



CITY OF NOVATO
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

ZOOM TELECONFERENCE

Wednesday, September 15, 2021 - 7:00 PM

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL

The Design Review Commission meeting began at 7:00 PM.

Commission Present: Vice Chair Studer, Commissioner Barber, Commissioner Farrell

Commission Absent: Chair MacLeamy, Commissioner Schatz

Staff Present: Planning Manager Steve Marshall

B. APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA

COMMISSION ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Barber and seconded by Commissioner Farrell, the Design Review Commission voted 3-0-0-2 to approve the final agenda. Motion carried.

AYES: Commissioners Barber, Farrell, and Studer

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Chair MacLeamy, Commissioner Schatz

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

D. CONSENT ITEM

D.1 Approval of Special Meeting Minutes of July 20, 2021 (JF, PM, MB, ES)

COMMISSION ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Farrell and seconded by Commissioner Barber, the Design Review Commission voted 3-0-0-2 to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of July 20, 2021. Motion carried.

AYES: Commissioners Barber, Farrell, and Studer

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Chair MacLeamy, Commissioner Schatz

PUBLIC HEARING

E. CONTINUED ITEMS

NONE

F. NEW ITEMS

NONE

G. WORKSHOPS

G.1. 777 SAN MARIN DRIVE (SM)

P2021-077; DESIGN REVIEW

APNs 125-202-03, -04, & -05; 773, 775, & 777 SAN MARIN DRIVE

Conduct a design workshop to review and provide comments on the master plan level site design and building massing proposed for 777 San Marin Drive.

Planning Manager Marshall presented the staff report.

Pete Beritzhoff, BayWest Development, introduced the development team and provided background regarding the project. Joe Runco, SWA, described the project's site design and open space/recreation amenities. David Burton, KTGy, described the project's-built elements, including building massing.

Commissioner Barber confirmed the process for a general plan amendment and rezone are beyond the authority of the Design Review Commission.

Planning Manager Marshall confirmed this circumstance.

Chair Barber commented that he preferred the onsite pond to be retained as a design feature and noted he had not heard a good reason to remove the pond.

Pete Beritzhoff commented that the pond is man-made feature and is supplied by potable water. He stated retaining the pond is not the highest and best use of available land.

Commissioner Barber asked about parking.

Pete Beritzhoff stated the single-family residences and townhomes will have two car garages. He noted the higher density apartment will have a parking structure that is wrapped by the apartments; the senior apartments will have podium parking. Parking ratios will be based on bedroom count.

David Burton noted on-street parallel parking would be available for guests.

Commissioner Barber asked if parking would meet Novato's code requirements.

Pete Beritzhoff stated the project would meet the State's code for parking.

Commissioner Barber noted easements on the project site and wanted to confirm that while buildings could not cross easements, landscaping could.

Pete Beritzhoff addressed the PG&E gas line easements crossing the site as an example – no habitable structures can go over the easements, but landscaping and roadways are acceptable. He noted an

easement for a large drainage line – indicating it is not possible to build over that utility, but landscaping is acceptable.

Vice Chair Studer opened the public comment period.

Dorothy Ascher – Lives at Partridge Knolls. Not unhappy with redevelopment of the project site. Asked about income eligibility for affordable residences. Asked about parking locations – underneath larger buildings? Asked to clarify the location of rental housing areas versus for-sale housing area.

Pete Beritzhoff confirmed the parking configuration of the apartments and senior apartments and addressed the location of rental and for sale housing.

Planning Manager Marshall invited Ms. Ascher to contact him after the meeting to obtain information on income levels.

Jon Pittman – Stated the project needs to connect to and embrace the community – the project’s design is insular - the project’s only connection to Partridge Knolls is an existing trail. He agreed with Chair MacLeamy’s comment about a pedestrian spine down the middle of the project – suggested connecting the fire road at Butterfield Drive to the pedestrian spine coupled with open space nodes. Recommended keeping existing water feature. Stated density is an issue, not use. Recommended opening different connections to the site.

Lynn Wolf – Expressed concern about the buildings at the east side of the site – questioned how the project coordinates with existing homes in the area. The buildings to the east are not that attractive – west buildings are fine. Consider more curved streets.

Pete Beritzhoff – Noted circulation is still being considered. Images of buildings are just catalog imagery from KTG’s portfolio of projects – the project is not that far along in architectural design. The project will draw architecture from surrounding neighborhood, something contemporary and appropriate.

Sylvia Barry – Expressed concern about traffic, noting only two exits to San Marin Drive. Referenced a roadway design presented during the North Redwood Corridor Focus Area Study. Wondered if a third exit from the project site was necessary in an emergency. Referenced the need for workforce housing and providing amenities for younger residents – something to attract people to Novato.

Vice Chair Studer closed the public comment period.

Planning Manager Marshall presented slides conveying the written comments of Chair MacLeamy and Commissioner Schatz.

Commissioner Farrell’s comments:

- Agreed with the comments of Chair MacLeamy and Commissioner Schatz.
- Suggested taking density and spreading it out more evenly across the site – the project needs a more balanced layout with a central spine with a wider central area - a unifying element with a gathering point, perhaps visible from San Marin Drive.
- Using loop road to define development area makes sense – likes edges being left as a greenbelt.
- The project just needs a central green space.

- Higher density buildings will need upper floor step backs – mimic more of the multi-family units at the center of the site – create softer transition of buildings.
- Encouraged contemporary buildings - no need to contextualize architecture.

Commissioner Barber's comments:

- We all want a central square.
- Project is packed with density within the loop road and just open spaces with benches at the edges – space near San Marin Drive won't be used – seems like leftover spaces are presented as amenities.
- The project needs something like the Sonoma Square - agreed with Chair MacLeamy's note about central space.
- The project needs a few minimal commercial amenities, such as a coffee shop or childcare facility, perhaps replacing the leasing area near the SMART station.
- Confine automobiles to the loop road with short roads that don't go all the way through the development area – use dead-ends to keep traffic down.
- Key pedestrian's paths to main pedestrian spine.
- Noted the units in the middle of the project don't appear to have any private open space - not appealing.
- The parking for the high-density area - podium and structured parking – works well.
- Noted the major buildings are a little less in height than the existing office buildings – these buildings placed right at Redwood Boulevard will have a visual impact.
- Referenced HO Policy 3.3 - break-up bulk and apparent height – consider second story step back – do something creative, not vertical walls.
- Add big park space, not token amenities
- Shift massing and avoid “cookie cutter” appearance – create an organic flow of design, like the site was developed over time.
- Expressed concern about parking

Vice Chair Studer's comments:

- Agreed with the comments of the other commissioners.
- Project needs a gathering area – something in the middle of the site to bring the developed areas together, otherwise the project seems disconnected.
- Views Novato and San Marin as having a rural feel and history - perhaps a barn structure within a central space for gathering and socializing.

- Concerned the senior housing area is so far to the east side of the site – perhaps disperse senior housing.
- Consider reducing density at the east side of the site and adding density to the west side of the site. Fine with single-family residences, but also fine with balancing units if necessary.
- Consider amenities for seniors – senior building seems really bumped-up against larger rental buildings.
- Consider an area for food trucks – a nice gathering space, perhaps moved into the project – could possibly bring people in from the larger San Marin community.
- Likes the idea of a childcare center.
- Excited about landscaping design and bringing in materials to blend in with Mount Burdell.
- Make a place for not only first-time buyers – make them want to stay in the project.
- Consider a community garden, perhaps roof top gardens.
- Consider energy efficiency – solar.

The slides summarizing Commissioner Schatz and Chair MacLeamy's comments are attached for reference.

H. GENERAL BUSINESS

NONE

I. ADJOURNMENT

The Design Review Commission adjourned the meeting at 8:41 PM.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly adopted at the Design Review Commission meeting of October 6, 2021.

/Shelley Woods/

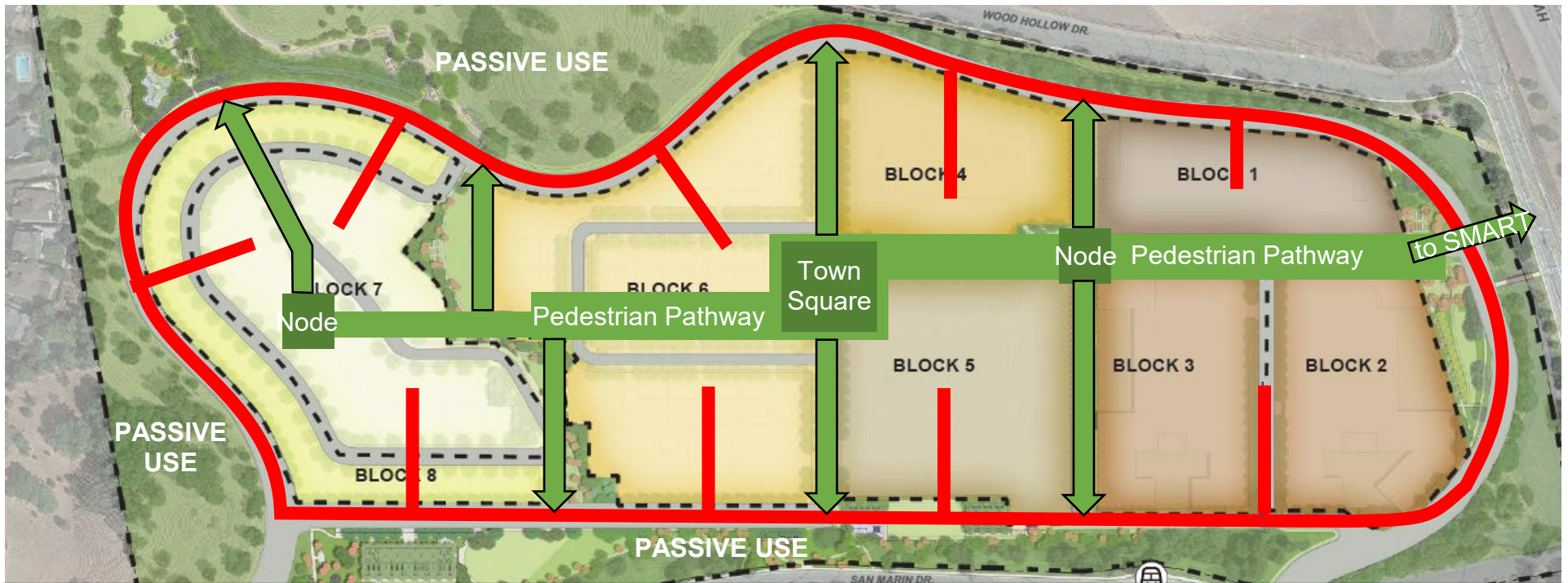
Shelley Woods, Senior Office Assistant



Fireman's Fund Conversion Project

Review & Analysis of *Site* and *Scale*

by Patrick MacLeamy, DRC Chair
Wednesday, September 15, 2021



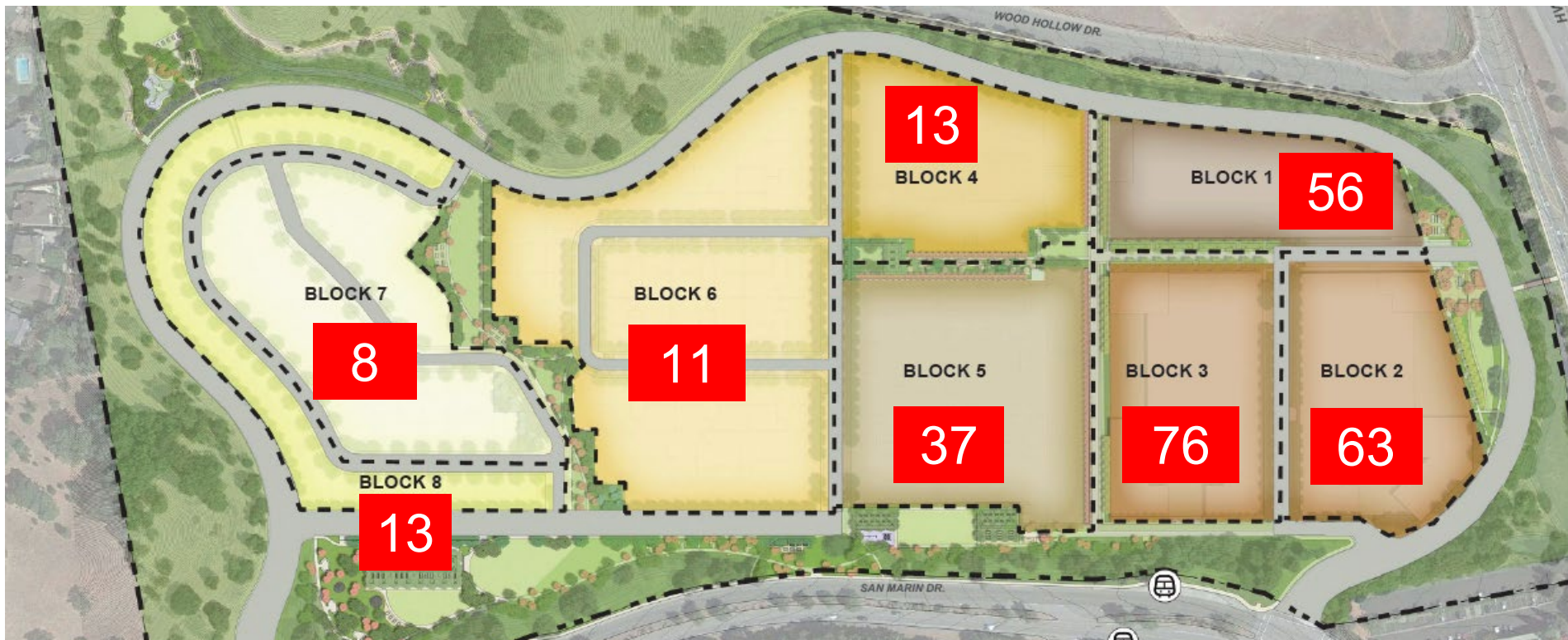
Site Analysis & Recommendations

Site Analysis:

1. Good concept to keep development within current loop road.
2. There is no design concept inside the loop road
3. Instead the land is divided into blocks for development
4. Where are the spaces for people?

Site Recommendations:

1. Confine autos to the loop road and short roads (RED) to each housing area
2. Create a pedestrian-only spine in the center of the site for ACTIVE USE
3. Restrict green space outside loop road to PASSIVE USE (walking etc)
4. Connect pedestrian spine to each development and SMART
5. Find opportunities for nodes and a central PLACE for residents
6. Mix affordable housing with market housing - *not all together in one place*



Scale Analysis & Recommendations

Legend: # Units/acre

Scale Analysis

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Dwelling Units: | 1,081 |
| 2. Average Density | 31 units/acre within loop road |
| 3. Highest Density | 76 units/acre |
- higher by far than anywhere in Novato!*

Scale Recommendations:

1. Reduce average units/acre from 31 to 25
2. Increase units/acre at west end of property
3. Reduce units/acre at east end of property
4. Eliminate single family housing

777 SAN MARIN DRIVE

**INITIAL COMMENTS
BY
COMMISSIONER SCHATZ**

INITIAL COMMENTS - COMMISSIONER SCHATZ

- CURRENT PLAN MAXIMIZES BUILDOUT RATHER THAN WELL THOUGHT URBAN DESIGN
- OPPORTUNITY TO PROPOSE A CENTRAL PARK OR SQUARE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SITE
- CONSIDER OFFERING MORE ROOM BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS – PARTICULARLY BLOCKS 4, 5, & 6
- TOO MANY SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES
- CONSIDER MORE TOWNHOUSES & FOURPLEXES COUPLED WITH LARGER, SHARED OPEN/GREEN SPACES
- CONSIDER INCLUDING SOME KIND OF COMMUNITY AMENITY – CLUBHOUSE/POOL
- APARTMENTS – CONSIDER LANDSCAPED COURTYARDS/SEMI-PUBLIC SPACES OVER PARKING GARAGE

INITIAL COMMENTS - COMMISSIONER SCHATZ

- PATHWAY TO SMART NEEDS LOGICAL CONNECTION TO INTERNAL NETWORK OF PATHS
- MAKE PROJECT ROLE MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – SOLAR, SHARED VEHICLES, ETC.
- INCLUDE RANGE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING – FAMILY & WORKFORCE HOUSING TYPES, NOT JUST SENIORS
- CREATE A MORE DEFINED NETWORK OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACES WITHIN PROJECT
- DON'T LET OPEN SPACE BE DEFINED BY THE LOCATION AND LAYOUT OF CURRENT EASEMENTS
- DESIGN WITH THE INTENTION OF CREATING BEAUTIFUL AND USABLE AMENITIES FOR NEIGHBORHOOD AND NEARBY RESIDENTS

INITIAL COMMENTS - COMMISSIONER SCHATZ

