



## PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

October 5, 2009

6:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers

701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

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Teleconference with participation by Commissioner Kadvany from:  
716 S. Madison  
Pasadena, CA 91106  
(Posted October 1, 2009)

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### **CALL TO ORDER – 6:02 p.m.**

**ROLL CALL** – Bressler, Ferrick (arrived at 6:04 p.m.), Kadvany (absent), Keith (arrived 6:05 p.m.), O'Malley (Vice chair), Pagee, Riggs (Chair)

**INTRODUCTION OF STAFF** – Arlinda Heineck, Community Services Director, Deanna Chow, Senior Planner; Justin Murphy, Development Services Manager; Thomas Rogers, Associate Planner

### **A. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Patti Fry, Menlo Park, commented on the Commission's role to provide the Council the best possible advice and help promote public discussion about complex planning issues. She said the Commission was being asked to consider the two largest projects done in the City over the last two decades. She encouraged the Commission as they had done with the gross floor area discussion to spend the time needed and if needed continue the items to special or other meetings to provide the best advice to the Council and the community.

Chair Riggs noted that Commissioners Ferrick and Keith were now in attendance and that Commissioner Kadvany was absent.

### **B. CONSENT**

Commissioner Keith noted typographical errors in the transcripts for the September 14, 2009 meeting. Chair Riggs asked that the Commission consider the two sets of meeting notes separately.

1. **Approval of minutes from the August 31, 2009 Planning Commission Meeting.**

Commission Action: M/S O'Malley/Pagee to approve the minutes as submitted.

Motion carried 5-0 with Commissioner Riggs abstaining and Commissioner Kadvany absent.

2. **Approval of transcripts from the September 14, 2009 Planning Commission Meeting.**

Commissioners Pagee and Keith provided corrections for pages 27, 131, and 136.

- Page 27, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, 4<sup>th</sup> line: Replace the word "always" with "as."
- Page 131, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, 2<sup>nd</sup> line: Replace the word "lead" with "LEED."
- Page 136, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, 4<sup>th</sup> line: Replace the word "lead" with "LEED."

Commission Action: M/S Pagee/Keith to approve the transcripts as modified.

Motion carried 4-0 with Commissioner Riggs and Keith abstaining and Commissioner Kadvany absent.

**C. PUBLIC HEARING**

There were no public hearing items.

**D. STUDY SESSION**

1. **Study Session/El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan:** Review of project status and opportunity for individual Commissioner comments.

Staff Comment: Planner Rogers said copies of email messages to the Commission email list from Ms. Nancy Couperis and Ms. Kimberly Glenn had been distributed to the Commission. He said that Mr. Prakash Pinto and Mark Hoffheimer of Perkins+Will would give a presentation to the Commission on the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan.

Mr. Prakash Pinto, Perkins+Will, said there had been a third and final community workshop on September 17. He said they had since had met with the Oversight and Outreach Committee, were now meeting with this Commission and then would meet with the Council. He noted that the Phase I Visioning Plan had entailed an extensive community visioning exercise and mailings and other communications to the public, had

used an oversight and outreach committee, and had been unanimously approved by the Council.

Mr. Pinto said that through the Phase II workshops and meetings with the Commission, Council and Oversight and Outreach Committee goals of the specific plan had been defined, including a downtown with a village character and connectivity, improved circulation on El Camino Real and sensitive development. There were concerns related to underutilized parcels on the El Camino Real, and a desire for an improved train station area and a vibrant downtown. He said that these vision goals about the El Camino Real and the vacant parcels there and the vision goals about the downtown and vibrancy informed the emerging plan.

Mr. Pinto said that the emerging plan had been reviewed at the last community workshop which had consisted of a preview, presentation, an open house with identical stations of information, a questionnaire, and a town hall discussion at the end. He said 130 people registered at the workshop and the ending discussion was lively. He said that there were five main sections for consideration at the workshop: 1. Emerging plan; 2. Public space; 3. Building character; 4. Vibrancy and land use economics; and 5. Connectivity and traffic.

Mr. Pinto said for the section on the emerging plan and land uses there had been a massing model of what the potential development scenario would look like based on input from prior community workshops, the Oversight and Outreach Committee, Planning Commission and City Council. He said related to public space and where public plazas might potentially put placed that in Community Workshop #2 they had shown a lot of streets potentially closed and the feedback had been to not do so many and really focus them. He said subsequently they focused on Chestnut and were looking at a more central plaza that would be more than just enhanced paving in the middle of Santa Cruz Avenue. He said the idea of a marketplace was proposed in Community Workshop #2 and that was a very popular idea, however there was input to not use up so much surface parking and to create a direct access to Santa Cruz Avenue from that. He said related to the Station Area the question was how to connect that both to the downtown and to the Civic Center and Library. He said they asked a series of questions and those were on the questionnaires. He said they asked if the emerging plan had enough public spaces and the response was for the most part positive. He said they asked whether to keep the median trees on Santa Cruz Avenue or whether to remove those and get more trees on the sides of the streets and increase the sidewalk width. He said there was an even split of support for those two options. He said they had presented vignettes and renderings of what height and massing might be along north and south El Camino Real and at Santa Cruz Avenue and Curtis Avenue, and Santa Cruz Avenue at El Camino Real with a range of three to five story buildings with a mix of uses and retail. He said they did vignettes for El Camino Real and Ravenswood Avenue looking north and at El Camino Real along the Stanford properties. He said they had proposed information on zoning code as to changes in height and setbacks.

He said they asked about whether village character was accomplished with the emerging plan for the downtown and El Camino Real and there was mostly support.

Commissioner Keith asked if the numbers shown for the questionnaire responses were percentages or total numbers of responses. It was confirmed that it was number of responses.

Mr. Mark Hoffheimer said related to land use economics that they looked at fiscal impact and financial feasibility. He said their models generally showed that revenues exceeded expenses.

Chair Riggs asked if they were expecting a consistent rate of buildout from 2011 to 2030. Mr. Hoffheimer said the economist made assumptions as to when development would come online. He said financial feasibility was looked at from the developers' perspective. He said with a generic residential development at three stories that the expenses exceeded revenue. He said if more density was allowed there was more revenue. He said they asked the question whether additional building height was an equitable tradeoff for increased revenues and vibrancy for the City. He said 62% said yes but others questioned the value.

Mr. Hoffheimer said they asked about bulbouts, sidewalk extensions and improved bike transits to improve connectivity and 75% of the respondents favored. He said that most of the results from the questionnaire affirmed the emerging plan. He said they asked about the slight increase of travel time between Middle Avenue and Valparaiso Avenue with development whether that was an acceptable tradeoff for vibrancy. He said 72% were supportive and 21% were opposed.

Mr. Hoffheimer said they talked about existing and proposed parking as to what it might look like under the emerging plan. He said they asked about a change in the distribution of parking downtown including locations of structures and 67 percent were in favor, but parking and parking structures was a hot button issue. He said however they received a number of comments supporting parking structures. Mr. Pinto noted that although there were 130 people registered that those people did not necessarily answer all of the questions as they might have focused on areas of interest to them.

Commissioner O'Malley asked how many questionnaires were turned into the consultants. Mr. Hoffheimer said he thought about 70.

Mr. Hoffheimer said that the plan would set broad policy concepts and overall vision for the El Camino Real and downtown with guidelines for the public and private realms, and for public space, circulation, pedestrian/bicycles, parking, and implementation.

Chair Riggs said there were public members who wanted to know the tradeoff to having four stories built and whether that fell within the private realm guidelines. Mr. Hoffheimer said that was correct. Chair Riggs asked when the public would get to see

the conditions that would accompany enhanced zoning. Mr. Hoffheimer said that was something the City would want to address. In response to Chair Riggs, Planner Rogers said the next few slides to be shown would address those issues.

Commissioner O'Malley said that the schemes showed an emphasis on housing along the El Camino Real corridor near the train station beginning with the Cadillac site and south yet he had not heard City discussion about having housing in those areas. Mr. Hoffheimer said there has been consistent support of housing near the train station to support vibrancy and transit use. Commissioner O'Malley said some members of the Commission supported housing in that area but others did not. He said he had been at all three community workshops and had not heard discussion about housing along the El Camino Real. Mr. Pinto said in the first workshop there had been a series of boards that talked about vibrant uses in the downtown and along the El Camino Real corridor and housing had been part of that discussion as well as mixed uses. He said at the second workshop they had showed a series of maps and diagrams and on each showed proposed uses with housing specifically shown around transit and office around transit and the feedback received was that housing was preferable around transit. Commissioner O'Malley said he would accept that those issues were addressed at the workshops. He said however that the Planning Commission had recommended approval of a project at the Cadillac site without a residential component. He said that site was close to the train station. Mr. Hoffheimer said they were recommending housing but not excluding other uses.

Mr. Hoffheimer said they had looked at public benefit and density development within three major categories of the positive outcomes of density, which helped frame the potential value to be shared by private developers and the method of sharing those benefits. He said the positive outcomes of density of from three to five stories were increased retail sales and vibrancy. He said by allowing for increased density there was more likelihood that sites would develop more quickly. He said greater density would produce higher development impact fees, produce a higher number of BMR housing units, and help finance and provide for public improvements. He said from the potential value to be shared by private developers would be determined what the potential amount spent on public benefits should be related to development costs and revenue. He said there was no magic formula and potential contribution from developers depended on many variables such as market condition, construction costs, land costs, lot size and configuration, cost to demolish, and remediation costs. He said there were methods for sharing benefits. He said impact fees such as those already used by the City were required by law to have a nexus. He said it was in individual developer structured negotiations that such things as contribution to a public amenity fund for streetscape on Santa Cruz Avenue might be required. He said they might identify public benefits from density bonus for onsite improvements, to extract additional housing, provide senior housing, public parking, publically accessible open space, green measures, or a cultural public piece. He said the specific plan would list things the community could look at to negotiate with developers. He said that could possibly

be done in a zoning ordinance but it was not being recommended as there were many variables.

Mr. Hoffheimer asked if the Commission would weigh in on whether they preferred Option 1 or Option 2 related to Santa Cruz Avenue relative to retaining median trees or removing median trees, planting trees on the sides and expanding the width of the sidewalk. .

Chair Riggs suggested that the Commissioners only ask questions at this time, and then have public comment.

Commissioner Bressler said that the questionnaire had asked if the public benefits were a tradeoff for up zoning, but asked what basis of benefits was provided for people to be able to answer that question.

Mr. Pinto said they had a series of boards on land use economics and vibrancy that showed with higher developments that revenues exceeded development cost and that difference could be used for public benefits; that increased heights resulted in increased impact fees. He said some of this information on density bonus and upzoning was somewhat technical and they had to choose how much information to give the broad community. Mr. Hoffheimer said they wanted to find out the maximum height that people might be comfortable with to help them as planners understand the parameters of density and density bonuses.

Chair Riggs called for public comments and asked that those be limited to three minutes, noting that arrangements could be made to have another three minutes donated by someone else.

Public Comment: Mr. Morris Brown, Menlo Park, said regarding public benefit that he objected strongly to talking about recreational impact fees and other fees as public benefits as those were mitigations. He said he would appreciate staff differentiating between mitigation and public benefit. He said that many people think Café Barrone was 50 feet high but it is 30 feet high. He said he did not think people understood the height of three, four and five stories. He said Derry Project had been proposed at four stories and the referendum had reduced that in negotiations to three stories. He said four story height was too much along the El Camino Real corridor. He said the General Plan for the City would expire in 2010; he suggested taking what had occurred in the specific plan so far and applying that to the General Plan update. He said the Commission and Council had to decide whether to move forward with the specific plan or to do the General Plan.

Ms. Patti Fry, Menlo Park, said as the process entered into the development of the EIR and zoning ordinance amendment that it should be clear to people what this plan was. She suggested story poles along the El Camino Real and materials online that were readable. She said that all of the discussions informing this process should be made

available to the public including comments from the Oversight and Outreach Committee, and that those should be available to inform Commission's discussion. She said she questioned impact fees as public benefits noting that BMR needs were tied to additional jobs and impacts on the housing requirements of the City, which was not necessarily a benefit but a way to address impacts of projects. She said people made judgments as to whether a project would pencil but most important landowners such as Stanford own their property. She said that she had been away and when she returned had been surprised by the number of plazas proposed. She suggested the City try a few things related to public plazas and street closing and see how they would work.

Chair Riggs closed public comments.

Chair Riggs said if that all of the information for the City's projects was available at the library if one's personal internet connection not good enough to watch videos or to view graphics.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Bressler said the comment about getting feedback from the oversight committee was good. He noted he was on the committee but had not been able to attend the last meeting. Mr. Hoffheimer said he had 20 pages of notes from the committee meeting and had not culled through those yet.

Chair Riggs said he could relate the high points from the eight speakers at the committee meeting. Elizabeth Lazensky had spoken and suggested bus cutouts for a rapid bus transit service on El Camino Real and noted competition to existing businesses had not been fully addressed. Mike Gilliard said the idea of consensus should be clarified as not everyone had been able to follow the process and what the impact to economics would be if building height was reined in. Elizabeth Weiss had commended the consultant and staff and noted more input was needed for hot issues. Steve Elliott had reinforced the positive comments of Ms. Weiss and noted that a hotel assumed a conference center and there would need to be additional work to determine the success of hotel. Reg Reiss had said one of biggest issues at the beginning of the process was to get El Camino Real traffic to flow with flow meaning it was working and traffic meaning it was not working. He had said that there was not a lot of potential for sidewalks along the El Camino Real to be pedestrian friendly. Rick Ciradella asked that businesses not be hurt by construction and expressed concern with parking lot 1. Chrissy asked for more on the fiscal viability of plan. Ben challenged the reference to 4% as the net benefit and showed difficulty understanding difference. Nancy Couperis had said there were 180 existing businesses to be supported and questioned the proposed marketplace as opposed to existing market, and that there was a need for surface parking. Mayor Robinson encouraged people to watch September 17 video to catch up on the process. Ms. Eggers, the owner of a medical building downtown, had questioned the meaning of a fiscal impact of 4% revenues.

Commissioner Pagee said in this process they had started with an idea of a village character and now they were looking at four-story buildings. She questioned how three to four story buildings downtown would maintain village feel.

Mr. Hoffheimer said there were three zones: downtown was the village character and buildings could be three to four stories; along El Camino Real buildings could be three to five stories high but stepped down toward downtown area and similarly for the station area. Mr. Pinto said the distinction was made at the second and third workshops that on the south side of El Camino Real that there would be nothing more than three stories on the west side and a range of three to five stories primarily along the Stanford properties on the east side.

Commissioner Pagee asked about the percentage of open spaces and public plazas needed for downtown village character. Mr. Hoffheimer said he did not know the percentage and there was a need to rely on public realm to provide public spaces from streets and parking plazas. He said this plan was proposing to close a portion of Chestnut to traffic to create a paseo, to have a much wider sidewalk the length of Santa Cruz Avenue, and to have one block in the center of Santa Cruz Avenue that could be closed for special events. He said they had recommended the removal of some parking in the plazas for pocket parks. Mr. Pinto said they looked at the station area and how to have a public plaza area there. He said in the second workshop they had showed a lot of street closures to increase the amount of public space, but there had been a lot of pushback to have access to parking plazas and to businesses. He said they wanted to focus on the quality of space and not the quantity. He said widening sidewalks on Santa Cruz Avenue was a primary goal and at one point they had shown three different pedestrian-only plazas, but which was now refined to two pocket parks and a paseo. He said Santa Cruz Avenue as a paved surface could function as a public plaza when closed off.

Commissioner Pagee said that along El Camino Real that upsizing on eastern side of three to five stories would require a setback of first story to give wider feeling for sidewalk and that would also allow for some type of public meeting place. Mr. Pinto showed in the proposed plan to have a setback which provided for a 15-foot sidewalk. He said the idea was to have a broader sidewalk to allow connection and walkability along El Camino Real as well as to increase the number of street trees. Commissioner Pagee asked if there was room for an actual park along El Camino Real as perhaps a tradeoff for higher density. Mr. Hoffheimer said that could be looked at and perhaps it could be a negotiation point with Stanford. Commissioner Pagee suggested senior housing as well. Mr. Hoffheimer said that was one of things listed for tradeoffs.

Commissioner Bressler said biggest upzoning was on Stanford land and biggest reason to allow that was otherwise those would remain vacant. He said as Ms. Fry pointed out that Stanford owns this land and costs formula did not apply to Stanford. He said a tiny park was not a real benefit for an upzoning tradeoff. He said the workshops were blunt instruments and what was found out was only what was asked. He asked if the



community had addressed field space as to whether to add residences if cannot add field space.

Mr. Hoffheimer said related to Stanford that negotiated developer contribution would apply to Stanford lands, which was a unique space. Commissioner Bressler said the question was who would negotiate these development agreements and he thought that it should not be staff only, but should include members of the Commission and Council and a public element as well. He asked if it was a general resources tradeoff to allow many new residences and not have any more field space. Mr. Hoffheimer said that question was not asked of the general public as their assumption was the recreation impact fee would be used to create playing fields elsewhere. Commissioner Bressler said there should be a process in City to have something like that. Chair Riggs asked staff to clarify the process for the development agreement for a given project and most significantly for the framing of the zoning ordinance for the project to have input from Commission and Council. Planner Rogers said that the process could be whatever the City desired. He said development agreements required some confidentiality and could not be entirely public but could possibly have a focus group. Chair Riggs said he thought tradeoffs needed to be listed in the specific plan. Bressler said he would like the Commission to weigh in on tradeoffs for public benefit under the specific plan and for upcoming developments.

Mr. Hoffheimer said the best way to get public benefit was a negotiated development agreement and they would continue exploring that and how it would work. Mr. Pinto said related to involvement that the City of Menlo Park could choose their process. He said they would like to see a good range of people with expertise to make decisions but ultimately that decision was made by the City.

Commissioner Pagee said there was a letter from Ms. Jo Eggers with a number of questions: noting 929 new jobs along El Camino Real and 1,500 more people visiting downtown with only 167 parking spaces in the downtown area, where would these additional people park. What are the number of current employees downtown and number of parking spaces downtown used by them? Would there be more patrons downtown or more income from patrons? Regarding residential increase of 1,537, how many would occupy downtown and how many would be along the El Camino Real? What is the anticipated cost for two parking structures downtown? Can City support one or two parking structures? Will there be metered parking? How will parking structures be green? How many downtown businesses provided taxable income to the City over the last 10 years?

Mr. Hoffheimer said he did not have table in front of him related to number of residences downtown and along the El Camino Real ECR but they could get that information. He said these numbers were a test. He said the parking spaces recommended were supported in the industry; as to trips being made, he said they were assuming that office workers downtown would walk. He said they could parse out the numbers but as a

general concept the numbers were based on the notion of mixed use. Mr. Pinto said there were 167 public spaces downtown but projects had to provide parking as well.

Commissioner Pagee said these questions were posed to the Oversight and Outreach Committee. Mr. Pinto said that they had just received the questions and they would like to have their experts answer those questions and get back to the Commission.

Commissioner Bressler said a good portion of the housing was meant to be transit oriented and they should not allow for many parking spaces for transit oriented housing. He said he did not like housing on existing parking areas or far away from transit.

Mr. Pinto said through their firm's experience in developing successful mixed use successful districts they found that housing did not have to be directly next to transit for the residents to use transit. Commissioner Bressler said that they were proposing housing in the most congested part of the City, and he said if developers would want to build there they would want to have cars. He said the issue was what kind of town they want to have. He said the town would be ruined if only add houses and cars and no recreation space. Mr. Pinto said in terms of housing near transit that people often park car in garage and take train to work and walk and bike downtown. Commissioner Bressler said this was not an accurate assumption for this area.

Chair Riggs said looking at the downtown limits that Oak Grove and University Avenues were included and asked if this area was intended to have a zoning revision. Mr. Hoffheimer said he was not sure and they would have to look at that more carefully.

Chair Riggs asked if the proposed marketplace was the same acreage as the existing Sunday marketplace and whether it was intended to take the place of the Sunday marketplace. Mr. Hoffheimer said it was an additional space that was more permanent or fixed and located to keep the space used for the Sunday market. Chair Riggs said there were 180 existing businesses, and if zoned for two to three stories on Santa Cruz whether the market analysis indicated those 180 businesses would have to remodel to keep pace with newer businesses. He asked if the specific plan would have encouragements for certain businesses and discouragements for certain businesses.

Mr. Pinto said they had looked at the existing retail as the base as it had been there a long time and supported by the community. He said they were looking at enhancing other areas of the downtown to increase vibrancy and programs to increase use noting they had received comments that there was not enough night time use nor enough restaurants while still maintaining what was there that was desirable.

Chair Riggs said he wanted to talk about the connections across El Camino Real. He said not only the train but El Camino Real was a difficulty between the east and west side of the City. He said the idea of bulbouts and enhanced crosswalks seemed a tame response and bulbouts were a significant compromise. He questioned if going north on El Camino Real and want to get Ravenswood how people would feel if there was no

longer any right hand turn lane. He said that they have not solved crossing across El Camino Real and asked if there was the possibility of considering a more dramatic solution.

Mr. Hoffheimer said there were no plans to block the right-hand turn from El Camino Real to Ravenswood. He said the plan recommends further down El Camino Real to put a sidewalk extension where they might work; for instance they might remove the right-turn lane onto Oak Grove and Santa Cruz Avenues going south to provide sidewalk extension. He said some people wanted better traffic flow and others better connection. He said they had looked at putting a pedestrian bridge across El Camino Real but the general public did not want it. He said they had explored alternatives and what was being proposed seemed supported. He said there looking at bulbouts on El Camino Real for all four corners of Santa Cruz Avenue. Mr. Pinto said much was heard about the perspective from people in cars, but they had heard from the community that there was a need to value pedestrians and bicyclists. He said it was a benefit to reduce crossing time for pedestrians and bicyclists. Chair Riggs said that traffic signal timing might maintain El Camino Real flow better.

Commissioner Bressler asked why a pedestrian bridge was rejected. Mr. Hoffheimer said such a bridge needed land on both sides for entering it and was a feature best suited to crossing a freeway. He said at the last workshop one board had focused on a bridge and underground options.

Commissioner Ferrick said she was concerned about the number of public spaces as to where they would come from and also east-west connectivity. She said the proposed public spaces were parking plazas; she asked why the projects that would develop could not provide those spaces. She said the Stanford lands would get the highest upzoning and there was a small pocket park but an underground tunnel was a better tradeoff for this highest upzoning.

Mr. Hoffheimer said most of the parcels downtown were 50 or 100 feet wide and it seemed impossible that they could provide a pocket park. He said also they were being mindful of creating an integrated system of open space and that most of the public space needed to be in and around downtown. He said for El Camino Real there was the possibility of getting open space along there that would be a contribution to the community. Commissioner Ferrick suggested a greater setback on the first floor for buildings two to three stories high in the downtown. Mr. Hoffheimer said they had suggested having a larger setback to increase sidewalk width but businesses did not want to give up the first floor space as that was the source of their business.

Chair Riggs said related to what was going on with high-speed rail meetings that the rail right-of-way that the City should indicate what was wanted in that area. He said related to wider sidewalks and those being better but that they should be widened for a function such as outdoor dining. He said the specific plan might say that four stories or five stories might be the upper limit but no one would want to look across El Camino Real

and see four stories. He said setbacks should be on both the third and fourth stories. He said positives were turning Chestnut into a paseo and parking structures were overdue. He said they needed to determine how to fund those. He said parking structures have much less visible asphalt and cars can be parked in the shade. He said someone had suggested a paseo to link three or four parking districts which he thought was a functional idea.

Mr. Pinto asked if the Commission might comment on the options along Santa Cruz Avenue as the community had been really split on the options. He showed Option 1 that would keep the median trees causing varying widths of sidewalk. He showed Option 2 to remove the median trees which would allow for more street trees on the edges and would have a 15 to 18 foot wide sidewalk down Santa Cruz Avenue. Mr. Hoffheimer said they would remove diagonal parking and create parallel parking. Chair Riggs said there had been a suggestion to remove parallel parking. He conducted a straw poll to keep median trees or remove those and widen the sidewalk. The Commission was evenly split. Commissioner Ferrick said that she did not want 15 to 20 years of very small trees. Commissioner O'Malley said this was a visioning process and sometimes there was a tendency to worry too much about now rather than look at what would be best in the long term. Commissioner Ferrick suggested phasing the tree replacement and sidewalk space expansion. Chair Riggs said that Mr. Mark Flegel had mentioned that at one time there was no median and Santa Cruz Avenue was not a very good street. He said the median has breaks to allow the flow of traffic to make turns.

2. **Study Session/General Plan Amendment, Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Rezoning, Development Agreement, Architectural Control, Tentative Parcel Maps, Heritage Tree Removal Permits, Below Market Rate (BMR) Agreement, and Environmental Review/Bohannon Development Company/101-155 Constitution Drive and 100-190 Independence Drive (Menlo Gateway Project):**

*Excerpt minutes were approved by Planning Commission on November 2, 2009.*

## **E. REGULAR BUSINESS**

There were no Regular Business items.

## **F. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

### **1. Review of planning items on City Council agendas:**

#### **A. El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan (Phase II) Process**

Planner Chow said there would be a study session on October 13 for the specific plan with the Council.

**B. Appeal of Use Permit for 825 Santa Cruz Avenue**

Planner Chow said the appeal had been continued through several Council meetings but the applicant had now withdrawn the use permit application.

**C. 1300 El Camino Real**

Planner Chow said this project was on the Council's October 6 agenda.

**D. 1706 El Camino Real**

Planner Chow said this project was on the Council's October 20 agenda.

**G. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Riggs said he had attended a high-speed rail workshop over the weekend, and after two days of the workshop Atherton, Menlo Park, and Palo Alto all in agreement that high speed rail should be underground. He said they were able to look at the costs of an above and below ground system. He said this puts the three cities on better ground in negotiating with high speed rail.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Deanna Chow, Senior Planner

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by Planning Commission on December 7, 2009