

CAMPUS/COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of January 21, 2021 Meeting

PRESENT

Manu Agni
Zaccary Bradt
Jorge Cortes (Co-chair; for Janis Jenkins)
Tawnee Gomez
Ken Hall
John Hughes
Jeff Kaplan (Co-chair)
Francisco Salinas
Marlene Shaver
Frank Silva
Cristy Winter

ABSENT

Steven Dow
Robert Frazier
Joshua Kohn

CAMPUS PLANNING STAFF

Ginger Stout
Robert Clossin
Raeanon Hartigan
Anu Delouri
Elyse Sanchez
Todd Pitman

GUESTS/CONSULTANTS

Kyle Fiddelke, OJB
Steve Jackson, AVC-Resource Management and Planning
Bryan Hooks, Facilities Management
Jade d'Alpoim Guedes
Jason Kayne, Facilities Management
Ji Song, Nanotechnology
Juli Smith, Capital Program Management
Michelle Phuong Thi Bui, GSA
Roberto Meza, Police Department
Stephanie Ellsworth, Transportation Services
Walt Kanzler, Design Development Services
Josh Kavanagh, Transportation Services
Curt Lutz, Transportation Services
Mehran Abolfathi, Clark Construction

BUSINESS ITEM: APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the October 15th, 2020 meeting were unanimously approved without further comment.

COMMENT TO DRB: PEPPER CANYON EAST RIM MULTIMODAL PATH & BIORETENTION (Kyle Fiddelke)

Rae Hartigan reminded the Committee they've seen parts of this presentation in the past and introduced the Project Manager, Juli Smith. Smith reminded everyone that Office of James Burnett - Landscape Architects (OJB) was part of the design team for the Pepper Canyon West Housing project that was put on hold due to the pandemic. Part of that project was to restore the canyon and provide a multimodal pathway on the west side of the canyon to access the LRT station from Gilman Drive. When the Pepper Canyon West Housing project was put on hold the campus determined that the restoration of the canyon and the installation of a multimodal path still needed to occur. The path was moved to the east side of the canyon so that it could stay in place when the Pepper Canyon West Housing Project moves forward on the west side of the Canyon.

Kyle Fiddelke with OJB presented the context of the project. A strong desire exists to connect east campus housing to the LRT station, via the Gilman Bridge. Several projects in the surrounding area will become new destinations, including Design and Innovation, the Pepper Canyon Amphitheater, and the LRT station. Fiddelke reminded the Committee of the previous plans to connect Gilman Drive to the Amphitheater with an accessible pathway on the west side of Pepper Canyon, incorporated into Pepper Canyon West Housing public realm spaces. With that housing project on hold, this trail would connect on the eastern edge of the canyon, and would expand upon the bioretention basin incorporated into the SANDAG's LRT project at the bottom of the canyon. Check dams used to slow water flow would be incorporated along the slopes of the canyon. A 16 foot wide multimodal path is proposed which would require up to 9 foot tall retaining walls along existing canyon grades. Retaining walls would be planted with vines to visually conceal them.

Considerations along the multi-modal path include shade trees, drought tolerant planting, lighting, and maintaining clear views and sight lines throughout the canyon to preserve views and enhance safety. The path will narrow where it connects to the LRT station to discourage cart use and slow micromobility travelers. Lighting and a blue Police safety light is proposed as well as security cameras to ensure continued safety.

Fiddelke shared the plant palette, including plants to screen the retaining walls. Juli Smith informed everyone that various projects are responsible for different parts of the canyon restoration and the full vision of the canyon would be completed with the future Pepper Canyon West Housing project.

The Open Space Committee reviewed the presentation and had the following comments:

1. Plant material and design - The Committee appreciated the efforts to provide a sustainable and maintainable plant palette and applauded the incorporation of plants native to California.
2. Greenwall - The Committee asked for additional detail on the specified block wall and encouraged the team to work with facilities maintenance staff to maximize planting success.
3. Safety & Lighting – The Committee shared concerns regarding safety and lighting due to adjacency of both housing and public transit at this location.

4. Wayfinding & Access – The Committee acknowledged the complexity and contextual elements of the surrounding area, and suggested the need to provide a sense of arrival from all entry points as well as ADA access to and from the proposed trail systems and the future housing.

John Hughes explained that the VC of Student Affairs has concerns regarding access for those with disabilities. Access around Campus is a high priority and Student Affairs has offered to aid in finding solutions. Fiddelke mentioned the proposed pathway is an interim condition and the fully ADA accessible path will be implemented with the Pepper Canyon West project. Hughes understands this is a phased project, but asked if there are physical solutions for access in the first phase. Frank Silva agreed that ADA should be considered from the beginning of projects. Robert Clossin informed everyone that accessibility is a high priority on every project, however the grades of canyon make constructing pathways with gentler slopes extremely difficult. The design team will study any opportunities to improve access. Walt Kanzler noted that Triton Mobility could help fill accessibility gaps during this interim condition. Hughes followed up with offering Student Affairs as a partner in identifying a solution.

Pitman stated taking a broader look at the surrounding areas for ADA access may show opportunities that have yet to be explored. This project focuses on the connection from the southeast portion of the pathway at Gilman Drive to the LRT station. Smith pointed out this area is not proximate to the main campus amenities and there is another LRT station on the East Campus.

The Committee was supportive of the project design, however recommended further review of the project with respect to providing adequate ADA access in this part of the campus.

BUSINESS ITEM: THEATRE DISTRICT LLN UPDATE (Robert Clossin)

Robert Clossin shared the construction began for the project. Fencing has been erected and major excavation is proposed to begin in June with a planned project completion of fall 2023. The project will provide 2,000 student beds, academic spaces and approximately 1,200 underground parking spaces. The project manager is working closely with Revelle College and the Theatre District representatives to keep everyone apprised of the activities.

BUSINESS ITEM: LA JOLLA INNOVATION CENTER (Robert Clossin)

Robert Clossin presented a unique opportunity for a private/public partnership (P3) to construct a project adjacent to campus at the southwest intersection of La Jolla Village Drive and Villa La Jolla Drive. The Rock Bottom restaurant closed for business and the site is being imagined as a location for University Extension and Health Sciences programs. The existing leased buildings in this location do not meet University seismic standards so a new facility would accommodate these relocations and in addition the project would provide space for University Extension (and a relocation from its existing temporary buildings located along North Torrey Pines Road). An existing pedestrian bridge connects the Health Sciences West neighborhood to this location and it is proximate to two LRT stations within 1/3 mile allowing for community access. The Regents would purchase

about an acre to develop an approximately 100-foot high building (approximately 105,000 GSF) on the site with four levels of parking below the building. A small ground floor cafe is envisioned.

The project site is located at a low elevation and the building height would fit within the heights of the surrounding buildings. No coastal views are impacted at this site. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will include a visual analysis and photo simulations. This project was not contemplated in the 2018 LRDP, so is not tiered off the LRDP EIR. The EIR will be out for public review in February, with a public hearing in mid-February. The project is targeting the May 2021 Board of Regents meeting for approval, with an anticipated construction completion date of mid-2023.

Jorge Cortes inquired about access from campus. Clossin stated site improvements would be included with the project to improve access and encourage pedestrian, bike and micromobility access, and proximate bus and shuttle access will need to be studied. The project site is also within 1/3 mile from two LRT stations (Nobel Station and VA Station). Restriping of the La Jolla Village Drive & Villa La Jolla Drive intersection is being considered and that intersection will also be improved with adaptive traffic signals that will improve circulation and reduce traffic congestion. Walt Kanzler pointed out this building will provide accessible parking within a total of 275 parking spaces.

BUSINESS ITEM: URBAN DESIGN CHALLENGE UPDATE (Raeanon Hartigan)

Hartigan shared a view of the Pepper Canyon Amphitheater from the approximate location of the LRT station. Rupertus Walk is envisioned to lead people from the station to University Center, however with Triton Pavilion on pause the walkway will lead people to the existing situation on Russell Lane. The Triton Pavilion project had envisioned extensive public realm improvements to enhance connectivity. In partnership, Transportation Services and Campus Planning held a student challenge to envision tactical improvements to the area to make improvements for the interim condition before Triton Pavilion is constructed and the ultimate public realm improvements are implemented. The challenge was held virtually during the course of fall quarter. The student teams proposed small scale interventions that serve a larger purposed in the short term, are financially responsible, and are scalable. Part of including students in the challenge was to allow students to show the campus how it can better serve their needs, help students practice persuading others to support their ideas, and to inform future design decisions.

A total of 4 student teams participated and included students from a diverse set of backgrounds and majors. Internship credit was offered to certain majors. Work groups were put together to identify the most feasible ideas and solutions.

Hartigan shared the team concepts which included potential interventions like surface painting, adding seating areas in parking lots that will be taken offline, limiting vehicular access, increasing micromobility focus areas, addition of art installations, and partnering with Study Abroad and the Visual Arts community to showcase their programs.

Implementation of ideas is expected by the time the LRT opens for riders, which is anticipated in mid-November 2021.

ACTION ITEM: HEALTH SCIENCES WEST NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING STUDY AREA (Raeanon Hartigan)

Hartigan presented the 72 acre study area boundaries of the Health Sciences West Neighborhood Study Area (Study) which includes the area east and south of Gilman Drive and west of Villa La Jolla Drive, and includes the surface parking lots south of the VA property. The neighborhood was formerly called “School of Medicine” but is also home to the School of Pharmacy and the School of Public Health so to be more inclusive it is now called ‘Health Sciences West’.

This Study will replace the previous neighborhood study completed in 2000, will align with the 2018 LRDP and the Chancellor’s Strategic Plan.

A Neighborhood Planning Study examines how to make the neighborhood more cohesive, how it integrates with surrounding areas, identifies maximum heights, massing of buildings, setbacks of buildings, parking structure locations, service access, and develops an open space framework. Additionally, landscape and building design guidelines will be developed to guide future project designs. A concept plan for utility improvements including phasing and surrounding area dependencies will also be considered.

Endorsement of the Study area is requested. A work group will be created to oversee the Study. Perkins-Eastman has been hired as the urban planning firm to do the Study. The Study will be reviewed by Open Space Committee, C/CPC, Campus Leadership, and DRB, and has an expected completion date of fall 2021.

Ken Hall asked how the VA LRT station connects bikes and peds to this neighborhood. Clossin explained there is not the premiere access we’d want from that station. The VA will be constructing a new spinal cord research facility soon and they have expressed some interest in the past about acquiring the existing parking lots to the south that are Regents property. There may be room for improvements while working with the VA. Josh Kavanagh explained the potential to widen Villa La Jolla and increase connections to the VA LRT station which will be examined in the Study.

Hall asked if Rita Atkinson housing could be expanded in the future. Clossin said it will be examined. Jeff Kaplan stated the Pharmacy program will likely expand, and other future schools may be proposed in the future, but the neighborhood has constrained expansion capabilities.

The Committee endorsed the Study area.

BUSINESS ITEM: GILMAN DRIVE CORRIDOR STUDY (Ginger Stout)

Ginger Stout described how the Gilman Drive Corridor Study team is working closely with the HSW NPS team to best identify the best solutions to create safe and efficient modes of travel for a wide range of users along Gilman Drive, one of the major circulation corridors and the primary roadway through the campus core. Kimley Horn and Associates is working on both projects.

Considerations taken into account will include Health Sciences West Neighborhood, Pepper Canyon neighborhood redevelopment, and Triton Pavilion. These areas are each expected to densify over the coming years. The Gilman Transit Hub is utilized by MTS buses, campus shuttles and various other users. The LRT Central Campus Station in Pepper Canyon will bring visitors to campus by the end of 2021. Gilman Drive accommodates major bike access, including the County's Coastal Rail Trail which runs from North County to San Diego. Other considerations along Gilman Drive include multiple intersections, pedestrian pathways, and parking access.

The creation of a proposed concept design and implementation plan using available data and by studying existing conditions will be coordinated between Transportation Services, Campus Planning, the HSW NPS team and other stakeholders. The Study will return to C/CPC at a later date for input.

BUSINESS ITEM: CYCLE TRACK PILOT – HOPKINS DRIVE (Josh Kavanagh)

Josh Kavanagh presented the pilot buffered 2-way cycle track along Hopkins Drive concept. The concept is still being reviewed by stakeholders so a final iteration has not been developed. The scope extends from Library Walk north along Hopkins Drive to the Scholars Drive North/North Point Drive intersection. The Geisel book drop area has current bike and pedestrian lanes on both the east and west sides of the road, so this pilot will give the full west side to pedestrians and the east side to bicycles. The parking along Hopkins Drive remains and an ADA accessible crosswalk would be provided to connect the east side ADA parking to the pedestrian path on the west side. Bike racks and outdoor seating areas are proposed along the concrete path on the west side of the Geisel plinth. Frank Silva appreciated that community members requiring ADA access would appreciate having the mid-block crossing choice.

Kavanagh shared the concept at the Voigt Drive/Hopkins Drive intersection. Traffic separators would keep the cycle track on the east side of Hopkins and connect to the existing buffered bike lanes. Flashing stop signs could be used here. Calming traffic improves safety for pedestrians and allows choice for bikers to use the roadway if they're more comfortable with that condition.

A three way stop is proposed for traffic calming at the south side of RIMAC to allow for cycle track crossover to the east side. All Campus roadways are open to biking and scooters. A concrete barrier is proposed along the west side of Hopkins to protect the 2-way cycle track along RIMAC field, with areas for egress onto RIMAC field. These barrier egress points would allow Hopkins Drive to remain open during events with less than 3,000 people.

The North Point Drive/Hopkins Drive intersection maintains the cycle track on the south side for seamless connections to 7th College. A new crosswalk is proposed connecting 7th College to north campus locations like Spanos Athletic Facility and Outback Adventures. LED stop signs are proposed at all corners, and a pedestrian refuge in the center of the roadway created by delineators allows for safe respite. A bike lane on the north side of North Point Drive would be maintained for the desire line between Hopkins Drive and North Torrey Pines Road. A crossbike path is proposed on the west and south side of this intersection. New shuttle stops are proposed for improved connectivity with 7th College.

Jeff Kaplan asked for a description of traffic separators. These include plastic curbing that is about 4 inches high, bolted down, with candle stick type delineators topped with reflective silver material. Delineators would be low enough to not grab handlebars. A rough top on the curb elements would help deter skateboarders.

Clossin inquired about the width of the cycle track. Stephanie Ellsworth described the bike lanes as 5 foot wide each direction and a 2 foot buffer between the vehicle and bicycle lanes. Kavanagh shared the campus is looking to lower vehicle speed limits to 20-25 mph on all of campus. Marlene Shaver asked about the schedule. Kavanagh said it will be a phased process with the lane realignments happening first, then installation of the vertical elements. He's looking to begin implementation during Spring Break.

This item concluded the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ginger Stout". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ginger Stout
Associate Planner