



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting
August 4, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

CALL TO ORDER – 7:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL – Bressler, Combs, Eiref (Chair), Ferrick, Kadvany, Onken (Vice Chair), Strehl

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF – Kyle Perata, Associate Planner; Justin Murphy, Development Services Manager; Thomas Rogers, Senior Planner

A. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A1. Update on Pending Planning Items

- a. General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) – Call for At-Large Member Applications – August 11, 2014 deadline

Senior Planner Rogers asked the Commissioners to reach out to community members who might be interested in serving on the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) as At-Large-Members. He said the Council would review the applications for selection of GPAC members.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS #1 (Limited to 30 minutes)

There were none.

C. CONSENT

There were no consent items.

D. PUBLIC HEARING

- D1. Use Permit/Kevin Clugage/1069 Cascade Drive:** Request for a use permit for excavation (removal of more than 12 inches of dirt) within the required rear, and left-side setbacks associated with landscaping improvements, including a new sports-court, on a standard size lot in the R-1-S (Single-Family Residential Suburban) zoning district. The project also includes a request to increase the height of the fence along the rear property line to a maximum height of nine feet. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Planner Perata said staff had no additions to the written report.

Public Comment: Mr. Kevin Clugage, applicant, said the project was to install Astroturf to replace lawn. He said the lawn had been replaced twice but did not thrive because it was located in a shaded area and had a lot of foot traffic.

Chair Eiref said it appeared they were moving one part of the yard to the other side of the yard. Mr. Clugage said the retaining wall at the top end of the property would create excavated dirt that they would use to fill in the bottom end where there would be another retaining wall.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Onken said it was a straightforward project, and moved to approve as recommended in the staff report. Commissioner Strehl seconded the motion. Chair Eiref said it appeared to be a reasonable proposal.

Commission Action: M/S Onken/Strehl to approve the item as recommended in the staff report.

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 3 (Section 15303, "New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures") of the current State CEQA Guidelines.
2. Make findings, as per Section 16.82.030 of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the granting of use permits, that the proposed use will not be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use, and will not be detrimental to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the City.
3. Approve the use permit subject to the following **standard** conditions:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans prepared by Yukon Landscape Design, consisting of five plan sheets, dated received July 22, 2014, and approved by the Planning Commission on August 4, 2014, except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval by the Planning Division.
 - b. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicants shall comply with all Sanitary District, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, and utility companies' regulations that are directly applicable to the project.
 - c. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicants shall comply with all requirements of the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Transportation Division that are directly applicable to the project.
 - d. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall submit a plan for any new utility installations or upgrades for review and approval of the Planning, Engineering and Building Divisions. All utility equipment that is installed outside of a building and that cannot be placed underground shall be properly screened by landscaping. The plan shall show exact locations of all meters, back flow prevention devices, transformers, junction boxes, relay boxes, and other equipment boxes.
 - e. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall submit plans indicating that the applicant shall remove and replace any damaged and significantly worn sections of frontage improvements. These revised plans shall be submitted for the review and approval of the Engineering Division.

- f. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall submit a Grading and Drainage Plan for review and approval of the Engineering Division. The Grading and Drainage Plan shall be approved prior to issuance of a grading, demolition or building permit.
 - g. Heritage trees in the vicinity of the construction project shall be protected pursuant to the Heritage Tree Ordinance. Prior to the building permit issuance, the applicant shall implement the tree protection plan and technique recommendations in the Arborist Report for all applicable heritage trees.
 - h. Concurrent with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall provide documentation indicating the amount of irrigated landscaping. If the project proposes more than 2,500 square feet of irrigated landscaping, then a detailed landscape plan documenting compliance with the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (Municipal Code 12.44) will be required, subject to review and approval of the Engineering Division.
4. Approve the use permit subject to the following **project-specific** conditions:
- a. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall revise the plans to identify a grid pattern (vertical and horizontal strips) for the proposed lattice extension of the rear fence, subject to review and approval of the Planning Division.

Motion carried 7-0.

D2. Use Permit/Stem Cell Theranostics/1490 O'Brien Drive, Suite G: Request for a use permit for the storage and use of hazardous materials for the research and development (R&D) of cell based assays for drug screening and research applications in an existing building located in the M-2 (General Industrial) zoning district. All hazardous materials would be used and stored within the building. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Planner Perata said there were no additions to the written report.

Public Comment: Mr. Ron Krietemeyer, Vice President of Operations for Tarleton Properties, said he was representing Menlo Business Park and the tenant, Stem Cell Theranostics. He introduced Dr. Andrew Lee, one of the company's founders.

Mr. Lee said the company was founded by two Stanford School of Medicine faculty members. He said he was a MBP PhD candidate at Stanford. He said their technology turned blood into heart cells. He said they had created a streaming process for heart cells without injecting anything into a patient.

Commissioner Kadwany confirmed with the applicant that the materials of concern were carbon dioxide, liquid nitrogen, and a couple of gallons of waste containers.

Chair Eiref asked about the cost and time to bring the application through the City process.

Ms. Ellen Ackerman, Green Environment, said the cost for this simple application was about \$5,000 with \$1,500 to submit the application and additional costs for her to prepare drawings

and a detailed list of chemicals that typically was not required elsewhere. Mr. Ron Krietemeyer said there were other expenses including architect fees.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Comment: Chair Eiref said for the record that he did not think the Planning Commission necessarily added value for these types of applications. He said he supported the application noting that the other reviewing agencies had signed off on it. He moved to approve as recommended in the staff report. Commissioner Onken seconded the motion.

Commissioner Ferrick said she agreed with Chair Eiref's observations. Commissioner Onken asked whether staff could provide the Commission with a comparison of processes for such applications in other municipalities as a future agenda item. Senior Planner Rogers said he understood it was one of the topics in the General Plan update as that was focused on the M-2 area.

Commissioner Combs asked if there was an instance in which this process had deterred a business tenant from locating in Menlo Park. Senior Planner Rogers said there were many variables that went into a tenant's choice of location, including elements such as the proximity to venture capital financing in Menlo Park. Mr. Krietemeyer agreed it was hard to pinpoint exactly why a prospective tenant might not follow through, but said their firm had lost two prospective startup companies to Redwood City because of the time and expense to go through Menlo Park's use permit process for hazardous materials use and storage. Ms. Ackerman noted that staff had been processing applications in a timely manner but there could be a lag in getting the item onto a Planning Commission meeting agenda, which was what she also communicates to prospective tenants.

Commission Action: M/S Eiref/Onken to approve the item as recommended in the staff report.

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 1 (Section 15301, "Existing Facilities") of the current CEQA Guidelines.
2. Make findings, as per Section 16.82.030 of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the granting of use permits, that the proposed use will not be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use, and will not be detrimental to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the City.
3. Approve the use permit subject to the following **standard** conditions:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans provided by DES Architects/Engineers, consisting of eight plan sheets, dated received July 18, 2014, and approved by the Planning Commission on August 4, 2014 except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval of the Planning Division.
 - b. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall comply with all sanitary district, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, and utility companies regulations that are directly applicable to the project.

- c. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall comply with all requirements of the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Transportation Division that are directly applicable to the project.
- d. If there is an increase in the quantity of hazardous materials on the project site, a change in the location of the storage of the hazardous materials, or the use of additional hazardous materials after this use permit is granted, the applicant shall apply for a revision to the use permit.
- e. Any citation or notification of violation by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, San Mateo County Environmental Health Department, West Bay Sanitary District, Menlo Park Building Division or other agency having responsibility to assure public health and safety for the use of hazardous materials will be grounds for considering revocation of the use permit.
- f. If the business discontinues operations at the premises, the use permit for hazardous materials shall expire unless a new business submits a new hazardous materials business plan to the Planning Division for review by the applicable agencies to determine whether the new hazardous materials business plan is in substantial compliance with the use permit.

Motion carried 7-0.

E. STUDY SESSION #1

- E1. Use Permit/Michael and Judith Citron/955 Sherman Avenue:** Request for a use permit to demolish an existing single-story, single-family residence and detached garage, and construct a new two-story, single-family residence and attached garage on a substandard lot with regard to lot width and lot size in the R-1-U (Single-Family Urban Residential) zoning district. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Senior Planner Rogers said there were no changes or additions to the staff report.

Questions of Staff: Commissioner Kadvany said he went by the site and noted that considerable excavation had occurred, which had been a concern expressed in one of the letters included with the agenda packet. Senior Planner Rogers said the project had been handled by several different planners to date. He said he understood that some work had occurred for which the applicant likely should have gotten a permit. He said the applicant was notified of this and through the use permit process was working to get everything on track.

Commissioner Strehl asked if any trees were removed because of the demolition. Senior Planner Rogers said that no heritage trees were removed but he was not sure about non-heritage trees.

Public Comment: Mr. Michael ("Sloane") Citron, applicant, said he and his wife have lived in Menlo Park since 1996 in the Felton Gables area and had raised their four children there. He said he and his wife owned businesses in downtown Menlo Park and tried hard to contribute to the community. He said that they would not be selling this home, they were not keeping a wall

of the house in their design, this was a complete new home build, and they had not taken down any trees. He said there were no trees of significance on the property and nothing to remove. He said they had before photos and an arborist report to substantiate that statement. He said the home inspection report showed there was asbestos in the existing home and they hired a company to find and remove the asbestos. He said they were as shocked as anyone when the company which had the permits to remove the asbestos finished as entire walls were removed. He said apparently the home was inundated with asbestos. He said it was asbestos removal and not demolition that had occurred, and that the City had found that they had followed the rules for asbestos removal. He said this was embarrassing for them and they hoped to get the project moving as soon as possible.

Mr. Citron said they had spoken with many neighbors about their plans, and everyone they were able to talk to in person liked the plans. He said three people had written to the Planning Department upon receiving the notice about this project. He said one concern was the character of the home and that it was two-story with a front facing garage. He said they had lowered the height and worked to soften the appearance of the garage to create a smaller framed, pleasing home. He said the most outspoken neighbor about their project lived in a home on the same block that was nearly the same design as what they were proposing. He showed the next door neighbor's two-story modern home, which neighbor he noted was also very outspoken about the proposed project. He showed another home on the block that had, in his opinion, an awkwardly designed second story with a front facing garage. He showed the rear neighbor's home on Cloud Avenue that was also a two-story home. He said these neighbors have expressed the opinion that he and his wife should build a one-car, detached garage at the rear as what was built in the 1940s. He said the vast majority of homes in the surrounding vicinity were two-story with front-facing two-car garages. He said their proposed design met code, was under the maximum height allowed by five feet, and was a traditional Menlo Park design. He said they designed a cheerful family home in keeping with the neighborhood and Menlo Park. He said Mr. Roger Kohler, the architect who designed the home, was a premier, award winning architect who had designed 40 homes in the Menlo Park area. He said the design was classic and elegant and they would use only quality materials and high end windows and doors. He said they redesigned the garage to make it more harmonious by using a wood paneled door and adding a trellis. He said the home has a varied footprint and noted distances from the front property line for the garage at 20.5 feet, the living room at 27 feet, and the entry door at 24 feet.

Mr. Citron said the neighbor to the east had been very outspoken about their proposed home plan, and had written a dozen letters to the Planning Division. He said they had tried to make several changes to accommodate this neighbor including lowering the roof line and raising the window height to the maximum allowable. He said the neighbor had been highly critical of the windows on the wall that would face the neighbor's home and yet the neighbor's facing wall had only one high window and the side yards have vegetation screening. He said the neighbor wrote that they had added two windows to the master bedroom. He said actually they took one proposed large window and split it into two smaller windows. He said the height and the location of those windows would have little impact on the neighbor's property. He said the neighbor wanted them to plant heavily on their side of the property and guarantee the type of plants, how high they would grow and in what time period. He said they thought that was unreasonable. He said they would be willing to build a fence on their side of the property as high as allowable if that would help.

Mr. Citron said three neighbors wrote to the City protesting their two-car garage. He showed a picture of one of those neighbors front-facing two-car parking area. He showed a photo of another of those three neighbors' front-facing two-car garage. He said City code would not allow the construction of a garage in the rear area in which the former garage was located and City planning staff had indicated it would be challenging to put a two-car garage in the rear. He said having a long driveway increased the potential for a blind spot back-over incident, and shared statistics related to that. He said within the vicinity of their property there were 31 homes with front-facing garages.

Ms. Lea Stublarec, Menlo Park, said she supported the project. She said she had known Ms. Judy Citron for many years and would attest to Ms. Citron's integrity. She said Ms. Citron had stated that they would keep the home in the family, and would not sell it. She said the Citron family did high quality, beautiful work, and the home they proposed to build would be a great asset to the neighborhood and would increase the property value for all. She said more importantly the Citrons were a great family that had done much for the community over the years. She said the neighborhood should be embracing and welcoming them with open arms.

Mr. Curtis Peterson, Yale Road, said he was a Menlo Park resident and voter. He said the proposed project was a well designed home that would use high quality building materials and would be a great addition for the neighborhood and community.

Mr. Dan Smith, Sherman Avenue, said he owned a home that was two doors down from the project site. He said the demolished house on the site had been there for three years, and he questioned why there had not been consequences resulting from that to the property owner. He said he would like to know the name of the asbestos company, and see the receipt and permit for the work they did. He said the applicant had indicated that there were 31 two-story homes with two-car garages in a two-block radius, which he found disingenuous as the subject property was on the boundary of incorporated Menlo Park. He said homes west of the project site homes were in unincorporated Menlo Park, which was under County building jurisdiction. He said no houses on the project site's side of the street had a front-facing two-car garage. He said he opposed the project.

Mr. Jeffrey Fenton, Sherman Avenue, said his home was located directly across the street from the project site. He said it was mystifying to him how the eyesore was allowed to remain in the half-demolished, dinosaur-skeleton condition for as long as it had. He suggested that leaving this eyesore so long might have been a strategy to wear down the immediate neighbors' resistance to the proposed design, but the neighbors had long memories.

Ms. Andrea Smith, Sherman Avenue, said the temporary fencing fell down whenever there was rain and wind. She said she had never met Mr. Citron when she was out there with other neighbors trying to stabilize the fencing. She said the home they were proposing was too large for the substandard lot.

Ms. Maria Flaherty, Sherman Avenue, said she and her husband had never been approached by the Citrons about the proposed project. She said it was great that they were developing the lot but the proposed design was out of character with the neighborhood. She said all of the houses on that side of the street were stucco and this project would introduce wood. She said all of the homes on that side also had single-car detached garages in the rear.

The neighbor on the right, said he had lived in his home nearly 25 years and that it was located directly next to the project site. He said the proposed design would fill most of the width of the lot with little setback on the sides. He said the proposed home was larger and extended further front and back on its lot than any other home on the block. He said he had a two-story and a two-car garage in the rear with a driveway from the front. He noted the project site was not maintained and had tall weeds. He said presently everyone had very private backyards as the garages were all in the rear of the properties.

The speaker said she was the neighbor to the east. She said some of the comments attributed to her were fabricated. She said the weeds were only cleaned up when she emailed the property owner. She said she had to call the City multiple times about the debris left in the driveway after the demolition as it remained there from the summer through February of the next year. She said they liked the garages in the back as it provided privacy.

Mr. Jon Wolken, Sherman Avenue, said he was supportive of the Citrons' proposed design. He said however that he would like the front setback to match the rest of the block's front setbacks. He said the fence on the project site fell over every couple of weeks or so. He said the structure on the property was in a terrible state. He said his home was burglarized a couple of years prior and the police had indicated they should talk to the applicant as the unsightly structure attracted bad elements.

Mr. Walter Mooney, Sherman Avenue, said the neighborhood had a very charming uniform character with homes built post-WWII. He said because the fence fell over, the house was derelict and an increase in robberies in the last six months that he and his wife had started locking all of their windows. He said the project site had degraded the neighborhood. He said the main issue was a very large house being proposed in a district that had smaller lots and a defining neighborhood character, which he would like to see preserved in Menlo Park.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Comment: Chair Eiref said there were comments on two-car garages in the rear. Senior Planner Rogers said there was nothing explicit in the regulations about that and that garages in the rear could be one-car garages. He said the other side of the street had varied garage structures, but this project would have the only front-facing garage on the block.

Commissioner Combs said the applicant and others had raised a question about whether the proposed new home would be sold or not, which he did not think should be part of the Commission's consideration of the project. Senior Planner Rogers said the Commission's consideration should be focused on the substance of the proposal itself and not assumptions about who might live there.

Commissioner Kadwany confirmed with staff that the City did not require two-car garages but two parking spaces, one of which was required to be covered.

Commissioner Strehl asked if they could park behind the garage if it was in the rear of the property. Senior Planner Rogers said the second required parking space could not be located in an area that would block entry into the garage. He said there had been instances where the second space was next to the garage and parallel to it. He said there was also a semi-recent example of a project that had an area that could function both as a patio and a parking space.

Commissioner Kadvany asked where a garage could be located in the rear noting the applicant had indicated that it could be not located where the existing garage was. Senior Planner Rogers said recent changes to the regulations for accessory structures meant it could be as close as three feet to the side and rear property lines.

Chair Eiref said he went by the site twice over the weekend and he understood the urgency for the site to be improved. He said he did not feel the urgency about where the garage should be located. He said he was concerned that the design was massive. He noted the number of changes of elevations and peaks and gables. He said there had been another project recently for which the Commission had asked the applicant to pull the house forward noting neighbors' concerns with how much farther back it was compared to other homes. He said the applicant came back with a design that was revised through conversation with the neighbors and was approved.

Commissioner Onken asked about the door and window materials proposed for use. Senior Planner Rogers said those details were not included for the study session but when the project moved forward staff would recommend simulated divided light windows with internal and external grids, and a between-the-glass spacer bar. He said the garage was noted as a wood carriage door. He said moving forward they would get clarification on the materials for the entry door.

Commissioner Strehl said she visited the project site and noted there were different styles of homes in the neighborhood except for the one side of the street where the project site was. She said the project site was an eyesore. She concurred with the Chair's comments about the size of the proposed home. She said she did not have a problem with the garage in front and thought the design looked good from the front but that it looked massive from the side. She said she had seen in other locations in town where multiple cars were parked in driveways to a rear garage and noted that was an eyesore as well. She suggested the applicant work with the neighbors and reduce the visual impact of the side elevations.

Commissioner Kadvany said he often talked about front-facing two-car garages as they were frowned upon in many areas particularly on smaller sites as they dominated the front façade and changed the pedestrian character of the neighborhood. He said stylistically they were frowned upon but pragmatically people built two-car garages in the front of homes. He said in reviewing such structures that he considered the size of the lot and what neighbors had to say about it. He said generally neighbors don't comment on front facing garages but this time they did. He said a two-car garage was not a requirement. He said the proposed design needed adjusting so it would fit better with the neighborhood.

Commissioner Bressler said the home appeared massive on the left side. He said there were comments that the design was too busy but the Commission also tended to not want a monolithic look. He said he was concerned about having the applicant talk to the neighbors as the relationships were very strained it seemed. He said he felt the Commission should provide guidance to the applicant. He said he would like less massing on the left side and a style that was more consistent with the neighborhood. He said doing a single-car garage would give the applicant more options.

Commissioner Onken suggested as a compromise that the applicant design a one-car garage with another space adjacent to it but with a variance to allow parking in the setback. He said that would greatly reduce the mass of the front façade. He said the proposed design extended significantly to the rear of the lot to achieve a four-bedroom house. He said they could push the garage back and lose the guest room to have the garage in line with the other houses adjacent to it. He said he would prefer the guest room kept and suggested building a one-car garage and a parking space on the side through a variance. He encouraged the applicant to use high quality materials and windows.

Commissioner Ferrick asked about a variance request. Senior Planner Rogers said that variance requests had different findings from use permit findings. He said a hardship peculiar to the property had to be established. He said it would take scrutiny and work and it might be successful or it might not. Commissioner Ferrick said that she would not want to put the applicants on that path as it had a much higher bar for success.

Commissioner Ferrick said her opinion was that the front-facing garage could be made to look very nice and less dominating. She said she liked that a front garage greatly reduced the amount of paved area which was environmentally better. She said the project, although designed nearly to the maximum allowed, followed the rules and met setback requirements. She recommended that it would help gain support to have the front setback match neighbors' front setbacks. She recommended that the applicant use an architectural style that would be more harmonious with the neighborhood although she would not consider that as a condition of approval. She also recommended that the applicant clean the lot sooner than later so that was not a sticky point when the project returned to the Commission for review. She said she thought it would be a nice house and that the project should not be punished because it was designed nearly to the maximum allowable.

Commissioner Combs noted the concern with a front-facing two-car garage but in considering both sides of the street he had noted there were quite a few different front elevations, so he did not think the front-facing two-car garage was an egregious request. He said the area was not a historic district and he was not prepared to tell the applicant that his house needed to be stucco. He said the project as proposed would have his support.

Commissioner Strehl asked whether the applicant had applied for a demolition permit so that the house could be demolished and the lot cleaned. Senior Planner Rogers said when a project has discretionary review as this use permit does that CEQA typically did not allow segmenting of the project. He said he was not sure what had transpired with this project as it had come to him very recently but suggested that there might be some action available if there was a safety risk, or potentially other unique factors.

Chair Eiref said he was told by the Building Department that if a project was a new build that demolition could occur before the permit was issued for construction. He thought it would be good to check on whether demolition could happen before winter.

Commissioner Bressler said neighbor input was important in these hearings and he suggested that the applicant not come back with the exact same design. He suggested the applicant work with the neighbors to the extent possible as that would aid in getting project approval.

F.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT SCOPING SESSION

- F1. Review and comment on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) to identify the content of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to be prepared for the following project:

Architectural Control, Lot Merger or Lot Line Adjustment, Heritage Tree Removal Permits, Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Agreement, Environmental

Review/Greenheart Land Company/1300 El Camino Real: Greenheart Land Company is proposing to redevelop a 6.4-acre site on El Camino Real and Oak Grove Avenue with up to 210,000 square feet of commercial uses and up to 220 dwelling units. The proposal requires approval of Architectural Control for the new buildings, including a Public Benefit Bonus to exceed the Base level Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and dwelling unit/acre thresholds. As part of the project, approximately 37 heritage trees are proposed for removal.

Staff Comment: Senior Planner Rogers said the front page of the staff report had a reference to the whole site having up to 210,000 square feet of non-residential uses and up to 220 dwelling units. He referred to a table on page 7 of the report which correctly stated that residential use was 203,000 square feet and the retail, restaurant and office use would be 217,000 square feet. He said that change would not impact the report's analyses. He said three emails received over the last few days on the project had been distributed to the Commissioners and those related to the environmental impact report scoping session.

Senior Planner Rogers said the scoping session was when input was collected from the reviewing agencies and the public on the specific topics they thought should be addressed in the environmental analysis. He said the four areas projected for analysis in the NOP included air quality, particularly for construction, hazards and hazardous materials, noise and specifically truck noise, and transportation and traffic. He said the NOP included intersections and roadway segments that were analyzed and some that would not as those had been particularly analyzed as part of the EIR for the Specific Plan.

Ms. Kirsten Chapman, ICF International, said she was the Deputy Project Manager and introduced the Project Manager, Ms. Erin Efner. She said the project was part of the Specific Plan area for which an EIR was certified in June 2012. She said portions of the site were previously analyzed under certain CEQA documents. She said the Derry Lane mixed use project EIR was certified in 2006 but the approvals were no longer valid. She said the 1300 El Camino Real project EIR was certified in 2009. She said because the proposed project was substantially different from the prior Sand Hill proposal that this CEQA analysis would consider the whole of the project and not rely on previous approvals.

Ms. Chapman said the Greenheart Land Company was proposing to use the site for a mixed use development. She said the proposed plan would demolish the structures in the southern part of the site and construct at least 420,000 square feet of mixed uses with three mixed-use buildings up to four stories in height, a surface parking lot, underground parking garages, onsite linkages, landscaping and a public park. She said the project would have from 188,000 to 210,000 square feet of office space in two buildings, approximately 203,000 to 210,000 square feet of residential space with about 220 residential units in one building, and between 7,000 to 29,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space throughout the ground floor of the proposed office and residential buildings. She said the range of residential, office and retail uses were flexible to allow for market trends but in no case exceeded 420,000 square feet of development.

She said the environmental analyses they would do would use the worst case scenarios for these ranges. She said the project was proposed within the parameters for development in the Specific Plan, the site was within the Specific Plan area, and the EIR certified for the Specific Plan would be applicable. She said the CEQA analysis for the project would demonstrate consistency with Senate Bill (SB) 226, which was CEQA streamlining for infill projects. She described other ways in which the proposed project met the threshold for SB 226. She said as the project might have a significant effect on the environment that was not previously considered in the Specific Plan EIR that an in-fill EIR would be prepared.

In response to a question from Commissioner Bressler, Ms. Erin Efner said SB 226 allowed a few streamlining features for EIRs such as specifically allowing fewer alternatives and not analyzing growth inducing impacts. In response to a question from Chair Eiref, Ms. Efner said each topic analyzed in the EIR had an associated cumulative analysis and in this case would include other projects in the area of the proposed project. She said CEQA asked whether the project itself contributed a substantial amount to that overall impact. Responding to questions from Commissioner Kadvany, Ms. Efner said the project had a range of development for different uses and he was right that not all of the maximums of those ranges could be developed. She said in this case their transportation consultant and the City would pick a combination of land uses that would be the worst case scenarios so the EIR would capture all the potential impacts but that the ultimate project would not reach that level of impacts. Commissioner Kadvany suggested using language such as may be as opposed to will be to make that clear. He confirmed with staff that there would not be a driveway on Oak Grove Avenue. In response to a question from Commissioner Onken regarding impacts to the future tenants of the site in being situated next to train tracks, Ms. Efner said in reference to noise that this was covered by the Specific Plan EIR and the only unique area with this project that was not covered by the Specific Plan EIR were additional traffic trips going different places than what was previously analyzed. She said she would need to review the Specific Plan EIR to refresh her memory on the noise analyses.

In response to a question from Commissioner Strehl regarding Caltrain response to the project and EIR, Ms. Efner said she did not think they would need or get any formal approvals from them but Caltrain and Caltrans had received the NOP and were asked to comment on the project. In response to a question from Commissioner Ferrick, Ms. Efner said at this point they did not know what alternatives they would compare but those would come out of the scoping session. Commissioner Ferrick said she had read several articles that development near quality transit such as this one having the Caltrans station in which the finding was made that traffic trips were considerably less with office use than residential use. She said she would like to see an alternative where there was more residential and less office or more office and less residential to compare with what was being proposed in terms of trip generation. Commissioner Kadvany noted there was a limit on office space development in the Specific Plan area and it was near the limit. Commissioner Ferrick noted that was a good point and suggested looking at more housing in terms of trip generation.

Commissioner Strehl asked if the alternative project would also look at the flex space. Ms. Efner said most likely it would be similar to what Commissioner Ferrick was suggesting and have a range of land uses. In response to a question from Commissioner Bressler regarding SB 226 applying to areas of less traffic, Ms. Efner said they looked at vehicle miles traveled per capita (VMT), which was the type of metric for the low traffic area. She said the zone this area was in had metric of 14.9 VMT per capita, and the region's average was 15.1 so they were

under the average number. Commissioner Bressler said he did not think that was the correct metric to use as there was much traffic and the streets were rated D, E, and F. Ms. Efner said the VMT metric was suggested by SB 226 to make that determination.

Commissioner Kadvany asked if the Specific Plan Initiative (Initiative) were to pass in November whether there would be an alternative plan, for instance, for 100,000 less square feet of office space. Ms. Efner said in that instance they would need to work with the City and the applicant to see what could be built. She said she noted the comment in one of the email comment letters.

Public Comment: Ms. Susan Grindley, Atherton, said she was concerned with having 220 more residential units and the possibility of having an additional 220 children needing school and other services. She noted a trend of more children in Menlo Park and not having a sufficient number of schools. She said culture and school impacts had to be included in the planning and asked if the Commission met with the school board. She said perhaps a school should be built on this land.

Commissioner Ferrick noted that area was of importance to her as well and referred to page 3-95 that set the student generation rate for this project at .13 or 33 students. She said Hillview School could accommodate 11 of those anticipated middle school students at any one time. She said currently the school district could not accommodate this increase but O'Connor School would open before this project was built.

Chair Eiref closed the public comment period.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Bressler said the Menlo Park School District Superintendent had come to the Commission during the Specific Plan development and indicated they were in a crisis situation, and asked that the City not add housing. He said that they could not consider school impacts in the EIR. Chair Eiref asked staff to address that statement. Senior Planner Rogers said that school impact was considered in EIRs. He said the state however finds that the payment of a school impact fee by a developer mitigates that impact. Chair Eiref asked if there was data related to rental versus purchased residential units and the number of children and impacts on schools. Senior Planner Rogers said they looked at that somewhat under the Specific Plan but noted it was a comment to be considered in the development of the EIR. Commissioner Bressler said paying a fee did not really mitigate the impact and it was a problem.

Commissioner Kadvany asked if they would get models on queuing at intersections. Ms. Efner said they would do that as part of the traffic impact analysis (TIA). She said the queuing studies were done at the access points of the proposed project and how it impacted traffic downstream. Commissioner Kadvany said queuing created the appearance of gridlock and that the roads were running out of queuing space. He said it was a congestion area. He asked if there was anything done specifically with this project design that would drastically improve energy efficiency. He said that would be a large task and might be out of scope but thought suggestions to make larger investments now would pay off later. He said it was a design alternative.

Chair Eiref noted prior Commission discussions of LEED certification and suggested that it should be at least to LEED Gold standards.

Commissioner Onken referred to the handout and page D8 regarding the proposed traffic study. He said there were 27 intersections proposed for study but it did not include the new Garwood Way which would connect to Encinal Avenue, and suggested it be added. He questioned why El Camino Real was not part of the proposed traffic study. Ms. Efner asked if Senior Planner Rogers could address the question, noting her traffic consultant was not present. Senior Planner Rogers said his recollection was that the City did not have standards for state-controlled highways, and El Camino Real is a Caltrans facility. He said Caltrans had impact standards for freeways. He said El Camino Real was not under the City's control and he believed that Caltrans did not have impact standards for a highway like El Camino Real. He thanked Commissioner Onken for the comment and said that it would be reviewed. Commissioner Onken said that if the traffic study did not include El Camino Real that many would protest. Senior Planner Rogers noted the Specific Plan did not analyze the El Camino Real segment either but considered many intersections and City-controlled roadway segments. Commissioner Onken suggested somehow considering El Camino Real under this proposed EIR.

Commissioner Bressler asked if it was possible under the EIR to consider mitigations to make the project more pedestrian-friendly noting that people needed to use surface streets to reach the Caltrain station and the retail. He said this was a heavily trafficked area with apartments on the other side of the railroad tracks and suggested an undercrossing and retail to serve the community would be great incentives for people to not use cars, which could be argued as mitigations, or reduction of the amount of traffic associated with the project. He said these were relevant and would require creativity.

G. STUDY SESSION #2

G1. Review and comment on the following project:

Architectural Control, Lot Merger or Lot Line Adjustment, Heritage Tree Removal Permits, Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Agreement, Environmental

Review/Greenheart Land Company/1300 El Camino Real: Greenheart Land Company is proposing to redevelop a 6.4-acre site on El Camino Real and Oak Grove Avenue with up to 210,000 square feet of commercial uses and up to 220 dwelling units. The proposal requires approval of Architectural Control for the new buildings, including a Public Benefit Bonus to exceed the Base level Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and dwelling unit/acre thresholds. As part of the project, approximately 37 heritage trees are proposed for removal.

Applicant Presentation: Mr. Steve Pierce, principal, Greenheart Land Company, said his colleagues, Ron Adachi, Bob Burke and David Israel were also present. He said they would present a preview of a conceptual project plan. He noted that later they would come back to the Commission for discussion on public benefit and design review. He said Greenheart Land Company was locally owned and active in Menlo Park. He said they had just created a joint venture with a tech incubator at 68 Willow Road and invited the Commission to join them for the ribbon cutting on August 12. He said they were about to begin construction on 200 apartments near Facebook's new building. He talked about the former Cadillac site and a previously approved office and retail project that was never built. He said a proposed condominium project on the Derry property was never built. He said their proposal was for office, retail, residential and considerable open space uses. He said the two proposed office buildings, each about

100,000 square feet, were being designed flexibly to accommodate different tenant needs and to accommodate both large and small users. He said the proposed residential building would face Garwood Way and along Oak Grove Avenue with 60% of the units being studio or one bedroom, about 37% two-bedroom units and about 3% three-bedroom units. He said units would on average be about 800 square feet and their target tenant was the young professional. He said the proposed approximately 7,000 square foot of retail space would be located along Oak Grove Avenue and El Camino Real. He said they were looking at a market hall with various vendors of foods and a café. He said they hoped to have two major restaurants on each end of the El Camino Real frontage and other retail between those. He noted open space features such as a plaza and the proposed Garwood Park. He said there would also be a plaza amenity for the apartment tenants. He said the minimum distance between buildings was about 50 feet. He said there would be underground parking underneath the whole project with two entries from Garwood Way and one entry from El Camino Real.

Mr. David Israel, principal, BAR Architects, San Francisco, said the site was a textbook transit oriented site. He said the project would not be a solid frontage on El Camino Real but would have permeability and more pedestrian-sympathetic street pattern and scale. He said in the future they would present a more detailed parking plan and that residential and commercial parking would be differentiated and secure. He noted that they had not placed residential parking contiguous with the street but kept the area green and open for a more pleasant pedestrian and bicycle experience. He said they were targeting LEED Gold standards. He said the first sustainability goal accomplished was the project's proximity to transit. He said they were considering solar harvesting with PVs and solar water for geothermal use for both heating and cooling. He said with all their projects they looked at local sourcing for project materials to minimize trip generations and sustainable methods for construction including recycling and how waste was handled. He said water efficiencies would be made through the landscape materials and systems chosen. He said high efficiency lighting with sensors would be critical to the project. He said they would provide secured and convenient bicycle parking contiguous to elevators as well as vehicle charging stations and shared car service.

Commissioner Strehl noted the description of Garwood Way having a pedestrian and bicycle friendly frontage because of the open space. She asked about the entry from Garwood Way into the parking and how wide that entry would be. Mr. Israel said they would work with the City engineers on that and that they had not studied in depth as to whether there would be a dedicated bicycle lane there or exactly how the road would be configured.

Commissioner Combs asked if residential tenants would have direct entry access. Mr. Israel said they had not studied that fully yet but had thought about it for the Garwood Way frontage. He said they would like the City's input. Commissioner Combs asked what features made the commercial space flexible. Mr. Israel said one element was providing the proper ceiling height for quality retail space, a storefront design to accommodate flex use for either a single tenant or several tenants, and having circulation cores and vertical penetration for different retail uses.

Commissioner Ferrick said that Caltrain planned to electrify their train service in the future and asked if the project allowed for any space that might be needed for that change. Mr. Israel said the Caltrain right of way would remain intact.

Commissioner Kadvany asked if the parking indicated in the left corner of the El Camino Real project side was for retail too. Mr. Israel said it was at this time and that they had not yet done a

full scale evaluation of traffic circulation. Commissioner Kadvany asked if it was a concern that there was no surface parking for a potential big retail space. Mr. Israel said the important thing would be to provide active, available parking for retail uses with convenient access. He noted the Specific Plan discouraged surface parking. Commissioner Kadvany said he appreciated the goals but noted another project proposal for 1300 El Camino Real had parking on the side to bring people into the site and underground parking. Mr. Israel said there would be some short-term “teaser” parking.

Chair Eiref said there were pockets of parking along Garwood Way and asked if the underground parking would be one large structure. Mr. Israel said it would be but with separation of parking for the different uses and secured parking for residential tenants.

Commissioner Kadvany asked if the underground parking could be expanded for businesses across the street. Mr. Israel said there was more than one level but not two levels propose. He said it was a physical possibility to expand the parking levels. Commissioner Kadvany asked about the percentage of open space. Mr. Israel said they were close to 40% with the minimum standard being 20%. Commissioner Kadvany asked if they were relying on the credit for balcony space. Mr. Israel said it was almost 40% without including the balconies. Commissioner Kadvany asked about the geothermal heating and cooling system. Mr. Israel said the Bay Area was pretty well suited for geothermal but the important factor was the soil quality of the site which would need to be looked at from a geothermal perspective. He said this was an emerging technology and it seemed there were now mechanisms that might make it viable. He said it would be groundbreaking if they could make it work for multi-family use. Commissioner Kadvany noted there was no elevation shown for Garwood Way. Mr. Israel said there was not but that it would share the character, non-repetitive and non-stacking form of the El Camino Real elevation.

Commissioner Onken noted that numerous energy efficiencies mentioned were required under Title 24, and questioned why they could not make this a “net zero” project. Mr. Israel said it was difficult in housing to do that but they would look at all of the energy saving opportunities for the project and do what they could do. He said there were cost implications and the reality in the current market place was a rapid escalation of construction pricing. He said there were other challenges related to state law that restricts how developers were allowed to charge users for power. Commissioner Ferrick asked rather than an overall project LEED Gold if it would be possible to do a LEED Platinum or “net zero” on the office use. Mr. Israel said they would have to give that thought as the project was located on the same podium and whether LEED would require evaluation as a singular project. He said the project from a building regulation perspective would be evaluated as a singular project.

Chair Eiref asked if they had considered adding two nearby lots to this project site. Mr. Pierce said considerable energy and effort were given to acquiring those two lots but it did not happen. Chair Eiref asked about the park design plan. Mr. Pierce said they would be looking for input from the community on what features the park space might have. He referred back to Commissioner Strehl’s question related to a bicycle path. He said the Specific Plan called for Garwood Way to have a Level 3 bicycle path that would basically connect the train station and downtown to the residential areas to the north. He said he thought the City’s Department of Public Works was working on a pedestrian crossing at Oak Grove Avenue. Chair Eiref noted that the Marriott Hotel was being allowed to use parking along Garwood Avenue for a certain length of time and if the applicant was discussing possible parking strategies with the hotel. Mr.

Pierce said that they had had conversations and the hotel was evaluating how much parking they actually needed, and they would continue those conversations. He said their proposed project had a considerable amount of parking noting they had over-parked the residential because they thought that was the correct thing for the market. He said they were maximizing potential uses of the parking. Chair Eiref asked about the quantity of underground parking and possible pivot points in the realization of that. Mr. Pierce said that brought up the question of the Initiative. He said the office space was the economic driver that would support them in buying and doing good things. He said of major importance for those good things was the underground parking as that opened the surface space so they could have 40% open space as opposed to the required 20% open space. He said if 100,000 square feet were removed from the project proposal that the parking would be at surface level and in an above ground structure. He said it was two and a half times more expensive to go underground than do aboveground structures. He said aboveground parking would mean the loss of open space. He said if they had to remove the office space that would affect the retail too as the office employees would provide downtown retail business during the day. He said it was not downtown walk-by retail. He said the office use supported the underground parking.

Commissioner Strehl asked what programs they would use to capitalize on the proximity to transit. Mr. Piece said they were trying to create visual connection between the project and the train station. He said a recent Caltrans study indicated that within a third of a mile of Caltrain stations that the a.m. and p.m. peak hour traffic for offices declined by 50% and for residential about 27%. He said that was their goal and they wanted to enhance those outcomes. He said they were looking at Go-passes. He said Caltrain said those were not available for residential tenants but for businesses to use as incentives. He said they would employ a traffic demand management (TDM) program.

Commissioner Bressler said it appeared that getting out of the project by vehicle at certain times of the day because of the street layouts would be similar to getting out of a sports stadium after the game. Mr. Pierce said they had provided multiple points of access and egress but it would be analyzed as they looked at each of those intersections. He said at this point they did not have that numerical analysis. He said one of the benefits of mixed use was that residents would be leaving when office employees were arriving. Commissioner Bressler asked whether the answer to the question of ingress and egress impacts might make the project not viable. Mr. Pierce said he did not think so and that those pressures might influence more people to use the train. Commissioner Bressler asked what over-parking the project meant. Mr. Pierce said they were providing 1.25 parking spaces per residential unit. He said based on past developments and particularly in this environment and price point that was needed to meet the expectations of the tenants. He said that he expected these to be active cars and stored cars.

Commissioner Combs asked about the flex nature of the commercial space and the observation that office was the more profitable use. He asked whether they would come back and request office space instead after some time period of offering the retail space with no takers. Mr. Pierce said retail was a lower rent but it was good for the development and both the office and residential tenants. He said they did not control the retail market and if no one came forward or only personal services such as a nail salon then they would need to rethink the use. He said their intent was a high quality development.

Chair Eiref said the report indicated a range of retail use from 7,000 to 22,000 square feet which was a wide range. Mr. Pierce said that was not for the entire site. He said there was 7,000

square feet proposed for Oak Grove Avenue and 22,000 square feet proposed for the El Camino Real frontage. He said the Oak Grove Avenue frontage was confined. He said within the El Camino Real frontage there was an opportunity to go deeper and shallower and the retail square footage could shrink or expand based on the market interest. Commissioner Kadvany said it was actually 7,000 square feet and up to 29,000 square feet. Mr. Pierce said they had spoken with some restaurateurs who were interested in the El Camino Real frontage and at a minimum they would have one or two restaurants at the two corners of the frontage.

Commissioner Ferrick asked if half of the proposed commercial office use was not allowed to be commercial office and there was a need to provide some other retail use or service what that would do to traffic impacts and other ability to provide underground parking. Mr. Pierce said with the loss of the office space that the parking would need to be above ground, there would be less space, fewer patrons for the retail, and that they would have to completely re-examine the project. He said they would probably need regional serving retail and that would have much more traffic. He said going more heavily on residential they would have to look at more diversity in units and that would have the school impact conundrum. He said he did not know if residential use would make use of the train as much as office workers. Commissioner Ferrick asked about the ability to do a successful TDM program with a different project. Mr. Pierce said people did not use the train to go to regional-serving retail stores. He said employers can offer TDM program incentives but with residents that was quite a different situation and less incentive driven.

Commissioner Kadvany asked about the possible use of the underground parking for the City and other area needs. Mr. Pierce said physically it could be done but the studies indicated that people would not walk the distance from there to Santa Cruz Avenue. Commissioner Kadvany suggested it could be employee parking. Mr. Pierce said that would be more viable. He said it was an opportunity that could be explored.

Commissioner Combs said the comment was made that taking away 100,000 square feet of office would make the underground parking unreasonable financially. He said right now the floor area ratio (FAR) was at a bonus level. He said if the FAR was reduced to the lower limit whether the underground parking would be financially possible. Mr. Pierce said it would be very tight. He said the bonus level made it very clear that they could do the underground parking. He said they initially looked at base FAR and structured parking and did not like how that looked, and decided they wanted to do something that was politically hard to do and that was use the bonus FAR zone in part to make it a better project. He said without the bonus FAR they would probably remove the underground parking feature.

Commissioner Strehl asked if that also would affect or stop discussions with the City regarding public benefit. She asked for instance if the Initiative passed and they were only allowed to develop 100,000 square feet of office what the impact would be. Mr. Pierce said that would impact the economics dramatically.

Public Comment: Ms. Fran Dehn, Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce, said that the City had waited a long time to see a resolution of the vacancy along El Camino Real. She said the project proposal used the specific design guidelines developed under the City's Specific Plan. She said it brought solutions to the City's housing deficiencies and would qualify as quality transit-oriented development. She said the mixed uses and generous open space, the below market rate (BMR) housing accommodation, and the public benefit to be negotiated made the

project a win for the City. She noted the project met the criteria of a seven-year planning process in which everyone participated and provided a balanced solution for housing, retail, commercial, transit, parking, flex space and open space considerations. She said the Chamber supported the process and the project.

Mr. Sam Wright, Menlo Park, said this was the type of project that residents had in mind when they went through the Specific Plan process. He said the underground parking would be a great addition and would open up the public plazas. He said Café Borrone demonstrated thriving retail with parking underground. He said a question was asked about the Chevron and old A&W site and he thought the major disappointment with this project was it did not include those parcels as they were very visible from downtown. He said perhaps in the future they might be developed more in keeping with this project proposal.

Chair Eiref closed the public comment period.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Onken said looking at the intention of the Specific Plan in terms of massing and design and in reviewing the BAR drawings that this proposal met the Plan's intention exactly. He said the massing on the El Camino Real frontage was exactly what was intended by the development guidelines. He said the intention of the retail related to the street and sidewalk widths on El Camino Real and Oak Grove Avenue was fantastic. He said he hoped the retail would flourish noting the retail along those two streets had been spotty. He said related to Specific Plan design that they were looking at four-story buildings at the back because of the below market rate (BMR) housing, and he thought it was appropriately tucked away in the back but possibly threatening to others. He said they should be very happy to get BMR housing integrated within the rest of the housing and not noticeably different. He said he wondered about the Mediterranean Santa Barbara design look. He said BAR does wide and varied versions of this design and requested something a bit more forward looking and less like Stanford development. He urged the developer to allow the architects to do what they do best and that was new and innovative design. He noted recent bad versions of Mediterranean design along El Camino Real. He suggested that the developer add in measurable real green targets and get to net zero as much as possible, and advertising that to the community. He said the project needed to sell itself to the community. He said exiting Garwood Way at either end and the tactic of entering the opposite lane with the bisection of the railroad tracks meant there would be backups for left turns onto Oak Grove Avenue and Encinal Avenue. He said one school of thought said limit the parking and everyone would use the train and the other school of thought was to put as much parking as possible to keep the parking pressures off the residential areas. He said he thought the latter was preferable for the City's needs.

Commissioner Ferrick said she liked that the housing units were rental and the majority of them were smaller units. She thought the future tenants would likely not have cars and she was not concerned about the 1.25 parking ratio allowing for one parking space for each smaller unit and potentially two spaces for a larger unit. She said she like the idea of having restaurants anchor the retail space along El Camino Real as that would be attractive and activate vibrancy. She said it was great there were two acres of plaza, landscaped and open space which she thought showed the Specific Plan got it right with the bonus levels because the developer was able to add in the underground parking and put in the open space and plaza. She said she liked the 25-foot setback along El Camino Real and the forward thinking with bicycle parking, charging stations, and car share. She asked if there were bicycle path improvements along Oak Grove Avenue as that was one of the City's east-west connectivity pinch points. She said it was a

critical school route until an undercrossing at Middle Avenue was built. She said she loved Mr. Wright's idea of building next to the two sites with the thought that those properties would be part of this kind of project in the future.

Mr. Pierce suggested the question about the bicycle circulation might be better asked of staff as the Garwood piece was part of a larger City plan. He said he did not know if that larger plan had something planned for Oak Grove Avenue or if there was something they could do to facilitate anything there. Commissioner Ferrick said they had done something by removing the entry from Oak Grove Avenue. Senior Planner Rogers said the Specific Plan identified Oak Grove Avenue as a Class 2 bicycle lane improvement noting that parking would likely need to be removed from one side of the street to implement the improvement. He said they looked at all large projects for possible streetscape improvements or mitigation measures so closely linked to the project that the developer should implement it, such as the example of extending Garwood Way for this proposal. He said they would look at the Oak Grove Avenue bicycle lane goal and see whether there was a connection to the proposed project.

Commissioner Ferrick said she liked the Mediterranean design but agreed with Commissioner Onken that the design could be made more modern. She said it was a very pretty development however and she was pleased as she thought this was the type of development they had in mind with the Specific Plan.

Commissioner Kadvany said there was no overnight car parking in Menlo Park on residential streets and with that a condition was built in to prevent that particular parking overflow. He said regarding the architecture that when he saw the schematics in the newspaper in November he was fearful it would be kitschy and over-articulated. He said what he saw here was that the architect knew how to avoid that and this proposal had much detail interest. He said regarding connectivity that he did not see much to draw pedestrians and bicyclists to the site. He said they would want people to come from Garwood Way and through to the project from the back. He said that the retail space on El Camino Real was based on market conditions when the project was built. He said without retail there would just be two large office buildings on El Camino Real and that did not benefit the City, and it behooved the City to look at a range of public benefit and valuation studies. He asked if there would be a consultant to do that. Senior Planner Rogers said an independent consultant would be asked to look at what the value was to the developer with the incremental increase and if there was more profit from the building, and what the benefit was to the City including revenue and other intrinsic value such as a public park that needed consideration. He said that information would be presented to the Commission. Commissioner Kadvany said it was important to get that information for negotiations.

Chair Eiref said he liked the design. He said he liked the building at 1600 El Camino Real, which had a similar design. He said his personal preference agreed with putting the taller four story buildings back toward the railroad tracks. He asked about the second story setback as he did not see that happening. He said regarding traffic on Garwood Way that there might need to be one-way traffic at certain times of the day. He said underground parking was significant and he liked all of the open space that provided. He said it would be very important to draw out and showcase the features. He said the retail should be baked into the proposal and the applicant should showcase an interactive, retail supportive proposal.

Commissioner Strehl said it was an attractive project and it could attract people into the area. She agreed with underlining the positive aspects of the project.

Commissioner Onken noted this proposal had a high degree of human scale which another large project which had moved from boxy modern forms to a somewhat Mediterranean design did not. He suggested requiring the human scale at the outset.

Commissioner Combs said he liked Santa Barbara Mediterranean architecture very much. Commissioner Ferrick said she supported high quality architecture well done.

H. COMMISSION BUSINESS

There was no Commission business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Thomas Rogers, Senior Planner

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on September 8, 2014