Planning Commission



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: 3/28/2022 Time: 7:00 p.m. Location: Zoom

Regular Meeting

A. Call To Order

Chair Michael Doran called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. At Chair Doran's request, Associate Planner Matt Pruter explained how applicants and the public would be able to participate in the virtual meeting.

B. Roll Call

Present: Andrew Barnes, Chris DeCardy (Vice Chair), Michael Doran (Chair), Camille Gonzalez Kennedy, Cynthia Harris, Henry Riggs, Michele Tate

Staff: Payal Bhagat; Contract Planner; Nira Doherty, City Attorney; Fahteen Khan, Assistant Planner; Eric Phillips, Special Counsel; Matt Pruter; Associate Planner; Corinna Sandmeier, Acting Principal Planner

C. Reports and Announcements

Acting Principal Planner Corinna Sandmeier said she had no updates to report.

D. Public Comment

- Kim Novello, Menlo Park, said she wanted to emphasize how important it was that if bigger buildings were developed and more people were living in the area that consideration should be made of the places those people would need, noting comments made about amenities being provided such as grocery stores. She said in addition consideration should be made for outdoor space and she did not see that the dense residential developments were providing safe outdoor private space for the smaller children who would live there, which as a mother was important to her. She said also commercial grade cabinetry had sharp edges dangerous for children. She said apartments should be bigger as more people were working from home.
- Robert Owen Bruce said he was not a Menlo Park resident but attended church in Menlo Park.
 He asked about the status of the Parkline project and whether there were other location options
 for some of the facilities proposed.

Chair Doran said the Commission was holding its first study session on the Parkline project this evening and there was no project application yet.

 Sue Connelly, Burgess Classics resident, said she was very active in emergency preparedness in Menlo Park and other towns. She said her concern was water. She noted the long drought and asked if underground reservoirs might be provided through development for high density places such as apartment buildings.

Chair Doran closed public comment.

E. Consent Calendar

E1. Approval of minutes and court reporter transcript from January 24, 2022, Planning Commission meeting. (Attachment)

ACTION: M/S (Chris DeCardy/Henry Riggs) to approve the consent calendar as submitted; passes 7-0.

F. Public Hearing

F1. Use Permit and Variance/Heather Young/811 Bay Road:

Request for a use permit to demolish an existing church and construct two new, two-story, single-family residences on a substandard lot with regard to minimum lot width in the R-3 (Apartment) zoning district. The proposal includes a request for a variance for the new residences to encroach into the required 20-foot separation between main buildings located on adjacent lots. The project also includes administrative review of a condominium map. (Staff Report #22-016-PC)

Staff Comment: Assistant Planner Fahteen Khan said staff had no updates to the written report.

Applicant Presentation: Heather Young, Heather Young Architects, introduced the property owner Zach Trailer, who wished to make a few remarks.

Zach Trailer, property owner, said the property had access from two sides. He said there was housing on both sides of the site, and he thought the proposal was an appropriate use of the site.

Ms. Young said the proposal was for two new single family, two-story homes with one at 811 Bay Road and the other at 810 Van Buren Street, noting it was in the triangular zone between the Bayshore Freeway and Bay Road and Madera Avenue. She said the existing neighborhood was predominantly multi-family residences. She said the requested variance was to address the southern edge of the site plan where an existing residence was less than 10 feet from the property line. She said their project was proposed at 10-feet from the property line but would not achieve the required 20-foot separation due to the other property's structure's proximity to the property line. She said new screening trees were proposed on the south side to the property closer as mentioned earlier and new trees on Van Buren Street. She said a very mature redwood tree in the public right of way would be preserved and protected. She said the proposed house heights were 27-foot, 7 1/2 inches and well below the maximum allowable height of 35 feet. She said the mass of the houses was broken down to respect the tapering of the lot. She said materials and finishes included vertical cedar siding on the second floor, light colored cement plaster on the first floor, accents with cantilevered awnings and porches all around the windows and doors with high quality exterior metal clad interior wood. She said they would use precast pavers for a permeable driveway. She said the roof was a standing seam metal roof.

Chair Doran opened the public hearing and closed it as there were no speakers.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Riggs asked if the windows were true or simulated true divided lights. Ms. Young said the windows would be simulated true divided light with the spacer between the glass layers.

Commissioner Camille Gonsalez Kennedy said the project site was one of the more challenging and encumbered sites in that neighborhood given its adjacency to Highway 101 and Van Buren, which at that point was almost an access service road. She said part of the property abutted at the rear of the VA site. She said these seemed to be spec homes and questioned the demand for those in what was a very challenging physical environment.

Mr. Trailer said there was a need for all kinds of housing in all kinds of places. He said he thought it would be a great place to live noting it was in a great school district and there were nice neighbors in the area that they had met doing their outreach process. He said it could probably have been a great apartment site but parking space requirements could not be met for that.

Commissioner Cynthea Harris referred to the two one-car garages and asked whether Menlo Park requirements led to that solution. Ms. Young said they had looked at an uncovered parking space in the side yard setback on the north side but had misunderstood the zoning requirement that both parking spaces be outside of the 10-foot setback. She said if they had not had that requirement that it would have been quite a different project.

Commissioner Michele Tate said currently houses of worship were being encouraged to do multi-family housing on their properties. She said this was a perfect site for an apartment building but that was not possible because of the parking requirements. She said she wished a four-plex would have been possible instead of this proposal as it would have worked better within the surrounding environment.

Chair Doran said the standard for granting variances was high. He said this project met that standard as the nonconforming setback was based on the neighboring property and basically it would be wrong to penalize the applicant for that.

Commissioner Riggs said the project was attractive and suitable for the site. He moved to approve and make the findings as recommended in the staff report. Chair Doran seconded the motion.

ACTION: M/S (Riggs/Doran) to approve the item as recommended; passes 6-1 with Commissioner Kennedy opposed.

- 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 California Environmental Quality Act (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. Make the following findings as per Section 16.82.340 of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the granting of variances:

- a. The hardship at 811 Bay Road is caused by the combination of the property being a narrow lot and a neighboring, nonconforming, multifamily residence, which creates a small area for the permitted building footprint. The hardship is unique to the property, and has not been created by an act of the owner.
- b. The variance will allow the proposed units to be located at the required 10-foot side setback line, providing adequate space for two units. The variance would not constitute a special privilege, as the variance request is merely allowing the applicant to have similar development capabilities as any other R-3 zoned properties.
- c. The proposed project would be below the maximum allowed floor area and building coverage; and all other development standards would also be met. If the adjacent parcel (815 Bay Road) is redeveloped in the future, it would be required to adhere to the 10-foot side setback requirement and the variance would no longer be needed. As such, granting of the variance would not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, and will not impair adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property.
- d. The variance request is based on the nonconformance of the adjacent structure. Since other properties are generally located next to structures in compliance with their respective zoning district development regulations, or have lot width to accommodate the allowable buildable area, this variance would not apply to other properties in the same zoning district. As such, the conditions on which the variance is based would not be generally applicable to other property in the same zoning classification.
- e. The property is not within any Specific Plan area, and as such, no finding regarding an unusual factor is required to be made.
- 4. Approve the use permit and variance subject to the following **standard** conditions:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans prepared by Heather Young Architects, consisting of 30 plan sheets, received March 4, 2022, and approved by the Planning Commission on March 28, 2022, 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 by 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. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall submit plans indicating that the applicant shall remove and replace any damaged and significantly worn sections of frontage improvements. The plans shall be submitted for review and approval of the Engineering Division.
- f. All applicable public right-of-way improvements, including frontage improvements and the dedication of easements and public right-of-way, shall be completed to the satisfaction of the Engineering Division prior to building permit final inspection.
- g. 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 the issuance of grading, demolition or building permits.
- h. Post-construction runoff into the storm drain shall not exceed pre-construction runoff levels. The applicant's design professional shall evaluate the Project's impact to the City's storm drainage system and shall substantiate their conclusions with drainage calculations to the satisfaction of the City Engineer prior to building permit issuance.
- i. Simultaneous 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 500 square feet of irrigated landscaping, it is subject to the City's Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 12.44). Submittal of a detailed landscape plan would be required concurrently with the submittal of a complete building permit application.
- j. If construction is not complete by the start of the wet season (October 1 through April 30), the Applicant shall implement a winterization program to minimize the potential for erosion and sedimentation.
- k. Prior to building permit issuance, the Applicant shall pay all applicable City fees. Refer to City of Menlo Park Master Fee Schedule.
- I. Heritage trees in the vicinity of the construction project shall be protected pursuant to the Heritage Tree Ordinance and the arborist report prepared by Urban Tree Management Inc., dated March 2, 2022.
- F2. Use Permit, Architectural Control, Below Market Rate Housing Agreement, Heritage Tree Removals, and associated Environmental Review/Andrew Morcos for Greystar/165 Jefferson Drive (Menlo Flats Project):
 - Request for a use permit, architectural control, environmental review, below market rate (BMR) housing agreement, heritage tree removals, and BMR housing density bonus to redevelop the project site with approximately 158 multi-family dwelling units and approximately 15,000 square feet of commercial space on a 1.38-acre parcel. The proposed mixed-use building would be eight stories in height, including three levels of above grade podium parking. The commercial space would be located on the first and second floors. The project site is located in the R-MU-B (Residential Mixed Use, Bonus) zoning district. The project site currently contains a one-story, approximately 24,300-square foot office building that would be demolished. The proposed building would contain approximately 153,964 square feet of gross floor area of residential uses with a floor area ratio of

approximately 256 percent. The proposed building would contain a commercial component of approximately 15,000 square feet of gross floor area with a floor area ratio of approximately 25 percent. The proposal includes a request for an increase in height, density, and floor area ratio (FAR) under the bonus level development allowance in exchange for community amenities. The applicant is proposing to pay the community amenities in-lieu fee for the proposed project. The proposed project would include a below market rate housing agreement that requires a minimum of 15 percent of the units (or 21 units of the 138 maximum units allowed by the Zoning Ordinance before accounting for the 20 bonus units) be affordable. The applicant is proposing to incorporate 20 additional market-rate units (which are included in the total 158 units), per the density bonus provisions in the BMR Housing Program (Chapter 16.96.040), which allows density and FAR bonuses, and exceptions to the City's Zoning Ordinance requirements when BMR units are incorporated into the project. The proposed project includes the removal of two heritage trees. (Staff Report #22-017-PC)

Staff Comment: Contract Planner Payal Bhagat made a short presentation on the Menlo Flats project noting that the Commission was asked to consider and take action on the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) and project entitlements. She said the building had 158 multifamily apartment units, 13,000 square feet of office space, and 1,600 square feet of commercial use. She said 21 BMR units at various income levels were proposed. She said the Housing Commission reviewed the proposal on February 2, 2022, and forwarded a recommendation of approval of the inclusionary housing units at mixed income levels to the Planning Commission. She said the project proposed to make a community amenity in-lieu fee of approximately \$4.84 million. She said the project was requesting reduction of 20 residential parking spaces and a small increase to the average height. She said consistent with the ConnectMenlo Land Use element, the project would provide a public paseo that would connect Jefferson and Constitution Drives on its eastern property line.

Planner Bhagat said staff recommendation was to adopt a resolution certifying the FEIR, adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), and adopt the CEQA findings; adopt a resolution approving the use permit, architectural control permit, BMR Housing Agreement, Open Space Agreement, and approve the Community Amenities proposal. She said the actions taken would be subject to the conditions of approval attached to the staff report.

Planner Bhagat said the staff report stated the finished floor elevation for occupiable spaces should be 24-inches above the base flood elevation but rather it should state 12-inches as the project site was less than 2 acres.

EIR Consultant Presentation: Matthew Wiswell, LSA, said he would review the FEIR elements that were under consideration for certification, and provide some background on the overall environmental review process including the process and timeline. He said the project was within the ConnectMenlo study area, for which a programmatic EIR was certified November 2016. He said this project tiered from that EIR. He said the East Palo Alto Settlement Agreement for bonus level development required a focused EIR with regard to housing and transportation. He said the environmental review of this project complied with the terms of that settlement agreement. He said no significant unavoidable impacts were identified and that all impacts were reduced to a less that significant level with the implementation of mitigation measures.

Mr. Wiswell said the Draft EIR evaluated a range of alternatives to the project with the objective of avoiding or reducing potential impacts. He said the EIR included full analysis of three alternatives in

addition to the CEQA required no project alternative. He said in terms of impacts the all-residential alternative would be the superior environmental alternative as it would reduce impacts compared to the proposed project and that mitigation measures TRA1 would not be required. He said three letters were received during the 45-day comment period. He said the letter from the Sequoia Union High School District made a number of comments related to impacts on schools. He said the two letters from individuals outlined concerns related to tribal cultural resources and overall concerns or support related to the merits of the project. He said all comments were responded to in writing in the Response to Comments document. He said comments received at public hearings were further responded to in the Response to Comments document. He said the Response to Comments document also included some minor corrections and clarifications to the draft EIR that were made in response to comments or were initiated by staff or LSA. He said with completion of the Response to Comments document that LSA and city staff determined that none of the comments on the draft EIR disclosed any new significant information, no new significant or substantially more severe environmental impacts than what had been identified, and no new feasible mitigation measures or alternatives had been identified which were considerably different from other previously identified, and that the draft EIR did not require any recirculation.

Mr. Wiswell said the FEIR included the draft EIR and Initial Study, the Response to Comments document, and the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program. He said the Planning Commission was asked to decide whether or not the FEIR was adequate. He said the standard for adequacy were found in CEQA Guidelines Section 15151 as shown on the slide. He said the Planning Commissioner was asked to determine if the basic purpose of CEQA had been fulfilled, and if based on its own independent judgment the FEIR was adequate.

Applicant Presentation: Andrew Morcos, representing Greystar, said he would present on the project as well as Clark Manus, project architect, and Karen Krolewski, Landscape Architect. He said the 21 BMR units at a mix of affordability levels were onsite and distributed equitably. He said they were providing over 5,200 square feet of publicly accessible open space. He said connectivity was being provided through a publicly accessible paseo that promoted walking and biking through the site, noting 365 bicycle parking spaces onsite. He said the project was meeting LEED gold design standards including all electric design and 100% renewable energy, and pre-wiring for 100% EV charging.

Mr. Morcos provided an overview of the community outreach done since 2020 when the project was first introduced to the public. He said community outreach influenced the development. He said it helped them locate the publicly accessible open space adjacent to the paseo. He said they heard from the community and the City Council's Community Amenity subcommittee that the community amenity list needed to be updated. He regarding BMR they were requested to look at equivalent alternative BMR units rather than all at the low-income level. He said the BMR alternative approved by the Housing Commission included four very low-income units, 12 low-income units, and five moderate-income units all of which were capped at 75% of a comparable market rate per city code.

Mr. Morcos said the community amenity determination was a long and involved process. He said they were proposing \$4.84 million for a community amenity in lieu fee. He said originally Menlo Flats had proposed a café onsite as the community amenity. He said the entitlements for a project at 111 Independence Drive were approved and included a café as its community amenity and thus a café was not available to future developments. He said the City's Community Amenity subcommittee provided a revised list and started the process of adopting an in-lieu fee, which passed June 22, 2021. He said the revised list now included six options that were either unavailable or infeasible for

Menlo Flats. He said one was an urgent center and that was provided by their Menlo Uptown project. He said second was a grocery store that was in the proposed Meta development but infeasible for Menlo Flats just because of size limitations. He said a pharmacy was also in Meta's development and again infeasible for this project due to size and costs. He said regarding undergrounding power lines and Highway 101 soundwalls that the cost and scope for those projects far exceeded the \$4.4 million available through the project and also would be inefficient as those would stop and start dependent upon other developments doing. He said they were thus proposing the \$4.84 million community amenity in lieu fee.

Mr. Manus, project architect, said while the corner amenity space had changed relative to its potential use that its entry continued to offer the opportunity to create a dynamic and public space with a glimpse into the active resident open space on the podium. He said their exterior materials were a combination of fibrous dement, dark and light smooth trowel stucco, dark finished storefront, and green screens. He said at the building entry that served both pedestrians and vehicles the corner's verticality served as a beacon to help merge the residential and commercial uses. He said along the length of the paseo greening had been introduced to soften portions of the building particularly at the ends of the residential wing. He said the wall also accommodated backdoor access to the building for residents, a bike room access and a pet spa.

Ms. Krolewski, PJ Design Landscape Architect, provided slides of the podium and roof deck spaces showing their relationships to the publicly accessible space below them, including the front eastern plaza and the paseo spaces. She said they progressed the plaza design to activate the space to the surrounding neighborhood. She said the wooden patio steps were tiered with seating creating an inviting and activated corner. She said the paseo was a full public space providing all the city required paseo elements and would stand on its own until the adjacent 175 Jefferson Drive project would complete the rest of the paseo.

Chair Doran opened the public hearing and closed it as there were no speakers.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Riggs asked regarding the FEIR finding of no significant impacts from the project whether they should assume that was due to the ConnectMenlo EIR status. Mr. Wiswell said they were saying that this project on its own had no significant impacts beyond what was previously analyzed with ConnectMenlo. Commissioner Riggs said there were unavoidable impacts to traffic noting that Bayfront Expressway would be affected by another 158 living units. Mr. Wiswell said ConnectMenlo identified some significant unavoidable transportation impacts. He said with the shift from level of service (LOS) to vehicle miles traveled (VMT) that was not an impact considered significant for Menlo Flats anymore. Commissioner Riggs said it would be a real-life impact just not an EIR impact. Mr. Wiswell said it was not an environmental impact.

Commissioner Riggs referred to the applicant's finding that a pharmacy was not viable due to lack of space and asked if that was because the commercial space was limited to 1,600 square feet. Mr. Morcos said while they had that amount of commercial space their community amenity value was \$4.4 million and a 15,000 square foot pharmacy would greatly exceed that dollar amount.

Commissioner Riggs said when the Planning Commission last saw the project, they discussed activating the ground floor, basically the commercial space. He asked how the project was addressing that. Mr. Morcos said they focused on the front corner where the publicly accessible open space was and as some of the renderings showed there were tables and chairs for seating. He said he thought it could still be a café or a yoga studio or some other active use. He said the publicly

accessible open space would provide seating for people to activate that space and whatever use went there. Commissioner Riggs noted a bookstore/café in Palo Alto and asked if Greystar would seek such tenants. Mr. Morcos said such a tenant would be a great amenity for the residential tenants.

Commissioner DeCardy noted that as he had said previously the last time that the reduced parking alternative for this project was critical. He asked how they decided what level of reduced parking to use. Mr. Wiswell said the reduced parking alternative as proposed was to try to minimize the VMT impacts related to office users. He said he believed the VMT reduction needed was around 20% but the reduction percentage provided by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association capped the reduction related to reduced parking at a 12% VMT reduction so they used the maximum reduction possible to determine how many parking spaces to reduce to achieve the 12% VMT reduction. He said that was about nine spaces. Commissioner DeCardy asked why they did not do more VMT reduction. Mr. Wiswell said he believed the thinking was that if parking was reduced too much there would still be a finite number of people that drove to a site and looked for parking creating traffic circling neighborhoods. Commissioner DeCardy asked about the date of this analysis Mr. Wiswell was referring to. Mr. Wiswell said it was a statewide report and was produced within the last 10 years and recently updated. Commissioner DeCardy said he was dubious about the utilization of that percentage cap.

Replying further to Commissioner DeCardy, Mr. Wiswell said there was not a relaxation of Traffic Demand Management (TDM) requirements for the project as the City's Transportation Guidelines required a TDM plan to achieve a minimum 20% trip reduction. He said the project had to reduce the VMT on top of what was already accounted for by the TDM program. He said what the mitigation measure did was account for the 20% trip reduction but the TDM itself was not relaxed. Commissioner DeCardy said he appreciated that the parking reduction was in the proposal as he thought that was relevant for future projects. He said LOS was not mandated by the state but they had decided to do that analysis as a city and asked if that had been done. Mr. Wiswell said yes and it was at the end of the transportation section of the EIR.

Commissioner DeCardy said he would find the EIR adequate. He said regarding the use permit and architectural control approvals that it was a very nice project that the Commission had seen four times. He said the applicants had been responsive to feedback, and he would support. He said he supported the BMR Housing Agreement for the mix it provided. He noted the approval from the Housing Commission. He said regarding community amenities that he understood the frustration between what the community wanted and the need to update the list, but he supported the \$4.8 million in lieu fee. He said he urged the City Council to utilize the money soon and to directly benefit the most impacted community.

Commissioner Riggs said going forward it seemed him it would have been an admirable goal to go beyond the VMT reduction goal of 12%. He said other than that he would echo Commissioner DeCardy's five points made and he also found the project supportable.

Commissioner Harris said this was her first time to see the project noting she had read the transcript of the November 15, 2021 meeting. She said many of the things the Planning Commission had requested were responded to by the applicant. She said she was fine with the BMR plan and appreciated that those were indistinguishable from market rate units and that there would be four-bedroom units. She said she agreed with others concerns that the city would not meet its housing targets with the 15% BMR requirement.

Replying to Commissioner Harris, Planner Sandmeier said in June 2021 that the City Council updated the community amenities that were available to projects, one of which was payment of an in-lieu fee. She said that was a dedicated fee that would go to the communities affected by new development. Commissioner Harris asked how the freeway walls that would cost more than \$4.8 million would ever happen. She said she thought that Council was going to look at that and figure it out, go back to the community and put together some process of how funds would be spent.

Nira Doherty, City Attorney, said the City Council had not yet made the updates to the list that Commissioner Harris was referencing, and which it was contemplating last summer. She said they anticipated that coming back to Council in the next couple of months. She said the Council had the discretion to update the community amenities list at any time to add or remove amenities from the list. She said they had not done that and had added the option to pay an in-lieu fee, which this project was opting to do. She said the fee was not specified as a "by right" fee in the community amenities ordinances and the municipal code but staff's recommendation was to approve the in-lieu fee as proposed as this was a housing development.

Commissioner Harris said at the last meeting they went over a number of these development projects in the Bayfront area and were told a 3-D model would be created of those. She said it would be helpful as the Commission was approving these projects for them and community members to see it. Planner Sandmeier said they were looking into what kind of information they could add to the website with graphics and those sorts of things. She said she did not think it would be an actual 3-D model. Commissioner Harris said her understanding was it would be a 3-D model

Commissioner Harris asked at what point they could go to just VMT analysis as it seemed a great deal of time and money was spent analyzing LOS. Mr. Wiswell said the LOS analysis was still required to comply with the City's General Plan as there were some policies within it relating to LOS. Special Counsel Eric Phillips said it was a ConnectMenlo requirement that the city and new projects being added to the city meet certain LOS standards. He said projects that were developing were required to show General Plan conformity. He said also there were conditions of approval proposed for the Commission on this project that improved LOS performance to comply with the General Plan and meet those standards established in ConnectMenlo. He said as long as those standards and the General Plan remained in effect projects would be obligated to meet those standards and comply with them.

Commissioner Harris asked that a future Planning Commission agenda include an item to draft a recommendation to the City Council to amend the General Plan and ConnectMenlo to remove the requirement for LOS analysis. Chair Doran noted the request.

Chair Doran said regarding the five items for the Commission's consideration that Commissioner DeCardy had expressed those well. He said he was in favor of making the findings and approving as per the recommendations. He said regarding the community amenity he had a strong preference for brick-and-mortar type community amenities as those were the most cost effective. He said something built as part of a project could have a greater value than the appraised value of the amenity. He said he had no intention of derailing the project because of the proposed in lieu fee.

ACTION: M/S (Riggs/DeCardy) to approve the item as recommended in the staff report; passes 7-0.

- Adopt a resolution certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report, adopting findings required by the California Environmental Quality Act, and adopting a Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program.
- Adopt a resolution adopting findings for project Use Permit, Architectural Control, Below Market Rate Agreement and Community Amenities Operating Covenant included in project Conditions of Approval.
- G1. Study Session/Nick Menchel/333 Ravenswood Avenue (Parkline):
 Request for a study session on a master plan development to comprehensively redevelop the SRI campus with a residential, office, research and development, and retail mixed-use project. The proposed project includes requests for a general plan amendment, zoning ordinance amendment, rezoning, conditional development permit (CDP), development agreement (DA), architectural control, vesting tentative map, and below market rate (BMR) housing agreement. The project would necessitate the preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR) in compliance with the California

Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). (Staff Report #22-018-PC)

Staff Comment: Acting Principal Planner Sandmeier said 23 new emails had been received on the proposed project, and that many were in favor of additional housing and additional BMR housing; and some expressed concerns about the impacts to neighbors and to the church located at 201 Ravenswood Avenue. She said the existing SRI campus was an approximately 63-acre site with 38 buildings and 1.38 million square feet of gross floor area. She said the proposed project had no net increase of nonresidential square footage and that approximately 284,000 square feet would be retained for SRI's use in Buildings P, S and T. She said approximately 1.1 million new square feet of office and research and development uses were proposed in five main structures from three to five stories, a new office amenity building, and three parking structures for nonresidential use. She said the proposal included 400 residential rental units. She said that included 15% Below Market Rate (BMR) units, 19 two-story townhomes with attached two-car garages, 391 apartments in three buildings, three to five stories tall, and approximately one parking space per unit and one-story parking garages with podiums at the second level for private open space for the apartments. She said the proposal also included a sports field and a one-story community building adjacent to the Ravenswood Avenue and Middlefield Road intersection, 25 acres of landscaped publicly accessible open space, and new pedestrian and bicycle paths and connections through the site.

Ms. Sandmeier highlighted that the proposed circulation was private internal streets, an internal road to the three main residential buildings and parking garages, and an internal loop road to provide access to all nonresidential buildings, parking garages, surface parking areas, loading areas and for emergency vehicle access. She described the entry points for each of the building types. She said the requested entitlements included a General Plan Amendment, Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Rezoning, Development Agreement, Conditional Development Permit, architectural control for the new buildings, and a vesting tentative map to merge existing walks and create new parcels.

Ms. Sandmeier said topics for the Commission's consideration were the proposed land uses including site density and intensity, the site layout including building orientation and site access, conceptual architectural styles, design and layout of open space, parking locations and ratios, and proposed sustainability measures.

Questions of Staff: Commissioner DeCardy asked if this project would be reviewed standardly or whether it would have unique review.

Ms. Sandmeier said it would require a number of public hearings both at the City Council and Planning Commission as the environmental review progressed but it would be similar to what they saw with other projects.

Applicant Presentation: John McIntire, SRI, said that they were collaborating with a local firm Lane Partners to reimagine the site to serve both SRI's and the community's needs.

Mark Murray, Lane Partners, said their firm was Menlo Park based with an office about a half mile from the SRI campus. He said they had met with City staff and the Fire District, with community groups and had one on ones with dozens of residents. He said they held a series of open houses last summer before making their initial submittal in the fall. He said three of those were open to the general public and then they held a fourth specifically for the Burgess Classics neighborhood. He said those 32 homes shared a property line with the SRI site. He said that meeting was focused on the design particularly regarding the buffer zone between those properties and SRI. He said they received constructive feedback and were able to implement changes that responded to that.

Mr. Murray said one of their goals was to open up what currently was kind of a void in the center of town. He said the existing campus was large and for the most part had had security fencing around it. He said they envisioned as the Parkline name implied a new district characterized by open space, noting they planned to have 25 acres of publicly accessible green space. He said the site contained numerous mature heritage trees with some species over 100 years old that many community members had never seen. He said the goal was to preserve many of those heritage trees. He said another goal was to improve pedestrian and bicycle transportation through the area. He said regarding the commercial development component they were doing a one-to-one replacement for the existing 38 buildings. He said SRI would consolidate into three of the existing buildings and the other older 35 ones would be demolished and that same square footage would be consolidated into five new state of the art R&D buildings that were much more efficient and sustainable. He said another goal shared with the community was housing and that was proposed on 10 acres closest to the downtown and amenities. He said they were proposing 400 units at variable affordability and were open to community feedback on what the appropriate amount and types of housing were.

Thomas Yee, principal architect, Studios Architecture, referred to the site analysis and noted in addition to Mr. Murray's comments that there was an electrical substation near the corner of Ravenswood and Laurel. He said the three buildings, P, S and T that SRI was planning to retain were intended to be included in the master plan effort. He said the existing parking made up about 50% of the entire site area with the building footprint another 23% so 70% of the existing site was hard surface. He said their goal was to convert that into a more amenable resource for the community. He said onsite there were about 1,370 existing trees, a great percentage of which were heritage trees, and that it had been important to incorporate the trees into the plan. He described how in removing the fence the site would be opened up and how it might connect with other parts of the city. He described the pedestrian circulation plan and how the City's bicycle path plan might be extended through the redeveloped campus. He said regarding vehicular circulation they were purposely trying to separate residential from the office R&D and to not have any office R&D traffic go onto Laurel. He described elements of the residential portion of the development that would provide separation and enhanced open space for neighboring residential areas. He said for the residential design they took cues from the Allied Arts neighborhood and the Davis Polk building and were proposing sort of the Mission style. He provided visual imagery of the proposed design starting with Laurel Street and then from the corner of Ravenswood and Laurel toward the east with an

alternative pathway that was pedestrian oriented and an alternative bicycle pathway. He showed a view if walking down Ravenswood toward one of the entrances to the office R&D side with entrances clearly defined. He said they would create signals for the public to clearly show that this was a public trail and people were welcome into the site. He showed the proposed commons area of the office R&D site and existing heritage trees and the introduction of both passive and active uses that might be utilized both by tenants and the public. He showed lastly a view to the upper right of the playing field at Ravenswood and Middlefield.

Chair Doran opened for public comment.

Public Comment:

- Sue Connelly said she saw three potential problem areas noting she was a resident of the Burgess Classics community. She said her community's chief concern was the size of the proposed project. She said the elevations shown were only of the lower story and the apartment buildings would be five, five-story buildings and three five-story buildings plus the 20 townhomes. She referred to the office noting those were also five story buildings. She said the project meant the introduction of a great number of people who had not been there before and that would put pressure on the infrastructure and on water. She said safety was another chief concern as having the area fenced for many years had protected her community on one side. She noted they were having problems with the shared gate area with unhoused people. She said they had been trying for three years to resolve this humanely to obtain services and help and had been steadily rejected. She said she and her neighbors proposed that the number and the height of the office buildings be reduced. She said having fewer office buildings meant less of an impact on housing.
- Kalisha Webster, Housing Advocate for Housing Choices, said they were a nonprofit service provider helping people with developmental and other disabilities find and retain affordable housing throughout San Mateo County. She said she was calling in support of the proposed project but noted the City's draft Housing Element and the development need of around 1700 affordable units, nearly half of which were for very low-income level. She urged the applicants to do more with the project to serve people of all income levels and abilities. She said the site was ideally situated near transit and the downtown that supported a walkable and more sustainable community. She encouraged the city and developer to take advantage of the opportunities at the site to increase heights and densities and to include more affordable homes at all income levels and abilities. She said they supported the request for a one-acre parcel to be donated to an affordable housing developer that could develop more affordable housing at deeper levels of affordability than that under the inclusionary housing ordinance. She said a nonprofit developer was batter able to serve the needs of lower income residents for the provision of more onsite support services. She said as of December 2021, 77% of Menlo Park adults with developmental disabilities still lived in the family homes, not by choice, but due to the lack of deeply affordable housing available.
- Kelly Vavor said she was a former public high school teacher and now a community volunteer
 engaged. She said she felt optimistic about this proposed development and grateful for the
 thought that had gone into it. She said she was the mother of four children and the public open
 space and better bicycle and pedestrian routes really resonated with her. She said the project
 would generate significant new tax revenue that would benefit their elementary and high school
 districts. She said she supported the project.

- Michal Bortnik, Allied Arts, expressed appreciation for SRI and Lane Partners for bringing a great opportunity and being open to the community's feedback. He said he liked all the open and green space, the trees, the bicycle and walking paths, and the thoughtful layout to work with the surroundings. He said it was great that hundreds of housing units were within easy walking distance of so many things. He said his only request was that more housing be provided. He noted the unfortunate reality of homelessness in the community. He said he made more specific comments in his written letter to the Planning Commission. He said at the last Commission meeting a presentation was made on development in the Bayshore area and how much new development was happening there and how quickly. He said he hoped that a double standard would not be applied here as to what was acceptable versus what was acceptable in other parts of town.
- Anna Zara, Linfield Oaks, said she supported the Parkline project as it was an ideal location due to its proximity to transportation, shopping, entertainment and recreation. She said she also supported higher density apartment buildings as part of the project so that one of those buildings might be made available to people with intellectual, developmental and physical challenges. She said many in this vulnerable population in Menlo Park were forced to relocate away from family, friends and familiar surroundings due to the lack of affordable housing.
- Verle Aebi, Linfield Oaks, said for those who lived on Laurel Street the traffic impact of the proposed project in conjunction with the projects that would be occupied in the near future on El Camino Real, the Stanford project and the other project further north on El Camino Real could put quite a few additional cars on Laurel Street as it was commonly used to cut through. He said when they got to the environmental impact analysis the traffic needed to be analyzed in conjunction with the future grade separation project, which he was sure would happen someday. He said one of those options involved cutting off Alma Street, which would put quite an increase in traffic pressure on Laurel Street. He said he thought it was discussed last summer that there should be no car access from the project even from the residential portion onto Laurel Street and the access should all be onto Ravenswood Avenue and Middlefield Road as those were much larger streets. He said years ago SRI maintained a "black house" with very toxic gases and chemicals that were used for some of the semiconductor work on campus and if that was the case today that was inconsistent with the density housing proposed.
- Bob MacDonald, Chair, ad hoc Church Committee for the Parkline project for the Menlo Park Christian Science Church on Ravenswood, and a Menlo Park resident said on behalf of his fellow church members attending this evening, that their church had been a neighbor and partner with SRI for over 60 years. He said in the late 1950s their church did a land swap with SRI that led to their current location surrounded by SRI on three sides. He said at that time a perpetual parking agreement was made that provided parking on SRI property for services, meetings and events at their church as well as some mutual traffic flow easements that ensured traffic flow and emergency vehicle access around the perimeter of their property and the ability to exit onto Middlefield Road. He said they had identified a significant issue for their church with the proposed plan, and were requesting that the playing field be moved so it was not adjacent to them to ensure the sanctity and serenity of their religious services, meetings and events. He said they were comfortable with continuing to have parking lots, parking structures, and office buildings adjacent to their property as that would create a buffer similar to what they had enjoyed for over 60 years. He said two of the three existing mutual traffic flow easements, Ravenswood 1 and Ravenswood 2, needed to remain in place to ensure that emergency vehicles were able to

get to any location around the periphery of their property. He said they would also like to reach a mutually acceptable agreement regarding the Middlefield Road connection.

- Alex Ho, said he lived near the site. He said it was great that SRI was planning to redevelop the property and help solve the City's housing shortfall. He said Lane Partners had incorporated much input from the neighbors. He said there were two issues he hoped might be addressed. He noted the egress from Burgess Drive and that it was specified during the presentation as a locked gate but he wondered about assurances that it would remain so in the future. He said the entry would drive additional commute traffic through the Linfield Oaks residential neighborhood and more importantly along Laurel Street, which was the Peninsula Bicycle Corridor and used by numerous children going back and forth to Encinal School. He said it was really important to look at traffic flows along Laurel Street. He asked what could be done to ensure that unhoused people did not start camping along the bicycle path and behind the Burgess Classics adjoining homes. He said currently people were sleeping on the sidewalks back there. He said also there was a history of shopping cars and garbage being left in the neighborhood, and the SRI back fence served as a homeless laundry every weekend. He asked that this be addressed through the project development.
- Emily Simonson, Laurel Street resident, said she supported the proposed project. She noted the thoughtful planning, additional housing, and the addition of better and safer ways to commute by bike and walking. She said as a mother of three young children that was lacking in this area. She said she appreciated the addition of green space as it was a rare opportunity to create more green space while creating more housing.
- Ken Chan said he was an organizer with the nonprofit Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo County. He said they worked with communities and their leaders to produce and preserve quality affordable homes. He expressed appreciation for SRI and their partners for the proposal. He said while the 400 proposed housing units would address the housing and jobs imbalance there was much more that could be done. He said they would like the project proponents to partner with an affordable housing developer to provide the highest number of affordable homes at the deepest affordability levels that would include services and support for residents such as after school care, computer lab, playgrounds and other amenities.
- Adina Levin, resident, said she served on the Complete Streets Commission but was speaking for herself. She said the proposed development was near amenities and offered paths and green space for people to enjoy and go to and from without really having to use cars for numerous short local needs and potentially near jobs. She said a letter recently sent to the City Council observed that southern California cities were ahead of Menlo Park in developing draft Housing Elements and had had their Housing Elements rejected due to unviable sites and lack of affirmatively furthering fair housing. She said it was pointed out that Menlo Park was at risk of a similar situation. She said she agreed with others to have additional homes particularly deeply affordable homes to accommodate housing needs.
- Karen Grove, Housing Commission, said she was speaking for herself. She said she supported the project noting the bike and walking paths, preservation of the beautiful trees, and the housing. She agreed that the site could be used for more housing and highlighted the comments made by Housing Choices noting the relationship of homelessness to low income. She said she supported the property owner donating land to an affordable housing provider to partner with to provide homes and support services. She said the Housing Element was dependent upon

affordable housing. She said she canvassed nearby residents of the project over the weekend and found that may were supportive of more housing, more affordable housing, more extremely low-income homes through the dedication of land and partnership with a nonprofit provider for this proposed project.

- Brittani Baxter, District 3 resident, said she lived within walking distance of the proposed project and loved the idea of opening up the site. She said her neighborhood was walkable and fantastic and she would love for more people to have that opportunity. She said she shared the enthusiasm for the future of this project and what this once in a generation opportunity meant for the city. She said concerns were expressed about traffic and parking and the site was perfectly located wherein a person would not actually need a car to get around. She suggested the site be set up with things in place to encourage people to choose more sustainable, ecofriendly, and congestion-reducing transit. She said using space for homes and people was preferable to using it for car storage. She said given the scale of the site there was a great opportunity to think about everybody in the community and help create that much needed difficult to create affordable housing especially for populations with specific needs. She noted the density of Bayshore projects with 100 units per acre and 40 units here per acre and suggested more could be done.
- Lynne Bramlett, District 3 resident on Mills Court, said she was speaking for herself noting she also led the disaster preparedness organization MPC Ready, which focused on Menlo Park and the unincorporated county islands within or adjacent to Menlo Park. She said their focus was disaster prepared neighborhoods as research showed in a disaster the most immediate source of help was the neighbors living closest. She said there were serious gaps in the local government's disaster preparedness. She said development projects represented opportunities to significantly improve disaster preparedness through the community amenity process. She said she agreed with another speaker's suggestion about the idea of putting underground water cisterns in new development. She said the city had less than one day's worth of stored water for emergency medical drinking and water was also essential for firefighting. She said fires were secondary consequences of earthquakes and pointed to the Hetch Hetchy water delivery's vulnerability to disruption from an earthquake. She said the local fire district had very little water stored and she thought water storage was much more important than a juice bar or a playing field.
- Rob Willington, Menlo Park resident, said he and his family supported the project. He said the SRI campus land was currently underutilized and it was a great idea to redevelop it into a new neighborhood with open space and new housing.
- Steve Pang, Burgess Classics, said he was opposed to the open space concept of the proposal as it would lead to unhoused people using for encampments. He said over the past three years they had tried to work with SRI to handle the unhoused problem with their back gate and nothing had been done. He said their children used to be able to bike and walk around the neighborhood but it did not feel safe anymore. He said he opposed the bicycle path from Middlefield to Laurel for substantially the same reason. He said he opposed the number and location of housing units proposed as there was potential for a lot of traffic on Laurel Street. He said he had submitted additional comments in a written comment letter.
- Frank Contreras, Menlo Park resident, said he and his family had lived in the area for 40 years and he supported the project proposal. He said he would like his family to be able to stay in the

area and affordable housing was needed. He said he agreed about the homelessness and encampments that those needed to be addressed. He said he agreed with housing being provided to special needs population as he thought everybody should have the opportunity to live in Menlo Park as it was such a great area.

- Will Connors, Willows resident, said he strongly supported the project particularly the bicycle and
 pedestrian access to schools and the downtown. He said his only critique was about the
 townhomes on Laurel Street as he would like to see more density in that area similar to the other
 residential units proposed at three to five stories as that was a better use of space near transit.
- Susan Stimson, Linfield Oaks, said she had attended some of the community input sessions and
 was pleased to see that some of what was recommended by residents had been incorporated.
 She said she would appreciate consideration of a closed wall for the parking structure to
 preserve privacy and block headlights at night as well as noise. She said she would like
 information on how security would be maintained throughout the green space so that the space
 might be utilized at night. She said that other large mixed-use projects in this area and their
 impacts on traffic and resources should be determined before adding another large
 development.
- Kenneth Mah, Burgess Classics, said they generally supported the proposal particularly the bicycle and pedestrian paths. He said they asked that the impact of the development and specifically the housing density be thoroughly considered. He said he and his wife used to bike to Stanford for five years and there was a safety issue at Laurel Street and Ravenswood Avenue as there was no dedicated bike lane. He said this project would worsen that safety issue. He said traffic in general would be increased on Laurel by the project. He said the current proposed designs might decrease the safety of both residents in his neighborhood and the Parkline residents trying to cross Laurel Street to get to Burgess Park. He asked the Commission to mitigate impact to Laurel Street by considering ingress and egress exclusively onto Ravenswood Avenue and Middlefield Road. He said they supported other issues needing attention including gate access on Burgess Drive, ensuring the intended use of the green space and insuring provision of safety and security of that space.
- Katie Behroozi, Menlo Park, said she served on the Complete Streets Commission, but was speaking for herself. She said this project addressed three big needs. She said one was a direct response to increased density as they needed better connectivity for bikes and pedestrians between Middlefield Road and Laurel Street. She said the project also offered open space noting recent conversations in the city on how to save parks. She said with the housing crisis there were homeless people. She said for several years there had been discussion to have a shelter in the area which was not supported. She said in general this was a great area for denser housing. She supported keeping the proposed openness and ensuring safe crossings at Middlefield Road noting the Vintage Oaks intersection. She said she was a member of the Trinity Church and they had a shared parking agreement with SRI but were also joyfully anticipating the idea of new potential parishioners and members of the community.
- Peter (no last name given) said he met with Mark Murray and Lane Partners and they had
 listened to the community's opinions. He said he lived in the Classics and loved the quiet nature
 and the streets. He said his one concern was traffic as although the plan was to replace existing
 square footage one to one those were primarily currently unoccupied buildings with lower
 employee density. He said he understood the vision for open space but that had consequences.

He said the connectivity to the ingress and egress made sense but did not really address safety issues of the ingress and egress along Burgess. He said there were dedicated bicycle lanes already along Linfield Drive and Ravenswood Avenue so they disagreed with having ingress and egress along Burgess. He said he wanted to make sure that they did not provide programming activities directly behind his and his neighbors' back yards between his community and the parking structure as that would encourage homeless encampments. He referred to comments on safety and unhoused people in the vicinity.

• Gail Gorton, Burgess Classics, said in general she supported the proposed project. She asked that the Commission be sensitive to a huge residential development dropped into a mixed residential area ranging from single family homes to apartment buildings, the tallest of which were only two-story. She said traffic impacts would be huge. She said Laurel Street, Ravenswood Avenue and Middlefield Road were two-lane roads already heavily congested. She said traffic was heavy on Laurel Street with Burgess Park there and she had seen near misses with bicycles from cars exiting the parking lots. She said they had to consider how the schools would absorb additional population and the impacts to natural resources. She said she appreciated the inclusion of a playing field as the fields at Burgess were at maximum usage. She asked how the Parkline playing field would be operated. She said she would prefer to see affordable homes for purchase on the site. She said it was important to provide affordable rental housing too. She said she would like the number of affordable units to remain the same as proposed but for the overall number housing units to the reduced.

Chair Doran closed public comment

Commission Comment: Chair Doran noted the time was 10:24 p.m. and that they would need to stop at 11 p.m. unless they voted to extend beyond that time.

Chair Doran said the first topic staff requested input on was land use. He said overall he thought the project was great and very thoughtful, and the land use was appropriate. He said he liked the residential uses closest to the train station, the playing field close to Menlo Atherton (MA) because there was not a lot of parkland around MA. He said the application included a request for a zoning ordinance amendment and rezoning so everything was on the table. He said it was a very large site and a great opportunity close to transit. He said he would encourage more housing and was amenable to higher density for housing. He said the proposed site layout seemed respectful to neighbors and he liked the townhouses as a bridge to existing residential neighbors. He said he liked the three stories nearer the front edge of the property and the five stories further behind. He said he would support higher densities especially if they were behind the five stories so height was gradual. He said also he would support more land being used for residential than for office. He said he appreciated the preservation of the heritage trees. He said access seemed well thought out. He said he heard the objections to residential access on Laurel Street but they needed residential development and the applicants had done a good job of keeping at least the commercial access off Laurel Street. He said regarding conceptual architectural styles that he believed it was very appropriate noting it was in early stages but he thought Mission style seemed appropriate. He said the design layout of the open space looked good. He said regarding parking locations and ratios that it was better than what was there now. He said regarding proposed sustainability measures it was still early in the design but he appreciated the LEED gold goal. He said he was generally supportive and would like to see more housing.

Commissioner Kennedy said generally she was supportive of the proposed project. She said she agreed with Chair Doran's comments on increased density and that significantly increasing density would be appropriate for this project. She said they had seen a number of letters contemplating what it would look like to take an acre and partner with an affordable housing developer to provide meaningful affordable housing. She said that might help them to embrace what was starting to happen across both Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties to move toward the attempted zero of homelessness. She said this site was their hope for putting the right amount of housing at the right densities downtown where it belonged.

Commissioner Andrew Barnes asked if the project site was outside of the Downtown / El Camino Real Specific Plan area (Specific Plan) and if so, what community amenities program applied to it. Planner Sandmeier said the site was outside of the Specific Plan and there was no specific community amenities program. She said the applicant was requesting a new general plan designation and new zoning ordinance amendment that the property would be rezoned to. She said as part of those there could be an exchange for some type of community amenity that was negotiated.

Commissioner Barnes said he liked the idea of a sports field but that was not a community amenity in the formal sense. He asked if they were considering have Parks and Recreation program the use of the field. Mr. Murray said they were open to how the field would be programmed. He said in a sense it was a community amenity as that sports field with an adjacent park area and a community building was really a community use rather than an amenity base for their office occupants or residents. He said it was meant for AYSO or other recreational leagues. He said hopefully it could allow for office occupants use as well but they intended it to be truly a community sports field. He said that it was early on and they were open to ideas on management of it.

Commissioner Riggs asked what the approximate occupied density of SRI was currently. Planner Sandmeier said she did not have that information. Mr. Murray said they did not either as occupancy had been significantly disrupted by the pandemic. He said SRI's intent was to consolidate into those three existing buildings totaling about 280,000 square feet but he thought currently employees were spread out in much more space. Commissioner Riggs said they would have to look at something historic then like a 2019 Google map or something like that. He said his question related to traffic and noted the Meta campus with three office clusters of roughly 500,000 square feet each and the amount of traffic going in and out of those clusters. He said over the 20 years he had regularly traveled down Ringwood and Ravenswood he had never seen even a fraction of that traffic in the SRI parking lots. He asked if that was accurate. Mr. Murray said the last Conditional Use Permit, approved around 2004, showed a headcount cap of about 3,200 people but that had declined significantly due to Covid.

Commissioner Riggs said the public they heard from were supportive of the project because of housing, BMR units and opportunities to create more affordable housing and for special needs populations. He said however the project would have approximately 1.4 million square feet of office space and 400 residential units. He said by comparison Willow Village had over 1700 proposed housing units for roughly the same amount of office use, and that project was providing significantly less housing than the additional workers generated by it. He said the proposed Parkline project was not a housing development project. He said that did not mean he was opposed to it unless it was a housing project – he just thought it should be clear what the project was. He said one letter from the public asked how many workers were expected and how that related to housing / jobs imbalance and traffic. He said five story office buildings here would indicate a higher density. He said there

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were three parking structures proposed so he expected there was some concept of what kind of density was expected. He said information on that would be expected at the next session.

Commissioner Riggs said regarding the proposed land use, intensity and density, that the most notable thing was this was not a jobs and housing imbalance correcting project. He said the question would be how much it would contribute to the imbalance. He said that this might not be the project that needed to address the imbalance, just that it was something to be noted. He said since the project was predominantly an office space project, he thought it made sense to put the office space as close to the train station as possible. He suggested that office space users might take advantage of transportation much better and more immediately than residents. He said that he did not really have any comments on the site access, design, layout of open space, parking locations or ratios as theoretically those would be rethought to place office closer to transit. He said regarding conceptual architectural styles that they were taking the correct approach, and when that style was done well, it was really exciting.

Commissioner Harris said this was a unique opportunity for the City to transform an aging property with limited use to an open and mixed-use neighborhood. She said with so much community interest there were of course different ideas about what was wanted. She complimented the applicants on the 25 acres of publicly available green space, the retention of heritage trees and locating buildings around them, only the residential entrance on Laurel Street, listening to the community, and the pedestrian / bicycle paths and connectivity. She agreed they could not go wrong with the attractive Mission style architecture and was supportive that the five stories were set back from the three stories, and the 50-foot setback between the site buildings and Burgess Classics. She said her areas of concern included traffic impacts and mitigation. She said regarding a Transportation Demand Management plan (TDM) they had indicated a shuttle to Caltrain and suggested that might be extended to go downtown, maybe circle around to Safeway and then back again. She said she would like the TDM to go even further than that. She said they had had success on other projects with trip caps so she would like to see that. She said she would like Menlo Park to eliminate minimum parking requirements entirely toward significantly reducing the number of people driving and parking on this site as it was close to Caltrain and El Camino Real buses, and close to downtown amenities. She said the proposed three large parking structures took up too much land that could be used for housing. She asked if they had considered putting the parking underground, which would allow room for additional residences and reduce parking.

Mr. Murray said they considered it and a big drawback was the digging as that increased construction timing by nearly two times, and involved environmental impact and construction noise impact with trucks hauling dirt away. He said while the end result made the parking sort of disappear, it obviously was very costly. He said with this site and being able to provide 25 acres of open space they did not think it was necessary to do underground parking. Commissioner Harris said the difference between the number of office workers for R&D versus regular office use was a pretty big delta, which might mean a greater parking need. She said when the project came back, she would like information on employee count, to see the parking reduced or ideas of how they might do that. She said to let the Commission know if the city would need to help them with parking reduction. She said they might consider charging for parking both the residents with unbundled parking and also the office workers or give rebates to those who did not drive to work. She said her second suggestion was to increase the number of housing units noting if parking was reduced that they would have more space. She referred to the idea of dedicating an acre to a nonprofit housing group to get more density and housing for people of all abilities and deeply affordable housing, and noted that deeply affordable housing residents were less likely to need cars

and that would help the parking. She said as they got closer to a project submittal that she would like to review the recreation site to understand what made the most sense, whether it was really for the community, whether it was truly a recreational field and if so what type.

Chair Doran noted it was 10:59 p.m. and two Commissioners were requesting to speak. He proposed taking a vote on extending the meeting time in a finite amount, and suggested 20 minutes acknowledging that some Commissioners had severe time constraints.

ACTION: M/S (Harris/Doran) to extend the meeting to 11:20 p.m.; passes 7-0.

Commissioner Tate said her biggest concern was the project would not provide enough housing. She said she liked the idea of donating not just one but a couple of acres to a nonprofit or low-income housing developer for affordable housing development. She said additionally she was concerned about the field near the existing church, as she thought the church needed quiet for their activities. She suggested the project team as a good neighbor might consider moving the field or to come to a compromise with the church. She said her assumption was there would be some sort of security to ensure the grounds were safe, but she had not heard that addressed in response to community comments.

Mr. Murray said the 25 acres would be privately owned. He said it was something they were trying to create as an amenity and not to burden the neighbors or the city. He said he envisioned that they would privately develop and maintain the space and there would be some kind of public access license or easement to use it as a park during certain hours. He said they were open to ideas. He said in terms of safety late at night and early morning, as this was private property, they would be responsible for securing it. He said they would have every incentive to secure it as the property owner for the benefit of the residents who lived there. He said that was something they were very confident they could manage.

Commissioner Tate asked if they had given consideration to donating some of the land. Mr. Murray said they were speaking with different groups and others about how to generate more affordable housing. He said the idea had been discussed and they were open to it.

Commissioner Barnes said a couple of areas could use more thought. He said as he conceptualized the 25 acres of green space, he saw that was good for the site and for instance the office users and residents. He said the common area in the middle was underutilizing the site. He noted the dearth of playing fields in the area and suggested two fields on the site that were neither a park or a tenant feature amenity. He said he had no use for in lieu fees but a use for an accretive, material and tangible community benefit. He said he supported parceling out some of the property, an acre or so, for a deeply affordable housing project. He referred to traffic impacts from the project notably to the Willow Road, Middlefield Road and Woodland intersection. He said moving forward he would want discussion on what impacts the project would have transportation and transit infrastructure.

Commissioner Tate said for the record that her request was for one or two acres donated to a low-income housing group but that it was not in lieu of the BMR units the project was providing. She said that integrated housing was better than when it was just in one building but she understood the need for the latter, and they had the property size to make it happen.

Commissioner DeCardy said he appreciated community interest in the project. He said what the applicants were trying to do and the direction they were going could work very well and there were

challenging things to sort out. He said two things were not working and those needed to work in a fundamentally different way. He said one was affordable housing. He said with 400 units that 15% BMR would be about 60 units of affordable housing. He said that was one unit of affordable housing per acre on this property. He said the simplest thing would be to set a goal for affordable housing and then they could sort out what that required but the goal needed to be significantly higher than 60 units. He said the second was the congestion that would come with attracting so many people to this area and what to do about that. He said a parking garage would not get them out of the congestion problem. He said the project team proposed shuttles. He said he had the opportunity to have a walkthrough with Mr. Murray and that was helpful. He said an electric shuttle that went from the site down to Caltrain was a beginning point. He said working with City Council they could open this up and as Commissioner Harris had commented, take the opportunity to look across the community and finally get connectivity from Bayfront to the downtown that would get people out of cars, work for this development and act as a catalyst to make that work for the rest of the community. He said the city had major developments from the Bayfront, along Willow Road and downtown not to mention what might come out of the Life Sciences District and the USGS site. He said now was the time as a community to address connecting all that with something other than single occupancy vehicles. He said it was not this project's responsibility to own this but it was their responsibility to catalyze it to help make their project work.

Commissioner Riggs said he supported Commissioner DeCardy's call for action for transit from Bayfront, past SRI and to the Caltrain station and that would require the City Council to do something more locally. He said he was surprised the challenging Ravenswood and Ringwood intersection had not been mentioned as here was an opportunity to bring Ravenwood around the church property and align with Ringwood. He said the current intersection was dangerous for the many pedestrians coming from the high school, particularly dangerous for bicyclists going southbound on Middlefield Road and crossing that loop connector. He said it was an annoyance to everyone who had to navigate those double traffic lights and it was time to fix it.

H. Informational Items

- H1. Future Planning Commission Meeting Schedule
 - Regular Meeting: April 11, 2022

Planner Sandmeier said the Citizen M project that had been continued would be on the April 11 agenda as well as two single-family home projects.

Commissioner DeCardy said for a future agenda that Commissioner Harris had raised an item about looking at level of service and he was looking forward to that opportunity at a future meeting.

Commissioner Tate said she would like an agenda item to talk further about parking and how to get around that requirement. She said the project they saw earlier on Bay Road was a lost opportunity for more housing units because of parking requirements. She said she thought Commissioner Riggs had wanted to review current ordinances a while back and hopefully they could put that on their agenda soon to be up to date.

• Regular Meeting: April 25, 2022

I. Adjournment

Chair Doran adjourned the meeting at 11:20 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Corinna Sandmeier, Acting Principal Planner

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

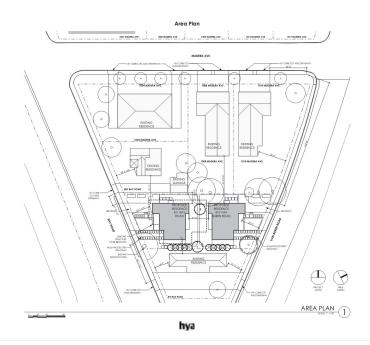
Approved by the Planning Commission on August 29, 2022

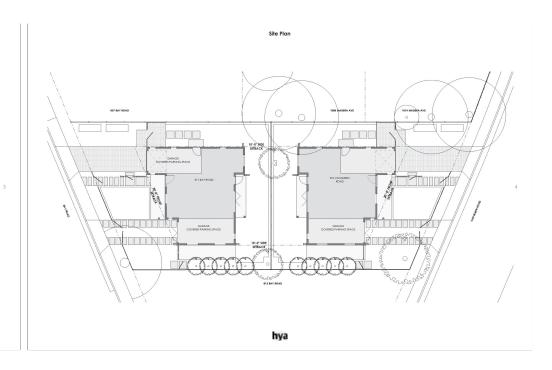
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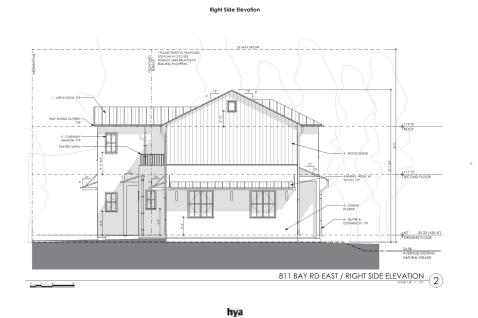
811 Bay Road Planning Commission Hearing March 28, 2022

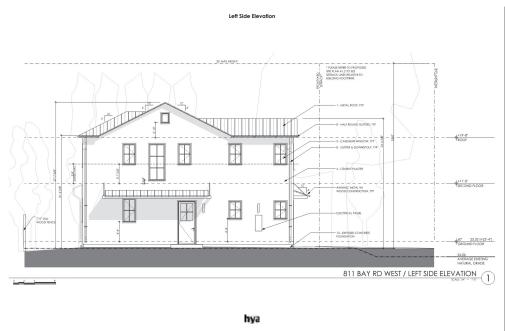












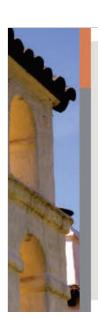
















- Staff introduction
- Presentation by EIR consultant
- Presentation by applicant
- Public comments
- Commissioner questions
- Commissioner deliberation and vote





PROJECT PROPOSAL

- Mixed-Use Building = 158 multifamily apartment units made up of studio and four-bedroom units,13,400 square foot office space, and 1,600 square foot neighborhood serving commercial use
- BMR Proposal = 4 units at very-low income, 12 units at low income, and 5 units at moderate income totaling 21 inclusionary housing units
- Community Amenities Proposal
 - Payment of \$4,840,000 in-lieu fees
- Requested waivers pursuant to City's BMR Housing Program
 - Reduce residential parking by 20 parking spaces
 - · Minor increase in average height
- Development of a 10-foot wide public paseo connecting Jefferson Drive and Constitution Drive

4

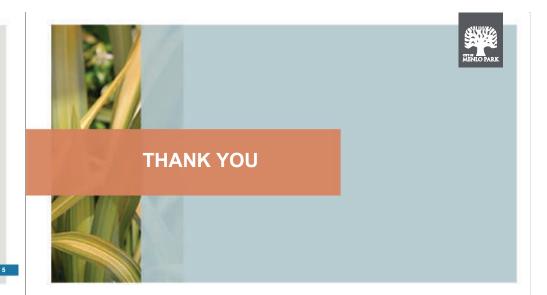




STAFF RECOMMENDATION

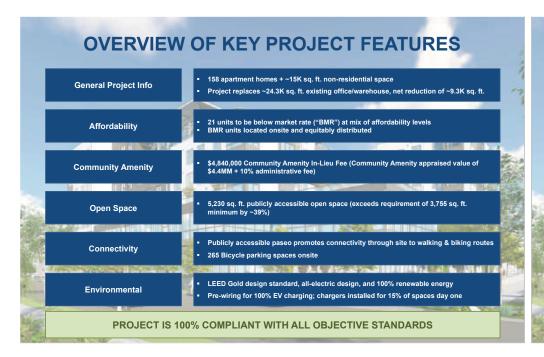
- Recommended Actions
- Adopt resolution (Attachment A):
- Certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR)
 Adopting the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)
- Adopting the CEQA Findings
- Adopt resolution (Attachment B) approving the:
 - Use Permit
 - Architectural Control Permit
 - Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Agreement
 - Open Space Agreement
 - Approve the Community Amenities proposal

The above actions are subject to Conditions of Approval (Attachment B, Exhibit G)









COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Outreach to Date

- Robust community outreach process since 2020
- > Flyers sent to 6,000+ addresses in Belle Haven/Menlo Park/East Palo Alto neighborhoods
 - June 2020 Flyer provided overview and opportunity for one-on-one discussions
 - Nov. 2021 Flyer provided overview and dates of two virtual community meetings hosted by Greystar on November 6th and 10th
- > 10 one-on-one phone calls with community members
- > Two (2) presentations to Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce; most recent in Oct. 2021

How outreach has shaped the proposed development?

- The community's wants and needs have changed since 2016; as such, the project will satisfy
 the City's Community Amenity requirement through contribution of an in-lieu fee
- The project will offer Equivalent Alternative BMR unit mix featuring mix of affordability levels per feedback received from City Staff

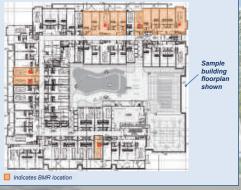
PROPOSED BMR UNIT MIX

- The community will include 21 Below Market Rate ("BMR") units
- The proposed BMR unit mix will mirror the overall unit breakdown for the community
- Housing Commission unanimously approved the BMR Alternative below that features a mix of affordability levels:

Alternative 2

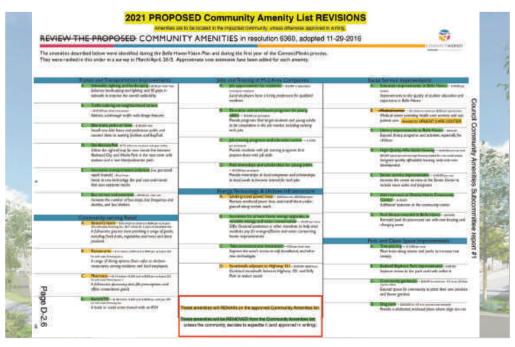
Income Levels	Units
Very Low Income	4
Low Income	12
Moderate Income	5
Total	21

*Note: BMR rents capped at 75% comparable market rent



COMMUNITY AMENITY

- Menlo Flats Community Amenity: \$4,840,000 Community Amenity In-Lieu Fee (Community Amenity appraised value of \$4.4MM + 10% administrative fee)
- History:
 - Menlo Flats initially planned for a café onsite
 - 111 Independence was approved with a café as their community amenity
 - Once an amenity on the list is approved as part of a project, it is no longer available to future developments
 - On April 20, 2021 the City Council ad hoc subcommittee on ConnectMenlo community amenities presented a revised list and started the process of adopting an in-lieu fee
 - Community Amenity In-lieu fee passed via Ordinance No. 1077 on June 22, 2021



COMMUNITY AMENITY (Cont'd)

- Proposed Community Amenity List Revisions Summary
- Proposed list includes options which are unavailable or infeasible for Menlo Flats:
 - Urgent Care (Menlo Uptown approved amenity, unavailable)
 - Grocery Store (included in Meta development, not feasible)
 - Café (111 Independence approved amenity, unavailable)
 - Pharmacy (included in Meta development, not feasible)
 - Underground Powerlines (cost far exceeds \$4.4 million available, not feasible)
 - HW 101 Soundwalls (cost far exceeds \$4.4 million available, not feasible)
- Given the lack of options and feasible amenities, Flats will be providing a community amenity in-lieu fee totaling \$4,840,000





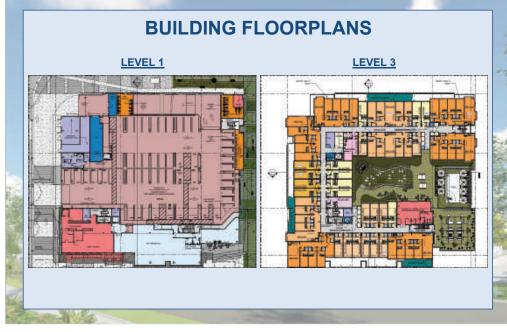


















MENLO FLATS PROJECT FINAL EIR

March 28, 2022



CONNECTMENLO EIR

- Project site is within the ConnectMenlo study area
- Programmatic EIR certified in November 2016
- Project tiers from ConnectMenlo EIR
- East Palo Alto Settlement Agreement

I C A

CEQA PROCESS AND TIMELINE Milestone Date Publication of Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Initial Study (IS) November 16, 2020 December 7, 2020 Draft EIR Scoping Session End of 30-Day NOP comment period December 21, 2020 Publication of Draft EIR and Notice of Availability October 25, 2021 Draft EIR Comment Session November 15, 2021 End of 45-Day Draft EIR Comment Period December 9, 2021 Publication of Response to Comments on Draft EIR March 16, 2022 Final EIR Certification Hearing/Consideration of Project March 28, 2022 LSA

INITIAL STUDY FINDINGS Potentially Significant Less than Significant Less than Significant No Impact with Mitigation Air Quality · Agriculture and GHG Emissions · Geology and Soils Biological Resources Noise (Operation Hazards and Energy Period Traffic) Hazardous Materials • Hydrology and Water Population and · Noise (Construction-Quality Transportation Airports) Planning Tribal Cultural Public Services Recreation Utilities

 Lists agencies and individuals who submitted comments: Sequoia Union High School District Two individuals Planning Commission DEIR Hearing Includes copies of all comments on the Draft EIR Provides a written response to each CEQA-related comment Includes minor corrections and clarifications to the Draft EIR 	RESPONSE TO COMMENTS DOCUMENT
Provides a written response to each CEQA-related comment	 Sequoia Union High School District Two individuals Planning Commission DEIR Hearing
	•
Includes minor corrections and clarifications to the Draft EIR	Provides a written response to each CEQA-related comment
	Includes minor corrections and clarifications to the Draft EIR
LSA	

Alternative	Characteristics	Impacts Reduced/Increased?	Mitigation Measures Required
No Project	No modifications to the project site	All project impacts would be avoided	• None
Base Level	47 residential units 9,011 sq. ft. of nonresidential space Four-story, 40-foot-tall building	Population and Housing (population growth) Air Quality (construction- period emissions) Noise (vibration)	All mitigation measures would still be required
All Residential	159 residential unitsNo office/retail space70-foot-tall building	Population and Housing (population growth) Air Quality (construction- period emissions) Noise (vibration)	Mitigation Measure TRA-1 no longer required
Reduced Parking	 Nonresidential parking reduced by 9 spaces No other modifications 	All project impacts would be the same	All mitigation measures would still be required

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS DOCUMENT

- None of the comments on the Draft EIR disclose new significant information
- No new significant or substantially more severe environmental impacts have been identified
- No new feasible mitigation measures or alternatives have been identified which are considerably different from others previously analyzed
- The Draft EIR did not require recirculation.

LSA

FINAL EIR

- Draft EIR and Initial Study
- Response to Comments Document
- Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Together these documents constitute the Final EIR

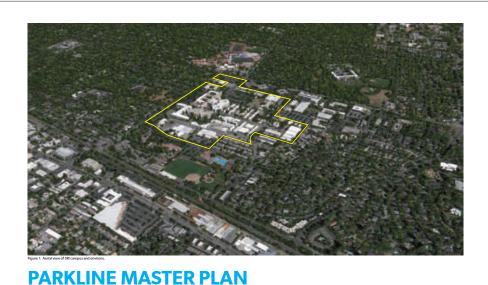
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ADEQUACY OF THE EIR

CEQA Guidelines Section 15151:

An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure.

LSA



PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION: MARCH 28, 2022

PARKLINE'S VISION FOR THE 63.2-ACRE SITE:



1. RESIDENTIAL

• 400 new rental housing units: affordable and market rate rental housing



2. OPEN SPACE & CONNECTIVITY

Over 25 acres of landscaped, publicly accessible open space

A network of new bike and pedestrian pathways



3. REVITALIZATION

• Replacement of 1.1 million square feet of outdated research buildings



4. TREE PRESERVATION

- Preserve heritage trees
- 1,375 existing trees, 1,489 after redevelopment



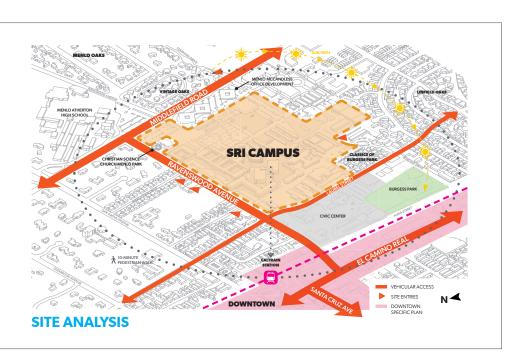
PARKLINE IN PRESIDENT DELENGATIONS

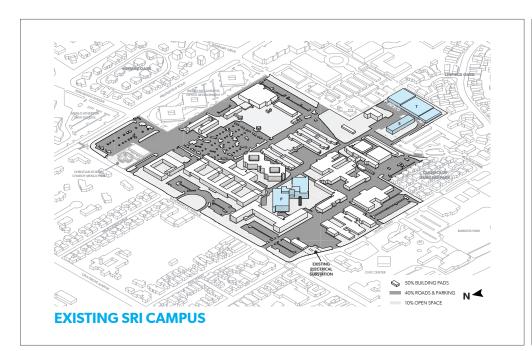
5. SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

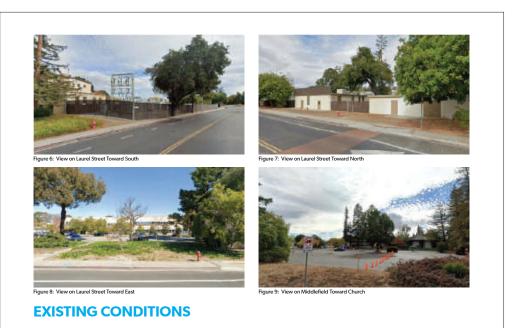
- · High performance building design
- Vast reduction in impervious surface
- Reduce carbon

PROJECT VISION & OBJECTIVES



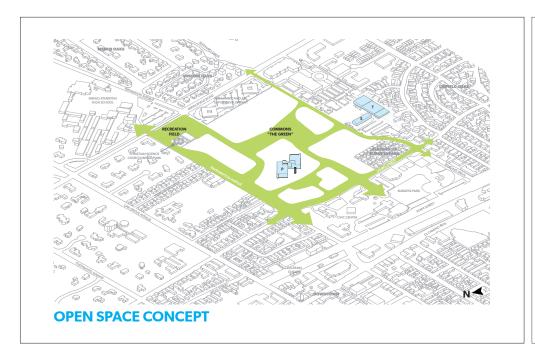


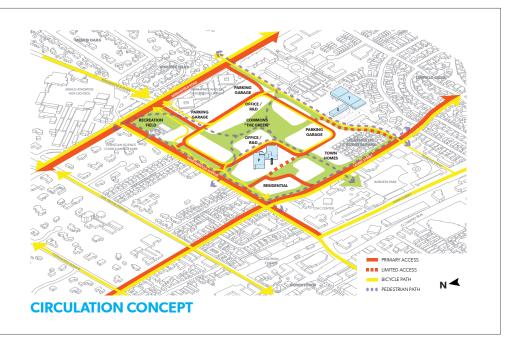




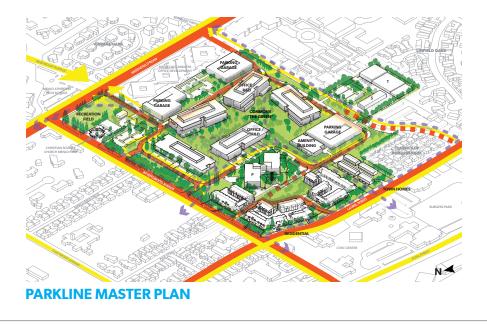






















VIEW IN RAVENSWOOD GREENWAY



VIEW AT RAVENSWOOD AVENUE SITE ENTRY



VIEW FROM COMMONS LOOKING WEST AT OFFICE BUILDINGS



VIEW AT RECREATION FIELD

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PROJECT VISION & OBJECTIVES