



Housing and Planning Commissions

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING DRAFT MINUTES

Date: 10/4/2021

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Special Meeting Location: [Zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) – ID# 824 3177 4086

A. Call To Order

Planning Commission Chair Michael Doran called the joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Housing Commission to order at 7:09 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Planning Commission:

Present: Andrew Barnes (arrived between 7:20 and 7:45 p.m.), Chris DeCardy (Vice Chair), Michael Doran (Chair), Cynthia Harris, Camille Gonzalez Kennedy (departed at 11:17 p.m.), Henry Riggs (arrived 7:12 p.m.), Michele Tate

Housing Commission:

Present: Lauren Bigelow, Karen Grove (Chair), Rachel Horst, Heather Leitch, Nevada Merriman, John Pimentel

Absent: Chelsea Nguyen

Staff: Calvin Chan, Senior Planner; Deanna Chow, Assistant Community Development Director; Justin Murphy, Deputy City Manager; Mike Noce, Acting Housing Manager; Corinna Sandmeier, Acting Principal Planner; Chris Turner, Assistant Planner; Mary Wagner, City Attorney

C. Regular Business

C1 and C2 are associated items with a single staff report

C1. Consideration of a Resolution of the Planning Commission Authorizing Teleconference Meetings in Compliance with AB 361 ([Staff Report #21-047-PC](#))

Chair Doran opened public comment on Items C1 and C2 and closed it as there were no speakers.

Planning Commission ACTION: M/S (Chris DeCardy/Michele Tate) to approve the item as recommended in the staff report; passes 6-0 with Commissioner Andrew Barnes not yet in attendance.

C2. Consideration of a Resolution of the Housing Commission Authorizing Teleconference Meetings in Compliance with AB 361 ([Staff Report #21-047-PC](#))

Housing Commission ACTION: M/S (Nevada Merriman/Lauren Bigelow) to approve the item as recommended in the staff report, passes 5-0 with Commissioner John Pimentel not in attendance and Commissioner Chelsea Nguyen absent.

- C3. Housing Element Update/City of Menlo Park: The Planning Commission and Housing Commission will review and discuss land use and site strategy options to meet the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) as part of the state-mandated Housing Element, and make a recommendation to the City Council on a preferred land use strategy to be further evaluated as part of the Housing Element Update process. The City's fair share of housing is approximately 3,000 new housing units, ranging at all income levels, for the planning period 2023-2031([Staff Report #21-048-PC](#)) ([Presentation](#))

Project Team Presentation: Assistant Community Development Director Deanna Chow introduced Christabel Soria Mendoza and Asher Kohn, M-Group, who would make the presentation.

Ms. Mendoza listed the topics she would present on: Housing Element Goals, RHNA Overview and Criteria, Pipeline Projects, New Housing Needed, Outreach and Engagement Update, Community Feedback 9/23, Land Use Strategies and Next Steps.

Ms. Mendoza said three goals were set for the Housing Element Update: Balanced Community, Affordability Focused, and Social Justice. She said four relatively new concepts that had gained attention over the past few years and were to be considered in talking about housing equity were environmental justice, racial justice, social justice and housing justice. She said injustices in each of those areas needed to be addressed at the same time and not separately.

Ms. Mendoza provided a table describing 5th Cycle RHNA 2015-2023 results and highlighted the notable lack of low- and moderate-income housing. She said for the 6th Cycle RNHA 2023-2031 the number of units needed had increased from 655 to just under 3,000. She said the state housing department strongly recommended and basically required planning for an additional buffer of 15% to 30% that increased the target to 3,830 units with 2,161 of those affordable. She said the need for housing in Menlo Park increased by 450% in one RHNA cycle. She said to help meet that need they were looking at using sites and pipeline projects in the 5th cycle as well as housing opportunities in single-family areas, commercial sites, the downtown and El Camino Real area, publicly owned sites, religious facilities and accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

Mr. Kohn reviewed housing location criteria for affordable housing. He showed a table of projects in the pipeline all of which were in the Bayfront area. He said those projects had over 3,000 housing units, 487 of which were classified as affordable. He said they would look at potential affordable housing opportunities to be distributed equitably throughout the City. He showed a table of new housing needed after consideration of the pipeline project unit numbers and expected ADU production, which was 899 very low, 180 low, 518 moderate, zero above moderate and totaled 1,597 units needed. He provided information on potential sites throughout the City and sites that had expressed interest in housing development. He described their outreach and community engagement. He reviewed the key takeaways from a community meeting on September 23, 2021. He said the downtown/El Camino Real area was most preferred by attendees at that meeting for affordable housing followed by City-owned parking lots in the downtown, and commercial areas. He said the least preferred areas for additional housing were single-family areas, religious facilities and multi-family areas. He said the prioritization of housing development in commercial areas ranked preference in order for Sharon

Heights, Willows, and Middlefield. He said the prioritization of housing development in the downtown/El Camino Real area ranked preference for El Camino Real. He said there was stronger community support for more density in Sharon Heights and the downtown. He said discussion points included the intersectionality of housing and education and other services, incentivizing developers to allocate inclusionary housing, for instance housing for people with disabilities, and consider City parking lots and golf course for more housing. He reviewed land use strategies noting they looked at areas around Willow, Middlefield, Downtown/El Camino Real, and Sharon Heights regarding density and affordable housing. He said also there was a Ravenswood school district site next to Flood Park, the SRI site between the downtown and Middlefield areas. He said Option A distributed development throughout the City relatively equal in four areas of the Downtown/El Camino Real, Middlefield, Willow, Sharon Heights and other sites as referred to earlier for about 2,221 units with a default density of 85% and 1,183 for affordable housing. He said Option B would focus on adding residential uses along Middlefield and Willow in commercial areas. He said Option C had greater density in the downtown and along El Camino Real. He provided a table that summarized the three pie charts associated with the three options. He provided a map showing proposed new housing by school district. He said after this meeting they would meet with City Council on October 26 and with that direction they would then meet with commissions to review policies.

Chair Doran noted that Commissioner Andrew Barnes had joined the meeting during the item presentation.

Chair Grove and Chair Doran agreed to start with clarifying questions from Housing Commission.

Housing Commission Clarifying Questions: Commissioner John Pimental referred to density and asked if other assumptions were made as for greater height in some areas. Geoff Bradley, M-Group, said that they had not gotten to that level of detail. He said at this point they were identifying sites that met the location criteria as potential housing opportunity sites. He said utilizing the default density as was presented that the state allowed cities to plan for that density with the presumption that affordable housing projects could occur or were more likely to if they were at least that default density. He said the portfolio of sites would shift as more input was received from the community as the process continued. He said if sites became restricted, they might have to increase density to compensate and that obviously would impact building heights. Commissioner Pimental asked at what point they would consider what areas would be more appropriate for taller buildings beyond normal height. Mr. Bradley said at any of the identified sites their default starting point would be to see to what degree the sites could fit within the existing framework outlined in the zoning ordinance or area plans and then what might be required beyond those standards.

Commissioner Nevada Merriman referred to the density of 30 units per acre and asked how that compared with the state's density bonus law and the City's affordable housing overlay. Mr. Bradley said that state density bonus generally maxed out at a 35% density bonus. He said there was a new state law for projects that had a higher level of affordability that could go up to 50%. He said with 30 units per acre as the default density that could increase another 35% or 50% with 45 units per acre. He said the City's affordable housing overlay applied to properties within the Downtown / El Camino Real Specific Plan area as well as for specific properties that carried the higher density R-4 AHO designation, which had a density bonus up to 60%.

Replying to Chair Grove, Ms. Chow said the affordable housing overlay (AHO) was created as part of the City's last Housing Element. She said it was applicable to sites that had been zoned with the overlay codified by zoning ordinance and it was applicable to all the Downtown/EI Camino Real Specific Plan area. She said a number of sites along Haven Avenue and Willow Road were rezoned with the AHO. She said MidPen's property at the 1300 and 1200 blocks both applied to the AHO to accomplish additional below market rate (BMR) units. She said it was not additive. She said you could not apply per the local BMR ordinance and then apply for AHO. She said an applicant could apply for one density bonus noting it could be from the City's BMR Ordinance, the AHO, or state density bonus law.

Replying to Commissioner Rachel Horst, Mr. Kohn said almost any property within the City could be planned for future housing. He said if the City laid out a comprehensive program with incentives and concessions as well as adequate density bonuses a fair argument could be made that that site would develop. He said the question was where the City wanted to proactively plan for housing. He referred to the Bayfront area as an example of industrial zoning moving to residential development.

Commissioner Lauren Bigelow said the demographics of the community meeting attendees was not particularly representative. She asked how engagement would be broadened. Mr. Bradley said that was important to them as well. He noted that the demographic she mentioned had been very responsive and thoughtful. Commissioner Bigelow said for the record that they needed to make sure that outreach was being made to people who could speak for themselves rather than having older, whiter, homeowners speaking for them. She confirmed with Mr. Bradley that the City owned parking lots considered for future housing development were the ones in the downtown.

Chair Grove said for the record that she did not fully understand how development ratios were defined. She asked what was required to incentivize very low-income housing and although not a RHNA requirement extremely low-income housing. She noted the high cost of land in the area. Mr. Bradley said he had been studying the history and genesis of existing affordable housing projects the City already had. He said land cost was a barrier to building affordable housing. He said to the extent they could identify sites in high opportunity zones those sites by default were eligible for tax credit financing. He said having a diffusion of sites throughout the community and not restricted to one area was an important piece of strategy to make sure the nonprofit developers had access to those system of financing. He said the City needed to look at how to increase funds to contribute to affordable housing as the City itself had been a supporter of many of the affordable projects. He said nexus studies were needed to evaluate possible fees or to increase fees for market rate housing and commercial development. He said housing was driven by the new jobs created in the region and to the extent the City could harness that and provide an ongoing revenue stream to help support affordability that was often what was needed to help finance affordable projects.

Chair Grove said cost of land was expensive and referred to the development ratio for the City-owned parking lots. She asked if it were a percentage of the total area noting it was 33%. She confirmed with Mr. Bradley that meant one-third of all the City-owned parking lots in the downtown could become housing projects. She asked if there were any other City-owned parcels feasible for housing other than green spaces such as in Sharon Heights. Mr. Bradley said the City provided a file of all the City-owned properties. He said many of those did not meet the size criteria and those that were larger were not really surplus property that could become

housing. He said they could look at other City-owned parking lots to see if there were more opportunities as such land could be an important factor in very affordable housing projects.

Planning Commission Clarifying Questions: Chair Doran referred to the staff report and the default density of 30 units per acre. He ran through some general calculations of unit size and lot size and asked whether he was correct that an acre for 30 units would require perhaps at the most two-stories to allow for parking and open space. Mr. Bradley said he had done work for the City of Campbell that allowed a maximum of 27 units per acre and those projects typically were three stories.

Chair Doran said the state recently passed SB9 and SB10 that would impact zoning and he did not understand it in context of City zoning. He said it seemed that all single-family residential parcels would be allowed to split for two duplexes to be built. He asked if they created a plan based on the City's zoning ordinance whether the state could preempt the City's rules creating a completely different outcome than what they had planned. Mr. Bradley said the two bills were very recently signed into law. He said to some extent they were fairly simple and blunt instruments that allowed nearly every single-family homeowner to split their lot in half and build two units on each lot. He said analysis done by the Turner Center, UC Berkeley, found a pretty small percentage of projects that even theoretically and financially would be feasible. He said he did not think SB9 would result in any great production of housing and noted similarities to ADU production. He said SB10 had potential as a change factor. He said it allowed for 10 units on a lot and could be anywhere in a city. He said it allowed cities to pass an ordinance to allow such projects, firmly putting control with cities whereas SB9 put the control with individual property owners.

Commissioner Chris DeCardy asked why they did not look at smaller than .5 acres in line with SB9 allowances for potential housing sites acknowledging units might be smaller and have greater density. Mr. Bradley said they considered .5 to 10 acres because the Housing Department of Community Development in Sacramento that administered housing regulations had established that as the preferable size for affordable housing. He said they apparently had information that less than .5 acres was too small for affordable housing developers to have a financially feasible project to maintain long-term and have any economy of scale. He said sites became too large over 10 acres and become a barrier as that was larger than what developers wanted to build and manage. He said with the new state laws he agreed they should take a harder look at the .25 to .50 acres range.

Commissioner Michele Tate asked if they might zoom into a map and show publicly owned sites that were less than .5 acres and broadening the scope noting potential for inclusionary housing as well as low-income housing. She said that a study was to be done through Facebook of potential housing uses for the City-owned parking lots downtown and asked if they had seen that study or whether it had been completed. She asked what research had been done already on using the parking lots downtown for housing. Mr. Bradley said they would look into that.

Commissioner Cynthia Harris asked whether they had any examples of affordable housing projects at the 30 units per one acre density in an area having a similar land cost of Menlo Park downtown land. Mr. Bradley said that some of the MidPen projects were very close to the 30 units per acre. He said the ones he was thinking of might be under construction. Commissioner Harris asked whether such size projects were economically feasible with the high cost of land. Mr. Bradley said in some circumstances the 30 units per acres was too low within the context of

costs within different areas to work but they wanted to start with that as a base line. He said comments about density levels appropriate for different areas would be welcome.

Commissioner Harris asked if the City had incentives for building affordable ADUs. Mr. Bradley said there were no incentives to his knowledge but generally cities were precluded from state law from taking a regulatory approach on that. He said if the ADU to be built was larger than what the state required then an affordability restriction could be requested by the City. He said because the units were smaller and might be next to a house, not have a yard or share a yard, and not have laundry facilities, they tended to be generally more affordable, which was what planners assumed. He said HDC however required rent surveys to back up assertions around affordability. He said 21 Elements, an umbrella group formed by County and its cities, did a detailed rent survey for ADUs that found in slightly rounded numbers those were 30% extremely low income, 30% very low income, 30% low income and 10% moderate income.

Commissioner Harris asked they had documented the population they had spoken with noting those who worked in Menlo Park but could not live in Menlo Park or people who had been displaced. Mr. Bradley said that was a demographic question they asked with the communitywide housing survey and the invitation was extended to anyone who had an interest in housing in Menlo Park. Commissioner Harris confirmed with Mr. Bradley that they focused both on the quantitative and qualitative search.

Commissioner Henry Riggs asked if they had looked at the Burgess Center and found any of the parking lots, fields, courts or buildings not in demand for the prescribed uses. Mr. Kohn said because the Burgess Center was such an important part of the community that they did not consider individual uses but rather looked at it in entirety. He said they did not find sites within it that could be converted to housing. He said they were open to hearing about possibilities. He said also as Burgess Center was conterminous with Burgess Park that it was off limits due to Council's direction from September 21, 2021 not to explore public parks. He said unless they got direction otherwise, he was not comfortable evaluating that.

Commissioner Andrew Barnes asked if proximity to transit was a factor in the identification process of potential affordable housing sites and if so, to what degree. Mr. Bradley said that was a key factor and asked Mr. Kohn to address further. Mr. Kohn said they used a mapping program to identify every parcel that was within a 15-minute walk distance to a bus stop and train station.

Mr. Sung Kwon, M-Group, referred to the fair housing perspective and said they looked at access to transit, jobs, parks, and schools using that filter along with the .5-acres to 10 acres that HDC developed, and those components were the beginning of their site selection process.

Commissioner Barnes asked whether transit accessibility was built into the areas that community members were asked to rank as preferred. Mr. Bradley said in the beginning part of the presentation it was noted that downtown and El Camino Real were closest to Caltrain. He said when they came to the end of the presentation and polled that he did not believe they specifically repeated that factor.

Mr. Bradley noted a map was available of the publicly owned sites.

Senior Planner Calvin Chan pulled up the map of City-owned parcels onscreen noting it was part of the City's open data and was publicly accessible from the City's website. Mr. Bradley

observed numerous sites were parks and as the map was zoomed through, he identified different sites.

Chair Doran opened public comment reminding speakers they would have two minutes to speak.

Public Comment:

- Michal Bortnik, District 4, said he appreciated seeing numbers of sites and the focus on affordable and fair housing. He said regarding fair housing that the density in District 1 was 100 units per acre but used otherwise was 30 units per acre and that did not sound fair. He asked whether they had a legal and moral obligation to close that gap under the Housing Element. He noted a comment made that Sharon Heights residents were less tolerant of taller buildings than residents elsewhere. He asked in their research if they found areas of Menlo Park where residents preferred taller buildings more than Sharon Heights' residents. He referred to a comment made that if the zoning and incentives supported affordable housing that the developers would come. He asked for examples supporting that theory on the scale being talked about and perhaps creating an Option D that included A, B and C.
- Erik Burmeister, District 2, Superintendent, Menlo Park City School District, said he commended the efforts to stop overdevelopment in District 1 and seeking ways to spread the development beyond the transportation corridor as most places in Menlo Park were within walking distance to public transportation. He said Option A to him was the most well balanced, but he needed more time to study the proposals. He said the Menlo Park City School supported housing, housing diversity, affordable housing, and fair housing. He said they needed the City, developers and commissions to understand they would need support in addressing capacity issues to serve the number of students that this housing increase, 70% of which was focused in Menlo Park City School District, would create. He said he would like clarity where pipeline projects were as he had heard all were within District 1. He said that seemed odd as the Downtown Specific Plan had 600 units and asked whether that was not considered pipeline projects. He requested they help offset student generation rate properties with commercial properties to increase tax revenue for school districts noting senior housing, mixed uses, and studio and one-bedroom units. He suggested they involve school districts early in planning and to have all non-tax paying developers pay towards costs of student generation.
- Andrew Bielak, MidPen Housing, said they were a nonprofit, affordable housing developer based in Foster City, and as mentioned they owned multiple projects in Menlo Park. He said MidPen had some affordable projects in District 1 with a density of 30 to 35 units per acre. He also noted that the properties were purchased thirty to forty years ago subject to very different land prices than now. He said for density to be currently viable that buildings had to be significantly taller for affordable housing in the majority of the developments they were looking at and encouraged the City to look at ways to enable that. He said MidPen had the capacity and willingness to work with the City to analyze sites that might be viable for development.
- Kalisha Webster, Housing Choices, said she was a housing advocate for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She said currently 77% of Menlo Park adults with developmental disabilities lived in their parents' homes because of a lack of affordable and

independent housing. She said also data was showing that people of color with disabilities experienced a higher rate of housing discrimination and severe rent burden than other people of color without disabilities or whites with disabilities. She said the City should incorporate housing goals for people with developmental and other disabilities and plan to affirmatively further their housing. She recommended requiring less parking and allowing greater height so developers could offer units for people with developmental disabilities.

- Adina Levin said she had served on the Complete Streets Commission but was speaking for herself at this time. She said she had served through that Commission on the ConnectMenlo project and had supported increased density for housing in the Bayfront area due to the expansion of job opportunities there. She said she supported doing the same in the downtown and El Camino Real area as they looked at the Housing Element. She said the 30 units per acre density did not seem practical to produce enough affordable housing for the Housing Element. She said public land might be very helpful in affording the very low- and low-income affordable housing. She said while parking lots at Burgess Park were used that it was also possible to put parking underground and build up if there was public land needed to make affordable housing cost effective.
- Ken Chan, organizer with the County's Housing Leadership Council, said they agreed with the staff report that the City needed to look at expanding sites with the affordable housing overlay and perhaps refining and updating it. He said they also encouraged continued outreach to insure that people who need housing had a say in how the City approached its solutions. He said 70% of the attendees at the September 23 community meeting were white and 71% of them were homeowners. He said the most recent 2020 census indicated that only 58.2% of residents in Menlo Park were white, about 42% were renters, and almost 5% were developmentally disabled. He said the City needed to reach those who were not comfortably housed.
- Lynne Bramlett, District 3, said there was a lot of information to absorb, and she agreed with most of the comments already made. She said she agreed with the recommendation that moderate up zoning be distributed throughout the City. She said she was grateful that District 1 had been taken off the list. She said she also was curious how the pipeline projects fit within this. She said fundamentally she thought ConnectMenlo had been an unfair process and she had not heard how that would be remedied. She said she was concerned about housing for the developmentally disabled.
- Denis Kourakin, District 3, said he would encourage the City to go further in terms of the impact that residential construction would have on other aspects of community life. He said he would like the City to look further at not only how schools would be impacted but how parks and other public infrastructure would be impacted by 3,000 more residential units that would be a 25% increase in residents. He said spreading the housing over the City and not from just a diversity perspective but from a City use perspective that some areas in the City would benefit from increased residents such as the downtown. He said this project was an opportunity to revitalize the downtown area. He said he agreed with not using the green areas of the City.
- Stephen Pang, Allied Arts, District 4, questioned the assumption about building near transit or the Caltrain corridor as that was not a subway system. He said previous developments such as the Reynolds parcel on Encinal Avenue and Artisan Way on El Camino Real had

been multi-family units and each had two-car garages. He suggested surveying those residents and finding out how many of them took public transit. He referred to the new SRI development composing of 400 new units and the developer had indicated they only had allotted 400 parking spaces. He said in California more people used cars than took transit so he would like to see any study that could back up the data that if you build next to transit, they would come. He said looking at the social, racial, and housing justice for Menlo Park that they wanted to address it seemed obvious for such development to be in Sharon Park area as it had none in the past few years.

- Benjamin McMullan said he was the systems change advocate at the Center for Independent Living for individuals with developmental disabilities. He said in addition to affordable housing for people with disabilities it was important to think about the accessibility of the housing. He said they appreciated affordable housing but if it was not accessible that was a barrier to people with disabilities.
- Brittani Baxter, District 2, said she supported comments made to include people with disabilities in rebuilding and reimagining the downtown. She said she hoped for greater density especially closer to downtown. She said 100 units per acre was the baseline in District 1 and she would like to see a similar level downtown. She said increasing height provided more options including preserving green space.
- Brooke Cotter, Menlo Park, District 3, said she supported equitable distribution of needed housing citywide. She said she wanted with denser dense projects in different areas that green space was preserved, and housing services, schools and amenities were supported. She said she would really like it if they could get the below market rate housing needed without overproducing market rate housing.
- Pamela Jones, Menlo Park, District 1, said three of the pipeline projects in her district had 923 of the family units and those children would be in the Redwood City School District. She said they should look into what that school district would do to welcome those students. She said the higher the buildings the more open space would be retained. She said the projects in District 2 such as Menlo Portal, Menlo Uptown, and Willow Village had substantial open space and were building four to seven-story buildings. She said that could be done on the parking lots as those would not even be seen and the unique village character would be retained. She said they needed 1,597 affordable units for very low and low income. She said the market rate housing had been met with the pipeline projects. She said they needed to remember during this process where the affordable units could be built.
- Katie Behroozi, District 2, said she was on the Complete Streets Commission but was only speaking for herself. She said she thought parking could be put underground and the areas in the Civic Center could be two-stories rather than one-story. She said she would like them to be more creative when looking at ways to build affordable housing and accommodate additional residents as they probably would need more classrooms and places to recreate, and space for libraries. She said Caltrain was on its way to being less of a commuter rail as electrification would allow them to have much more frequent service.
- Jon Rosenbaum, Sharon Heights, said he did not think his voice had been heard. He said he worked hard and lived in inexpensive housing to save money so he could buy a home in Menlo Park. He said now because of the pleasant character of Menlo Park the conversation

was to increase housing density by 25%. He said it was important to improve the livability and limited green space, some of which would be taken away. He said the Daily Post recently said that in the Safeway Center in Sharon Heights there would be 209 new houses, which would be 418 new parking spaces. He said with more and more density they would lose Menlo Park and that it would all be concrete. He said they needed to look at the quality of life as well as the density of housing.

- Francesca Segre, Menlo Park City School District Board member and resident, said she supported having more diverse housing in Menlo Park to provide more diverse learning opportunities for their students. She said she supported more low income and below market rate housing. She said at a recent School Board budget meeting they talked at length about the Housing Element and its potential impacts on their district. She said they looked at what 3,000 additional units might look like in terms of their facilities, and it was quite tight. She said Ravenswood and Las Lomitas had more capacity in their facilities, but as discussed District 1 was not part of this project and understandably with all it had done. She said she supported having affordable housing located all over the City.
- Misha Silin, Allied Arts, District 4, said he wanted housing opportunities all over the City and not just in District 1 or downtown. He said as a community they should embrace the fact that housing costs were pushing people out of the community from all the different neighborhoods in Menlo Park. He said regarding the plan he agreed with other speakers to ensure that the plan was realistic. He said he wanted housing spread throughout and also wanted the downtown to be denser in general, so he liked the idea of having taller buildings on Santa Cruz Avenue.
- Gail Gorton, District 3, said she too would like to see the housing spread equally throughout Menlo Park. She said she would also like to see housing downtown specifically as she thought they could rejuvenate the area if more housing was there. She said her concern was that people liked Menlo Park and if they brought in more housing and residents the City should remain attractive for them and that it not be too crowded and congested nor lack parks. She said she was concerned about their schools, green space and traffic. She said SRI had shared some early plans and she did not think they would keep the feel of Menlo Park having a five-story building on the corner of Ravenswood and Laurel.

Chair Doran closed public comment and recessed the meeting for a short break.

Chair Doran reconvened the meeting.

Planning Commission Comments: Commissioner Barnes said he was on the Menlo Park School District's Housing Element Advisory Team. He said the District Superintendent had raised questions he could not answer and asked if he could refer those to the Housing Element team. He asked if consideration had been made toward revenue streams to offset financial impacts from housing development to the schools.

Ms. Chow said the team had met with representatives from the different school districts as housing would impact the districts. She said she was not sure how to address the question posed. She said they were taking comments and would have additional conversations with the school districts about the points raised tonight.

Commissioner Barnes asked if the City could do an annual capacity study looking at school district facility capacity, operational funding capacity and staffing capacity and create ongoing assessments on what the impacts were with reporting between the school district and the City. Ms. Chow said they would do a fiscal impact analysis that would look at impacts to the City's general fund and special districts including fire, water and school districts from the additional housing. She said the City Council had requested an additional closer look at the impacts for construction on schools.

Commissioner Barnes said that density was needed to get the housing and the BMR units needed. He said that all affordable projects were needed as those could avail themselves of the tax credits and other funding mechanisms for those.

Commissioner DeCardy asked why the staff report on page 7 stated that because of SB9 there would be no further look at density in single-family zone housing. Ms. Chow said there was conversation with the City Council earlier about what types of strategies they would want to pursue. She said single-family was one of the strategies identified and whether or not that should be explored further or taken out of consideration, and it was kept. She said the recent passage of SB9 and SB10 seemed to be mandated solutions that would provide opportunities for expanded growth in single-family residential neighborhoods. She said this evening the two Commissions might make comments on other opportunities in single-family residential neighborhoods for housing expansion. Mr. Bradley said that the state went much further than they would have dared to go, and it seemed wise to leave it at that. Replying to Commissioner DeCardy about triplexes and quads, Mr. Bradley said under SB10 for everywhere that had a general plan or zoning designation allowing residential or mixed-use development, the City could create its own framework for multi-unit projects up to 10 units per parcel.

Commissioner DeCardy said he thought they were supposed to look at all options. He said they should look at density and increasing density in all sorts of ways. He said per the math they saw before it seemed District 4 would miss an incredible opportunity to have a broader array of potential residents in their neighborhood such as teachers, fire and emergency personnel and service workers but the rest of the City would get that opportunity. He said regarding single family residential zoning he did not get why SB9 and SB10 mandates would be their limits. He said they should look at all options for density.

Commissioner DeCardy asked about parking assumptions or whether those would be considered later in the process. Mr. Bradley said they would take a detailed look at the City's existing parking standards as part of their constraints analysis, which would look at anything that could hold back the potential development of residential properties. He said they would also look at the parking standards as allowed for under the various density bonus programs.

Commissioner DeCardy said every single piece of momentum with how they did EIRs and consultants looking at benchmarks was leading to a future of overparking. He said people did not want to build concrete that people could not live in or on. He said they needed to see different scenarios particularly as they moved to different modes of transportation. He said parking was a disaster as it was regulated currently noting multiple Planning Commission meetings with developers who did not want to build parking but were forced to. He encouraged the team to look at that carefully as he thought it opened up a solution set that otherwise would be constrained unnecessarily.

Commissioner DeCardy said he fully supported Option A and spreading housing across the City, looking at greater density in the right kinds of places, and an affordable housing overlay that would work really well for their community, but he thought they were limiting themselves. He said they should have as much affordable housing at all levels that they possibly could and asked why not do options A, B and C. He referred to the chart on page 16 and said if they took the highest in all of those options, they would have 3,000 units as opposed to 2,200.

Commissioner Camille Gonzalez Kennedy said the only way that affordable housing would be built was to mandate it as otherwise homeowners would sell their lots and a developer would demolish the existing and build a much bigger home on the lot. She said none of the houses that would be torn down would be replaced with anything that most people or some people could afford. She said they should focus completely on density as that was the only way to solve the housing crisis. She said they needed to think in novel ways about it and innovatively. She said they should hire the best minds to develop housing that was both gorgeous and functional and served many purposes. She noted the brilliant tech buildings that had been built and yet the Commission saw the same residential designs built repeatedly. She said she agreed with Commissioner DeCardy's comments.

Responding to Commissioner Riggs' request to hear from the Housing Commission before he made his comments, Chair Doran noted that was fine as no other Planning Commissioners had indicated they wanted to speak.

Housing Commission Comments: Commissioner Pimental said the analysis and work were great. He said 3,200 units was a really big goal and would not be met by their traditional inclusionary zoning processes. He said he found upon review that only 30 units at moderate, low, and very low income had been built in the last five years. He said to think that the current way of doing things would get them the numbers they had been delivered in the RHNA processes was a bit misguided. He said he supported thinking in a much broader and more creative way about this. He said to make a material impact he thought they needed to look hard, at least for affordable units, at converting the downtown parking lots in such a way that was outside of their traditional perspective. He said they needed situational analysis downtown. He said to enable a five to eight or more story building with parking underneath on the City owned parking lots he suggested calling the developers and finding out what they needed to build 50% or even 100% affordable projects. He said he thought they needed to test the assertion that if they enabled it the builders would come. He said he was not sure they would. He said the key variable was density and height. He said that was something they probably did not want to do across the entire city but if they identified several specific parcels like the downtown parking lots where the city could contribute the land then maybe a nonprofit developer could build 100% affordable housing downtown and other developers would have a chance at building market rate. He said they would have the benefit of doing it all at once, re-envisioning the downtown, and letting the market bring some of the beautiful buildings one of the Planning Commissioners was looking for. He suggested putting out an RFP or RFQ and asking what the market would bear.

Commissioner Bigelow said she wanted to emphasize the RHNA cycle 6 coincided with the 10 years of the UN's Housing Report on Climate Change and that they needed to do things differently. She said she thought the most single effective thing to do to decrease greenhouse gas emissions was to build housing near transit to incentivize its use and to build near resources so that people might walk to those as well. She said they were supposed to be planning for a future and they had 10 years only to get it right. She said they should seriously consider doing

all they could along El Camino Real. She said concerns were expressed about traffic and congestion. She said having worked in an affordable developer's office and administering their programs she knew many could not afford cars a lot of the times, so it helped to provide housing near transit. She said people wanted to live near their jobs and housing near jobs also would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and traffic. She said she heard interest for densification along El Camino Real and the downtown including the City parking lots, and suggested they pursue that.

Commissioner Horst said reading the staff report and listening to the presentation that one of her main takeaways was an underlying assumption or set of assumptions she was not entirely supportive of and that was not a reflection of what staff or M-Group were doing but rather it was an absorption of some historical long-standing preferences and possibly also City Council direction. She said they should be operating in a reasonable set of parameters. She said looking at 30 units per acre did not feel like a reasonable practice. She said each of them had a limit as to the height, density, or whatever development standard they picked that was acceptable on any given parcel in the City, but she did not think it was as conservative as how they were being asked to approach it in the options. She said she would like the to think about it in a less constrained way and it sounded like other commissioners felt similarly. She said the approach of looking citywide for development opportunities was the right approach and that had been commented upon several times, but it was the parameters that were overly constrained. She said they should look at different parts of town differently because noting location potential. She said District 4 was close to amenities and transit. She said they should target areas that had the most promise to provide housing for their growing population. She said she would encourage that they think in a less constrained way as Commissioner Pimental and Commissioner DeCardy had described. She said they needed to think about the feasibility of future development and ask the right people how to get there. She said in thinking about feasibility and affordable units they needed complement policies that promoted and supported affordable housing development. She suggested to give affordable housing developers the edge to be able to develop to look at public land. She said if they wanted to deliver on the affordable part of the affordable housing needed to look beyond just the number of units, they could site She said she also was looking at an Option D, which would be all of the above and more. She noted regarding density the different forms buildings could have to fit well into the broader context of the neighborhood, which was an encouraging note for those apprehensive about greater density.

Commissioner Merriman commented that the consultant should consider the impacts of AB 1763 which was part of the 2019 suite of housing legislation that allowed for 100% affordable housing projects to have additional planning adjustments. She said they employed this in the City of San Mateo on public land specifically to maximize public land for public benefit. She said they added two floors and she believed an additional 80 homes. She recommended taking a look at that when they were looking where to put density and potentially how to move forward. She said she thought most knew she was employed by MidPen housing and had deep experience with the City's affordable housing overlay zone. She urged relooking at that in the current financing constraint environment to make sure it was going to work and create a density feasible going forward as the existing housing stock was not necessarily indicative of what would work in today's market given that it was conceived of many decades ago. She said she would also ask if the consultant would really be digging into the regional housing needs assessment. She said the allocation was a big number and it was great it was broken down by income level, but further analysis was needed as to who in Menlo Park would need the housing. She said you could look at several trends in the County and see that it was an aging county, and it was too expensive for many people to live here. She said people sought housing elsewhere even if they

had employment here. She said they had many people who were over housed in large homes such as a couple, an empty nester, or even just one person, who might not have a place to transition to next. She said the County had done much research on that and the consultant could look at that to try to understand where people were and their options to move forward. She said she would conjecture there was a need for affordable senior homes in addition to affordable family homes. She said they also heard over and over that many individuals were disadvantaged in the marketplace from being able to secure an actual market rate apartment either because it was too expensive or because their intellectual disabilities made it hard to get through the requirements needed to get into those homes, which was why the County had preferences in some case for these populations. She said Ms. Webster from Housing Choices could provide further statistics about how many individuals Housing Choices were serving from their case management perspective in the City. She said that was information that would be helpful as they moved forward so they could try to think through what the different populations that really need to get considered and how to get their input. She said the housing stock for those with disabilities was very limited and they had few options. She said she thought they could do a better job of trying to match the demands in Menlo Park with what they were hoping would be the end housing product. She said she had other things on her mind that she did not have the answer to but was curious about and was wrestling with. She said she would love to see input from the various representatives from District 1. She said though they were not looking at additional density in District 1 there could be City policies that might potentially help people who lived in District 1. She said she was supporting Option A.

Commissioner Leitch said she would support Option A and development on El Camino Real. She said it was awesome they were taking a bold approach as left to its own devices they would not get affordable housing. She said assuming that they were successful, and all the developments went through, and they got a series of development along the parking lots in downtown and SRI she wondered how they handled the actual construction process and public education about the disruption of construction.

Chair Grove said she supported Option A plus more density downtown. She said regarding climate change that they did not have time to waste. She said that things would be inconvenient noting Commissioner Leitch's point but with climate change things would be very inconvenient if they did not act and boldly. She said that the staff report was phrased around spreading balanced distribution throughout council districts. She said she did not think that was as important as school districts. She said they had two well-resourced and high performing school districts that could benefit from increased diversity, and they should make sure both of them had that benefit. She said one of the reasons she supported Option A was because it provided for the most planning in the Sharon Heights neighborhood but what she did not like about Option A was it was tepid on density downtown. She said by downtown she meant El Camino Real, Santa Cruz Avenue and three or four blocks off of Santa Cruz. She said she wanted the parking lot option pursued. She said she wanted them to think creatively and expansively about City-owned land. She noted older buildings in their Civic Center that could be much nicer looking and have housing above them. She said to several public commenters' points that parking did not have to be only in a two-dimensional space. She said they had three dimensions and they needed to use all of them. She said parking could be underneath parking or housing could be over parking. She said they really needed to consider all of it. She said regarding special needs that a bond was passed for housing for people with mental illness. She said she recently met with someone from NAMI who was starting an organization to look for solutions for supportive housing for a number of parents with children with mental illness, who needed some support to take their medications but who could live independently with some minimal support. She said the parents

were aging and desperately looking for solutions to house their adult children and there was money in that bond fund. She said regarding single family zoning and SB 9 that she thought they could do better than simply complying with state law. She said SB 10 required City action. She said heights really did not matter if the street level was pleasant and expansive since most people did not look up when they were walking around. She said she supported Option A plus higher heights and greater density downtown, and a reconsideration of all the public lands that were available. She asked whether the City's corporation yard could be moved elsewhere perhaps closer to the Bayfront Park and that space used for housing.

Planning Commission Comments: Commissioner Riggs said they were currently in construction or had already approved over 1,000 units in RHNA cycle 5. He said most of those would not have real public transit adjacent. He said their only real public transit was Caltrain on El Camino Real and with electrification of that system 400 of those units would be transit oriented at least to other locations transit oriented. He said in Menlo Park he thought it would be very rare that one person could rent a \$5,000 per month one-and-a-half-bedroom apartment. He said it would probably take a couple or more people but the assumption that both occupants would work along the transit corridor was unrealistic. He said building housing they would actually increase traffic and impact on the infrastructure. He said residents in Menlo Park were early adopters of ADUs or at that time called SDUs. He said they pressed hard to get them. He said there was quite a range of occupants of ADUs and that they tended to serve a lower income population. He said he had seen that personally. He said there was a good chance that the survey that was done on ADUs did not include a number of the unpermitted ones. He said those in both District 1 and District 3 were very much under market and could be as they were old and simple, and had very little money put into them, which was what made things affordable. He said the Planning Commission was very aware and he imagined the Housing Commission had a sense of being subject to lobbying by those interested in growth. He said he heard argument that supported growth from a surprising range of nonprofits. He said their interest should be in Menlo Park and its residents. He said he appreciated the work done by the team and his fellow volunteers' enthusiasm and commitment. He said he would suggest a possibly altered path. He said with planning at this level he asked himself whom they served. He said the answer for him was clear. He said when he talked to some of their leaders it did not seem clear. He said one speaker's comments stood out that he worked really hard and lived cheaply so he could save money to buy a home in Menlo Park, in a community that was appealing to him, and who now was faced with the possibility that might be transformed due to rules changing. He said he did not think they wanted to change the rules and they had heard great suggestions about where to concentrate growth. He said downtown was the clear location and it had been expressed by different Housing Commissioners in different ways. He said displacement was a significant issue when an area was up zoned. He said they had been approving up to recently significant projects that raised housing demand. He said Council should formalize that they were not going to generate more housing and that Council should focus on transportation to relieve the conditions of not only those of limited means in housing but all residents and improve their quality of life. He said when they established that they were in a different direction then they should build certain projects downtown including the designated low and very low-income housing so they could get funding for it rather than pretend they could build a bunch of \$7,000 a month units to get another 30 affordable units. He said Council should then turn back to ABAG and ask that they recalculate Menlo Park's RHNA, because unlike other cities Menlo Park would not dig the housing hole deeper and would build housing downtown and focus on residents by rebuilding the downtown.

Commissioner Harris said they had a big task and they had to do it in way that was affirmatively furthering fair housing. She said housing really determined the outcomes of many other factors for people. She said she agreed they needed strong policies and incentives to build all the housing needed. She said she did not think they were at a point yet to decide on one of these strategies. She said they did need to do Option A to distribute the housing, not just among the council districts but among the school districts, and also Option C to help with the downtown. She said at this juncture she did not think they should eliminate anything. She said also they should take another look at City-owned land and see what could be possible. She said she felt they were serving their current Menlo Park residents best by including housing that would allow them to have people who worked in the restaurants and taught in their schools live here. She said buying a house in Menlo Park had not been available to most people and now the prices were many times more than what they were. She said the downtown was very important and she said with better housing they would have a more vibrant downtown. She requested they take another look at their downtown plan to have a really good vision for how all of downtown was going to work, especially as they had new residents. She said she knew they were not there yet but she wanted to put on record about ownership units that she was very interested in some opportunities for ownership units. She said she was happy to learn that MidPen had been able to develop them. She said when people were given the opportunity to build wealth and build community that was also about affirmatively furthering fair housing so she would like to take a look at ownership options especially in the SRI area where you would have families living right across from the recreation center. She said regarding Sharon Heights that it seemed most of the focus was the Sharon Heights Shopping Center and she was concerned if anyone had contacted the owners of that center and whether they were even interested in redeveloping. She said if they had trouble putting housing in that area, they would be struggling to find housing in the Las Lomas school district. She said she agreed with Commissioner DeCardy on parking and would like to look at changing those rules both for residential and commercial. She said there were opportunities to reduce traffic if they also reduced parking.

Chair Doran said he endorsed the view expressed by several commissioners on both commissions that they should distribute the new housing. He said he favored Option A, which he thought distributed it better than the other options. He said he was somewhat skeptical of overreliance on the transit corridor because Caltrain was not yet electrified, had capacity problems and limited destinations. He said it was important to integrate low-income housing throughout Menlo Park, so he was supportive of Option A. He said he was skeptical of Option D or being all of Options A, B, and C and more. He said this was a significant increase in housing units for a city the size of Menlo Park, and he thought that they needed to be somewhat measured in how they grew as history was littered with towns that grew too fast and suffered consequences they did not envision. He said when office space grew too fast it created imbalances from which they were now suffering. He said housing needed to catch up and be the priority, but they needed to be realistic and even cautious about how quickly they changed the landscape and worry about unintended consequences. He said he thought they did need to consider that residents that came to Menlo Park for a certain lifestyle. He said he did not think their views were the only views that mattered but they deserved to be considered.

Chair Doran said the time was 10:54 p.m. and the Planning Commission would need to vote to continue past 11 p.m. Housing Commission Chair Grove said she thought the Housing Commission was prepared to vote on the recommendation to the City Council.

Housing Commission Action: Commissioner Leitch moved to recommend Option A plus increased density in the downtown area as broadly described by Commissioner Grove. Commissioner Bigelow seconded the motion.

Replying to Commissioner Pimental, Commissioner Leitch said Option A was moderate up zoning throughout the City. She said Option C was mixed use development focused on downtown El Camino Real. She said she was inspired by the bold comments of many people here.

Commissioner Merriman asked Ms. Chow whether in her opinion that in Option A between AB 1763 and the affordable housing overlay zone if higher densities could be achieved along El Camino Real and in the downtown. Ms. Chow said through the various density bonus laws there could be opportunities for higher densities. She said there could also be opportunities for higher minimum densities without the need for a bonus law as well. She said that was part of the conversation they wanted to have and identified in the staff report. She said the 30 units per acre was a state default density but certainly they could have higher densities and achieve similar amounts of units. She said there were different ways to mix and match to get the same outcomes.

Commissioner Merriman said because higher densities could be achieved through bonus density laws, she supported a clean Option A. Commissioner Leitch said she could withdraw her motion. Chair Grove asked if Commissioner Leitch might want Commissioner Merriman to make a friendly amendment. Commissioner Leitch said she would. Commissioner Merriman said she would move to adopt the staff recommendation for Option A. Chair Grove said that was actually different from Commissioner Leitch's motion. Commissioner Leitch retracted her motion.

Chair Grove asked Commissioner Merriman if she were making that motion whether she would accept a friendly amendment to think more expansively about publicly owned land. Commissioner Merriman said absolutely as that was a strategy for affordability.

Commissioner Bigelow said looking at the difference between Option A and Option C she saw 280 units of very low and low affordable units across the downtown and El Camino Real in Option C but not in Option A. She asked if it was potentially feasible to make those 280 units happen if they went forward with looking more expansively at public lands and Option A.

Replying to Chair Grove, Commissioner Bigelow said she would love to see Option A with a modification of additional densification along El Camino Real and in the downtown area. Chair Grove asked if that could be accomplished with an affordable housing overlay. Ms. Chow said the state density bonus, or an affordable housing overlay allowed increased density on a site so that was an option. She said also with zoning regulations they could include an increase in minimum zoning. She said these were conversations they could continue to have and would have more policy conversation next month.

Commissioner Kennedy left the meeting.

Chair Doran said per the Planning Commissioner bylaws that they needed a vote to continue meeting past 11 p.m. He determined each Commissioner's willingness to meet until 11:45 p.m.

Planning Commission Comment (continued): Commissioner Barnes moved to recommend adoption of Option C as it had the worthy objectives of density and delivered deeply affordable

housing at scale. He said Option C would send the message that they were serious about delivering density in the City and serious about doing it at scale in the one area of the City that could accommodate it. He said Option C allowed for site selection and put an emphasis on site selection and that would score well for the different types of financing needed. He said building along transit was where the focus of the City should be.

Commissioner DeCardy said this was not a mandate to build but a set of incentives to build. He said tonight he learned that there were numerous details to be worked out that would determine whether they built or not such as around density, affordable housing overlay, financing, height, impacts of SB 9 and SB 10, Commissioner Pimental's creative ideas about the downtown, and parking. He said on one level that no matter what they chose the devil was in the details and he appreciated Commissioner Merriman's background on that. He said why not give themselves every opportunity for every option so that when the details were figured out, they ended up with the best option. He said it would be a shame to have the details point them towards an option they had gotten rid of. He said his friendly amendment to Commissioner Barnes would be to look at page 16, chart table 10, and go through each of those columns and pick the number that was the largest in each of those columns.

Commissioner Barnes asked for staff to weigh in on the proposed friendly amendment. Ms. Chow said for studying purposes having options was great. She said once they started, they wanted to narrow it down to have a project description for the purposes of creating a notice of preparation for CEQA. She said having a larger number that was not intended to be used would over study impacts that might not represent what the ultimate decision would be for the project. She said there was opportunity for flexibility and where there might be some of the concentration of the density. She said she wanted to remind that the Specific Plan already included densities higher than the 30 dwellings per acre. She said for now they could have conversation and present these ideas to the City Council at their meeting on October 26. She said thought that they needed to start refining particular sites and identifying the particular densities and strategies that could help achieve the numbers and the geographic areas so when they did CEQA to make sure they understood where impacts would potentially occur.

Commissioner Barnes said recommending Option C would indicate the area to have emphasis on and asked further about impacts of using higher numbers of units. Ms. Chow said if the numbers they presented were things that said we want 40% in a certain area, then staff would start refining what sites they wanted to identify that potentially could achieve that 40% development in for instance Sharon Heights. She said they were okay with mixing and matching but to be clear what areas to focus development in.

Commissioner Barnes said he would accept the second and friendly amendment related to Sharon Heights but not accept it for Middlefield.

Commissioner DeCardy asked what the downside was if they planned for more housing. He said if it were for CEQA purposes that CEQA provided a lot of information that would be useful about making choices across those areas. Ms. Chow said CEQA would look at it cumulatively and she did not know if it would go to granular detail as it was a program level EIR and not project specific.

Commissioner DeCardy withdrew his second.

Commissioner Barnes moved to recommend Option C as presented in the staff report.

Chair Doran said the motion failed for lack of a second. He moved to recommend Option A as proposed by staff. He said the motion failed due to the lack of a second.

Commissioner Harris said she was going to propose going with Option C but adding A and also requesting that staff and M-Group relook at all of the public land that was not parks or green space. She said she would be amenable to adding Middlefield or not. Replying to Commissioner DeCardy, she said overall they should distribute throughout the entire City. She said it would not exactly be equal and she would like to focus more on transportation downtown.

Chair Doran said he thought what Commissioners DeCardy and Harris were saying was the same and that was to use the higher numbers of either A or C. Commissioner Harris agreed.

Commissioner Tate said she agreed with what was being discussed with Options A and C, but she would like to build in to revive the concept that Commissioner Pimental mentioned to put out an RFP to see what developers could actually build in the downtown. She said what she mentioned earlier about Facebook sponsoring a program was actually a contest with developers to see what they could produce to develop those sites. She said she would like to revive that as they were trying to look at all of their options at one time. She said she feared liked Commissioner DeCardy said earlier that we were going to sell ourselves short keeping the focus too narrow.

Commissioner DeCardy moved to recommend to the City Council to take the higher numbers of the rows for both Options A and C with encouragement to look again at all City-owned property for deeper investigation.

Chair Grove asked that it be explicit to not include any green space.

Replying to Chair Doran, Ms. Chow said her understanding of the motion was to recommend to the City Council a combination of numbers between Options A and C and it was the higher of the numbers between them and for staff to reevaluate all City-owned parcels.

Commissioner DeCardy said to include exclusion of City-owned green space.

Commissioner Harris asked if Commissioner Tate wanted to add a friendly amendment related to the point she made earlier. Commissioner Tate said yes and, in some way, to encourage City Council to take another look at a contest, or something, to really engage developers to see what their thoughts were about what could be done with the City's parking lots.

Commissioner DeCardy said he was supportive of that added to his motion. Commissioner Harris seconded the motion.

Planning Commission Action: M/S (DeCardy/Harris) to recommend a combination of numbers between Options A and C and the higher of the numbers between them, for staff to reevaluate all City-owned parcels excluding green space, and encourage Council to consider a contest or something to engage developers for their ideas of what could be done on the City's parking lots; failed 3-3 with Commissioners DeCardy, Harris and Tate supporting, Commissioners Barnes, Doran and Riggs opposing, and Commissioner Kennedy absent.

Replying to Chair Doran, Commissioner Barnes said he believed Option C was the right approach and perhaps they could add in Sharon Heights at 558 units versus 442. He said the 400 units for SRI overweighted Willow and Middlefield at that corner without the same access to the train that El Camino Real has. He moved to recommend Option C and add in Sharon Heights at 558 units.

Chair Doran said the motion died for lack of a second.

Chair Grove asked if Commissioner Barnes added in the public land exploration and the design contest whether there would be support for his motion. Commissioner Harris said she would support that. Commissioner DeCardy said he would too. Commissioner Tate said the number for Middlefield should be higher also.

Commissioner DeCardy said the question was if Commissioner Barnes would include with his motion the amendments to explore City-owned land except green spaces and exploration of the prize or incentive resurrection to apply it to the downtown opportunities for housing in the City parking lots.

Commissioner Barnes said that he really could not support units in Sharon Heights as it was not near transit. He moved to recommend Option C as presented with an exploration of City-owned land and RFQs for City owned parking lots for housing.

Chair Doran said the motion failed for lack of a second.

Commissioner Riggs moved that the Planning Commission was split on options and had concerns with the packaging of the options and were not able to choose an option; however, there was a majority support for providing housing and some innovative suggestions were made. Chair Doran seconded the motion.

Planning Commission Action: M/S (Riggs/Doran) to forward a recommendation to the City Council that a majority of the Planning Commission was supportive of providing additional opportunities for housing and a variety of innovative suggestions were made; however, there were reservations about the packaging of the land use scenarios and the Planning Commission was unable to conclude a majority of support for any particular or combination of land use scenarios (i.e., Option A, B, or C) to meet the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation for the Sixth Cycle Housing Element Update; passes 6-0 with Commissioner Kennedy absent.

Housing Commission Comment: Commissioner Pimental moved to forward a recommendation to the City Council to proceed with the land use scenario of Option C and encouraging the consideration of City-owned properties, excluding City parks/green spaces, for additional housing, and encouraging the consideration of engagement opportunities with developers to explore redevelopment of City-owned downtown parking lots (e.g., competition, Request for Proposals).

Chair Grove asked if Commissioner Pimental would accept a friendly amendment to use the higher number of net new units in Sharon Heights. Commissioner Pimental agreed. Chair Grove seconded the motion.

Housing Commission Action: M/S (Pimental/Grove) to forward a recommendation to the City Council for proceeding with the land use scenario of Option C (Mixed Use Development

Focused in Downtown/El Camino Real) with a modification for using the higher number of net new units in Sharon Heights (i.e., 588 units in Option A); encouraging the consideration of City-owned properties, excluding City parks/green spaces, for additional housing and encouraging the consideration of engagement opportunities with developers to explore redevelopment of City-owned downtown parking lots (e.g., competition, Request for Proposals); passes 6-0-1 with Commissioner Nguyen absent.

D. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:54 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Assistant Community Development Director Deanna Chow.

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on November 15, 2021

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- Housing Element Goals
- RHNA Overview and Criteria
- Pipeline Projects
- New Housing Needed
- Outreach & Engagement Update
- Community Feedback 9/23
- Land Use Strategies
- Next Steps

3



GOALS



**BALANCED
COMMUNITY**



**AFFORDABILITY
FOCUSED**



**SOCIAL
JUSTICE**

4

PROCESS

- Presentation
- Clarifying Questions
- Public Comment
- Commission Discussion
- Commission Recommendations

2

6TH CYCLE RHNA 2023-2031

	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total Housing Units
5 th Cycle RHNA	233	129	143	150	655
6 th Cycle RHNA	740	426	496	1,284	2,946
6 th Cycle RHNA with 30% Recommended Buffer	962 (740+222)	554 (426+128)	645 (496+149)	1,669 (1,284+385)	3,830 (2,946+884)

* Total with 30% buffer is **3,830 housing units**
2,161 affordable units



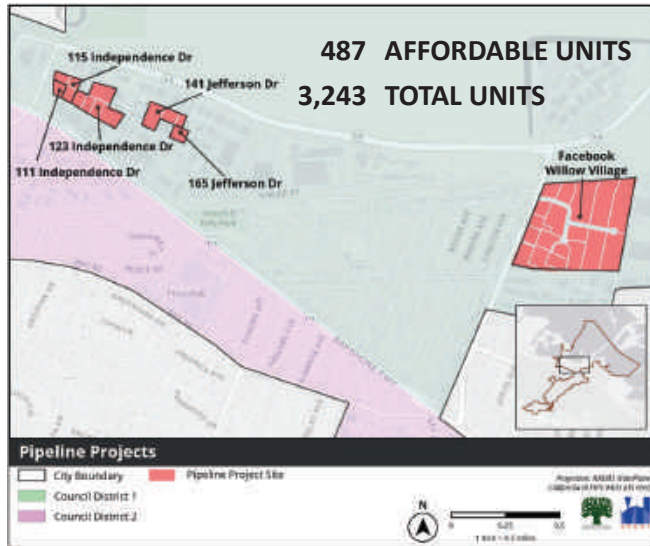
POTENTIAL HOUSING SOLUTIONS



5TH CYCLE RHNA 2015-2023

Income Category	Allocation	Total through 2020	Percent Complete
Very Low	233	148	64%
Low	129	80	62%
Moderate	143	11	8%
Above Moderate	150	1,177	785%
Total	655	1,416	

MAJOR PIPELINE PROJECTS



HOUSING LOCATION CRITERIA

- 0.5 Acres to 10 Acres
- 30 Dwelling Units per acre
- Distribution throughout city
- Realistic development potential
- Proximity transit, schools, and other services
- Proximity to available infrastructure and utility

NEW HOUSING NEEDED

	Very Low (0 - 50%) AMI	Low (51 - 80%) AMI	Moderate (81 - 120%) AMI	Above Moderate (above 120%) AMI	Total Units
6 th Cycle RHNA with 30% Buffer	962	554	645	1,669	3,830
Pipeline Projects + ADUs	63	374	127	2,764	3,328
Total Net New Units Needed	899	180	518	0	1,597

AMI = Area Median Income

PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE

BAYFRONT DEVELOPMENTS

Status	Development Project	Very Low (0 - 50%)	Low (51 - 80%)	Moderate (81 - 120%)	Above Moderate (above 120%)	Total Units
✓	111 Independence	4	9	5	87	105
✓	115 Independence (Menlo Portal)	4	13	31	288	336
✓	141 Jefferson (Menlo Uptown)	7	23	43	410	483
🕒	123 Independence	22	22	22	366	432
🕒	165 Jefferson (Menlo Flats)	0	21	0	137	158
🕒	Facebook Willow Village	0	261	0	1,468	1,729
	Total RHNA Credit	37	349	101	2,756	3,243

487 affordable units

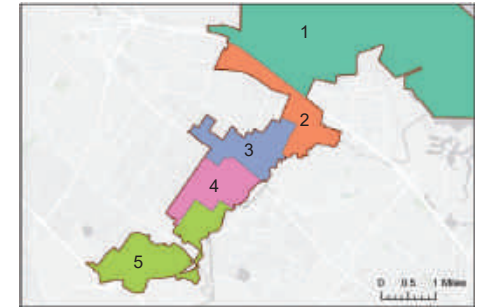


SITES WITH EXPRESSED INTEREST

Potential Projects	Total Units
335 Pierce Road (8 net new)	12
333 Ravenswood (SRI)	400
Veterans Affairs Site (2 Acres)	61
320 Sheridan (former Flood School)	78
USGS	225
Total	776

NEW HOUSING NEEDED

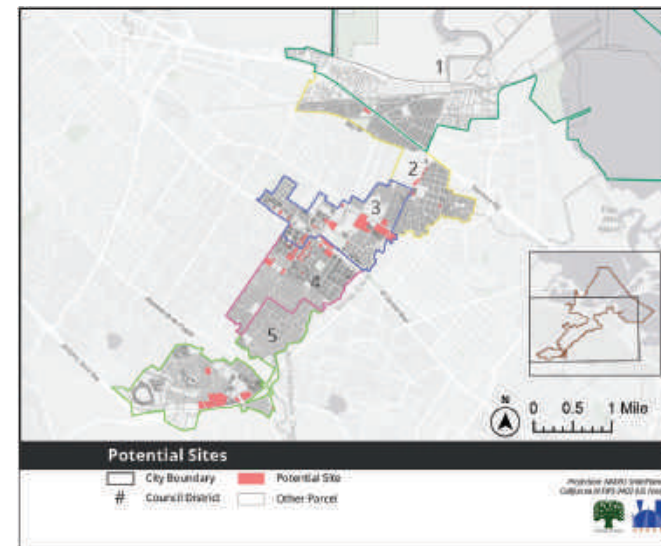
- Large amount of new housing planned in the Bayfront
 - 165% of needed Above Moderate and nearly 23% of all Affordable RHNA
- Housing Equity requires the remainder (net new RHNA) to be planned for the other areas of the city
- A focus on affordability will require robust policies and programs to support higher levels of affordable housing production



OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT UPDATE



POTENTIAL SITES



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **MOST preferred, 2nd-MOST preferred, and 3rd-MOST preferred areas for additional housing**
 - *Downtown/El Camino Real*
 - *City-Owned Parking Lots*
 - *Commercial Areas*
- **LEAST preferred areas for additional housing**
 - *Single-Family Areas*
 - *Religious Facilities*
 - *Multi-Family Areas*

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OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT



- ✓ Community Engagement and Outreach Committee (CEOC)
- ✓ Community Meetings
- ✓ Community Survey
- ✓ Pop Up Events
- ✓ Focus Groups
- ✓ Individual Interviews
- ✓ Project Gallery

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Prioritization of housing development in *Commercial Areas***
 - 42% | Sharon Heights
 - 32% | Willow
 - 27% | Middlefield
- **Prioritization of housing development in the *Downtown/El Camino Real Areas***
 - 47% | El Camino Real
 - 36% | City-Owned Parking Lots
 - 17% | Downtown (Santa Cruz Avenue and surrounding)

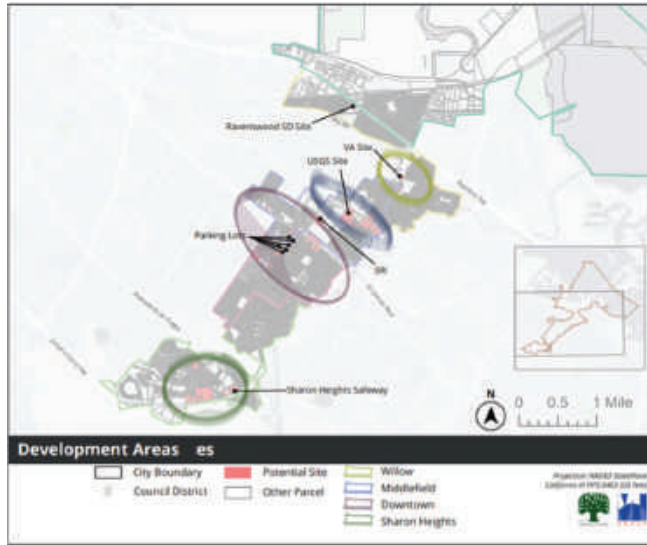
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COMMUNITY FEEDBACK 9/23



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DEVELOPMENT AREAS



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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Community support for more density in Sharon Heights and Downtown
- Consider the intersectionality of housing and education services
- Incentivize developers to allocate inclusionary housing
 - i.e. allocated housing for people with disabilities
- Consider City lots and golf course for more housing

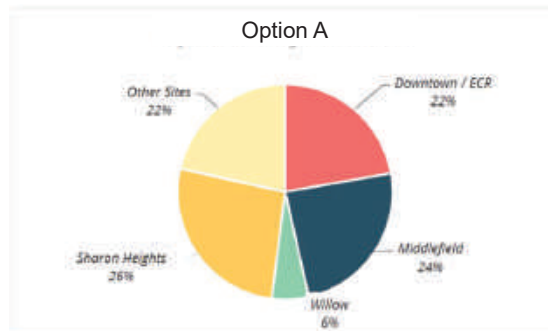
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LAND USE STRATEGIES

OPTION A - MODERATE UPZONING THROUGHOUT THE CITY

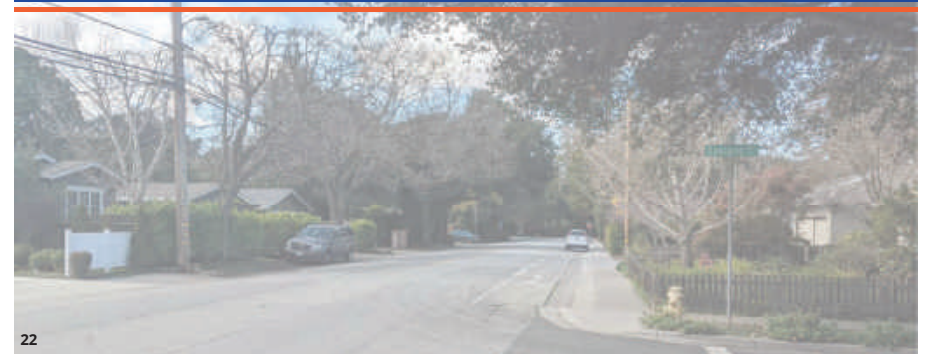
- Distributes development throughout the city in relatively equal amounts in the four geographic areas
- Of the total 2,221 units, 85% would be at default densities for affordable housing

The distribution of potential new housing units



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LAND USE STRATEGIES



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NEW HOUSING BY AREA

Option	Summary	Downtown/ El Camino Real	Middlefield	Willow	Sharon Heights	Other Sites	Total
A	Moderate Upzoning Throughout the City	22.2% (494)	24.2% (538)	5.5% (123)	26.5% (588)	21.5% (478)	100% (2,221)
B	Mixed Use Development Focused on Middlefield/Willow	10.2% (228)	41.9% (938)	6.9% (155)	19.7% (422)	21.4% (478)	100% (2,241)
C	Mixed Use Development Focused on Downtown/El Camino Real	34.2% (772)	19.5% (440)	5.4% (123)	19.6% (442)	21.2% (478)	100% (2,257)

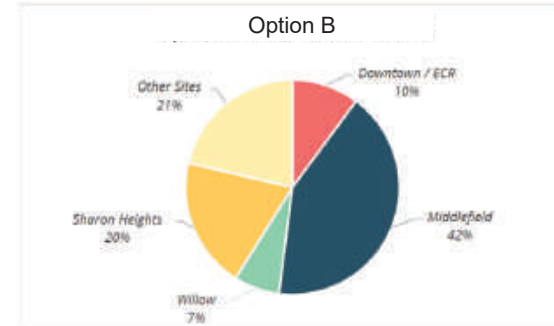
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LAND USE STRATEGIES

OPTION B – MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT FOCUSED ON MIDDLEFIELD/WILLOW

- Focuses development on the commercial sites land use strategy (adds residential use along Middlefield Road)
- Of the total 2,241 units, 85% would be at default densities for affordable housing

The distribution of potential new housing units



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NEW HOUSING BY COUNCIL DISTRICT

Option	Summary	1	2	3	4	5	Total
A	Moderate Upzoning Throughout the City	0% (0)	7.3% (164)	47.9% (1,064)	17.7% (394)	27% (600)	100% (2,221)
B	Mixed Use Development Focused on Middlefield/Willow	0% (0)	8.5% (192)	62.5% (1,399)	8.8% (197)	20.2% (453)	100% (2,241)
C	Mixed Use Development Focused on Downtown/El Camino Real	0% (0)	7.2% (164)	40.2% (908)	32.5% (732)	20.1% (453)	100% (2,257)

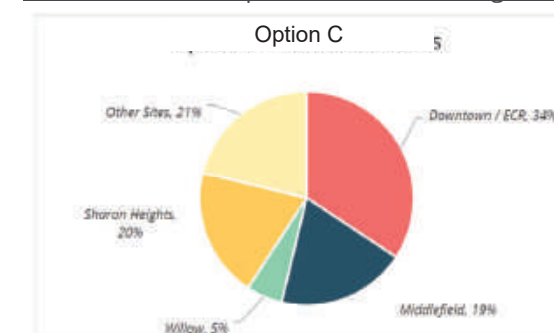
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LAND USE STRATEGIES

OPTION C - MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT FOCUSED ON DOWNTOWN/EL CAMINO REAL

- Greater density in the Downtown and along the El Camino Real corridor
- Of the total 2,257 units, 85% would be at default densities for affordable housing

The distribution of potential new housing units



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NEXT STEPS



NEW HOUSING BY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Option	Summary	Las Lomitas SD	Ravenswood City SD	Redwood City SD	Menlo Park City SD	Total
A	Moderate Upzoning Throughout the City	27% (600)	2.8% (63)	0% (0)	70.2% (1,558)	100% (2,221)
B	Mixed Use Development Focused on Middlefield/Willow	20.2% (453)	3.8% (85)	0% (0)	76% (1,703)	100% (2,241)
C	Mixed Use Development Focused on Downtown/El Camino Real	20.3% (459)	2.7% (63)	0% (0)	76.9% (1,735)	100% (2,257)

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2021 *Join us and give feedback!*

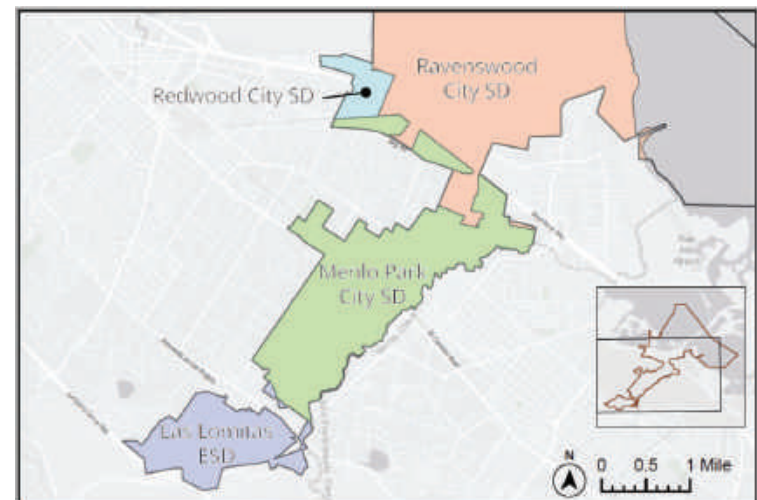
Upcoming Events

Preferred Land Use Alternatives to City Council
October 26, 2021 | *Tentative*

Housing Commission Policy Review Meeting
November 17, 2021 | *Tentative*

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NEW HOUSING BY SCHOOL DISTRICT



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San Mateo County Office of Education

PROCESS

- Presentation
- Clarifying Questions
- Public Comment
- Commission Discussion
- Commission Recommendations

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THANK YOU!

Questions Comments

Thank you for your time and commitment to the City of Menlo Park!

menlopark.org/housingelement

