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CITY OF MENLO PARK
Planning Commission

In re:
Parkline Project



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REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
AGENDA ITEM H1
MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2022

Reported by AMBER ABREU-PEIXOTO
(Via ZOOM Videoconference)
Certified Shorthand Reporter No. 13546
State of California

1 ATTENDEES

2 The Planning Commission:

3 Chris DeCardy - Chairperson
4 Cynthia Harris - Vice Chairperson
5 Jennifer Schindler
6 Andrew Barnes
7 Michele Tate
8 Linh Dan Do
9 Henry Riggs

10 SUPPORT STAFF:

11 Corinna Sandmeier, Acting Principal Planner
12 Matt Pruter, Associate Planner

13 PROJECT PRESENTERS:

14 Mark Murray, Lane Partners
15 Thomas Yee, STUDIOS Architecture
16 Jessica Viramontes, ICF

17 ---o0o---

18 BE IT REMEMBERED that, pursuant to Notice of the
19 Meeting, and on December 12, 2022, via ZOOM
20 Videoconference, before me, AMBER ABREU-PEIXOTO, CSR
21 13546, State of California, there commenced a Planning
22 Commission meeting under the provisions of the City of
23 Menlo Park.

24 ---o0o---

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1 DECEMBER 12, 2022

10:28 p.m.

2

3

P R O C E E D I N G S

4

This is item H1 -- excuse me. H, Public Hearing

5

2. This is item H1. H1 and I1 are associated items with

6

a single staff report.

7

H1, request for an Environmental Impact Report,

8

an EIR, Scoping Session for the Parkline Master Plan

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project to comprehensively redevelop an approximately

10

63.2-acre site located at 301 and 333 Ravenswood Avenue,

11

and 555 and 565 Middlefield Road. The proposed project

12

would redevelop SRI International's research campus by

13

creating a new office/research and development,

14

transit-oriented campus with no net increase in commercial

15

square footage, up to 550 new rental housing units (with a

16

minimum of 15 percent of the units available for below

17

market rate households), new bicycle and pedestrian

18

connections, and approximately 25 acres of

19

publicly-accessible open space. The proposed project

20

would demolish all existing buildings, excluding Buildings

21

P, S, and T, which remain onsite and operational by SRI

22

and its tenants.

23

The proposed project would organize land uses

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generally in two land use districts within the project

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site including, 1, an approximately 10-acre Residential

1 District in the southwestern portion of the project site;
2 and, 2, an approximately 53-acre Office/R&D -- that's
3 Research and Development District -- that would comprise
4 the remainder of the project site.

5 In total, the proposed project results in a total
6 of approximately 1,898,931 square feet, including
7 approximately 1,380,332 square feet of Office/R&D and
8 approximately 518,599 square feet of residential uses
9 (including up to 450 rental residential units).

10 In addition, the proposed project would establish
11 a separate parcel of land that is proposed to be leased to
12 an affordable housing developer for the future
13 construction of a 100 percent affordable housing or
14 special needs project, which would be separately rezoned
15 as part of the proposed project for up to 100 residential
16 units (in addition to the residential units proposed
17 within the Residential District), and which is not
18 included in the residential square footage calculations as
19 the square footage has not been determined.

20 The EIR will study two potential project
21 variants, one that includes an approximately 2-million
22 gallon buried concrete water reservoir and associated
23 facilities, and one that includes an additional 50
24 residential units for a total of up to 600 dwelling units,
25 inclusive of the standard -- excuse me -- standalone

1 affordable housing building.

2 The project site is zoned C-1(X) -- that's
3 Administrative and Professional District, Restrictive --
4 and governed by a Conditional Development Permit (CDP)
5 approved in 1975, subsequently amended in 1978, 1997, and
6 2004.

7 The proposed project is anticipated to include
8 the following entitlements: The General Plan Amendment
9 (Text and Map), Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Rezoning,
10 Conditional Development Permit, Development Agreement,
11 Architectural Control (for potential future Design Review)
12 Heritage Tree Removal Permits, Vesting Tentative Map,
13 Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Agreement, and
14 Environmental Review.

15 A Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed
16 project was released on Friday, December 2nd, 2022. The
17 NOP provides a description of the proposed project the
18 location of the proposed project and the probable
19 environmental effects. The EIR will address potential
20 physical environmental effects of the proposed project, as
21 outlined in the California Environmental Quality Act.
22 That's CEQA. An initial study was not completed as it is
23 anticipated this will be a full EIR and no topic areas
24 will be scoped out, with the exception of agriculture and
25 forestry resources, mineral resources, and wildfire.

1 Those topic areas are not anticipated to require further
2 analysis.

3 The project site is located within a "transit
4 priority area," as defined, and thus pursuant to the
5 Public Resources Code section 21099. Aesthetic and
6 parking impacts are not considered significant impacts on
7 the environment. Accordingly, the analysis in the EIR
8 will reflect this statutory directive. Nevertheless, the
9 City retains -- still retains authority to consider
10 aesthetic impacts pursuant to its design review authority.

11 The City is requesting comments on the scope and
12 content of this EIR. The project location does not
13 contain a toxic site pursuant to Section 6596.2 of the
14 Government Code. Comments on the scope and content of the
15 EIR are due by 5:00 p.m., Monday, January 9th, 2023.

16 And with that, I will turn it over to staff.

17 MS. SANDMEIER: Yes. Good evening again, Chair
18 DeCardy and Commissioners. So I have a small
19 presentation -- or try to keep it short.

20 Vanh, can you pull that up?

21 So this is for the Parkline project. And we'll
22 be focusing on the Environmental Impact Report Scoping
23 Session tonight. Next slide.

24 So I'll just kind of focus on the EIR scoping
25 session, since the -- sounds like the study session will

1 be continued.

2 So the purpose of the scoping session is for
3 input on the scope and content of the EIR. And no actions
4 will be taken tonight. And the public comment on the
5 Notice of Preparation ends on January 9th -- that should
6 be 2023. That's a mistake there.

7 So City Council will consider certification of
8 the Final EIR and most of the land use entitlements.

9 And next slide.

10 And this slide just shows the project location.
11 So it's the existing SRI campus. It shows the proximity
12 to downtown, the Caltrain Station, Burgess Park and El
13 Camino Real.

14 Next slide, please.

15 So the existing site is approximately 63 acres in
16 size. It contains 38 buildings. The existing land uses
17 are office, R&D, and supporting uses. And there are
18 approximately 1,100 employees there today.

19 So this is the most recent site plan for the
20 proposed project. 35 of the existing buildings would be
21 demolished. The proposal is for a mixed-use development.
22 The building shown in yellow would be a residential
23 district for approximately 450 residences, with 15 percent
24 below market rate units.

25 And the applicant is also proposing a separate

1 parcel to be dedicated to an affording housing developer.

2 And that would be up to 100 units.

3 And then the remainder of the site would be a
4 nonresidential, basically R&D and office district. And
5 the project includes 25 acres of publicly-accessible open
6 space.

7 So the recommended meeting format for the EIR
8 scoping session is staff overview of the proposed project,
9 presentation by the applicant, presentation by the City's
10 EIR consultant, public comments on the EIR scope,
11 commissioner questions on the scope, commissioner comments
12 on the scope, and then the close of the scoping session
13 public hearing.

14 Next slide, please.

15 And that concludes my presentation. And so next,
16 we'll go to the applicant

17 CHAIR DECARDY: Any questions of Ms. Sandmeier
18 from commissioners?

19 COMMISSIONER BARNES: I do.

20 CHAIR DECARDY: Commissioner Barnes.

21 COMMISSIONER BARNES: So I'm super appreciative
22 of the bifurcation on what we are going to do this
23 evening. Are we, in part two of this, going to hear a
24 redux of the presentation by the applicant? Because
25 depending on when this may come back, I may not be fresh

1 again. And I'd love to -- although it's going to be
2 repetitive, my mind only captures things for a certain
3 period of time. So I'd love to hear a redux of it. And I
4 wanted to check in on that.

5 MS. SANDMEIER: Yes. Through the Chair, that is
6 the plan. It will need to come back next year, 2023. So
7 there'll definitely be an overview again of the project.

8 CHAIR DECARDY: All right. Thank you,
9 Commissioner Barnes. Good question.

10 Any other questions?

11 All right. To the applicant. Thank you for
12 bearing with us this evening. Welcome. The floor is
13 yours.

14 MR. MURRAY: Good evening, Chair DeCardy and
15 members of the Commission, City staff, members of the
16 public. I'm the app -- I represent the applicant, Mark
17 Murray, with Lane Partners.

18 In the interest of time, I'm going to turn things
19 over to Tom Yee, from STUDIOS Architecture, to talk a
20 little bit more about the design, to try to move forward
21 with the scoping session.

22 But, again, we'll be back, probably in a couple
23 months to do the study session presentation, have a more
24 robust presentation there. But, again, here to answer
25 questions as well.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIR DECARDY: Thanks very much. And appreciate
3 you adjusting on the fly this evening. Thank you.

4 MR. YEE: My name is Thomas Yee. I'm with -- the
5 Principal at STUDIOS Architecture. Thank you for having
6 us this evening, Commissioner DeCardy, Vice Chair Harris.

7 So I'd like to go through the presentation very
8 briefly. Corinna explained the project location and site.

9 Next slide, please.

10 These are some of the goals that we established
11 for the site at the very beginning, over a year-and-a-half
12 ago -- the residential sustainability issues, tree
13 preservation. There are about 1,375 existing trees on the
14 site. We're retaining over half of them through our site
15 planning open space. As we mentioned, 25-acres of
16 publicly-accessible open space because the current site is
17 a fenced-off property. 63 acres, which we're transforming
18 to publicly-accessible land and both programmed, active
19 and passive, open spaces.

20 Next slide, please.

21 And on the Master Plan, as Corinna mentioned, the
22 land uses here are fairly straightforward. A 63-acre
23 site. Ravenswood on the top, Laurel on the left,
24 Middlefield on the right. On the left, part of the site
25 in yellow are three to four buildings of residential

1 apartments in the R1, R2, and R3 buildings. This is all
2 explained in the packet that you received -- and then
3 townhouses to the south, just north of Burgess Park
4 neighborhood -- Burgess Classics neighborhood. Those are
5 two-story townhouses to, again, address the scale
6 transition between Burgess Classics at the residential
7 buildings that work up Laurel, up to Ravenswood.

8 SRI is retaining three existing buildings, as you
9 see in blue there. Building P, S, and T. S and T are at
10 the south portions of the site. Those will -- SRI is
11 consolidating their operations into those three buildings,
12 and -- for their operations in the future.

13 So the 35 remaining buildings to which will be
14 removed will be transformed to office, R&D, and lab/life
15 science uses. You can see, those are situated in the five
16 buildings in light blue.

17 There will be an amenities building for the
18 tenants to the left, above the parking garage No. 3, and a
19 community building on the upper right, next to the church.

20 The open space is accessible. It's being
21 programmed. We've got the active/passive uses. We're
22 proposing a recreational field on the upper right, near
23 Ravenswood and Middlefield.

24 And the other aspect of the property is
25 circulation. We are very -- we've added and included

1 major pedestrian pathways to the site -- north along
2 Ravenswood through the site -- north and south, and
3 diagonally across the site; improved access from the west
4 on Laurel through the site toward the middle.

5 We have Class 1 bike lanes crossing the site
6 along the loop road, which is a private road that you see
7 circulating through the site, as well a consideration of a
8 Class 4 bicycle lane along Laurel.

9 Through our outreach programs with the community,
10 bike safety was a very big concern along -- along Laurel.
11 So Class 4 is a separated bicycle pathway for --
12 especially for kids going up and down Laurel. And they
13 have the opportunity to criss-cross the site over to Menlo
14 Atherton.

15 Again, the idea is to make the open space
16 active/passive, a criss-cross with pedestrian bicycle
17 pathways to create better access through the site, create
18 better safety for bicycle paths and pathways, and folks
19 using those modes of transportation. Located near
20 Caltrain. So taking advantage of the
21 transportation-oriented design aspects.

22 And we're -- both Mark and I are open to any
23 questions. But in the interest of keeping this going this
24 evening, we can conclude here and address any questions
25 you might have.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIR DECARDY: Thank you very much. And, again,
3 appreciate you adjusting for us on the fly this evening.

4 The next step will be, I believe, to our EIR
5 consultant. Is that right, Ms. Sandmeier? But are there
6 questions for the applicant, in advance of that, from any
7 commissioners?

8 Commissioner Barnes.

9 COMMISSIONER BARNES: So I do have a couple
10 questions on what they presented. But I want to be
11 respectful to the process and the sequencing of how we're
12 going to do this. I mean, I could ask some questions
13 about the site plan -- does it contemplate certain things,
14 and talk further about that.

15 But if we're going to come back to this, you tell
16 me, Chair -- or Chair through staff, how we should
17 progress this.

18 Should we not even go into it and go directly to
19 the EIR? Should we be touching on some of these issues
20 related to the project?

21 How do you want to do this?

22 CHAIR DECARDY: My suggestion, Commissioner
23 Barnes, would go to the EIR. If, after the EIR consultant
24 has spoken, that you've got comments germane to the EIR,
25 where you would like to ask questions of the applicant,

1 then perhaps they could -- you could come back to it at
2 that point.

3 But I think any other questions of the applicant
4 about the project is going to be under I -- what is
5 currently item 11, which we're going to vote to continue
6 until January. So, again, we'll get the full presentation
7 at that point. We'll have the opportunity for full public
8 comment, broad questioning of the applicant at that point.

9 COMMISSIONER BARNES: Okay. So I --

10 CHAIR DECARDY: Does that make sense?

11 COMMISSIONER BARNES: It does.

12 So in the context of clarifying questions, my
13 clarifying questions would be unrelated at this point to
14 the EIR because I haven't heard that yet. So by
15 definition, I won't have anything. But thank you for
16 that.

17 CHAIR DECARDY: All right. Ms. Sandmeier, so
18 we're going to the EIR consultant; is that correct?

19 MS. SANDMEIER: Yes. That's right.

20 CHAIR DECARDY: Thank you.

21 MS. VIRAMONTES: Good evening, Commissioners and
22 members of the public. Thank you for coming to the
23 scoping session for the Parkline Master Plan project. My
24 name is Jessica Viramontes, and I work for the
25 environmental consulting firm, ICF. We will be preparing

1 the environmental review component for the project, and
2 I'm the project manager.

3 Should you have any questions after the
4 presentation regarding the environmental review process, I
5 will respond to them accordingly.

6 Next slide, please.

7 My presentation will cover the scoping process
8 and the environmental review process. I will also explain
9 how to submit comments on the scope of the EIR and
10 describe the next steps.

11 Next slide, please.

12 The EIR team consists of the City of Menlo Park
13 as the lead agency -- meaning, they have principal
14 responsibility for carrying out the project. ICF will be
15 the lead EIR consultant and will prepare all sections of
16 the EIR, with assistance from Hexagon for the
17 transportation analysis, KMA for the housing needs
18 assessment, and West G. Yost for the water supply
19 assessment.

20 Next slide, please.

21 The EIR is a tool for identifying physical
22 environmental impacts by using the analysis conducted by
23 our EIR team. The EIR is also used to inform the public
24 and decisionmakers about a project prior to project
25 approval, recommend ways to reduce impacts, and consider

1 alternatives to lessen identified physical environmental
2 impacts.

3 Next slide.

4 The EIR will summarize the environmental setting
5 and regulatory setting, as well as evaluate potential
6 environmental impacts. With respect to the two scenarios
7 that will be evaluated in the EIR, which are the 100
8 percent office scenario, and the 100 percent R&D scenario,
9 each section in the EIR will evaluate the most intense
10 scenario for the issue being analyzed. This will ensure
11 that the EIR evaluates the proposed project's maximum
12 potential environmental impact and that any future tenant
13 mix is within the scope of the evaluation in the EIR.

14 Variants are variations of a project at the same
15 project site, with the same objectives, background and
16 development controls, but with additions and changes from
17 the project whose inclusion may or may not reduce
18 environmental impacts.

19 As mentioned previously, the EIR will evaluate
20 the variants, which are the emergency reservoir variant
21 and the increased residential variant in detail, equal to
22 that of the proposed project.

23 Next slide, please.

24 The EIR will analyze a proposed project -- will
25 analyze whether the proposed project would have a

1 significant environmental impact related to the issues
2 shown on this slide. With respect to aesthetics, this
3 issue will likely be exempt, but will also likely be
4 analyzed in some capacity for informational purposes.

5 The EIR will also include a section for impacts
6 found less -- found less -- found to be less than
7 significant, including the following issues: Agriculture
8 and forestry resources, mineral resources, and wildfire.

9 In addition, alternatives to the project will be
10 analyzed to potentially reduce identified impacts. CEQA
11 guidelines requires the evaluation of a no-project
12 alternative. Other alternatives will also be considered
13 and will comply with CEQA.

14 Next slide, please.

15 This slide shows the general steps involved with
16 the CEQA process for this project. As most of you know,
17 the NOP, which we'll discuss next, was released earlier
18 this month, on December 2nd. The NOP comment period,
19 which is the scoping period, ends on January 9th, 2023.

20 Following the close of the scoping period, we'll
21 begin preparing the Draft EIR. When the Draft EIR is
22 released for public review, a public hearing will be held
23 to solicit comments on the adequacy of the EIR. Then a
24 Final EIR will be prepared that will address all of the
25 comments received during the Draft EIR review period. A

1 certification hearing for the final EIR will be held
2 before the Planning Commission and City Council.

3 After the EIR is certified, the project can then
4 be approved. Following approval of the project, a Notice
5 of Determination is issued.

6 Next slide.

7 As discussed previously, we are currently in the
8 scoping phase of the project. This is the initial stage
9 of the EIR process. The purpose of the scoping phase is
10 to gather public input, identify key environmental issues,
11 identify possible mitigation measures, and consider
12 possible project alternatives.

13 I want to note that the intent of tonight's
14 meeting, as well as the scoping phase, is not focused on
15 comments on the project itself or its merits. Instead,
16 comments should be focused on the potential environmental
17 impacts of the project.

18 Next slide, please.

19 You can submit comments on the scope of the EIR
20 via e-mail or via letter to Corinna Sandmeier, Acting
21 Principal Planner with the City of Menlo Park. You can
22 also speak tonight, and we will note your comments and
23 consider them during the preparation of the Draft EIR.

24 All comments must be received by January 9th,
25 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

1 Thank you again for coming tonight, and we look
2 forward to receiving your comments.

3 CHAIR DECARDY: Thank you, Ms. Viramontes.

4 Any clarifying questions before we turn to public
5 comment? And then we'll have an opportunity to come back,
6 as commissioners for questions, comments, and input into
7 the EIR. But for right now, before we go to public
8 comment, any clarifying questions?

9 All right. Let's open public comment.
10 Mr. Turner.

11 MR. PRUTER: Thank you, Chair DeCardy. At this
12 time, I see a couple of hands raised. So I'm happy to go
13 through that, with your permission.

14 So we'll have -- looks like three commenters now
15 have raised their hands. Let's start with -- I have
16 someone by the name of Peter.

17 Peter, I'm going to let you un-mute yourself, and
18 we will begin the timer. You will have three minutes to
19 speak. If you could please provide your name and
20 jurisdiction at the start of your comment, that will be
21 greatly appreciated. You'll be able to speak at this
22 time.

23 Thank you.

24 PETER CHOW: Hi, Planning Commission. My name is
25 Peter Chow. I'm a resident here in Burgess community,

1 adjacent to the site.

2 What I wanted to do is just express my continued
3 concern for the number of housing units. The committee
4 here has been very vocal about maintaining the original
5 plan, which was 400 units. And we worked -- and, you
6 know, with Lane Partners and expressing our concern, but
7 now, this additional study is for an additional 50 units.
8 That was not originally contemplated. And so I will be
9 listening and paying attention closely to the impact
10 report, Environment Impact Report, as well as the
11 transportation demand management studies.

12 So want to continue to express my concerns and,
13 you know, for not only the well-being of the local
14 community here in the Burgess community, but all of Menlo
15 Park because we do understand that the rate -- you know,
16 along Ravenswood and Middlefield is a high impact traffic
17 zone area.

18 Thanks.

19 CHAIR DECARDY: Thank you.

20 MR. PRUTER: Thank you for your comment.

21 Our next commenter is the name Jenny Michelle.
22 I'm going to un-mute you. And, again, please provide your
23 name and jurisdiction at this time.

24 Thank you very much. You have three minutes to
25 speak.

1 JENNY MICHELLE: Good evening, Chair,
2 Commissioners, members of the public, neighbors, staff.
3 My name is Jenny Michelle, from the Commonplace
4 Neighborhood blog. And I am very excited about this
5 project.

6 But I want to -- actually, opposite of the
7 previous speaker, want to encourage the applicant to be
8 more aggressive with your housing and your specific
9 approach to meeting and exceeding our residential housing
10 obligations and needs for all residents of all income
11 brackets. Right?

12 But how is the applicant being tied to the Fair
13 Housing Development in this specific way? So I'm just
14 trying to have the applicant and the commissioners and the
15 public tie this together for all the residents who don't
16 understand our obligations here.

17 I'm also interested in pressing the housing -- or
18 I'm sorry. The parking mandates. I think we should
19 reduce the minimums to include loading and ADA parking
20 only.

21 We should encourage slow streets to address the
22 safety concerns that we have with high traffic, with
23 single-use vehicles.

24 And I think there should be robust public
25 outreach, specifically addressing this delta where our

1 population doesn't understand what is being required of
2 us; to develop fair housing in all of our districts and
3 neighborhoods, including the low density neighborhoods
4 that are almost specifically using this vehicle traffic to
5 get through to where the food is; right? So that's where
6 the 10-minute neighborhood comes in.

7 So thank you for allowing me to speak again, and
8 I appreciate your public service. Thank you.

9 CHAIR DECARDY: Thank you.

10 MR. PRUTER: Thank you for your comment.

11 Our next commenter's name is Sue Connelly. I'm
12 going to un-mute you at this time. If you could please
13 provide your name and jurisdiction. You'll have three
14 minutes. Thank you.

15 SUE CONNELLY: Thank you. My name is Sue
16 Connelly. And I, too, am a resident of Burgess Classics.
17 And I grew up in the area here too. So I love Menlo Park.

18 And I'm very much in support of intelligent
19 development, but I am genuinely concerned about the scope
20 of the SRI project. And, again, we here at Burgess
21 Classics, the 33 homes here, are actually a legacy of SRI
22 property that they sold back in '99 to develop in order to
23 raise funds.

24 So I want SRI to be successful. We really
25 appreciate them. Yet, my concern is that there are many,

1 many outside advocacy groups that are pushing very hard to
2 increase the amount of housing in this one lot. And this
3 is also prior to the Stanford project, Middle Plaza
4 opening up and the traffic and school impact, water,
5 infrastructure costs, plus what Springline will be also
6 adding to this very high concentrated area at 400, plus 50
7 to 100, affordable housing units over and above the BMR of
8 15 percent. It already is a monumental amount on an area
9 that's already getting stressed already.

10 My chief concern is also the traffic safety,
11 because Laurel Street is a primary artery, and it's a safe
12 streets, safe bike lanes path. And there are still
13 concerns about driveways for, you know, 450 units dumping
14 right onto Laurel Street, which is already gridlocked and
15 congested.

16 The other issues are that -- you know, the water.
17 I'm really glad that they're planning on building a water
18 reservoir, but just overall, and especially in view of the
19 123 Independent Drive -- Independence Drive earlier spoken
20 about, we have a major drought continuing and probably
21 prolonged for who knows how many decades further. And we
22 keep adding more and more people and such high density.

23 So I think that rather than conceding to all the
24 outside pressures for increasing the amount of housing, we
25 need to reuse and rethink the other areas that we have

1 available around Menlo Park and not make a completely
2 deadlocked and gridlocked Ravenswood and Laurel area
3 corridor.

4 Thank you very much, Planning Commissioners, for
5 staying so late. And thank you for hearing us.

6 CHAIR DECARDY: Thank you.

7 MR. PRUTER: Thank you.

8 Our next speaker is named Brittani Baxter. I'm
9 going to let you un-mute yourself. If you provide your
10 name and jurisdiction. You may now speak. Thank you.

11 BRITTANI BAXTER: Hi. Good evening. I'm
12 Brittani Baxter, District 3 resident. Try to be quick.

13 I think there are a lot of really great
14 structural elements in this project that I hope can be
15 studied in the EIR. So just wanted to ask about a couple
16 of those.

17 Overall, I'm really excited by the project's
18 potential to just kind of be a great example of kind of a
19 future beyond cars. It's so central to downtown. It's so
20 walkable. I think we all hate, you know, car traffic and
21 kind of being stuck in traffic. But I think, with the
22 walkable amenities around that location -- it's an area
23 that I walk to often -- I think it's a really cool
24 opportunity.

25 So having heard earlier in tonight's meeting

1 that, you know, those existing -- kind of existing
2 conditions factor heavily into the EIR. I know I'm
3 personally able to meet a lot of my daily needs by just
4 actually walking around the neighborhood, walking to
5 downtown. So just hoping we can study those existing
6 amenities to the fullest.

7 I also do like the idea of the increased
8 residential variant. To me, it's really appealing because
9 I think this is a once-in-a-multi-generational opportunity
10 for this parcel to turn over. It's been, you know, since,
11 I think, the '60's, when a lot of these buildings were
12 built. And so as I think to the future with more people
13 walking and biking and taking transit.

14 We're right by Caltrain. We're right by the
15 schools. That is really fantastic, too, just to be able
16 to locate those homes in a place that makes sense, again,
17 for people to have other options, other than vehicles.

18 I also wanted to ask if there's an opportunity to
19 study options that do have that reduced parking minimum,
20 again, to sort of create those right conditions for people
21 to ditch their cars, walk or bike around.

22 In terms of circulation impacts, I do really like
23 that the site plan for this location opens up a lot of
24 bike and ped routes that make it easier to kind of
25 criss-cross by Menlo Park, by a lot of our schools; get to

1 the train, get to downtown.

2 And so in terms of circulation benefits, I
3 actually feel that that could be an improvement,
4 especially as we think about, again, alternatives to cars.

5 And according to our housing element, I know that
6 right now, 96 percent of people who work here in Menlo
7 Park, who are already here every day, part of the
8 community, are commuting in to the city from somewhere
9 else. So, again, given that location next to the train,
10 given that there is no net increase in office space, but
11 that we are adding homes to the community, I do wonder if
12 there's any way to kind of study that as well, given that
13 we have people coming in to work, and at the end of the
14 day, you know, maybe driving to an area that doesn't have
15 great public transit. Just seeing if there's any way to
16 kind of map that circulation plan a little bit better.

17 Overall, really excited to have this project in
18 the neighborhood. Really appreciate the open dialogue and
19 just excited to see what transpires.

20 Thank you so much.

21 CHAIR DECARDY: Thank you.

22 MR. PRUTER: Thank you. We have two hands raised
23 that remain. The next is a person named Steve P. I'm
24 going to un-mute you at this time. Provide your name and
25 jurisdiction to start. You have three minutes.

1 Thank you.

2 STEVE PANG: Hi. Can you hear me?

3 CHAIR DECARDY: Yes.

4 MR. PRUTER: Yes.

5 STEVE PANG: Okay. Thanks.

6 Hi. My name is Steve Pang. I'm an owner of one
7 of the Burgess Classic communities since it opened up in
8 1999. And couple quick comments.

9 So with regards to the Parkline project, I've
10 been involved from the start and have attended most of the
11 feedback sessions. And I have to say that most of us are
12 sort of disappointed in Parkline -- that none of the real
13 significant points that we've provided have been adopted
14 and, basically, we feel neglected and ignored.
15 Particularly like the number of units that we're talking
16 about, the egress of the cars of all the units onto Laurel
17 Street, instead of Ravenswood; the bicycle path
18 connectivity behind Burgess Classic communities and the
19 potential gathering of, say, un-homed people behind --
20 which is really a problem right now.

21 So it's funny. We -- I, at least, don't feel
22 like any of our -- my comments have been addressed
23 successfully by Parkline.

24 A couple quick points before I finish. With
25 regards to reducing parking space, parking spaces in these

1 developments, that, to me, seems like a non-starter
2 because these units are rental properties, where people
3 live there maybe two, three years. And, honestly, as a
4 car owner, if I know I'm only going to live in a place
5 only for two, three years, I'm not going to ditch a car
6 and just have to -- just have to buy a new one back
7 several years later. So anyone reasonably renting these
8 place, to me, will seem like -- will hang on to their
9 cars. And so there is the issue of a lot of cars -- you
10 know, up to 600 new cars, maybe a thousand cars, in the
11 neighborhood. And that's a real problem.

12 My final comments are with regards to the
13 Environmental Impact Report. Exactly, there's potentially
14 a thousand more cars in the neighborhood. And, you know,
15 we'd like to know how that's going to be addressed. You
16 know, is that going to be examined? Where is this traffic
17 going to go to on Ravenswood and Laurel? And how is it
18 going to impact our neighborhood, as well as adjoining
19 neighbors?

20 And the last one -- my last comment was with
21 regards to the habit -- the dedication of a certain part
22 of land to a homeless organization or some other
23 organization. So I heard what was happening with
24 Independent Stride, Habitat for Humanity, with a nice
25 plan. And something more definitive needs to be set down,

1 before any approval comes into play. Thank you.

2 CHAIR DECARDY: Thank you.

3 MR. PRUTER: Thank you. And our last hand raised
4 is a person named Gail Gorton. I'm going to let you
5 un-mute yourself at this time. You'll have three minutes.
6 Please provide your name and jurisdiction. Thank you.

7 GAIL GORTON: Good evening. I'm Gail Gorton, a
8 Burgess Classic resident. Thank you for your time
9 tonight.

10 What has been the primary focus of this project
11 is the housing portion. People seem to have forgotten
12 that there will be thousands of employees coming and going
13 from the site five days a week. The additional congestion
14 that this development is going to create is not limited to
15 the housing portion.

16 Traffic light changes at the corner of Laurel and
17 Ravenswood have not helped currently, and there are going
18 to be track changes in the future, train track changes at
19 Alma and Ravenswood. And I'm wondering if these are being
20 taken into consideration in the EIR.

21 In terms of the EIR, it's my understanding it
22 doesn't include the Burgess Classic neighborhood's request
23 to study and include an alternative option of no vehicular
24 access on Laurel Street to the large apartment complex.
25 The fact this was not included, despite what was my

1 understanding from Lane Developers saying it would be
2 studied, is disconcerting.

3 The Parkline project has continued to increase in
4 size. Yet, last month, Stanford's Hoover Institute
5 released a new study, which I suspect you are aware of,
6 stating that in 2021, California lost 152 corporate
7 headquarters. More than double the totals for each of the
8 three years, from 2018 to 2020.

9 I encourage the Planning Commission and the City
10 Council to consider how their current decisions are
11 impacting the future of Menlo Park. I understand you are
12 trying to meet housing element numbers, but those numbers
13 are going to be changing as the business climate changes
14 here in California. With the USGS site opening up, there
15 will be further opportunity to meet the numbers required.

16 I'm asking the Planning Commission to keep the
17 original number of the apartment complex proposal at 400
18 units; not to increase it to 450. The increase in units
19 seems to be driven by a goal to get to 68 units designated
20 as low and moderate income households. 15 percent of 450
21 is 68. Parkline has agreed to this. However, if you
22 increase 15 percent by a mere two points, to 17, and do
23 the math, 17 percent of 400 also equals 68. Considering
24 all that Lane Partners has to gain in this endeavor, I
25 can't imagine they would say no.

1 I'm also asking the Planning Commission to
2 require all apartment parking be underground. This large,
3 three- to five-story apartment complex is not in any way
4 congruent to the neighborhood where all current residences
5 are one or two stories.

6 Lastly, I encourage the commission to emphasize
7 active land use, not just pretty paths for our children
8 and families. Burgess Park is already packed and cannot
9 accommodate our new neighbors. The many individuals and
10 families who will be living in this densely populated
11 development need usable outdoor space for their mental and
12 physical health.

13 Thank you for your consideration.

14 CHAIR DECARDY: Thank you.

15 MR. PRUTER: And, Chair DeCardy, through the
16 Chair, there are no other hands raised at this time. If
17 you'd like to feel free to close, or we could wait for
18 public comment.

19 CHAIR DECARDY: Just give it a second.

20 All right. Still none?

21 MR. PRUTER: That is correct.

22 I apologize. We did not give an opportunity for
23 the members of the public to come forward.

24 CHAIR DECARDY: By all means, please come
25 forward.

1 PHILLIP BAHR: Thank you for having me tonight,
2 Commissioners. And thank you for your presentation
3 tonight. I feel like we've had a great education tonight.

4 I love the 123 Independence, and what they went
5 over and how a housing project -- and how they brought the
6 community together and how detailed it was. That was
7 great.

8 And then we've been talking about this project
9 with Parkline. I appreciate the Classics neighborhood,
10 and I agree with most of the comments that have been made
11 about the size of the project. I'm still a little unclear
12 about the count. I think it's 450, plus 100, plus 50. So
13 a total of 600. But if somebody has a better answer, let
14 me know. But I just look at the documents, and that's
15 what it comes up to.

16 I've commented on some of this before, but I'll
17 just hit the highlights. And one is the traffic and the
18 safety. Yes, it's a big deal about all the traffic coming
19 out onto Laurel, but also onto Pine. Across from Pine
20 Street, that's a disaster right there. Right now, you
21 can't even turn right and turn left as it is. And so with
22 that many more cars, it's never going to work. So they
23 really need to just abort that entry.

24 And I don't have the answer for it. But maybe
25 with some further study and the minds, they can come up

1 with other suggestions because I don't want to say that
2 it's not a great project, and we need the housing. I'm
3 just saying the envisioning of it right now.

4 The second thing is the building setback. It
5 would be good that it's not so close to the road. And I
6 think, along with the building setback, it's the housing
7 height and the number of stories.

8 During the pre-meetings that we had with Lane
9 Partners and with the architect, we went over many things,
10 but one of them was the height of the building along
11 Ravenswood and Laurel and keeping with the neighborhood.
12 One to two stories would be great. And then set back.
13 And then, as you go -- so that you can have the
14 residential character because that side has been on Menlo
15 Park for 70 years. So that's about when those houses were
16 built.

17 And then the final -- so I'm saying that the
18 building height along those streets is just too tall. And
19 I can see it, as an architect, that that is, like, a
20 four-story building. Originally, it was one to two. Then
21 it's three. Now it's four. And it blocks off all the sun
22 in the morning coming onto that intersection at Laurel and
23 Ravenswood.

24 And then the final thing is the site master
25 planning and design of it. I think, get as much housing

1 as you can, but I think, get it in a way that doesn't
2 impact the neighborhood.

3 And also, in terms of a master plan for SRI, I
4 look at it -- and I've done hundreds of master plans for
5 large projects, like hospitals and research labs. And to
6 me, either having an iconic building or something that has
7 the labs with the spaces that are for collaboration. They
8 just have a great opportunity.

9 And right now, they've turned it into a
10 residential, and I'm not sure why. Maybe, if I understood
11 the program better, I could speak better to that.

12 Thank you very much. And my name is Phillip
13 Bahr, and I'm a resident of -- on Pine Street. Thank you.

14 CHAIR DECARDY: Thank you very much.

15 Any more public comment hands, Mr. Pruter?

16 MR. PRUTER: At this time, I see no more.

17 CHAIR DECARDY: All right. We'll go ahead and
18 close public comment.

19 That brings it back to the dias. Again, we're
20 not voting on anything. This is for commissioner feedback
21 or questions relevant to the EIR this evening.

22 Who would like to begin?

23 Commissioner Riggs.

24 COMMISSIONER RIGGS: Thank you. Recognizing the
25 time, I'll try to be brief.

1 I would like to know how we would phrase -- and I
2 guess this would be through the Chair to staff -- how we
3 will address the impacts relative to the current
4 situation.

5 Are we addressing the proposal and their
6 variance, compared with the square footage of SRI or of
7 the actual average occupancy over the last several years?
8 I ask this in the context, remembering that when we
9 studied projects for El Camino Real, going back ten years,
10 we realized we had to compare the impacts with recent
11 usage, not with the fully occupied usage, since the
12 projects had been very much underpopulated for many years.

13 CHAIR DECARDY: That's a question to staff?

14 COMMISSIONER RIGGS: That's a question to staff,
15 yes.

16 Are we comparing with theoretical occupancy or
17 actual occupancy over the last, say, three or four years?

18 MS. VIRAMONTES: Corinna, I can take this, if
19 you'd like.

20 MS. SANDMEIER: Yeah. That would be great.
21 Thank you.

22 MS. VIRAMONTES: Okay. Perfect.

23 So I just want to clarify. The project team, you
24 know, including the City staff, are currently confirming
25 the approach for the CEQA baseline, which will be, you

1 know, what we use to measure the project impacts against
2 -- or as well as the project variants. And so we're still
3 working through those kind of questions. It will likely
4 be the -- you know, the baseline of the timing that the
5 NOP was released.

6 And I just also wanted to clarify that we will be
7 studying an -- we will likely be studying an actual
8 existing conditions at the site.

9 COMMISSIONER RIGGS: I apologize. Our audio has
10 not been what it used to be. And the repetitiveness of your
11 speech, coupled with that, makes it a little bit hard to
12 follow, frankly, what you just said.

13 But I think you ended by saying the baseline
14 would be actual recent usage?

15 MS. VIRAMONTES: Correct.

16 COMMISSIONER RIGGS: All right. Thank you.

17 And then, in terms of the projected occupancy of
18 the -- either office or R&D buildings, am I correct we're
19 using, for office space, 250-square-foot per occupant?

20 MS. VIRAMONTES: I believe that we're still
21 working through those questions as well. But we'll be
22 sure that the generation rate for employees will be
23 conservative enough so that the impacts identified in the
24 EIR will capture the possible future tenant mix and
25 employees that we'll generate by the project.

1 COMMISSIONER RIGGS: I appreciate that because my
2 concern is, these are -- in a sense, these are spec office
3 buildings. And they could just as well be occupied by
4 startups and by other tech-oriented companies with
5 relatively high density use of desks, as they could be by
6 VCs, with very low use of desks.

7 And although we are hearing of companies that are
8 only asking their employees to come in a certain number of
9 days per week -- even, for example, my friend's company,
10 they gather once per week. But on that one day, they all
11 come in. So that would be relevant.

12 And then, of the -- for the project variant with
13 increased housing, I probably read and forgot how much
14 increased housing that would be. I mean, right now, we
15 have 550 as the outside.

16 Would the variant be the 550, or is the variant
17 going to be something like 700 to 800?

18 MS. VIRAMONTES: The variant would be 50 more
19 residential units under the project. So it would be a
20 total of 600 units.

21 COMMISSIONER RIGGS: All right. I would like to
22 suggest that since it's a variant, for the sake of an
23 environmental review, that the difference between the
24 proposed and the variant be significantly different. And
25 so I would suggest at least 150 additional units, if not

1 250, which, you know, to those listening, that does not in
2 any way imply that I think the project should be larger.
3 It does mean that we would like the information that would
4 result from seeing additional housing here.

5 We still don't fully know, until the EIR comes
6 out, whether having more housing here is actually a
7 benefit to transportation, for example. Because if the
8 vast majority of people who work here -- and the SRI
9 campus, until recent years, was a significant draw for
10 people. They've all been driving in.

11 If this changes to more transit-oriented
12 development, sometimes the new housing onsite will have a
13 back effect on those who commute in. And perhaps that's
14 wishful thinking, but the EIR, I think, is more likely to
15 tell us than my guessing or anyone else's.

16 And I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

17 CHAIR DECARDY: Other commissioners?

18 Vice Chair Harris?

19 VICE CHAIR HARRIS: Yes. Thank you so much for
20 that introduction.

21 I would agree with my colleague, Commissioner
22 Riggs, that to study just 50 more units is going to be
23 less -- going to give us less information than studying at
24 least 150 additional units. And I can't remember, but I
25 don't think that that's coupled with reduced office.

1 But I'm wondering if it would be possible to do a
2 variant where we are increasing the housing, coupled with
3 reducing the office, as we struggle with our housing
4 situation because as I was looking at the map, I was
5 thinking that existing building F -- if, after the rest
6 were done, they moved those folks to some of these newer
7 offices, that would provide a nice extra area, right over
8 in the residential zone, to build a lot more housing. So
9 that's a thought.

10 And then the other was to think about reducing
11 the parking. We talk about this about every time. But
12 reducing the parking significantly. So that would be
13 something else that I would want to see studied. Just
14 some thoughts.

15 CHAIR DECARDY: Commissioner Do.

16 COMMISSIONER DO: I agree with the previous
17 comments, and I want to add on to Vice Chair Harris'
18 comment about drastically reducing parking.

19 I think later on in the staff report, I think
20 some parking rates from the Bayfront area were cited. And
21 I just wanted to add, this is an area much closer to
22 transit than the Bayfront, with Caltrain and El Camino
23 Real bus route. So I think even within a half mile.

24 So I just want to echo what Vice Chair Harris
25 said.

1 CHAIR DECARDY: Commissioner Barnes.

2 COMMISSIONER BARNES: Question through the Chair
3 to staff, in particular to the folks who are doing the
4 legwork on the EIR. This is kind of a process question
5 because I don't really understand how this works. And to
6 the extent you can help me understand, it would be
7 fantastic. And what it's specific to is to the question
8 around parking. And more specifically to the extent to
9 which the EIR can illuminate the various discussions
10 around parking.

11 We -- to say more about that, we have a lot of
12 discussions about reducing the number of spaces, and we
13 have assumptions about reductions in greenhouse gases
14 associated with that written reductions, and congestion
15 associated with that.

16 And then we also make assumptions around
17 reductions being doable, feasible; actually, in practice,
18 working. And I don't have any background in this. I
19 think the suppositions around reducing parking are good.

20 What I'd like to know is, is the EIR the
21 mechanism that can illuminate, you know, a database
22 approach to, you know, what happens when you reduce
23 parking? What are the specific impacts of those? Has it,
24 you know, borne out in other jurisdictions? What's the
25 role of the EIR specific to parking and the discussions

1 around parking? I'd love to hear a little bit more about
2 that.

3 MS. VIRAMONTES: Sure. I can tackle that one,
4 and others can add on as needed.

5 I do want to clarify that an EIR is not the
6 mechanism for analyzing the impacts of reducing parking.
7 Specifically, parking is not a topic that is required as
8 an environmental issue that is required to be analyzed
9 under CEQA.

10 And also I want to note that it's been found that
11 generally, reductions of parking do not reduce
12 environmental effects. But I know that my colleague,
13 Kirsten Chapman on this call -- or at this meeting, might
14 have a little bit more to add.

15 Kirsten, is there anything else you want to chime
16 in on?

17 MS. CHAPMAN: Hi. I'm Kirsten Chapman. I'm with
18 ICF. I'm helping Jessica with this EIR.

19 And we actually recently completed the EIR for
20 the Willow Village project. And we did prepare a lengthy
21 master response in the Final EIR that discussed how
22 parking and environmental impacts are not actually
23 correlated. And we explained why this is not a reason
24 that we can use to reduce environmental impacts by
25 reducing parking.

1 So without getting into those details, that is
2 where we recently prepared the response. And, yeah. As
3 Jessica mentioned, it's not a CEQA topic. Parking is not
4 a CEQA topic. And so we generally do not discuss this.

5 But where we will have a robust discussion will
6 be in the alternatives section, and we can discuss why a
7 reduced parking alternative would not actually reduce the
8 environmental impacts.

9 COMMISSIONER BARNES: And if you would just take
10 a moment, define "environmental impacts" in the context
11 with which you're using it, when you say, would not reduce
12 environmental impacts. What's a practical or what's an
13 example of that?

14 MS. CHAPMAN: Well, so transportation impacts
15 like traffic impacts would result in greenhouse gas
16 impacts, air quality impacts, noise impacts. But reducing
17 the parking in and of itself would not reduce the amount
18 of trips to a project site. It would likely result in
19 people driving around neighborhoods, looking for parking.
20 They still need places to park.

21 What is better, rather -- or not better, but what
22 works generally more or what does work more than reducing
23 parking is to have a TDM plan, which is required in the
24 City of Menlo Park, to require the workers on the project
25 site and the residents to take more public transportation

1 or shuttles. That reduces trips.

2 But the reduction in parking generally does not
3 reduce trips, which then has an environmental effect of
4 putting out fewer greenhouse gases and fewer air quality
5 emissions and noise.

6 COMMISSIONER BARNES: Thank you for that.

7 And I assure my fellow commissioners, I wasn't
8 leading the witness on that. I didn't know how it was
9 going to get answered. But I don't know. I always want
10 to come back to testing our assumptions. And that was
11 informative for me, because I didn't -- I didn't know the
12 answer to that.

13 Okay. So I'll probably come back with another
14 one, but thank you for -- for answering that. Appreciate
15 that. And I'll come back with something else.

16 Back to you, Chair.

17 CHAIR DECARDY: Yeah. Sorry. That's red meat
18 for me.

19 So, Ms. Chapman, I don't know if you were there
20 for the Willow EIR, but that -- the answer then was
21 entirely unsatisfactory. The reason is because of a lot
22 of assumptions about leakage, that there's not alternative
23 transportation; and so, therefore, people drive around
24 neighborhoods. And we couldn't do a reduced parking
25 because we've got parking minimums in Menlo Park, which is

1 what we just talked about with the last EIR.

2 So I just -- I encourage you all when you do this
3 EIR, to be as careful as possible when you're explaining
4 why it doesn't have impacts because an answer without that
5 is actually misleading. So that's first point.

6 And then, secondly, for me is an encouragement to
7 find a way in the EIR that can actually tackle this
8 question because it is the one that comes up again and
9 again and again and again. And it just came up in
10 multiples of the public comments with the concerns of the
11 residents who live nearby right now.

12 So, again, I'm tired of EIRs that don't serve the
13 public interest of our community. And I appreciate you
14 all are doing your jobs, and I appreciate you're boxed in
15 by a whole set of stuff. But somebody in this mix has got
16 to do a better job for our community. This is a lot of
17 money, and a lot of time spent on these things.

18 So perhaps the alternative is a
19 massively-increased TDM plan. And I'm fine to do TDM over
20 parking. If the -- if we have a massive TDM plan that
21 says it has to be reduced by 40 or 50 or 60 percent, and
22 then that's a way to be able to look if there's an
23 environmental benefit.

24 And if they want to keep on building the parking
25 garages, when there's going to be no cars in them, that

1 would be a massive mistake. But that's fine, frankly, if
2 that's the answer on this.

3 So I'll just go back to my frustration with just
4 about every EIR I've seen in four years now. And this one
5 is, I'm concerned, headed in that same direction. So I
6 just -- I appreciate the presentation, and I appreciate
7 and understand how -- the way that we have a community
8 that does not have good alternative transportation and
9 because we have parking minimums puts parameters for what
10 you all can do on an EIR.

11 But I would really encourage you to find creative
12 ways around that to actually give a document that would be
13 useful to the community in understanding what those
14 impacts are, and what the benefits might be, if we change
15 those patterns and those behaviors. That would be a true
16 benefit to the discussion of this potentially-fabulous
17 project that is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity -- that
18 never again are we going to get 62 acres within a block of
19 a train station. And we've got to begin looking at it
20 right with the EIR, if we're going to continue to look at
21 it right through the whole project.

22 So I appreciated Commissioner Barnes, your
23 question. And I assume you knew it was headed toward me
24 on that. But that is the one interest I had is when you
25 do alternatives on this project, and if there's a "no

1 project" alternative, again, I hope we don't come back
2 with three alternatives that ends up with the Goldilocks
3 porridge in the middle that's just warm enough because
4 that's just not useful for us.

5 And I hope you can find ways that can make it
6 useful for our community to use this information that
7 you're going to come up with and your expertise to our
8 benefit.

9 Other commissioner input on the EIR in this
10 scoping session?

11 COMMISSIONER RIGGS: Yes.

12 CHAIR DECARDY: Commissioner Riggs?

13 COMMISSIONER RIGGS: Thank you. I have to admit,
14 I had the same reaction as Chair DeCardy. I think anyone
15 who has worked in Manhattan or, frankly, even San
16 Francisco, yes, you can drive to your office at 6th and
17 Market and then cruise around and look for a surface spot.
18 But that gets really old. And, yes, 60 or 80 people might
19 manage to find street parking spaces until it gets posted
20 two-hour zones. But 600 are not going to. And I think
21 it's quite counter-intuitive for us to hear that reducing
22 -- eliminating places to park is not going to have an
23 effect with how many cars come in to work.

24 And I think we realize that only so many people
25 can take Caltrain because if you're coming in from

1 Hayward, Caltrain simply doesn't go there. And, frankly,
2 if you come in from the Belmont Hills, Caltrain doesn't go
3 there. But a whole lot of people come from San Francisco.
4 A whole lot of people come from San Jose. And if we don't
5 test the waters, as Mr. DeCardy has stressed, we won't
6 have information that we can use. I do not think if it's
7 true that we are not taking reduced parking seriously
8 because of existing codes -- that that should stand in the
9 way. And perhaps this body needs to clarify.

10 When a project comes before us, the result is a
11 change in codes. And the change in codes may be buildable
12 height, it may be density, it may be parking ratios
13 applying to that site. So all items are in flux. And if
14 we can benefit from further information, that would be
15 extremely important.

16 And it may indeed turn out that in real life, if
17 you take away all parking places and have 10,000 people
18 report to work, they'll still drive, then we've learned a
19 very surprising lesson. But I think we have to see it.
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIR DECARDY: Other commissioner comments on
22 any aspect of the scoping of the EIR for input at this
23 time?

24 Commissioner Barnes.

25 COMMISSIONER BARNES: And I must apologize. I'm

1 scrolling furiously back up and down in the staff report.
2 And I'm looking for the specific alternatives. And I
3 guess I don't see it laid out.

4 I'm going to ask this question in real time. Is
5 there a specific matrix that talks to the different
6 alternatives that are being discussed that will be
7 underwritten in the EIR? What am I missing?

8 And I'll ask this question through staff. Thank
9 you.

10 Excuse me. Through Chair.

11 MS. VIRAMONTES: Corinna, would you like me to go
12 first?

13 MS. SANDMEIER: Sure.

14 MS. VIRAMONTES: Okay. I just want to clarify,
15 we haven't yet determined the alternatives for this
16 project. The typical process is to evaluate the project's
17 impact and then develop alternatives that would reduce or
18 avoid any significant environmental issues.

19 So to back up a little bit, you kind of see what
20 the potential impacts of the project are. And then you
21 develop alternatives to kind of help the public understand
22 what alternatives to the project there would be that would
23 reduce the project's environmental impacts.

24 But also to back up again, there are project
25 variants under consideration; one being the emergency

1 reservoir variant, and the other being the increased
2 residential variant. And those will be analyzed
3 throughout the EIR, to similar level of detail as the
4 project. So there's variants, and then there's
5 alternatives.

6 COMMISSIONER BARNES: Got it.

7 So the baseline EIR is based on the project
8 applicant's project description, in terms of densities and
9 intensity; is that right?

10 MS. VIRAMONTES: Exactly. Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER BARNES: Got it. Okay.

12 And I -- this is a -- this is a unique location
13 in Menlo Park that brings together the live, work, play.
14 So thank you for that. This is a commentary. This is a
15 unique portion of Menlo Park that brings together the
16 live, work, play aspect of our city. And I -- I think the
17 commercial -- the office, the commercial pieces of this
18 are very appropriate. And I wouldn't be inclined to see a
19 reduction in that for the purposes just straight up from
20 what the applicant has proposed.

21 I think, from a master plan perspective, it's a
22 net neutral, in terms of space. And I think it's wholly
23 appropriate for this area, for the mix of the different
24 uses for this site and for what it brings to the city.
25 And I wouldn't be inclined to be supportive of a reduction

1 in that component of it. Thank you.

2 CHAIR DECARDY: Commissioner Riggs has left, for
3 those that couldn't see.

4 Other commissioner comments on this item, which
5 is H1, the scoping for the EIR?

6 To staff, have you received what you --

7 COMMISSIONER BARNES: I'm sorry. One more
8 question.

9 CHAIR DECARDY: -- were after this evening?
10 I'm sorry. Commissioner Barnes, please.

11 COMMISSIONER BARNES: Thank you.

12 As it relates to the project itself as being
13 contemplated in the EIR, when we saw the site plan
14 earlier, it had a recreational field at the corner of
15 Middlefield and Ravenswood, and then it seemed to carve
16 out around the church.

17 So my question is, is the project scope
18 contemplating the church site being part of the project or
19 not part of the project?

20 And that's kind of a two-part question. One is,
21 you've got that parking which abuts Ravenswood and
22 Middlefield and another is the actual physical structure
23 of the church itself and the parking that's behind it.

24 What's in the project scope?

25 CHAIR DECARDY: That is a question to the

1 applicant or staff --

2 Ms. Sandmeier?

3 MS. SANDMEIER: Yes. Through the Chair, the
4 church is not part of the project site. There is an
5 agreement between SRI and the church to provide some
6 surface parking to the church.

7 And I know that's -- I think that's influenced
8 the site plan a little bit, that requirement to continue
9 providing some parking there.

10 COMMISSIONER BARNES: Thank you for that.

11 So through the Chair, the -- so the project
12 contemplates a wrap-around, in effect, where you've got --
13 and if we could look at the actual site plan itself, that
14 might provide some quick clarity in this.

15 Can someone pull that up? I think it was on one
16 of the slides in the project introduction.

17 MS. SANDMEIER: Yeah. Vanh, it was slide 5 on my
18 presentation. If you can pull that up.

19 COMMISSIONER TATE: Excuse me. Chair DeCardy,
20 I'm leaving the meeting.

21 CHAIR DECARDY: All right. Thank you,
22 Commissioner Tate.

23 COMMISSIONER BARNES: Okay. So it -- so the
24 proposed project encircles the improvements that are the
25 church, in a sense.

1 MS. SANDMEIER: Yeah. That's right. The church
2 is its own parcel.

3 COMMISSIONER BARNES: And the parking behind the
4 church -- I'm sorry -- runs with the project or doesn't
5 run with the project?

6 MS. SANDMEIER: That parking is part of the
7 Parkline project. But there's an agreement where the SRI
8 -- or Parkline is required to provide parking to the
9 church. And maybe the applicant can speak to that a
10 little bit more.

11 MR. MURRAY: Please. Sure. Just to add a little
12 bit more detail.

13 So kind of that white carve-out on Ravenswood,
14 that's the church-owned property. So there are two
15 buildings there that are owned by the church, not part of
16 the project scope. However, the surface parking around it
17 is part of Parkline. It's owned by SRI.

18 But the church has an easement to 125 parking
19 stalls adjacent to the church. So we're maintaining that
20 in the -- in our project scope, as we're required.

21 COMMISSIONER BARNES: Got it. Thank you.

22 And thank you to our fellow commissioners here
23 for your forebarence with that question.

24 That's all. Thank you.

25 CHAIR DECARDY: Ms. Sandmeier, have you had

1 whatever you need from commissioners on scoping of the EIR
2 this evening?

3 MS. SANDMEIER: Yes. If there's no more comments
4 from commissioners, that's...

5 CHAIR DECARDY: All right. Any final comments or
6 initial comments from any commissioners at this time?

7 All right. I'm going to go ahead and close Item
8 H1 this evening. And thank you.

9 And thank you to the consultant for the
10 presentation, for clearly laying out what's going to
11 happen, and appreciate all the work you're going to be
12 doing.

13 (Whereupon, Agenda Item H1 ended.)

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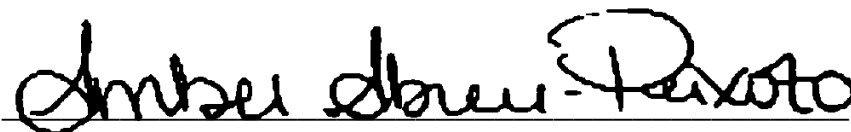
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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, AMBER ABREU-PEIXOTO, hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings were taken in shorthand by me, a Certified Shorthand Reporter of the State of California, and was thereafter transcribed into typewriting, and that the foregoing transcript constitutes a full, true, and correct report of the proceedings which took place;

That I am a disinterested person to the said action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 27th day of January, 2023.

Handwritten signature of Amber Abreu-Peixoto in black ink, written over a horizontal line.

AMBER ABREU-PEIXOTO, CSR No. 13546

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