



**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AT PLACES MEMO
Tuesday, December 13, 2016**

The following documents are attached for your review and information:

1. CAC member Bonnie Packer's comments
2. CAC member Hamilton Hitching's comments
3. CAC member Annette Glanckopf's comments

Public Comments

1. Betty Jo Chang
2. Canopy

**CAC Member Bonnie Packer's comments on the draft of the Natural Environment and Safety
Elements of the Comprehensive Plan update**

Date: Dec 12, 2016

Introduction is great. Just a few editorial comments:

Introduction: "management of open land": Shouldn't this say open *space* instead of open *land*?

Map N-2: What do the 4 zones indicate?

Storm drain system Map N-5 ?? This did not come through

Energy: What about natural gas?

Climate change: It should be noted here that some of the policies and programs in the Transportation Element are also for the purpose of slowing global warming by reducing GHG.

Open Space:

N-1.1 [N1] private open space. Private open space should be defined more explicitly. Is the intent here to refer to private property located in the open space zones? Does private open space include small backyards in the flatlands? It is very important that this be made clear. There are references elsewhere to residential backyards.

Policy N-1.9 [N22] bullet points: Are these essentially a restatement of the rules for development in the open space zone? If so, eliminate the bullet points and simply state that the City will continue to apply the guidelines in the zoning code relating to developments in open space zone.

Program N1.10.4 [N27]: What in-lieu fees are being referred to here? Please be specific.

Policies N-11. And 12 [N28 and N29] Add San Mateo County.

Urban Forest:

Programs N2.6.1 and 2: Need to clearly and explicitly define street trees; that is trees that are in the City rights-of way.

Accordingly, rewrite Policy N-2.7 [Previous Policy N-15] [N42] as follows:

Where no tree exists in the City right of way, or if City-planted trees (street trees) are removed from the right of way in front of new commercial, multi-unit, and single family housing projects, require the owner/developer to provide or replace such street trees and related irrigation systems where appropriate. [Previous Policy N-15] [N42]

Creeks:

Setback requirements: Policy N-3.3 and programs: will any of this prevent the construction of or repair of existing trail bridges?

Water Resources:

Policy N-4.6 [N83] retaining rainwater on site – What sites does this policy apply to? City property? Is this for all properties? It should be rewritten to state: “Encourage the retention and utilization of rainwater on site..... “

There is some language missing in the following program:

Program N4.8.2 Explore appropriate ways to monitor dewatering for all dewatering and excavation projects *and to is* not recharged into the aquifer. [NEW PROGRAM] [N92]

Program N4.12.1 [N105] Evaluate Promote the use of permeable paving.....What verb belongs here? Evaluate or Promote?

Program N4.12.3 is redundant as the idea is expressed in N-4.12.1. Also, it is not clear where this would apply, as written (another poorly drafted EIR mitigation measure)

Program N4.12.3 Mitigate flooding through improved surface permeability or paved areas, and storm water capture and storage. (EIR Mitigation Measure) [NEW PROGRAM] [N107]

Air Quality:

Policy N-5.3 should be made stronger by adding the language in italics:

Establish and regularly enforce regulations that reduce emissions of particulates from manufacturing, dry cleaning, construction activity, grading, wood burning, landscape maintenance, including leaf blowers, and other sources. [(Previous Policy N-27)(Comp Plan Draft EIR Mitigation Measure AIR-1)] [N130]

Policy N-5.4 Add introductory language as indicated in italics:

Establish and regularly enforce regulations that require all potential sources of odor and/or toxic air contaminants **be** adequately buffered, or mechanically or otherwise mitigated to avoid odor and toxic impacts that violate relevant human health standards. [Previous Policy N-29] [N135]

Noise:

Policy N-6.1[N136]

The long narrative about guidelines for noise levels must come from some official document that should be referred to, rather than repeated here in the comp plan.

Program N6.10.1 [N151] Remove the reference to the Stanford University Medical Center.

Energy: (In the Safety Element this is referred to as Power – which is the better term?)

Program N7.1.1 [N161] should this say “meet customer electricity **and natural gas** needs”?

Climate change: No comments

Safety element.

Community Safety:

Policy S-1.6 [S19] Should protect the privacy and civil liberties of all **persons** (i.e., not just residents).

Program S1.7.2 [S25] regarding the Public Safety building: Rewrite: "Ensure that the new Public Safety building meets the needs....and will be resilient...."

Power: In the Natural Environment Element the word used is Energy. Does it matter?

Natural Hazards:

Floods:

Policy S-29 [S65] Use "Prohibit" rather than "prevent" regarding habitable basements in flood zones.

Comments from CAC Member Hamilton Hitchings

Date: 12/12/16

I have read the latest version of the Safety Element and overall it looks quite good. I did spot a couple of things:

* Program S1.1.3 "Develop citywide emergency drills that involve residents...". I believe this is supposed to be "emergency services volunteers". We don't currently have drills for the untrained general population and we are not planning on adding them to my knowledge. I think Annette feels strongly about this so Annette plays weigh in.

* MAP S-2 says "Earthquakes and Faults" with no legend of what they are nor text saying there are not any in Palo Alto. It would be nice if it was clearer to the reader what it was showing us.

* MAP S-5 "Fema Flood Zones". I believe the 100 year flood zone is larger than denoted, especially in the Duveneck/St. Francis and Crescent Park Neighborhoods. Since Embarcadero and cross streets are not show such as Newell, Middlefield and Louis its harder to tell and it would be helpful if those could be added.

Hamilton Hitchings

Comments CAC meeting 12/13/16
Natural Environment & Safety
Annette Glanckopf

Natural Environment

- 1) Tighten spacing map and page N4
- 2) Program N1.1.1 – remove errata “s,” before Pearson
- 3) Policy N1.4: Program N1.4.1 calls for review of CEQA thresholds of significance regarding special status species.....but for me this is hanging. Then what action should be taken...report status to the agencies listed in program?
- 4) Goal N2 under Urban Forest: Add a new Program N2.1.2. Add “ *explore feasibility and locations for a memorial park to commemorate citizens who have contributed significant public service to the City of Palo Alto.*”
- 5) Program N2.9.1. There is a comment Replacement tree program complete. If so, should this program be removed?
- 6) Program N3.4.1 addresses creek stewardship, which is currently ongoing by Acterra. Replace the word “*develop*” to “*enhance*” or “*expand*.”
- 7) Water Resources Policy N4.3: Add incentive programs,. Note: some of which are currently in place at city or county level
- 8) Policy N4.8 Program N4.8.1 add regulate ...*research, develop programs and regulate new construction*
- 9) Program N4.8.2: Add *regulate*
- 10) Policy N4.15 Add new program “*Consider prohibiting water from (new) construction (basements) to flow into storm drains*”
- 11) OMIT Program N5.2.2 or reword. It addresses cars idling for more than 3-5 minutes. I am not sure how one can regulate cars in traffic from idling.
- 12) Policy N.6.2 : Consolidate construction noise under Policy N6.10

Safety Element

- 1) Program S1.1.3: The city is not going to take on implementing a drill for all residents. The program should read:
Develop citywide emergency drills that involve key stakeholders - City of Palo Alto first responders, city staff, ESVs (Emergency Service Volunteers) and the Red Cross
- 2) Program S2.6.1: On seismic : The program encourages neighborhoods to pool resources for seismic retrofits. I think the city c/should be the agent that does this...or at least add to program
- 3) Combine Program S2.5.2 and S2.53
- 4) Policy S2.9: Change word "Prevent" to "Prohibit"new habitable basements ...within the flood zone
- 5) Policy S2.15 I suggest using the word "expand" not "support " the Fire Department efforts in public education, since they are currently mainly focused on foothills fire prevention planning

PUBLIC COMMENTS

12/13/16

To: CAC

re: Safety Element review of draft-December 13, 2016

Thank you for your efforts on this plan element. I appreciate the progress that has been made.

Here are the items I would like to see strengthened.

FLOOD HAZARD AND MITIGATION

Program S2.8.1 (page S-20) “Implement flood mitigation requirements of FEMA in Special Flood Hazard Areas as illustrated on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps [previous program N-76] [S60].

Comment: FEMA’s concern is about property damage. We are, in our city’s safety program, also concerned with human health and safety.

Our current Muni-Code City Flood Hazard Regulations (Muni Code 16.2) apply only to FEMA designated SFHA zones. Palo Alto thereby meets the minimum requirements for participation in the FEMA property loss Insurance program for designated SFHA zones.

The City provides NO flood hazard regulations for housing construction in the rest of the City. This is not FEMA’s fault. For FEMA actively encourages Cities to do more; “The NFIP requirements are minimums. As noted in 44 CFR 60.1(d), “Any floodplain management regulations adopted by a State or a community which are more restrictive than the criteria set forth in this part are encouraged and shall take precedence.”

==> Please consider adding to Policy S-2.8.1, a recommendation that Muni Code 16.2 also be applied to all areas indicated on Map S-6 Sea Level Rise (55 inch)mark.

This will have the effect of proactively reducing construction of residential basement dwellings in areas where we know we may expect more flooding during the practical lifetime of residential construction. This decouples Palo Alto’s health and safety concerns about sea level rise, from the often glacial responses of a property insurance mechanism (FEMA) flood map. And, the cost of voluntary flood insurance in these areas which are not currently SFHA designated might be reduced (per Program S2.8.2).

Program S2.8.2 (page S-20)- Continue participating in FEMA’s Community Rating System to reduce flood insurance for local residents and businesses and strive to improve Palo Alto’s rating in order to lower the cost of flood insurance [PTC]NEWPROGRAM [S61]

==> Thank you.

Program S2.8.3 (page S-20) “Partner with appropriate agencies to expand flood zones as appropriate due to sea level rise, changes in creek channels, sheet flooding or storm drain overload due to increased likelihood of extreme storm events caused by climate change. [PCT] [NEW PROGRAM] [S62]

Comment: Note request re: Policy S-2.8.1. In addition to working with agencies regarding FEMA flood maps, muni-code 16.2 Flood Hazard Regulations can reduce health and safety risks associated with new construction of basement dwellings in areas proximate to current FEMA flood map areas and within the areas where sea level rise and other flood hazard vulnerabilities are known or anticipated.

==> Please consider adding to Policy S-2.8.3, a recommendation that Muni Code 16.2 also be applied to all areas indicated on Map S-6 Sea Level Rise.

Program S2.9 (page s-21) Prevent new habitable basements as part of residential development in single-family residential neighborhoods within the flood hazard zone.

The City of Palo Alto states that: “All of Palo Alto has been determined to be subject to some risk of flooding, and it is inaccurate to say that a given property is "not in a flood zone" simply because it is not in a Special Flood Hazard Area.”

(<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=442&TargetID=175>)

==> Please consider adding prohibition of new habitable basements as part of both single-family and multi-family residential neighborhoods within the sea-level rise and dam inundation maps (MAPs S-6 and S-7).

Program S2.9.2 Study appropriate restrictions on underground construction in areas in which the current groundwater level is 14 feet or less to accommodate expected higher ground water levels due to sea level rise and minimize consequent flooding of underground construction. [NEW PROGRAM] [S67].

==> Please consider adding a deadline for this study report of no later than 24 months from adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Time is of the essence.

Again, thank you for your time and efforts on this plan, and your contribution to our City.

Betty Jo Chang
Newell Road, Palo Alto

Public Comments from Canopy (Catherine Martineau)

Dear Elena,

I have reviewed the Natural Element's latest draft dated 12/13 and am happy to see that Canopy's edits were incorporated into this draft.

The only one that I still would like to see is the mention of the urban forest in the second sentence of the Vision, as follows.

Vision:

[...] Palo Alto will respect and manage natural resources in a way that sustains the natural environment and protects our foothills, baylands, creeks, parks, **urban forest**, wildlife and open space legacy.[...]

I assume this is an oversight since page 2 of the staff report states: "The urban forest has been added to the list of natural environments to be protected and preserved." However, if there is a real issue with this, please let me know what it is so that I can understand.

Many thanks,

Catherine