get your feedback tonight. The subcommittee will meet again to further refine these
16 options and bring them back for voting at a later date. I also wanted to point out that, in the
17 staff report that you have in front of you, there's a breakdown that explains how much square
18 footage is remaining in the Downtown cap, and then in the materials on your table we also
19 have some additional information tonight that explains and breaks down how much is
20 remaining in the 3.25 million-square-foot cap. You might like to consider that in your discussion
21 of nonresidential growth management tonight. I think what we'd like to do is, as we normally
22 do, go around the horn and give everyone a couple of minutes to weigh in on the policies and
23 programs under Goals L-1 through L-3 as we normally do. Please, in your comments, if you
24 could, indicate which of the options for building heights you prefer and why. That would be
25 great. Also, if you could comment on the options and the ideas put forward for nonresidential
26 growth management, that would also, I think, help to move the ball forward.

27
28 **Co-Chair Garber:** We are going to do this as we have done before. We'll have the
29 subcommittee speak first, and then we will go around the room starting from my left all the
30 way around, and then we are going to vote as requested on the four options for height. The
31 likelihood is high that—before I say that, the way that we wanted to do the voting on the four
32 options was what's referred to as approval voting. You can vote for as many options as you
33 want. We'll be counting hands each time we do it, so that we can get an understanding of
34 preferences between these. Then, I suspect we will have conversation we'll open up to the
35 larger body as people desire, and we'll likely have some conversation around variations of the
36 four. If there's additional study or conversation that needs to be done there, we can pursue
37 that at that time. Bonnie, you had a procedural question?



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1 **Bonnie Packer:** Should we focus our comments only on Goals L-1 through L-3? It seemed as if
2 the goals after that were not really massaged at all.

3
4 **Co-Chair Garber:** That's correct.

5
6 **Bonnie Packer:** Even though we submitted written comments, we don't need to address those
7 now. Is that correct?

8
9 **Co-Chair Garber:** That's correct. We're really trying to focus on one through three. There's
10 going to be how many more subcommittee meetings?

11
12 **Elaine Costello:** There's another subcommittee meeting coming up. These were tough issues.

13
14 **Co-Chair Garber:** Who knows, there may even be more. Len, question or comment from you?

15
16 **Len Filppu:** Will those absent tonight be able to be counted in the vote, in the polling?

17
18 **Co-Chair Garber:** I actually got a debrief from Shani on her opinions. I'm sorry, Arthur?

19
20 **Co-Chair Keller:** (inaudible)

21
22 **Co-Chair Garber:** She's given me her votes. We don't actually have a policy around proxy
23 voting here, but I can share at least her comments and where she would have voted. Unless
24 there's a suggestion there someplace, I would simply record her (crosstalk).

25
26 **Len Filppu:** There's only a couple more absent people. I wonder if the Chairs could send them
27 an email and ask for their vote.

28
29 **Co-Chair Garber:** Ask them, sure. Absolutely.

30
31 **Len Filppu:** Just add that to the total.

32
33 **Co-Chair Garber:** That would be Shani, Lydia and Jason. We could ask them. Jennifer.

34
35 **Jennifer Hetterly:** I'm curious about the purpose of the voting.

36
37 **Co-Chair Garber:** It is to get a flavor—apparently the subcommittee has come up with these
38 four options, that they've distilled from our conversations prior to today, to give them some



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1 direction on those four options. I suspect they will also get important feedback on the
2 discussion around those four options as well. It's a way of focusing us on those options as well
3 as then the variants that may appear subsequent.

4
5 **Jennifer Hetterly:** I'm under the impression that the subcommittee is not—maybe you all can
6 correct me—doesn't expect to reach a single recommendation on these topics. We're not ...

7
8 **Co-Chair Garber:** I think that's true, and I think the subcommittee is going to end up
9 proposing—correct me if I'm wrong, subcommittee—refining the options that will then be
10 presented to the Council as a result of this. It's a way for them to get a flavor for where there's
11 dominance and where there isn't and which ones to further refine or ...

12
13 **Jennifer Hetterly:** I'll wait for my turn to come around to speak further.

14
15 **Hillary Gitelman:** Dan, could I just interject?

16
17 **Co-Chair Garber:** Yeah.

18
19 **Hillary Gitelman:** I think we all understand the Council's interest in getting minority and
20 majority opinions. I think the subcommittee has done a fantastic job, but it's telling that they
21 didn't land with two options. There are four options here. It could be that we just take a vote
22 and we report to the Council what the position was, how much support there was for each. It
23 could also be that based on the conversations this evening the subcommittee wants to further
24 refine the options, and we'll have to see that.

25
26 **Co-Chair Garber:** Lisa.

27
28 **Lisa Peschcke-Koedt:** One question on the process, that you can vote as many times as you
29 want. I'm thinking we should actually each vote once.

30
31 **Co-Chair Garber:** The thought was that we would ask for a vote for each one of the four. You
32 can vote once for each one of those four or not, if you support it or not. They're not necessarily
33 mutually exclusive.

34
35 **Lisa Peschcke-Koedt:** At Option 1, 2, 3, and 4, you can vote for all of them?

36
37 **Co-Chair Garber:** You can vote for all of them.

38



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1 **Lisa Peschcke-Koedt:** That's not going to get us anywhere.

2

3 **Co-Chair Keller:** If you were to vote for, say for discussion's sake, Options 1 and 2 or Options 3
4 and 4, you could vote for each of them. This way you wouldn't have to select; I like this one and
5 I like that one as well. You can ...

6

7 **Lisa Peschcke-Koedt:** Certainly your call. I think before we're done, we should probably do one
8 vote that's just you pick one. If it's spread completely, then I can (crosstalk).

9

10 **Hamilton Hitchings:** They are actually mutually exclusive.

11

12 **Co-Chair Keller:** The issue there, mutually exclusive, but the issue is you could be happy with
13 several of them. Therefore, we want to know which ones people have support for and which
14 ones people don't have support for. There's a whole bunch of voting theory that talks about
15 how you narrow down among multiple choices. It turns out that when you have multiple
16 choices for which people might want several and not others, approval voting tends to get the
17 best outcome in terms of getting that weighting.

18

19 **Co-Chair Garber:** We thought we'd try it anyway. With that, who from the subcommittee
20 would like to lead off with comments? Any one. Stephen, Steve, excuse me.

21

22 **Stephen Levy:** I want to thank Andrew and Elena and Elaine, and that is a tongue twister
23 because I have an Elaine over here. It's been a very collegial subcommittee. Four people in
24 particular have made time in your ridiculous schedule to attend every minute, Doria and
25 Annette and Hamilton and Amy. I really appreciate their effort. I don't believe in limits. I
26 believe in performance standards when I think of housing. I will vote for the unrestricted
27 option. I think of the two buildings across the street from me that are both higher than 65 feet,
28 that are lovely, dense, walkable, urban areas. When I think of the lower limits, I think that that
29 prevents Channing House or all of the senior care facilities that Neilson Buchanan came to our
30 committee and talked about previously. When I think about why that might be feasible, I look
31 at Whitney and say, "We can make a deal at the shopping center and near the medical center,
32 in the heart of the Research." I don't know whether Whitney agrees, but I have ideas where
33 height limits wouldn't be intrusive on any neighborhoods. I don't like limits. Similarly, I don't
34 like limits on anything. I like performance standards. I like determining all kinds of growth,
35 residential and nonresidential, depending on how we succeed in the RPP and the TMA and in
36 impacting impacts, whether driverless cars and Uber and shuttles can reduce the traffic
37 impacts. I believe in addressing impacts in a Comp Plan, not numbers. We should go with what



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1 we can find. We can mitigate. I'm going to vote for the least restrictive options to preserve the
2 choice of Council down the line.

3

4 **Co-Chair Garber:** Annette.

5

6 **Annette Glanckopf:** I can go next, and I don't know if you want all the comments in all three
7 goals, but I'll just ramble on for a minute. I felt really strongly that the shopping centers, the
8 three neighborhood commercial shopping centers should be distinguished in the CN zones. In
9 the Program L-1.7, I was really concerned about working with property owners to identify
10 barriers. That to me seems like give-aways. I'm always worried about that. A new policy,
11 Program L-5, formerly L-5 now L-20, use performance measures and architectural standards. I
12 love the idea of architectural standards, but I think we need to ratchet up what we actually use
13 for architectural standards. I think we're sorely missing them in many cases. I'm not really sure
14 about performance measures. I'm not sure what we are trying to do with L-25, update the
15 Zoning Code to limit the displacement of existing retail. That to me seems to be all based on
16 rents, and I'm not sure what the City can do. Maybe we should have a program for that.
17 Another policy, support efforts to preserve rental housing units in existing neighborhoods. I
18 think it's the rents that are going up as opposed to policies that we can have. Over 40 percent
19 of the City is rental now. I think we do need rental units, so I support the concept, but I'm not
20 sure if it should be a policy. We look at housing uses. I really support what Council was saying
21 about the loss of second units with the redevelopment of the very, very large properties for
22 something like village or clustered housing, etc. I am still concerned about second units on
23 very, very tiny lots. There's so many out there now, and we don't Code enforce them. That
24 really worries me. I actually am pleased with the new Program L-56 that talks about minimizing
25 the amount of signage throughout our City which, I think, is really important to do. Finally, on
26 building heights, I feel very strongly that we should keep to the 55-foot limit, and I'm going to
27 stand on that position. I think, as Doria said before, that we can develop an awful lot. We have
28 a lot of capacity there that we haven't used. I'm going to vote for Option 1.

29

30 **Co-Chair Garber:** Annette, you had mentioned policy and signage. Was that 50 or 55?

31

32 **Annette Glanckopf:** Sorry about this.

33

34 **Co-Chair Garber:** That's okay. You can get back to us.

35

36 **Co-Chair Keller:** It's 56.

37

38 **Annette Glanckopf:** L-50 ...



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1 **Co-Chair Keller;** L-56. Did you mean to say you support the 50-foot height limit or 55? You
2 said ... Thank you.

3
4 **Co-Chair Garber:** Anyone else from the subcommittee? Doria.

5
6 **Doria Summa:** A couple of comments. Most importantly, I support the 50-foot height limit.
7 We have not begun, even begun, to exhaust the potentiality of what the 50-foot height limit
8 can do across Palo Alto. Until we do that, there's no reason to raise the height limit. It has not
9 been demonstrated as factual in anywhere that I've seen that raising the height limit will either
10 lower the price or create more attractive architecture. This picture that staff gave us—it's not a
11 criticism, but it's just an observation, because I know how hard staff is working. You can't read
12 the heights on here, so it's absolutely useless. Moving around in the program. Performance
13 measures are useful, and we should get those. You can't mitigate away growth, the negative
14 impacts of growth. They're going to be there; everybody has admitted that. Hillary Gitelman
15 said at the Council a couple of months ago, more housing means more impacts, more traffic,
16 more parking. Driverless cars, just out today there's an article—I forget where it was—that
17 driverless cars will likely increase congestion on our streets. We had a lot of discussion in the
18 definitions about single-family residential. Staff told us what that means is R-1, R-2 and RM-D.
19 That doesn't seem to make sense to me. I thought we had talked about being more specific
20 with those land use definitions. Maybe there should be single family which is R-1, the other
21 two low-density residential designations, and then 15, 30 and 40 would be multi-housing. Let's
22 see. Goal L-1, a well-designed compact and resilient City, blah, blah, blah. The first policy, L-1,
23 is okay. The other policies contradict it, and it seems very biased towards development, the
24 whole rest of that, which I don't think is appropriate. There's a new program, reevaluate
25 development standards in the C zones, CC, CS, CD. We had talked about that quite a bit, and it
26 was felt by a lot of us that that was too open-ended and that if we were going to rethink the
27 development standards and land uses in the C zones, it needed detailed decision and it should
28 be discussed by this group, not by somebody in the future unnamed. I'll stop there.

29
30 **Co-Chair Garber:** If there's—Hamilton. Then, we'll go around the room.

31
32 **Hamilton Hitchings:** I'm really happy with how the subcommittee has been working together
33 despite a very diverse set of views that I think could capture both ends of the spectrum. We've
34 actually done a good job of working through all the hard sections. Essentially one through
35 three have 90 percent of the controversial issues. We've actually agreed on a ton in it. I'm
36 pretty happy with how the subcommittee is working together. I feel like there's still a lot of
37 room and zoning envelope left for the housing. I actually think that this time around we don't
38 need to raise the height limit. I think it's actually a hot issue for 2030. Don't forget growth

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1 doesn't stop in 2030. We've got to get the next 15 years of growth, so we don't want to use it
2 all up in the next 15 years. One thing I would say is I'd like to make sure if we do give any height
3 increases, that we require a higher percentage of BMR. It's an incredible wealth transfer to the
4 real estate developer when we do a height increase, but the point of that is actually to benefit
5 the people who having trouble renting. We want to increase the percentage of BMR so that
6 the renters can benefit as well. I want to change subjects for a second. I'm a little concerned
7 about the EIR. For me, I don't understand as a Council Member how you can pick an option if it
8 wasn't one of the options that you actually studied. There's a lot of talk about book-ends. If
9 you have a very high housing growth number and a very low housing growth number, that
10 doesn't really tell me whether the middle housing growth number is going to mitigate the
11 impacts. I'm a little bit concerned about that. I'm also concerned that the Council is being
12 asked to make decisions, come up with housing numbers to study, without actually having seen
13 the Land Use Element and the Transportation Element. I want to make sure they're better
14 synced, because I don't want them to be in the process of making a lot of decisions without
15 having seen the work we're doing. I think there's more opportunity there. The last thing I'd
16 just say—this comment's for Hillary—my understanding was go big also included net zero. It
17 wasn't that we weren't going to do net zero for it. Those are my comments.

18

19 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thanks. We have two other members. Amy, and then Jen.

20

21 **Amy Sung:** Thank you. The subcommittee met two times. I think we are planning for the third
22 time. We have this group that is assigned to the subcommittee, but I think because of the time
23 of the day that we met, some of them cannot really make it. I really think it might just be
24 something that we need to take into consideration when we construct subcommittee meetings.
25 At any rate, I wanted to voice my support for lifting this 50-foot building height limit. I wanted
26 to get back to this invaluable information that our Co-Chair provided back when we met in
27 April. This number gives us the historic background perspective. There was also a rep from the
28 League of Women Voters that came to speak before us. They expressed concerns that the
29 commercial development cap will discourage the housing that might be part of mixed use. I
30 think that what we are talking about, about lifting the height limits, really is because we have a
31 huge concern about affordability. The way that we can make it better is to relax that limit,
32 which it's about time we correct that one. Just the City's own survey from April '14, a key
33 finding from Citywide voter survey that 76 percent of the people that was polled says the cars
34 haven't—it's the same by far the most urgent problem in Palo Alto. 76 percent, that's three in
35 four. How do we get to that? I went back to the Land Use Element, the bible that we base our
36 comments on. Can I continue just ... There is a pie chart, the land use distribution that was
37 compiled in 1996. I don't know if there is an updated pie chart that tell us what allocation of
38 what use. This chart, 4 percent was for multifamily use. We need to relax the height, so that

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1 we can hopefully find a solution for this affordable housing. Also this morning, I just read from
2 Silicon Valley Business Journal that the Governor is proposing a housing proposal for affordable
3 housing. He is proposing something Statewide that—I'll come back to that one. Thanks.

4
5 **Co-Chair Garber:** Jennifer, then Alex, and then I think that exhausts our subcommittee.

6
7 **Jennifer Hetterly:** There are a couple of things that I thought we had agreed on in the
8 subcommittee that didn't show up here. I missed part of that last meeting, so it may have been
9 superseded. I thought that in the definition of single-family residential we had thought to
10 delete the expansion to 14 units per acre in single-family residential zones. That is on page 1-2.
11 I think also on page 5 we talked about eliminating the two policies at the bottom of the page
12 that are now labeled L-2 and L-3 about infill and the focus on attracting land uses addressing
13 the needs of the community seemed a very vague concept. As far as the height limit options
14 and the L-8 options, I think it would be most productive for the subcommittee if this group
15 focused their efforts on how to refine the options so there's an option there that represents
16 everybody's perspective rather than trying to prioritize them. I hope that the wording won't be
17 seen as sacrosanct as it's written here. This is the first time we've seen it in this form as well.
18 Help refining those options, I think, would be extremely helpful. I saw just skimming through
19 the comments. One comment in Arthur's piece that I liked was the idea of adding a program
20 about additional housing impact fees where housing units are lost or rental units are converted.
21 I'd like to find a way to fit that in. I like Hamilton's idea of setting higher standards for BMR in
22 those scenarios where we would raise the height limit. I think there's some opportunity to
23 consolidate the language on L-8 options. There seems to be a lot of commonality about
24 addressing parking, traffic, etc. Maybe we could just have a standalone policy that addressed
25 those that would apply to any of the options. There were a couple of other questions asked in
26 the staff report about whether exceptions on the cap in nonresidential square footage to be
27 allowed for certain uses like retail, public buildings or community facilities. I don't think that's
28 appropriate for the Comp Plan. I'd rather tackle those exceptions on a case-by-case basis
29 depending on what the project is. The second question was about a range of options that
30 might include raising the cap for the Downtown cap. I don't support that. I do support options
31 to convert commercial space to square footage. I support the 50-foot height limit.

32
33 **Co-Chair Garber:** Alex.

34
35 **Alex van Riesen:** I missed the last meeting, so I'll keep my comments brief. I do appreciate the
36 work of the team and the staff in trying to make this come together. I agree with a lot of the
37 comments that my friends have made. I think the main thing that still remains elusive to me—I
38 agree that the issue is affordability—is that although there seems to be lots of articles and lots



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1 of discussion that if you build more housing, you by definition make it more affordable, there
2 seems to be no research or no evidence that we have the capacity to build enough housing to
3 actually affect the price point for housing. I've thrown that out at a number of meetings, and
4 I've never seen that answered. I agree with many of the folks supporting Option 1, but I
5 actually am okay with Option 2 so that there's some flexibility and to allow for some creative
6 use in terms of the mixed used of retail and housing.

7
8 4. Discussion of the Land Use & Community Design Element

9
10 **Co-Chair Garber:** We'll start around the table. Whitney and then Elaine.

11
12 **Whitney McNair:** I don't think there should be an absolute height limit in the Comprehensive
13 Plan. Certainly height shouldn't be tied to the concept of a negotiated additional community
14 benefit as is described in the staff report. If it's in an appropriate place that limits impacts and
15 is well designed, that should be enough. Not everything should be positioned as a means to get
16 something more from a project. It just sets up unrealistic expectations for all parties. The City
17 didn't like the PC zone for that reason in particular. I wouldn't support trying to put something
18 forward that just continues that practice. I support increasing heights. There is a zoning
19 ordinance that can limit heights in particular areas when it's needed and when it's appropriate.
20 There should be an allowance for increased height. As far as the caps go, it seems very
21 confusing to keep referencing a 3.2 million-square-foot cap that dates back to 1989 at least
22 without explaining in the policy that as of 2015 there's only 1.7 million square feet that is
23 available. It isn't a 3.2 million-square-foot cap. That is not clear in any of the documentation. I
24 think the community continues to think that we're talking about 3.2 million. Over about 30
25 years, there's been about 1.6 million square feet that's been built in those nine planning areas.
26 We should keep that in mind. The EIR and Comp Plan policies will address the impacts of that
27 growth. There is some information in the SUMC, which is the hospital, Development
28 Agreement that is not included in Policy L-8, which should be. If you go back to Resolution
29 9169, it provides some important information, and the SUMC square footage isn't in the cap. I
30 think Option 3 is fraught with problems and without goals or targets is impossible to implement
31 successfully. Having an overall cap split into different planning areas has been problematic in
32 the past. I'd rather see it as cumulative to everywhere, combined. Option 4, moving towards
33 net zero as a goal could be done well if it is a goal and not a mandate. We haven't seen what
34 those targets are, nor have we seen the components and how they would really address the
35 impacts. Just lastly, I wanted to say that what was Program L-4 has a cap at the shopping
36 center, but this is one where the EIR is not being tied together with the language. If you want
37 to see additional housing at the shopping center, that 80,000-square-foot cap would need to be
38 addressed and changed.

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1 **Co-Chair Garber:** Elaine and then Julia.

2

3 **Elaine Uang:** Regarding building height limits, I'm okay with Option 3 but maybe from a slightly
4 different perspective than is offered here. I like Options 3 and Options 4. I think my first
5 preference would be for Option 4. Just to go in order, Option 3 makes a lot of sense actually for
6 design flexibility and for community design, building design. We have Goal L-3 which is guiding
7 building design. It could be worded differently. Allowing an additional height, maybe up to 65
8 feet, would actually provide a lot more flexibility from a design perspective. The ground level is
9 really where all the competition for space happens. If we want to create a lot of the other
10 things that we've talked about, like public plazas and really nice streetscape amenities, really
11 great ground-level experience, it's important to have that tradeoff at the ground floor and be
12 able to apply that FAR somewhere else. If you could bump up and have a nice tower that goes
13 up to 65 feet, that would really enable us to get a lot more community benefits at the ground
14 level. While it's not my first choice, I would be for it more for the community design reasons,
15 not so much for the height limits. I think I'm in agreement with Steve that I don't think that
16 height limits really are the thing that we should be going for. I would reword the new policy
17 and say building heights over 50 feet, not building height limits. It's not clear to me whether
18 this is written so that any building height could be considered. If so, I'm actually okay with that.
19 I do think that the performance-based criteria, which we see on the nonresidential side, could
20 also be applied to the residential side to "mitigate" impacts. I think we're starting to move
21 towards demographics where walkability, livability, shared systems like car share and bike
22 share and those types of things will enhance livability but minimize traffic impacts. On
23 nonresidential growth management, I'm glad Whitney brought up the square footage cap. If
24 you take a look at how much square footage has been built since 1989 and compare it to the 20
25 million square feet that we already have, she said something like 1.5 million square feet has
26 been built. We already have 20 million. That's only 7 percent expansion of nonresidential
27 square feet since 1989. I guarantee you our economy and the number of jobs that we've added
28 has not been 7 percent since 1989. I'm not entirely convinced that the addition of square
29 footage is what's driving the number of jobs and the growth of jobs. I do agree with Steve that
30 we should focus on performance standards. I might offer a slightly different perspective—can I
31 just finish—which is not to apply this cap Citywide but really to concentrate it. I wouldn't say
32 concentrate it in the nine zones, because it's not clear to me what those zones are.
33 Concentrate them Downtown, concentrate them at Cal. Ave., where there's transit accessibility.
34 That's where we can really apply those performance-based standards.

35

36 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you, Elaine. Julia.

37



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1 **Julia Moran:** I agree with the three that just spoke. I originally thought that I would be for an
2 Option 3-type policy, but looking at Option 4 I think it makes the most sense especially if we
3 add some stronger language like Hamilton talked about around BMR. I think it's really
4 important that we listen to the people that have come here to speak, housing choices, the
5 senior community, the parents of mentally disabled adults, the education community and also
6 the people that have come to the City Council meetings. I was a little frustrated at our last
7 meeting where one member was talking about who we represented, what the opinions are out
8 there in Palo Alto. I think it's important for us to remember 45 percent of the City rents, about
9 40 percent of the City is under 45 years old. We do not represent that makeup in this room,
10 but it is our job to represent that community. We might not be talking to the people that have
11 those differing views and are looking for more housing, but that is clearly a large portion of our
12 City. It's important that we're taking their views into consideration when we're making our
13 choices.

14

15 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Bonnie.

16

17 **Bonnie Packer:** It just so happens we're all sitting together with—we all seem to agree. I agree
18 with what Steve said about not wanting caps, that they're not a good idea, but I'm realistic that
19 I don't know that the City Council would be ready for something so different from 50 cap and
20 no cap. That's why I will vote for Option 3. Remember, Option 3 is talking about 65 feet, and
21 it's focused for certain uses that we need, particularly affordable housing. If you're concerned
22 about having enough space for parks and not negatively impacting our R-1 neighborhoods,
23 there's very little land in Palo Alto. The little land that's left, you have to build up in order to get
24 the affordable housing that we need. I'm not saying it should be for high-rent condos, but if we
25 focus on the affordability for these places, I think it might pass muster. As for the caps on office
26 space, on nonresidential space, I don't know enough. I don't have enough economic
27 information as to what that would mean. There isn't anybody here that's representing the
28 business or the developer community that can tell us more stuff and what are the issues
29 involved in that. I don't feel educated enough to have an opinion of whether it should be 3.2
30 million, 1.7 million more square feet. That is only 7 percent of what we have now. You don't
31 even have that much of a cap. Should we have any cap? How will it affect our City's economy
32 and the whole City infrastructure? Will anybody want to come here anymore if developers
33 can't build anything? These are things we have to think about. The other thing I want to say,
34 though, is some people talk about the negative impacts of growth. Growth can have positive
35 impacts. If more people can live here, you can reduce greenhouse gases because of less
36 commuting, you can have a more economically diverse community because you're providing
37 more opportunities for more people to live here. It isn't always negative; growth can be
38 positive. I think we should change our mindset on that. I did submit other written comments

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1 that I hope will be taken into consideration as I don't want to use up my 3 minutes on those.
2 Thanks.

3

4 **Co-Chair Garber:** Well done. Bob.

5

6 **Bob Wenzlau:** I'm not quite as smart on all this nuance, but I found myself agreeing with Steve
7 on the notion of performance standards. Broadly, I think that our Council and the discourse of
8 the day should be able to make the determinations rather than being bound to these numeric
9 limits that are ultimately in some respects, I feel, are antiquated. When we were looking at the
10 options—I don't have the number in front of me. I think there was one last option which was
11 performance based. Equally with the issue of the commercial/residential square footage
12 numbers, it would be again towards that direction of performance base and not holding to
13 specific numeric standards that, I think, can be confusing. Those are my remarks. Thanks.

14

15 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Len.

16

17 **Len Filppu:** Thank you. As far as the building height limit, I think we should try to maintain the
18 50-foot limit. There are a number of opportunities and ways that appropriate developments
19 can have exceptions and have special situations, but there is still a lot of opportunity for
20 existing buildings and even new buildings to have smaller units and a number of different ways
21 to increase the housing stock at the 50-foot limit. By the way, I am a member of the
22 subcommittee, but because of the hours that they meet, I have been unable to attend, so I held
23 off on the first go-around. When I am able to attend a meeting, I'll step right into the first go-
24 around. One of the other concerns I had that I'll talk about right now is the Policy L-51 where it
25 talks about a mix of housing types. It says in appropriate locations encourage a mix of housing
26 types including micro units, studios, co-housing, etc. I think we really should define what we
27 mean by "in appropriate locations." I don't believe that this is appropriate for residential R-1,
28 R-2. We might want to specify that it's more R-15, 30, 40, mixed use zones so that we know
29 exactly what we're talking about on that. Thank you.

30

31 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Ellen and then Don.

32

33 **Ellen Uhrbrock:** I'm very glad to talk and to support either Option 3 or Option 4. I find that
34 high-rise buildings are very desirable for seniors and also for the young people. The mixture of
35 the young and the old is fine in a high rise, and so can some of the office things be incorporated
36 in there like there is at 550, that type of a high-rise building. I'm in favor of it. Of course, I've
37 had experience in both kinds of high-rise buildings. I want to tell you, though, about some of
38 the problems that are faced by them if they are residential. At least my Channing House, of



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1 course, was built 50 years ago. It does not have adequate garage space, and it has a big parking
2 problem, and it's suffering through now adjusting to the RRP, working very hard on it and
3 working hard on how you can increase the spaces that are available and finding others and also
4 adjusting to the changes there are in transportation. I think in the next 10 years it's going to be
5 very exciting with all the ways that things are changing for delivery and for mobility that will be
6 very adaptable. I think they may not start to ride bicycles all around town, but they certainly
7 will be able to use an app and order everything by mail order. Channing House, we order all
8 our pills online, and they deliver them to us. It's a solution, and we're working on this. Actually
9 they're working very hard on this. It's a serious problem because we also are dependent on a
10 large number of, I'll say, underpaid employees that commute. The man that served me my
11 breakfast this morning came from Oakland to give me my breakfast at 8:00 in the morning
12 there. Absolutely fine fellow and working hard. Of course, he'll quit as soon as he gets a job
13 closer to home, but things are changing. I want three or four, go up.

14

15 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Don.

16

17 **Don McDougall:** Thank you. Just a random walk through my thoughts. My first thought
18 relative to one, two and three goals here is that when I tried to plot what the policies were all
19 about, it was not directly related to the conversation in the preamble, where the preamble said
20 we were going to talk about four different goals, one of which was housing affordability. I
21 would say that there are very few, if any, of the policies that are in one, two or three or in any
22 of the ones to come that really deal with housing affordability. I continue to rag on the fact
23 that the definitions need to be improved. Thanks to Jennifer I now understand and will support
24 some of the definitions that are there, but I'm not sure that this Land Use Element did anything
25 to clarify what is already definitions in the community services one. In terms of data, I agree
26 with what Arthur said, that it's not just the percentages, it's the absolute numbers. I would like
27 us to try and adopt a consistent set of absolute and percentages. Some of these elements refer
28 to the State Finance numbers; some of these elements refer to the ABAG numbers. ABAG
29 numbers are typically regional. The State Finance numbers are by city. Either way you look at
30 it, whatever numbers you want to use, the growth in children in Palo Alto in the 15 years we're
31 talking about is relatively minimal. Whether it's 0 or 15 percent depending on what you look at,
32 that's very small compared to the growth in seniors which is something like 110-135 percent if
33 you use those numbers. I think that everything we look at, whether it's parks or buildings or
34 whatever, needs to be addressed in the granularity of these cohorts rather than simply the
35 general number. In terms of height, for me the issue isn't height. For me, the issue is that
36 quality of life as defined in the future. Many of the policies that we have now are to maintain
37 the status quo. As Ellen just said, the status quo is not going to exist anymore, so we have to
38 talk about the quality of life in terms of walkability, in terms of transit and many different kinds



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1 of things. Back to the EIR, I think it's silly to go ahead with the EIR at this point until we have
2 the opportunity to weigh in on that. Thank you.

3

4 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Adrian and then Lisa.

5

6 **Adrian Fine:** To start on the height limit, I'm in support of removing the cap for a few reasons.
7 One is it's from the 1970s, and 50 feet is pretty arbitrary. It was just kind of chosen out of thin
8 air at the time. Even though there is a lot of buildable space across the City, it's not always in
9 the best places. Removing the height limit not only allows density in transit and service-rich
10 areas, but it'll also provide future real estate value which can be taxed and diverted to services
11 such as transit, retail preservation, parks, whatever you name it. One other thing. If you're
12 going to talk about the environment and sustainability, tall buildings are way more efficient.
13 There's a funny policy in the Comprehensive Plan I actually wanted to comment on; it's not a
14 big thing, saying promote infill development in Palo Alto. All we do in Palo Alto is infill
15 development. There's actually nothing else. It's kind of funny to actually promote that and
16 then not even consider building up or building more efficient structures. For those reasons, I'm
17 in favor of removing the cap. Finally, I actually like some tall buildings in the mix. I think it adds
18 diversity to the City, and it's a nice thing. In terms of growth management, I'm also kind of on
19 the pro development spectrum here, where I'm in favor of Option 5. I'm a strong believer that
20 Palo Altans are not against growth itself, but rather the negative effects of that growth. I think
21 performance zoning and management has proven to be really effective particularly with office,
22 research and industrial uses, maybe a little less so with residential uses. For me, it comes down
23 to the fact that Palo Alto really is a world-class place because we have supported innovative
24 and efficient and new businesses, which are increasingly unable to locate in Palo Alto due to
25 costs. Recent office prices have reached a massive high; they're some of the most expensive in
26 the world per square foot office rents, which leads to a monoculture of business types. I don't
27 think that's healthy for the City economy. I'm in favor of Option 5 and growth management.

28

29 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Lisa and then Mark.

30

31 **Lisa Peschcke-Koedt:** Comments on the goals, but I'll start with the building height option. I
32 can see pluses on all of them, but I think if I have to choose one, I would end up going with
33 Option 4. I don't think there should be a specific limit; however, I would modify Option 4 in two
34 ways. That's important to me, to vote for Option 4. One is that the higher buildings would only
35 be in certain designated areas where we've agreed, it's close to transit, it fits the
36 neighborhoods, kind of like the 101 Alma or Channing House. I'm not saying are or aren't, but
37 pick where we would want them and put them there. That's the only place I would go high, but
38 in those cases I don't care if it's 100 feet high. At 50 or 65 is arbitrary to me. It depends on the

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1 location and the need. The second thing I would do is I would have an overall restriction on tall
2 buildings. I would hate to see us become a San Francisco skyline of all high rises, that that's all
3 you see. There would be an overall limit. With those two, I would go for Option 4. As part of
4 that, I would definitely make it a tradeoff. As somebody mentioned, the developers certainly
5 can make more money by being allowed to go high. That means that development must be for
6 below market rent or seniors or something else that we're trying to incent. I wouldn't do it
7 otherwise; I wouldn't do it just for economics. That's where I would come out on the options.
8 On the growth management, I think I would probably still keep a cap. I think it should be a
9 Citywide cap, but I understand Adrian's comment about—I'm not sure for the future, but I feel
10 for now that that probably makes sense. I personally think we need more residential and
11 maybe retail and not a lot of big office. I think there's enough room for small office, but again
12 I'm somewhat neutral on it. For both L-1 and L-2, I would ask that we add the word diversity—
13 it's in my comments that are at your places—in the actual goal title. Diversity meaning
14 economic diversity but also land use diversity. It can be lots of diversity. I think it's a very
15 important word missing from both of those goals. In Goal L-3, tying back to the height, I would
16 add that we add to Goal L-3 suggestions of where we would potentially permit a really high
17 building for that purpose. Thank you.

18
19 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Mark and then Arthur.

20
21 **Mark Nadim:** For the height limit, actually I was hoping to see different numbers proposed.
22 The original 50-foot limit that was proposed in the '70s, I don't think it was arbitrary. Basically I
23 think they were looking to five-story buildings. Things changed; designs changed. Now, with
24 the higher ceilings for both retail and even residential—residential used to be 8-foot limit for
25 each floor, and now they're talking about 8 and 10-foot height ceilings. If we want to maintain
26 the five-story limit, we would go up to maybe 55 or maybe up to 60-foot height. Basically that's
27 what I would like to see. The proposed Program L-24, on the incentives to convert ground floor
28 nonretail to residential along El Camino, I don't think that would be a good idea especially along
29 El Camino. When you have residential, you end up with developments like Arbor Real where
30 you have only the back of the building because of the noise and to prevent the noise from
31 getting into the residences. Along El Camino there should be only retail on the ground floor.
32 The other new proposed program, L-25, only limiting the displacement of existing retail, I think
33 the wording needs to be banning the displacement of existing retail to anything else, whether it
34 was residential or offices. On Policy L-12, on requiring new or remodeled structures to be
35 compatible with adjacent structures, again architectural design is evolving over the years. To
36 limit the innovation and new ideas is a disservice to the community. We see the difference
37 right now between homes built in the '30s from homes in '50s and then from homes built in the



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1 '70s. To say that we want to maintain the same design as whatever is available is a disservice.
2 Thank you.

3

4 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you, Mark. Arthur.

5

6 **Co-Chair Keller:** Firstly, let me talk a little bit about height. I gave a discourse in my notes
7 about the fact that there is no single 50-foot height limit in the City. That's an overall cap.
8 There are a lot of zones in the City—in fact, most zones in the City, the cap is actually lower
9 than 50 feet. Other than grandfathering, the Stanford Medical Center was allowed to go above
10 50 feet. Essentially there are only some places where you can have 50 feet. I think we need to
11 make sure the language indicates that only where it's—if we do increase it, and I'm not saying
12 we should, we should make sure that we're referring to where the limits are now 50, and those
13 change, not where the limits are lower. Secondly, the issue is that if you think height increases
14 affordability—there's these tall buildings right next to the Safeway called the Villages in
15 Mountain View. I'm looking right at their website; studio apartments rent for between \$3,000
16 and \$4,400; one bedrooms rent for between \$3,200 and \$5,300, and two bedrooms rent for
17 between \$5,300 and about \$9,000. Here's a situation where they went up. I wouldn't call
18 those affordable. Would you? No, I don't think so. The issue is that it's not necessarily the
19 case that going up leads to affordability. We have to be very careful about these sort of broad
20 arguments that tie increases to affordability. There are situations like BMR housing; that's
21 certainly affordable. Unless you do BMR, the new housing is going to be expensive. In terms of
22 performance standards, when you have performance standards, that's sort of like PCs. PCs had
23 kind of performance standards and goals or whatever. We didn't like PCs because those
24 performance standards in PCs, called public benefits, didn't really work. You're really talking
25 about public benefits in a new realm. Also, if your performance standards are measured post,
26 the building is already there. Do you say if you don't meet the standard, you're going to tear
27 down the building? Obviously that's not going to happen. You've got to be careful about what
28 performance standards means. In terms of Uber, Lyft and self-driving cars, Uber and Lyft
29 actually reduce transit use and increase traffic. That's what the data shows. I think that the 50-
30 foot height limit is actually four stories. There are no five-story buildings in Palo Alto that are
31 50 feet high. There are five-story buildings in Palo Alto that are 61 feet high. I'm in favor of the
32 50-foot height limit. If you really want to go to 55 feet, four stories, not five. Otherwise, you
33 have shallower stories than we have now with four stories and 50 feet. I don't think that
34 accomplishes the goal. Thank you.

35

36 **Co-Chair Garber:** First, let me reiterate what Shani had spoken to me about. These are her
37 comments. She was supportive of Option Number 1, keeping the 50-foot height limit. She is no
38 longer supportive of increasing the building height as proposed in Option 2. She would not vote

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1 for that. Option3, she was intrigued by, but she would abstain from because she doesn't
2 understand where and for what uses the buildings might be used. She was intrigued to see if
3 there was a way for that to work. She says specifically, "I do not have enough information to
4 consider Option 3." She's opposed to Option Number 4. Some very general comments of my
5 own then. I thought last night's conversation by the Council, speaking of Option 5, which I'm
6 actually not going to address here but I wanted to pull out some of the comments that I
7 thought were very interesting to me. First of all, the Council in previous sessions had agreed to
8 focus their interests on growth around University Avenue and California Avenue. In particular,
9 it seems to me that Councilman Schmid has a vision of what those two places, University
10 Avenue and California Avenue, are that is of greater density and potentially greater height as he
11 has suggested. Mayor Burt—I think it was Mayor Burt and I may be wrong in this—had said he
12 didn't feel there should a height limit, but there should be a story limit. Councilman Holman
13 spoke about the inability to see actual examples to be able to action them in an appropriate
14 way. A couple of comments around all of those things. First of all, height is not a panacea for
15 housing price. It can; it cannot, but it's not a panacea. There would have to be other
16 regulations that allow us to get what we want out of it that don't have to do with the
17 physicality of it, but it has to do with who's allowed in, whether it's BMR, etc. However, a 50-
18 foot solution doesn't get you better architecture or fewer impacts. It just doesn't, as we've
19 recognized time and time again. I don't know what the limit should be. I actually think there
20 should be a limit. I don't think it should be 100 feet; that was thrown out as an example. I do
21 know one thing. Between now and 2030, we don't know what is going to happen between now
22 and 2030. We need to allow enough flexibility for future Councils and future committees such
23 as this to be able to move within them, which gets me back to Councilman Holman's comment,
24 which is to be able to see what these things are. Unfortunately, the way the regulatory
25 environment works, you can't do that at the policy level. You have to take action—forgive me,
26 I'm going to continue on here. You have to take action around numbers and around grand
27 policies. You can't actually create pictures of what you're going to see. I don't know what the
28 exact number is, but I do believe that we need to create flexibility and the opportunity for that
29 number to be arrived at. The way that you end up seeing that is by creating some policy that
30 allows that flexibility to go, and then you study it specifically in specific plans which are, as
31 we've already talked about, potentially including University Avenue and California Avenue
32 and/or other places, but we have yet to talk about those things specifically. I agree that we
33 should try and find policies that do not have to be negotiated. That has gotten us into trouble
34 many, many times. Again, I'm coming back to the fact that I don't know exactly what that
35 number should be, what the height number is specific to that. I think Co-Chair Keller's
36 comments in his notes to us all about what zones actually can go up to 50 feet were
37 extraordinarily helpful, because it's actually a very small amount of the City. I actually took out
38 my colored pencils and was going to start coloring them in on the zoning sheets, which I

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1 brought with me, but then realized how difficult that is when you start adding in and trying to
2 figure out which ones are next to the lower heights that you would have to modify. It quickly
3 becomes a very difficult thing to model, which is a conversation that Hitchings and I had way
4 too late last night. It is very, very difficult to create pictures of what this stuff is. You have to
5 create general policy and then focus in. That's, unfortunately, the reality of our regulatory
6 environment. I'm not going to say much more about that. Let's move on. Unless there is
7 anything urgent that somebody wants to say, let's vote on the four, and then let's open up the
8 discussion to see if there are more ways that we want to ... Yes. The other note that Arthur is
9 asking me to comment on is his Comment Number 2, which notes that the Housing Element
10 Program H-2.1.1 already states "to allow for higher density residential development, consider
11 amending the Zoning Code to permit high-density residential and mixed use or single-use
12 projects in commercial areas within one-half mile of fixed rail stations and to allow limited
13 exceptions to the 50-foot height limit for Housing Element sites within one-quarter mile of fixed
14 rail stations." His point there is that Options 3 and 4 are already being allowed within the
15 Housing Element. You can still vote for them, but there you are. Hamilton.

16

17 **Hamilton Hitchings:** I'd just like you to clarify the definition of voting members.

18

19 **Co-Chair Garber:** The only people here that can vote—actually it's probably easier to exclude.
20 There are two members that have been appointed to the committee that cannot vote; that is ...

21

22 **Co-Chair Keller:** (inaudible)

23

24 **Co-Chair Garber:** Right. This evening there is only two; we are also missing Heidi. Heidi and
25 Whitney and Adrian cannot vote. The rest of us can with the exception of staff. With a show of
26 hands, we'll have staff do the counting. All those that would vote to support Option 1, keep the
27 current building height of 50 feet, please raise your hand.

28

29 **Hillary Gitelman:** Is this people who support it or could live with it?

30

31 **Co-Chair Garber:** This is people that support this option, Option Number 1. You can vote for as
32 many options as you want. Did you get Arthur? Seven. All those that would vote to support
33 Option Number 2, incorporate flexibility in building regulations to foster better design. Let me
34 read the rest of it. Maintain a 50-foot height limit on buildings in Palo Alto, but allow heights
35 up to a maximum of 55 feet for residential and retail, mixed-use projects to allow flexibility in
36 floor to ceiling heights and enhance the livability in multifamily residential units. All those that
37 would support that policy, please raise your hand. Thank you. Option Number 3, allow the
38 possibility of building heights up to 65 feet in specific areas to encourage a more diverse and



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1 affordable range of housing options. The new policy, I'll go ahead and read it. Building height
2 limits up to a maximum of 65 feet may be considered for areas well served by transit, services
3 and retail as a way to facilitate a mix of multifamily housing including affordable units, units
4 targeted to seniors and other special needs populations and micro units designed to
5 accommodate younger members of the workforce. This includes a new program proposed
6 here. Establish criteria and conditions that must be met in order to allow building heights up to
7 65 feet. Criteria could include affordability of the residential units, compatibility with
8 surrounding land uses, sensitivity to context, proximity to transit services and retail, and
9 mitigation or avoidance of adverse impacts on traffic and parking conditions. All those that
10 would support that policy, please raise your hand. Option Number 4, allow the possibility of
11 higher building heights in specific areas to encourage a more diverse and affordable range of
12 housing options. The new policy would read "building height limits over 50 feet may be
13 considered for areas well served by transit, services, and retail as a way to facilitate a mix of
14 multifamily housing including affordable units, units targeted to seniors and other special needs
15 populations and micro units designed to accommodate younger members of the workforce."
16 The program underneath that reads "establish criteria and conditions that must be met in order
17 to allow building heights higher than 50 feet. Criteria could include affordability of the
18 residential units, compatibility with surrounding land uses, sensitivity to context, proximity to
19 transit, services and retail, and mitigation or avoidance of adverse impacts on traffic and
20 parking conditions." All those that would favor that option, please raise your hand. Just out of
21 curiosity, is there anyone that did not vote for any? None. Let's open it up to everybody here.
22 You can either speak to this or anything for that matter. I see one flag from Annette, Alex,
23 Elaine and ...

24

25 **Hillary Gitelman:** Could I ask a question? I would really be interested in getting a sense from
26 the group about whether they'd like the subcommittee to keep working on these height
27 options, other options, wordsmithing, or whether we're done with these and we move on to
28 the options about the other issues.

29

30 **Co-Chair Garber:** Perhaps they can answer that in their comments. I had Annette. I had
31 somebody over here. Who was it? Alex, did you have your ... I'll take Lisa then. (inaudible)
32 Sure. Let me just capture what we've got here now. Ellen ...

33

34 **Co-Chair Keller:** Do you want (inaudible)?

35

36 **Co-Chair Garber:** ... Elaine—yes, hang on one second. Let me just capture everybody. Steve.
37 Hillary.



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1 **Hillary Gitelman:** We had seven for Option 1, four for Option 2, seven for Option 3, and ten for
2 Option 4.

3
4 **Co-Chair Garber:** All right. Yes, Bob.

5
6 **Bob Wenzlau:** You said you can just talk about whatever you want to. What did you ...

7
8 **Co-Chair Garber:** This is the open session, so you can either address what we've just spoken
9 about or other topics in addition ...

10
11 **Bob Wenzlau:** Thank you.

12
13 **Co-Chair Garber:** ... related to land use ideally. If you can, staff would also like to learn what
14 you would be interested in having the subcommittee—what their next steps on these particular
15 options are. Annette and then Lisa.

16
17 **Annette Glanckopf:** I don't mean to muddy the waters on this height thing. There was such an
18 interest last night and talking about the number of floors. I don't know if that's something we
19 should also (inaudible) throw that in the mix. Maybe we could talk more about that at the
20 subcommittee meeting. I wanted to go back to a general concept, though. It's really
21 (inaudible) I've been going to these seismic meetings and (inaudible) developers. They are
22 really, really (inaudible) on incentives. Right now, the financial incentives are there for office
23 obviously. I think we really need to figure out what incentives we can give developers to build
24 affordable (inaudible). I don't think we should be allowing anyone to build just (inaudible) nice
25 little apartment complexes that are affordable if you define affordable up to \$125,000 a year in
26 salary. If you look at—I think it's San Jose, back to just general units. They raised the BMR
27 requirement up to 25 percent rather than 15. That's something that we might want to
28 consider. Again, I think we should really focus—maybe this is not in the Comp Plan, but really
29 try to encourage some sort of land use, maybe it's the Fry's site, maybe on San Antonio, maybe
30 on El Camino, of where we can actually build these large complexes no matter what the height
31 is, and have incentives that are focused in that area and maybe have reverse incentives for
32 people that just want to build office or they want to build residential without affordable units.
33 Smaller units, I think, is another thing we really need to focus on in these large complexes. My
34 whole feeling is—I'm not clever enough right now to suggest any incentives. If that's really
35 what we want to build, and that's really what the community is telling us, that needs to be a
36 number one priority and message coming out of this group. I don't think we should say let's
37 figure out what the office cap is, which I think should actually be lower, or let's figure out what
38 we're going to do to these regular market rate rental units. There's enough rental in Palo Alto.

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1 It's not affordable rental. Greg Scharff said last night there's 200-300—I think that was his
2 number—units available, maybe more. It's just that people don't want to pay the exorbitant
3 rents. Just some random thoughts on that area.

4
5 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you, Annette. I missed the meetings that you went to with the
6 developers. What meetings were those?

7
8 **Annette Glanckopf:** The City is also doing this little task force on seismically unsafe buildings.
9 There's a lot of commercial (inaudible) multiunit residential, houses, that are seismically unsafe.
10 There will be some discussion. It's really a shame that the timing is not married to this. There
11 will be some incentives at some point and policy for what (inaudible) these unsafe buildings
12 seismically to bring them up to snuff, which we can (inaudible) FAR, we're going to give them
13 more height, we're going to give them more setbacks, more parking restrictions, TDRs. It's all
14 populated with developers, and it's absolutely fascinating listening to them.

15
16 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Lisa and then Ellen.

17
18 **Lisa Peschcke-Koedt:** (inaudible) Hillary, you'd said should there be more work on the four
19 options. I don't know whether it's revising the fourth, if we agree, or there's a fifth one, is the
20 two things that I still care about, which is that there be an overall height limit across the City.
21 How many tall things, that we're not all just tall? The second is where would we do it. I'm not
22 saying I know where, but that there be a specific designation of where. I don't know if we're
23 okay adding that to Number 4 or that would be a Number 5. Beyond that, I don't know that
24 there were a lot of modifications to one, two, three, four. Were there? That we needed to do
25 more revising. That was it. Sorry. Then, I just wanted to check. This was a separate comment,
26 sorry. On Scenario 5, you mentioned—I think this is the one Steve sent the letter in as well to
27 the City Council. Did the City Council ask—they did ask to do both the little growth and then a
28 lot growth kind of scenario. Thank you.

29
30 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Ellen and then Elaine.

31
32 **Ellen Uhrbrock:** I want to bring to everybody's attention that tomorrow night at 6:00 at the
33 Rinconada Library, VTA is having an outreach program to discuss the presence of the routes of
34 the VTA. VTA 35, which runs through from Stanford Shopping Center all the way to the
35 Mountain View one, is really the only link between all the shopping districts in the middle part
36 of Palo Alto. It is the link to—matter of fact, it's the only way you use public transit to go to the
37 City Council meetings on a Monday night. Nothing else runs there. It's the only way you could
38 have gotten here tonight by public transit. It's essential to have an alternative so people can

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1 come if they choose to speak (inaudible). It goes through to all of the libraries. Our own
2 shuttle is supplementing this. Actually the shuttle does a lot of good on the shopping, and the
3 rest of it is our connecting path until we can get everything delivered by drone to our front
4 door. It's tomorrow night at 6:00. I am convincing as many people who are members of
5 Avenidas and live at Channing House to come and express themselves. I hope you will support
6 it.

7

8 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Steve and then Bob. I apologize, I skipped over you.

9

10 **Elaine Uang:** I wanted to add on just two points to the housing and nonresidential growth
11 management. I think with Option 4, I want to follow up on something Co-Chair Garber said,
12 which is there really needs to be some amount of certainty and some real strong definition
13 placed on the criteria. A lot of people have mentioned that there's a lot of potential left, which
14 may be true, but I think part of the problem is that we haven't really seen housing because
15 there's kind of a lack of certainty that's prohibiting the construction of housing in some of our
16 commercial areas. Maybe we have potential, but we're certainly not creating the environment
17 to construct that housing. Maybe we also need to consider the possibility we haven't set up the
18 right incentives. On the height bit, I think it's important to really figure out what those
19 incentives should be in order to get to those height limits and to get to those conditions. I think
20 there's some breaking news that Governor Brown is issuing these guidelines for "as a right"
21 approvals for housing, which could be a game changer. Maybe that's something we should be
22 considering for our community, if we really, really want to be serious about housing, affordable
23 housing, middle-income housing and a range of other things. I think also on the nonresidential
24 growth management bit, I really just want to reemphasize and underscore that we need to also
25 couple this with the location of nonresidential growth. Again, I mentioned last time that I think
26 we really should be incentivizing development in the areas near transit, and I put up that map.
27 Do we only want 50,000 square feet in Downtown, Cal. Ave., and El Camino, but allow 75,
28 150,000 next to the Baylands? It came to my attention a couple of days later that there's going
29 to be a development proposal for Ming's for a 65 or 70,000-square-foot proposal right on the
30 Baylands. Yet, we only have 46,000 square feet remaining in the Downtown area cap. It really
31 seems to me that if we're going to talk about growth management, we should be locating that
32 growth in the right place, the remaining 1.7 million or whatever square feet that's left, and
33 prioritize where that goes and not just allow it willy-nilly throughout the City, because that's
34 going to create real problems.

35

36 **Co-Chair Garber:** Thank you. Steve and then Bob.

37



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1 **Stephen Levy:** I have one policy point and one process point. Building on what Elaine said,
2 when I advocate for flexibility, that's about the number. That's not about the location or the
3 type or the criteria. When I supported for flexibility on the number, I suspected that we would
4 develop specific locations like Downtown or Cal. Avenue with specific criteria for specific groups
5 of people that might get priority for the height and have pretty specific performance-based
6 criteria. It wasn't just anything goes. On the process, pretty much we've stuck to policy, but
7 everyone once in a while here and at Council somebody throws out a number. There are going
8 to be more kids, there are going to be less kids, all of the housing and tall buildings isn't
9 affordable, you can't mitigate trips. I'd like some rules, some help from staff, some consultants
10 coming in. I work on this stuff every day for a living, and I have stayed out of those factual
11 questions because I'm here as a citizen. I'm getting to the point where I feel like there are a lot
12 of things being said here that are questions of evidence, and they're just personal perspectives.
13 I'd like the staff and the consultants to come in with some evidence on those questions, so
14 we're just not slinging stuff that we think is true and everybody doesn't know whether it's true
15 or not.