



**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, February 12, 2008

7:00 p.m.

**701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025
Menlo Park City Council Chambers**

ROLL CALL – Cohen, Robinson*, Boyle, Cline, Fergusson*

Staff present: City Manager Rojas, City Attorney McClure and City Clerk Kelly. Other staff were present in the audience.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

A. COMMISSION/COMMITTEE VACANCIES AND REPORTS

1. Commission members and Chamber of Commerce reports.

Action: Paula Maurano, Parks and Recreation Commission, gave an update on the Burgess Gym, Kelly Field Park and Hamilton Avenue Park.

B. PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

1. City of Palo Alto and Stanford Real Estate staff presentation regarding the Medical Center and Shopping Center expansion.

* Council Member Fergusson and Vice Mayor Robinson recused themselves due to a possible Fair Political Practices Commission conflict of interest and left the Council Chambers for this presentation.

Presentations were made by representatives from Stanford Hospital and Packard Children's Hospital, Stanford Shopping Center and the City of Palo Alto regarding the medical center and shopping center expansion.

The presenters informed the Council that the Stanford Medical Center project includes the replacement and expansion of Stanford Hospital and Clinics, expansion of Packard Children's Hospital and a one for one replacement of some of the Stanford University School of Medicine laboratory buildings due to the need to meet seismic requirements, increase patient bed capacity, and respond to changing patient needs. The presenters stated that the project will be constructed over a 20-year time line and would result in a net increase of approximately 1.3 million square feet of floor area, including 200,000 square feet of new medical office space. They stated that some of the land for the project is located outside Palo Alto and may be considered for annexation into the City limits.

The presenters informed the Council the plans for the Shopping Center include adding approximately 240,000 square feet of retail space, demolition of an existing parking structure, construction of a new parking garage with additional parking, and a 120-room hotel with conference and meeting room facilities focused primarily on serving Stanford University, the Medical Center and the Shopping Center.

Planning staff from the City of Palo Alto reviewed the process to date and presented next steps including proposed development agreements, environmental and architectural review, and opportunities for community input.

The presenters responded to questions raised by council members regarding specifics of the projects. The Council thanked the presenters for keeping them current on these projects.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT #1

Elizabeth Lasensky asked if there would be housing for lower income wage earners related to the Stanford expansion project. She said it is great that the old medical school will be taken down. She also questioned how much traffic would be generated from the north campus.

Patti Fry expressed concern for traffic and the lack of bicycle paths. She questioned how many physicians would be displaced during construction and how many would relocate to Menlo Park.

D. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approval of the minutes for the City Council Meeting of October 23, 2007.

[\(attachment\)](#)

Action: Moved, seconded (Cline/Robinson) and carried unanimously to approve the minutes as revised.

E. PUBLIC HEARING - None

F. REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Acceptance of the 2007-08 Mid-year Financial Summary and adoption of a resolution approving the recommended amendments to the 2007-08 Operating Budget. ([Staff Report #08-022](#))

Audrey Ramberg, Assistant City Manager, presented the staff report. Ms. Ramberg stated the purpose of the mid-year report; provided a summary of the bottom line general fund impact; highlighted the major revenue and expense adjustments and discussed the next steps in the budget process. She stated that there will be an increase in net revenues of \$1,701,847 resulting in projected net revenues for Fiscal Year 2007-08 of \$116,357 compared to the anticipated operating deficit of \$978,015 in the Fiscal Year 2007-08 adopted budget and deficit of \$1,585,490 in the Fiscal Year 2007-08 adjusted budget.

Ms. Ramberg stated that this is a result of increased revenues in the area of licenses and permits, the utility user tax, and in development application fees beyond initial projections and due to lower than projected personnel expenses due to delays in filling vacant positions.

The Assistant City Manager responded to specific questions raised by members of the Council and noted that the Council will have more opportunity to have input into next year's budget and revisit project priorities at a meeting scheduled for March 11, 2008.

She gave an update on the status of vacant positions and recruitment efforts.

Council Member Boyle suggested that in the future, the Finance and Audit Committee have an opportunity to review and comment on these types of reports before they are presented to the Council.

Action: Moved, seconded (Cline/Robinson) and carried unanimously to adopt Resolution No. 5779 approving amendments to the Fiscal Year 2007-08 Budget.

2. **Approval of the prioritization criteria for installation of missing sections of sidewalk as part of the Sidewalk Master Plan for the City of Menlo Park.** ([Staff Report #08-023](#))

Chip Taylor, Transportation Manager, presented the staff report noting the plan's goal is to present a systematic approach for prioritizing the installation of missing sections of sidewalks.

Camille Parks, Dowling Associates, Inc., reviewed the process used to develop the Sidewalk Master Plan, including holding a community meeting, input from an on-line survey, review of other cities plans, and working with staff. Ms. Parks reviewed the point system that was developed based on the following criteria: 1) vehicle volumes; 2) destinations and priority routes; 3) pedestrian opportunity areas; 4) ease of implementation; and 5) cost benefit analysis. She stated that a draft plan was presented to the Transportation Commission and a subcommittee of the Commission looked over a sample of projects based on the criteria developed. In response to Council questions, she stated that this plan is more detailed and innovative than others she has seen. She stated this plan is different in that it provides an inventory of the entire City and identifying gaps. She said it should be used as a guide from which decisions can be made.

Council Member Fergusson expressed concern that the safety factor is not included as part of the criteria and questioned how destinations were counted. She questioned why the 700 and 800 block of Gilbert and the parallel block of Coleman are not listed as priority routes.

Council Member Boyle stated that he would expect there would be some weighting based on whether or not a neighborhood wanted or didn't want sidewalks.

Vice Mayor Robinson asked if the plan is consistent with the safe routes to school plans. He expressed concern that the criteria gives more weight to the cost and benefit analysis than it does safety. He stated his belief that it is important to acknowledge and give weight to safety issues such as sight lines and obstacles for pedestrian safety.

Transportation Manager Taylor explained the destination and priority routes are measured within a quarter of mile. He stated that information about whether or not the neighborhood wanted sidewalks would be collected as staff starts to develop projects.

Members of the public commented as follows:

Scott McQuigo, Gilbert Avenue, said his goal is to convince the Council that the 700 block of Gilbert Avenue needs sidewalks. He reported that there are 12 houses on the street and that all the residents have signed a petition asking for sidewalks prior to the start of this process. He stated that the terrain makes it difficult for people to walk on the side of

the street and that this is a main feeder street for the school, with lots of vehicles, bicycles and children.

Elizabeth Lasensky reminded the Council that sidewalk surveys are on the Green Ribbon Citizens' Committee priority list and that safe sidewalks are key to getting people to walk and bike.

Dana Shields, Woodland Avenue, wondered how a cost/benefit analysis could be done without walking the street. She questioned what might be missing in the data collection such as what the obstructions, such as hedges and utilities, might need to be relocated or displaced and how to account for safety issues such as blind curves. She also questioned limiting priority routes to a quarter of a mile. She said that her street services 50 to 100 homes traveling to other destinations and that it is not safe to walk. She stated that the neighbors have a petition with 98% approval for sidewalks on this street.

Ellen Hafner, Woodland Avenue, agreed with Ms. Shields about safety issues on Woodland and asked the Council to put in sidewalks on this street.

Patti Fry, Santa Cruz Avenue, stated that it is good to develop some scientific criteria, but also expressed concern that good judgment be applied as well. She pointed out that her street is domed and there is a lot of overgrown vegetation, which makes it unsafe for pedestrians. She expressed concern that ease of implementation would have a higher value than safety.

In response to questions raised by members of the Council, the Transportation Manager stated that there is a plan to construct sidewalks on Santa Cruz next year, which is separate from the five projects proposed to be designed and construction next year as part of this plan.

Vice Mayor Robinson stated that he is inclined to put a higher value on prioritizing installation of sidewalks in areas where neighbors want them and where safety is an issue.

Council Member Fergusson agreed with many of the comments made by members of the public, including those that felt a sidewalk should be constructed on Gilbert. She questioned giving points based on using a quarter mile radius, how many people are presently using the street, and ease of implementation. Council Member Fergusson stated that it is important to create an incentive for people to walk and that a higher priority should be put on safety and that a street shouldn't be penalized because it might be more difficult to put in a sidewalk on that street.

Council Member Boyle questioned if residents on a street could form a sidewalk assessment district and offered another option might be that residents and the City split the cost of putting in sidewalks on a street. He encouraged staff, after hearing the Council's questions and concerns about taking a common sense approach to safety, to consider incorporating these concerns when preparing their prioritization list. He also asked that when the list comes to Council for approval, staff include some commentary about the nuances to help guide the Council's discussion.

Public Works Director Steffens responded that forming an assessment district can be a lengthy and costly process. He informed the Council that any owner can obtain a permit to build a sidewalk in front of his property.

Mayor Cohen stated concern that the process has been split in two. One part includes the study, survey, and tabulation and the other part, which isn't being talked, about is the budget. He agreed with other council members that subjective factors should be included in considering which streets should be moved up on the priority list. The Mayor said he believed that the hard part will be determining which and how many sidewalks are constructed based on how much money is available.

Action: Moved, seconded (Robinson/Fergusson) and carried unanimously to approve the prioritization criteria for installation of missing sections of sidewalks as part of the Sidewalk Master Plan as proposed by staff to include: a) adding considerations for safety and subjective issues raised by the Council and residents and b) encouraging staff to reevaluate streets to be considered on the priority route map.

3. Consideration of state and federal legislative items, including decisions to support or oppose any such legislation, and items listed under Written Communication or Information Item.

Action: None

G. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION - None

H. INFORMATION ITEMS - None

I. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Council Member Boyle announced that on February 13 the El Camino Real Downtown Visioning Oversight and Outreach Committee will hold the fourth in a series of education forums in the Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Cohen announced that on February 23 the El Camino Real Downtown Visioning Oversight and Outreach Committee will host a walking tour of the Downtown, starting at the Caltrain station at 10:00 a.m.

J. PUBLIC COMMENT #2 - None

K. ADJOURNMENT – Adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry M. Kelly
City Clerk

Approved at the Council Meeting of March 25, 2008