



ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES: February 6, 2020
City Hall/City Council Chambers
250 Hamilton Avenue
8:30 AM

Call to Order/Roll Call

Present: Chair Peter Baltay, Board Members David Hirsch, Grace Lee, and Alexander Lew

Absent: Vice Chair Osma Thompson

Oral Communications

Chair Baltay: The next item is Oral Communications. Do we have any members of the public who wish to address anything not on our agenda today? Good morning. We have one speaker from Lynn Chiapella. You'll have three minutes. If you could State and spell your name for the record, please.

Lynn Chiapella: Lynn Chiapella, last name C-H-I-A-P-E-L-L-A.

Chair Baltay: Thank you very much.

Ms. Chiapella: I have a concern about the landscaping on many of our buildings, especially our larger projects. It seems to me more and more the landscaping is more like containerized landscaping in that the cement is 90 percent or some huge percent of the lot. We have little strips or little holes cut in the cement in the case of parking lots. Over and over, when you go out and look at these areas that have been approved, the trees are not thriving, and the shrubs and whatever the flowers were are often not maintained. This also relates to the City's area, which would be the park strips. They also have containers in these areas with lots of cement. Midtown is a very good example, and that's where I live. If you were to go to the Safeway, we've put in complaints for years and years about the fact that there's no water, that trees that live in containerized or holes cut in cement do not thrive with no water. One after the other, the trees have just plain died. Where there might have been eight trees, there might be now two trees, and they're not looking very healthy. The City in that area has a park strip. Cars tend to hit these because Middlefield is very narrow. They are not replaced because Middlefield is an exciting street to drive. The trees do not thrive next to it. Many cities have put in some kind of a barrier. Even though it's psychological, it seems to work quite well, whether you go to San Francisco or it doesn't really matter. The point being that you're dealing with these projects where the containerized situation exists. I think more care should be taken and there should be some way to enforce if these look good after five or ten years. I could give you examples. I have pictures of where there were trees, and now there are no trees. I know you don't deal with R-1, but I've noticed lately the new R-1 is that we cover the complete lot in front with grass that's artificial. There's not a living tree, a living shrub, a living anything to be seen, except for that funny looking thing that they put in the front yard now that looks like that. It seems like there should be some standards where some kind of greenery is left, particularly in the front yard. What you do with your backyard, I don't know. I would hope that you would consider that when you're looking at your projects. Thank you.

Chair Baltay: Thank you very much for your comments.

Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions

Chair Baltay: Next item is Agenda Changes, Additions, and Deletions. Staff, can you take us through anything? Do you have any?

Jodie Gerhardt, Current Planning Manager: Yes. Good morning. The item that we have for today, we're going to be talking about the objective standards. We have some new State regulations that are encouraging us to do these sorts of standards versus our current standards are very subject. We do have two consultants with us. We also have our Chief Planning Official here in case you have any questions. I will let Jeannie and Chris introduce themselves. They have a presentation ready for you.

Chair Baltay: Jodie, before we do that, let's get through the first two items on this agenda though.

Ms. Gerhardt: That's true. Thank you.

Chair Baltay: Agenda changes, following that, assuming there's no changes to our agenda, City Official Reports, future meeting schedule. Do you have anything for us?

Ms. Gerhardt: Yes. Thank you very much. Sorry for that. No changes to the agenda.

City Official Reports

1. Transmittal of 1) the ARB Meeting Schedule and Attendance Record, 2) Tentative Future Agenda Items, and 3) Recent Project Decisions

Ms. Gerhardt: As far as the City Official Reports, you have in your packets the future dates, but you do see on the next page that February 20 has been canceled. Our next meeting would be in early March, being March 5th.

Chair Baltay: Thank you very much.

Ms. Gerhardt: Thank you.

Chair Baltay: Alex.

Board Member Lew: I'm on subcommittee today, and Osma's out. I presume that she was also on the subcommittee. I just want to make sure we're all organized about the ...

Chair Baltay: I think I'm going to take the second spot on the subcommittee, Alex. I was looking to see if Osma wanted to do it, but she's not here so that answers that question. I think you and I were the only two that really reviewed that hotel project all the way through.

Board Member Lew: Yeah, and I got the set of drawings.

Study Session/preliminary Review

2. Review Issues, Options, and Recommendations for an Approach to Objective Standards in the Zoning Ordinance

Chair Baltay: With that, let's jump into our study session. Before you start, I know there's no need for disclosures. If anybody feels the need to disclose anything? Thank you. Staff, let's get going.

Jean Eisberg: Okay. Good morning, Chair Baltay and members of the Board. My name's Jean Eisberg with Lexington Planning. I'm here with Chris Sensenig with Raimi and Associates. We have a presentation for you today. I invite and encourage you to interrupt us as we go along. I know you were

introduced to this project in December. I want to clear up any confusion about State laws. It is pretty confusing. We have a small group, and I want to encourage this to be a discussion, and then we will lead you through an actual discussion once we get through the presentation. What we're going to review is the objectives and outcomes proposed for this project. I'm going to talk about the context under both State law as well as the City's adopted policies and ordinances, and then we're going to talk about some of the issues we've identified from reviewing your Code, some options for how to move forward, and our recommendations so far. What we're looking from you today is to provide feedback about how to translate the subjective criteria in the Code to objective standards. Our discussion will be based on what you see as the priorities within the subject standards, specifically the Context-Based Design Criteria and the ARB findings. The outcomes of the project. We are looking to prioritize and identify a selection of subjective guidelines in Title 18 of the Code as well as the South of Forest Area, potentially also the El Camino Real Design Guidelines and the Downtown Design Guidelines. That is something that we're still scoping with staff. The goal is to revise as necessary to create objective standards for housing developments and for mixed-use residential. Second, to refine these design guidelines and design criteria, potentially by use, by housing type, and by zoning district. Right now, those are sometimes repeated across multiple Zoning Districts, and so potentially to pull those out of the Code altogether as a supplementary document. Third, to look for gaps and add new standards for housing and mixed-use projects to complement the existing standards and guidelines. Fourth, to add zoning graphics and revise the Architectural Review checklist specifically for residential and mixed-use projects to clarify objective standards for staff, for applicants, and for the Board. Lastly, to clarify SB 35, that's the SB 35 streamlining process, that application process, so just to create a form and a clear process if applicants are choosing to go through that route. How do these objective standards apply? We'll talk a little bit more about this throughout the presentation. Essentially, if you think of those standards in the Code and to the extent that there are objective standards in the Comp Plan and other coordinated area plans, they apply to all development projects, commercial, residential. Our focus here is on residential projects and on mixed-use projects that include residential. We're not really going to be looking so much at single-family homes, in part because this whole process is emanating out of State law that's encouraging multifamily housing production. For our purposes, we're not going to address commercial only projects. Part of that is this SB 2 grant is funded through a housing grant that I'll talk a little bit more about. Most of our amendments will be focused on Title 18. What is an objective standard? This is now narrowly defined by State law. I am going to read it verbatim so that we're all clear. What State law says is that standards that involve no personal or subjective judgment by a public official and are uniformly verifiably by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by both the development applicant or proponent and the public official prior to submittal. That sounds like fun. That means it has to be knowable upfront. If you think about things like conditions of approval, that can be more challenging, things that aren't knowable upfront and maybe are added to a project at a later date. A simple example is a front setback shall be a minimum of 10 feet. A lot of the standards in the Code that are measurable, that have numeric values, that say shall or shall not, that list specific materials, things like that are objective. On the subjective side are many of the standards and guidelines that we see in the Context-Based Design Criteria as well as in some of the performance standards. Two examples here from the existing Code, parking should be broken up into smaller groups of spaces to avoid large expanses of parking. Generally, that makes sense, but what does that mean? Do you break it into two groups? Do you break it into four groups? How many cars in each area? It's not exactly precisely knowable. Second example, scale and massing should be compatible with the existing pattern of buildings. This is going to be a real challenge for us, how we address issues around compatibility, around context. A lot of you are professionals in this field. You really know it when you see it. That's not necessarily a clear and knowable standard. Before I move into State law, any questions, comments? Yes.

Board Member Lew: You mentioned Title 18. I was wondering about our Subdivision Code because that's in a different title. I was looking at all of this, and I was thinking about the really big projects. Could we move things over there to break up a large site into smaller pieces?

Amy French, Chief Planning Official: Just to be clear, this process modifying the Zoning Code will start with the Planning Commission as far as recommendation to Council. The Subdivision Code technically

doesn't have to go to the Planning Commission, but certainly any ideas that are brought up here could be, they'll be put out there. They could be considered. It's just a little bit different process.

Board Member Lew: It's one that I'm not that familiar with.

Ms. Gerhardt: I think we're open to ideas. There's also ways to break up a building and have it look like maybe five different buildings, but it's sitting on one piece of property. If that's something that we want to entertain, that could be said as well.

Chair Baltay: I'm not sure I'm following, Alex, what your thought process is. Put these ordinances in the Subdivision Ordinance, you're saying? It would be a different way to regulate these things. Maybe you can expound on that.

Board Member Lew: How do I want to say this? We don't have very many of the really large site projects in Palo Alto. If you go to the North First area in San Jose, you'll see lots of huge projects with a lot of repetitive buildings on them. We have some of the large projects in town. I think they're not that great; they could have been better. For me, it's when I see facades more than 400 feet long or see every building is sort of the same except for maybe one minor color change on it. We're used to putting it into our Title 18. My question is can we put some of that in the Subdivision Code, which would force a smaller block. Not to say it couldn't happen in Title 18 as well, but it's just a what-if question.

Ms. Gerhardt: I think you could, but I think you'll find that a larger developer is going to have more opportunity to vary their buildings. I mean, Santana Row being a good example. That property is fairly large chunks of land, and yet the stores are very individual. That might be a better way to get at it.

Board Member Lew: They also hired multiple architects. They didn't just hire one architecture firm like some other projects.

Ms. Gerhardt: The main part was one architecture firm, but yeah.

Board Member Lew: They broke it up in half, and now on the newer expansion there are different architects working on there.

Chair Baltay: I think, Alex, the gist of what you're saying makes a lot of sense. On larger projects, if you can think of any way to just chunk it down a little bit, not so many, more architects, more development, it would really make a difference.

Ms. French: One thing I would caution about this thinking about actual smaller lots is we often find that to do something like an underground parking lot, it's better to have consolidated lots to make something really happen. That's the flip side of this.

Board Member Lew: I agree. In the case of say Santana Row, two buildings have a garage that connects below them. You can see that in Mountain View, on the new projects on San Antonio Road as well. That's a pretty common trend now to make a garage more efficient.

Board Member Hirsch: Can I ask a question of your point? What properties in Palo Alto do you see that are going to be developed in any way similar to what you're describing here? Do we have any pieces of land that are available for that or are we a built-out City, which means there's really little change for that kind of thinking at all?

Board Member Lew: We have Ventura. In Ventura, there are two large sites. If you read our Comp Plan, our Comp Plan calls for housing in the Research Park and the Shopping Center. We also have in south Palo Alto the Jewish Community Center that was all one big light industrial site. There are other large industrial sites out there. We don't get very many of them, but we do get them. I think it's important.

Chair Baltay: It's conceivable that housing could happen at the Stanford Shopping Center as well, and that's a very large site. It's not clear that we can try to subdivide that to do that.

Board Member Lee: If I may. Since this is such a big, complicated one to put our arms around, I wonder if we could hear the full presentation? Just to keep going and then we can jump into these discussions.

Ms. Eisberg: I just wanted to go through the State law context. I mentioned this project is funded by a State grant, which is SB 2. This is intended to provide local governments with funds and technical assistance to serve three purposes: to streamline housing approvals; facilitate housing affordability; and accelerate housing production. We're really focused on Item A, which is streamlining. The purpose from the State's perspective of enforcing objective standards is that it makes it more clear for the applicant and limits the ability of discretion from decision-makers to deny projects. Just as a reminder on Item C, accelerate housing production, the City actually really anticipated this the last couple of years, preparing the Housing Ordinance that was adopted last year that streamlined the multifamily approval process that projects are now just coming to the ARB and not going through Site Design Review. This new Housing Incentive Program allows for higher densities. That's just the context for the funding. One of the big items here that we need to think about is the Housing Accountability Act. This is not new State law. It's been in effect for several decades. It is not always well understood. Basically, what the HAA says is that it protects housing projects that comply with objective standards. A city cannot deny a project, make it infeasible, or reduce its density when it complies with objective standards unless the project has a very high threshold of a specific adverse impact. This Act applies to all housing development projects. The way the City interprets that, because the State law is written as residential units, is not applying to single-family homes. We're only talking about two or more units, residential projects, mixed-use development projects where at least two-thirds of the floor area is residential, and transitional and supportive housing. A few different examples of that. On the left, projects where the HAA would apply, a multifamily project that complies with all objective standards in an RM district. Second example, a mixed-use residential project in the Downtown District where you have ground-floor retail and two stories of residential above, where you'd be meeting that minimum two-thirds floor area threshold. Third, a State Density Bonus Law project that is eligible for waivers and concessions, a Density Bonus project where maybe they're asking for a waiver for setback, a waiver for height, a waiver for reduced parking. The State considers that all in compliance with objective standards. Lastly, an SB 35 streamlining project has to meet all objective standards, and the Housing Accountability Act applies. In the second column where the HAA doesn't apply, this means that the City can use more discretion and can at least use the findings to review a project and potentially deny a project based on those findings. First, we have a mixed-use residential project in a commercial district with ground-floor commercial and just one story of residential, so that's less than the two-thirds housing requirement. Second example, projects that are seeking a rezoning. If they're looking for an AH overlay, the workforce housing overlay, or otherwise rezoning the project and they're going through Architectural Review concurrently, that would still take it out of the Housing Accountability Act realm. Third, a project seeking additional FAR under the Housing Incentive Program, that is essentially an exception, and discretionary review is required. Lastly, a project requesting a reduction in the number of required parking spaces, and the Code makes exceptions for that where you submit a parking study, the Director reviews it, the ARB reviews it, and that takes it out of the HAA realm. Briefly, SB 35 project streamlining. Projects can be eligible for project streamlining if they're at least two-thirds residential floor area again, if a parcel does not have a historic resource or otherwise is not constrained environmentally in terms of fire hazards, flooding, and a list of environmental constraints that the State has.

Chair Baltay: Jeannie, quick question. Is being in a flood zone considered an environmental constraint?

Ms. Eisberg: Potentially under State law, yes. That could take you out of SB 35 unless you got a map amendment from FEMA.

Chair Baltay: If somebody was proposing not to build below the floodplain, I'm thinking more of residential, say three houses.

Ms. Eisberg: Outside of SB 35?

Chair Baltay: Yeah. I'm just looking at your streamlining here.

Ms. Eisberg: This is the State's criteria if you're trying to pursue an SB 35 streamline project. Currently in Palo Alto, in order to qualify for SB 35, at least 50 percent of the units need to be allocated for low-income households. The other eligible criteria, the project must be consistent with zoning and other objective standards. If a project meets those thresholds, staff are required to review the project within 90 to 180 days depending on the size of the project. There's no CEQA review. There's no discretionary review with ARB. It's essentially an administrative decision. Now, unless an affordable housing developer is coming in with a project, it's unlikely that Palo Alto's going to see this type of proposal. It's going to be difficult for a market-rate developer to propose 50 percent affordable housing, but it is possible that threshold of 50 percent could change if the City doesn't meet it's Regional Housing Needs Allocation for market-rate units, if it failed to send the State its annual housing numbers. Just some examples. I mentioned this idea of it's possible an affordable housing developer could come in with a Density Bonus project in the Downtown, and that could be reviewed and approved administratively. A market-rate developer could maybe team with an affordable housing provider and propose a project that's got ground-floor retail, three stories of residential in this example in the CC-2 district at Cal Ave. Last item on State law. This is new and went into effect January of this year. This prohibits jurisdictions from imposing subjective design standards going forward. We can still use the guidelines that are in place. We could create new guidelines. Subjective standards cannot be used to deny, make infeasible, or reduce the density of a project that complies with the Housing Accountability Act. It also prohibits jurisdictions from creating policies that would change zoning or General Plan designations that would lessen the intensity of housing without increasing that somewhere else. Essentially, the City cannot down-zone unless they up-zone somewhere else. If we want to make changes, because you could make objective standards, you could make things more narrow, make things less dense in one place, but we'd have to show that we're making allowances elsewhere that would make things more dense. How does this tie into everything the City currently has? We've got the Comp Plan with a range of policies. Some are actually objective. There are FARs in the Comp Plan, but a lot of those policies are subjective, but it is the vision for the City, and it includes discussions of policies around encouraging and supporting high-quality design. We have the Housing Element. The Housing Element includes housing policies. It also identifies housing sites. We're not identifying specific housing sites as part of this project. The Housing Element will be updated in a couple of years with those new Regional Housing Need numbers when they come out. We also have the Housing Work Plan. The Housing Work Plan was adopted, I think, about two years ago now. I mentioned the Zoning Ordinance update that went into effect last year that made changes to some development standards with the intention of encouraging housing production. The Housing Work Plan also called for strengthening objective standards because it anticipated what has happened, which is that the State is relying more and more on compliance with objective standards as a tool to facilitate housing development. I've tried to break down what does this actually mean for the ARB. I mentioned that Site and Design Review is no longer done, the PTC, the Council are not reviewing residential projects outside of an appeal. This is putting more of the review of these types of projects on the ARB and on staff. Just a few examples here. The top row I mentioned. If a project is proposing rezoning or to have one of these overlay districts applied and its going through Architectural Review concurrently, that puts it in the discretionary category. We've got staff and ARB reviewing, the PTC and the Council are applying that rezoning and can use both the objective standards and the subjective Architectural Review findings and the Context-Based Design Criteria conceivably to make changes to the project, conceivably to deny the project, to deny the rezoning. That's all acceptable. The next row, if the Housing Accountability Act does not apply, they're seeking some exception, they're not consistent with all the standards, then the ARB and City staff are reviewing those objective standards for compliance but can apply those findings and criteria to modify or deny the project. This third row, when the Housing Accountability Act does apply, you're really limited to the objective standards. However, projects are still coming here, they're still coming to the Board, there's still this conversation that happens with you. That's part of our hope here—we're all professionals—that you can still use the findings to comment on the project, to encourage changes to the project in your professional opinions. The public still comes and comments on the project, and that conversation still happens. In this asterisk box, that's why we're

here. We're trying to strengthen the elements of the subjective criteria, make them objective where it makes sense, to give you a little bit more to chew on, and to give the applicant more direction about what the City's priorities are and intents behind the design guidelines. That is our context. I want to pause here before we go on or I'm happy to just continue. Any questions on State law? Maybe we'll start there before we move on.

Board Member Hirsch: I do have one, and that is what happens if we don't meet our numbers on the RHNA? What if the City just doesn't do it? We're way behind now.

Ms. Eisberg: In the short term, in this current RHNA period, the reason that the City of Palo Alto is at this 50 percent threshold for the purposes of SB 35 is because you've built enough market-rate housing. If the City prorated by year for the RHNA period—I believe it's eight years—if you no longer met that threshold for market-rate housing, it could push you into this 10-percent category where essentially someone is complying with your Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, and they can now be eligible for SB 35. That's one factor. Right now, I don't think there's too many penalties for not meeting your RHNA during this cycle. I think during the next phase, three years from now, I think it's going to be different, and the State is going to try to penalize jurisdictions for not meeting that. The numbers we're expecting to go up substantially the next round.

Board Member Hirsch: That means density is going to go up somewhere as well.

Ms. Eisberg: That next Housing Element, if we don't have the sites, we're going to need to find them, which means rezoning them before the Housing Element is adopted. In the past, you could have a program to rezone, and the State's not going to let you do that anymore. I just wanted to mention when we're going to come back. There's still some scoping that's happening with this project. This is really a staff-driven project. We're here to talk to you because you're also at the frontlines of reviewing a lot of these projects. I just wanted to talk about where we're going. We're going to be working on a framework for objective standards over the next couple of months. We're going to come back probably two times to talk to you about the framework and some specific ideas for objective standards. We also welcome your feedback on the specifics this morning. We will be going to the Planning Commission and the Council to finalize the ordinance. Ideally, this all happens this year. Getting into the meat of the Code. This is really how the Code and the development review process happens right now for residential and residential mixed-use projects. We've got objective standards in terms of use regulations in this district. Multifamily residential is allowed. Duplexes are allowed. Commercial's allowed, etc. That's objective. The development standards generally are objective, the FARs, the lot coverages, the daylight planes, the heights, all of that. Other regulations, things get a little bit more squishy. We've got outside-of-district standards. We've got the Retail Preservation Ordinance, which is generally pretty clear. We've got parking standards. Some performance standards get a little bit muddy sometimes around lighting, refuse, storage. They can be read as subjective, so we want to look at cleaning those up. Conditions of approval, sometimes those are tied to specific Code requirements. Some of them are just standard conditions that the City applies, and we may look at wanting to move some of those into the Code. It could be very specific things around nesting birds or other environmental factors. Things that we're seeing in conditions of approval, maybe we can move those into the Code. The area that we're going to be focused on is the Context-Based Design Criteria, seeing where we can make elements of those objective and the ARB findings. The legislative actions would continue to be subjective and have discretion. Looking at your Code, the staff report goes into a bunch of different issue areas. We're really going to be focused on one this morning, and that's going to be the Context-Based Design Criteria and the ARB findings. The real crux of the issue for us here is that Title 18 includes a bunch of subjective criteria that cannot be applied to projects that are covered by the Housing Accountability Act, besides the sort of conversation that I mentioned that occurs here every month when you're reviewing projects. We're proposing to revise the Context-Based Design Criteria. Potentially keep them, but revise them to have a matching set of standards, revising these other more subjective development regulations I mentioned around open space or lighting or refuse where they're not quite clear, and then consider objective standards related to the ARB findings. I'm going to shift gears to Chris, who is an urban designer/architect/planner, to talk about this key issue, which is how we balance the professionalism of

the ARB, the policies that are in the Comp Plan about supporting and encouraging high-quality design and variation across the community, and how do we make these very subjective, know-it-when-you-see-it criteria into objective standards. Chris is going to go through four different tools and options. We have reviewed these to some extent with staff, and we're moving towards Options 1 and 2, which are directly rewriting guidelines as objective standards where we can, and then also linking standards to guidelines so that there is this opt-out option. You either meet the standard or you move into the guidelines and you make your case for meeting the intent of the guidelines. I'm going to pass it onto Chris.

Chris Sensenig: Hello. Welcome. I'm very happy to be here. I was actually here 15 years ago working on the Context-Based Design Criteria in what feels like another lifetime ago. I want to start with how we think about design. There's a continuum of design strategies from site design, which are often very objective. They're the development standards. As we get from massing to building modulation to facade articulation, over the past 20, 30 years as we wrote design guidelines for many cities, they were very much meant to be subjective and give people like yourselves great latitude in influencing the projects that happen in the community. As we begin to rewrite these to create objective standards, there are a few different options here. The first one is a direct rewrite. Here you see an example from the Context-Based Design Criteria that has a lot of subjective pieces to it. Entries that are clearly defined features of front facades and have a scale that is proportional to the size and type of building and the number of units being accessed. Here you could take out some of the subjectivity and provide very direct sizes that are objective. Now, this is just an idea. I'm not here to talk about these numbers. You can begin to prescribe very distinct sizes for how big an entry needs to be depending on its use. The second option—it's not exclusive—is linking standards and guidelines. The way this is done is all projects still need to meet all the guidelines, but there's a clear and objective way to meet those guidelines. If you meet the associated design standard, then you automatically meet the guideline. This allows a little bit of creativity if someone decides to go the discretionary route. It also provides an opportunity to put a little bit more context and intent into a design standard. Here you see a very simple design guideline, building shall reduce the overall scale and bulk of upper floors, create pedestrian-scale buildings and provide a variety of building heights. There's a very prescribed objective way to meet that, whether it's a 6-foot setback of the upper floors or a reduction in mass. I'm going to go over a few different examples of how these guidelines and standards can be linked. In this case, it's about creating a base, middle, and top of a building, which is very subjective of whether that happens, and then creating very distinct ways of meeting that. In this case, it's about a variation in a number of building components that allows you to clearly and objectively say, "Yes, there is a variation in the building material and color from the base to the middle. There is a change in the window pattern and material between the middle and top." Something that a staff-level person can check a box, yes, this occurs. Again, that can be applied in creating a facade rhythm and pattern where you want a human scale and rhythm and pattern that reflects the building use and again providing very distinct, objective numbers on how to do that. In this case, there is an option for a residential rhythm between 10-20 feet to express the room or 20-40 feet to express the unit. In a mixed-use building or in a commercial building, you can create that same set of objectivity that might be a little bit different or, in the case of Palo Alto, this might be different depending on where you are. Downtown might have a very different rhythm and pattern objective standard than El Camino Real or another neighborhood. There's different ways within building the objective Code that you can create distinctive districts that have a special character. The third way of doing this is creating a menu of options. This allows a little bit more flexibility potentially in how you might meet an objective standard. In this case, it's all ground-floor residential units shall be designed to be inviting, reduce the overall scale of the building, provide direct entry. You provide a menu of options. You can do this with a stoop, a front porch, a terrace, or a frontage court. Each one of these options has very objective dimensions to them. Again, this can change by which area in the City that you can be in. That can also happen with adjacencies and transitioning either across the street from a lower scale or back-to-back, and provide a number and range of opportunities to meet. The last option I'm going to go over is a system of building components. One of the things that can be very difficult in going from subjective to objective criteria is providing flexibility in design and not over-prescribing. One way to do that is you set up a system. I'm showing you Hunters Point Shipyard in San Francisco where you create a set of objective building modulations, whether that's upper-floor setbacks, bay windows. There's distinct criteria there. There's ways that you can articulate the building, fins, louvers. There's different

fenestration strategies, and there also might be different material and color strategies. Once you create that system of building components, you then can use that system of building components to regulate other things. In this case, in Hunters Point Shipyard it was about very big buildings, very big buildings. The objective standard was about how you may use the facade composition and changes in modulation, fenestration, and articulation to break down the scale of the building. As long as you had that variation, you met the standard. Sometimes the objective standard's not about a particular design aspect, but it's about something changing from one to the other. You alluded to buildings all looking the same or something. That is something that you can create an objective standard for by just noticing differences between and making sure that things are different.

Ms. Eisberg: We're going to have another pause here. The next phase, we're really going to just talk about specific elements of the Code and try to get your feedback on areas of priority, things like "I'm concerned about everything looking the same." There's a lot for us to tackle, and having your ideas about where we should focus is going to be very helpful. Next, I was just going to take a look at the ARB findings and take a look at some of the design criteria that Jodie passed around. If you want to just start the discussion, if you've already got things you want to talk about, I'm happy to do that.

Chair Baltay: At the risk of taking too long, you basically gave us four ways you think we could convert subjective standards to objective standards. We went through a similar process when we enacted green building standards, which are inherently fairly subjective. What we landed on there is something of a point system, a long list of things you can choose from, and you have to choose 75 points worth, and each one is weighted. Would that fit into this as a possibility as well? It seems it's sort of a hybrid of some of the things you're putting out there.

Ms. Eisberg: I think so. Lafayette just did this for their downtown area plan, which was adopted a few years ago. They just went back and revised and created objective standards. It's about a three-page ordinance, and it's a point system. You have to get a certain number of points. To Chris' point, you can choose to do the change in fenestration or the change in materials. It's kind of the same idea. Yes, that's certainly possible.

Chair Baltay: My concern about that then would be that it would require quite a bit of trial and error before you get it right. We're sort of forced to launch something. It seems hard to me to understand how you would do this out of the gate. Personally, I have a very hard time seeing what points should be where, but it seems to me that might be the most designer-friendly way to go.

Mr. Sensenig: I think you're right on there, with that being a struggle, how many points do you require before it's not doing enough. The first place to look, I think, is can we hit on the real priorities for the City of Palo Alto and make those subjective guidelines objective first. Then, if that becomes difficult or feeling overly restrictive, then maybe thinking about how to apply a point system to it. The prioritization of what you all feel is important, even in a point system, is Step 1. Theoretically, you would want to weight those even in a point system to make sure a developer can't get around it.

Chair Baltay. Okay. Why don't we keep going?

Ms. Eisberg: The next two slides, I just listed out all of the ARB findings. These are essentially a synthesis of the Context-Based Design Criteria, elements of the Comp Plan, other elements of the Code. As I mentioned, you can still use these even for projects that are covered by the Housing Accountability Act. You just can't use them to deny, make infeasible, or reduce the density of a project. They still could be used to do those things for projects that are not compliant. Looking at these, they are subjective. Are there elements here that are really important for us to consider as we are trying to make some of these distinct objective standards out of these? Unified, coherent design, desirable environment, natural features that contribute positively, harmonious transitions, enhancing living conditions, high aesthetic quality, design being functional, landscape design that's complementary, and sustainability. Likewise, the Context-Based Design Criteria, you have the printout that Jodie sent in front of you. The hardest ones, I think, for us are related to context and related to compatibility. There are elements here around looking

at the siting, scale, and massing and materials. There are ways we can make some of those elements objective, but a lot of these are more challenging around compatibility. Jodie's teased out some of these criteria and shown how you could make them objective. Item Number 1 here or Letter C, streetscape or pedestrian amenities that contribute to the area's streetscape environment such as street trees, bulb-outs, benches. What we could actually say is a street tree every 30 feet, bulb-outs at crosswalks if you're at certain locations, benches every quarter mile. That turns a subjective criteria into something objective. Likewise on bicycle amenities. Item D includes things such as bike racks, storage or parking and to use the standards from the Code around the specifics for long-term bicycle storage, dedicating public access for future bike lanes. Making those kind of criteria objectives is something we can do, that direct translation, that Option 1 that Chris explained. This last item, E, vehicle access from alleys or side streets where they exist, encouraging vehicle access from alleys, not from the main street. We could actually say that it must be provided from the alley, no new curb cuts. I think we actually did that on the ordinance last year. We said no new curb cuts on University, on California Avenue. Require pedestrian access from the front of the property, a few ways that we could do that direct translation. Just looking at the findings, looking at the Context-Based Design Criteria, these are some of the key themes that struck me. These issues of context and compatibility, both within a project and with the adjacent uses and buildings; a desire for high-quality design, which can mean both materials, the construction, and the design; functionality with how the site plan works, with how circulation works and internal to the building; and then the issue of sustainability in terms of natural resources, green building materials, and low-water-use plants. Even when we were pre-meeting with Chair Baltay, he brought up some ideas about translating some of these specifically. In terms of sustainability, we do have this Build It Green checklist. It may not be perfect if you meet the certain points. Maybe you could do better if you met different points. It is one way to translate desire for sustainability into an objective standard. You've completed this checklist and achieved X number of points. I have come to the end of our presentation. I just wanted to reiterate the questions that were for you. What do you see as the most important Context-Based Design Criteria and ARB findings? Do you have other ideas for how we can make these more objective? The other item that's not here but that Chris alluded to, we are thinking about how these might be applied in different locations. There are some objective standards that may apply even Citywide. There are some that apply by use, and there are some that apply by location, whether you're Downtown or on El Camino. I realize this is rather broad, but I hope that helps guide things a little bit.

Chair Baltay: Let me bring my colleagues up to speed on one thing. We have these preliminary meetings, so I met with Jean and the staff two or three days ago. I recommended to them that we try to keep our comments focused on specific design things that we can really sink our teeth into rather than broader discussions of the changing Zoning Codes and things. That was my sense at our retreat the other day, that we wanted to be focused that way. As well, I think that if we want to be practical in this manner, we really need to as quickly as possible delve into the nuts and bolts of what changes might be feasible and realistic. I'm saying that now to everybody just so you understand what I was telling the Planning staff. It's not what we have to do necessarily, but that's the information I imparted to them earlier this week. With that, why don't we just each give our reaction? Who wants to start? David, you're looking sort of chagrin, so why don't you go at it?

Board Member Hirsch: The presentation was really quite fantastic. I hear somehow within it the questions that certainly I had, which is just how do you make it happen. It's a significant change for us, the ARB. I see that the difference here is really between those two words. What makes it one way or the other way? Clearly, our approach is not objective. It's personal, and it's collective. The end result of our meetings, which are really informative to me as the newest member here, is that we come to conclusions based more or less on subjective opinions collectively. It's important to maintain that principle, I think. I think it's the way we are set up because of those descriptions of what we do, how we should look at our City. I'm concerned where we get into those kind of specifics that really don't allow us that capability. I find that to be the case in several of the illustrations in this book here. For example, the use of base/middle/top idea, it's really not a contemporary idea at all. It really ought not to be emphasized too much. If you look around at most of the housing, etc., that's built, we should be talking about housing because that's what we're talking about here. Most of it is very contextual, what I like anyhow. When it is very contextual to the extent that it observes massing issues relative to its

neighboring structures, but it's not design wise. It's not that kind of base/middle/top idea. It just is an inappropriate idea to apply to anything right now specifically. When you look at a series of alternatives, like you did at the Courtyard—I saw one as an architect of housing in New York City—a major issue is you really should show handicapped accessibility. That's very important. All of those details didn't show any handicapped accessibility to those courts. To prescribe that does a couple of negatives. One, it doesn't solve all the problems. To put a number on the dimension of an entry is a dangerous idea. Also, to show those options as specifics, as prescribed ways of doing things isn't a good idea. You have to recognize that there's a few other people in the picture here. One of them is an architect who is designing something. You give him the opportunity to do what architects do and come up with a point of view on a particular site in a particular neighborhood. I think the answer of side entries on buildings on major blocks is very significant, but to be specific, that specific, your objective way of showing things isn't going to be productive. I don't know how you get there because your job on this one is to do that. I don't think that's the way. The other thing is in a general sense I feel that what is in the book is really, there are some good directions here. The last part of the book, where you showed those buildings that are created with a chapter on top of them, which says bulk and massing, facade composition, they're very good. They're very good. The fenestration, you see the subtitles, fenestration, facade composition. That's what we do. That's what we end up with here on this committee. I don't think you can call them objective particularly. They're subjective, and that's really my big problem. For the State to say to us, "Make it all objective," what are they really trying to say? I think they're really trying to say, "We don't want you to hold up these projects. These are housing projects, and we want to force them through, so you make everything objective so that you don't have to spend too much time thinking about it." I don't agree with that. I don't agree with that principle. I think we need to have the facility to get together and talk about these projects differently. As terms of the timing, getting the project through, we don't know exactly how long it takes to do your preliminaries. When it comes to us and we make a joint consideration here, we're pretty good at that. We lay over projects when we really have something significant to say. I think that's reasonable, but we don't know whether an architect can go and make those changes and adjust to whatever we say in a week, in two weeks, in three weeks, or how it comes back to us. I wouldn't call us the culprit in this one. I think we make our decision pretty effectively here. I think it's only fair to look at that whole process to see what happens through the rest of planning as planning looks at it. I have to say that when we get projects coming through from your analysis, you Planning Department, I'm very impressed. We use all of those sources that we have to present a review by Planning, and that's a pretty damn good plan to begin with. I accept pretty much every one of those when they're brought in that way. We look at it a little differently. My opinion is that that process is a good one. If you can objectify some of the things that are in that, I don't have any problem with that, but let us do the subjective portion of it. In general, that's my feeling. I think we do it effectively here. I'm concerned that the State doesn't understand what we're doing. You explained it beautifully, and you could definitely get into the way in which we can deal with it that gives us our ability to do what we do.

Chair Baltay: Thanks, David. Grace.

Board Member Lee: I just want to thank you all for presenting this to us. I know there's been a lot of work on this. I'm very happy to use these Context-Based Design Criteria in the commercial project. I appreciate the work was done 15 years ago. The presentation was very clear. I want to try to answer those three questions that you're asking of us. It says on the last slide—we can go back to that. I did want to make some general comments. I absolutely agree that per the funding we want to streamline these housing approvals, we want to accelerate housing production. Whether or not personally or as a group we feel this or as a City we are doing this. Thank you for the invitation to the ARB to work with us. I do believe that it's possible to make objectives where it makes sense or where we can. That might not be in every bullet point. I think we need to be strategic and really look at where we can. This whole issue regarding prescription or specific dimensions, that my colleague here has mentioned before me, I also feel the discomfort in terms of specific dimensions. Where that is coming from is just the reality of issues of time and character and identity and a place. I do think that it's important to recognize as we look at this. Maybe we all won't agree on this, but my feeling is that when you say let's talk about design guidelines for South of Forest or San Antonio or El Camino, one of the things that many cities and some people feel is that these boulevards or these areas can have a special character due to a diversity and a

special identity. Sometimes these design guidelines are difficult or challenging for an applicant when there are specific examples, whether they're photos, and that's much more qualitative. I really appreciate the Hunters Point examples. Even then, I see specific examples of fins on buildings, for example. These are just ways to provide actually more independence for the applicant to navigate or a menu of options. However, districts and buildings take time to complete. Unfortunately, our City process is very slow. I'm sorry, but it is very slow to codify and even to come up with design guidelines. These are sitting there and meanwhile time progresses, and our ideas about a district may change. The urgency may change, or we find that there's some other options in how we work or how we answer these regional challenges that we have. That's where I have the hard part. There's also the issue, I think, in some of these graphics. I'll just mention the whole top/middle/bottom and this issue of style. There are sometimes aspects of a site or a context that might suggest something. Just a few blocks down, it might be slightly different. That is something difficult. Having said that, I do see some positives in terms of possibly this menu of options. I wonder about also some kind of range of dimensions. That's hard too because you look at specific areas within our City, and you might point to two or three excellent examples that will have a different range of dimensions for an entryway or specific things there that wouldn't allow for that range even. I want to offer that maybe that's a way to get to the numerical value that is more objective. I also feel like, when I look through the system of building components with that whole discussion, maybe there are ways to—I appreciate my colleague, Peter, who mentioned that there was a meeting and he pulled out some ideas. I saw that there was a list, and it even said materials. I'm a little bit hesitant there because, given our building technologies and how things change, materials that have not been tested still may be a terrific material. I just want to hesitate when we are that prescriptive in terms of a list. What are the most important Context-Based Design Criteria? Frankly, this is difficult because I like the Context-Based Design Criteria when it relates to specifically housing, which we're trying to accelerate here, and our ARB findings. When I was looking at the ARB findings, I find that they're written for all the different typologies of buildings that we review. It's hard to pull one out or two or just three out of the five or 75 or 80 percent that relate just to what we're talking about here in terms of the kinds of housing. Maybe it is important that we look at all the findings and then think about how that does translate in some way to something a bit more objective. I just want to ask the question. Can objective standards be written in a way that offers examples or a menu to assist in an application, knowing that staff and we want to accelerate these projects so we don't want to have ARB involved? Is there a mechanism where we are still accelerating but there is some involvement by a subcommittee or one or the Chair, if that person is willing to take all that time? Maybe staff can have the discretion to invite a professional that is on a City board to sit and review. That might not accelerate the application. Can you let us know? What do you think?

Ms. Eisberg: Yes, I think that is possible. I do want to be clear. Most projects are still going to come to you. I didn't mention that part of SB 330 limits the number of public meetings to five. That would be more of an issue for Palo Alto if we were in the situation two years ago when projects were going through PTC and Council as well, residential projects. Now, they're really only coming to you. The only projects right now that wouldn't come to you are the SB 35 streamlined projects. You mentioned the materials. Let's say we did create this comprehensive or exhaustive list of materials. If they wanted to propose something different, they could still do that. It's okay. The materials shall include X, Y, Z. If you want to use something else, it's at the discretion of the ARB, the discretion of the Director. There's still this out, and that's part of the linking of standards and guidelines that Chris described. You meet the standards. If you don't meet the standards for whatever reason, for certain desires by the architect you still need to meet the intent of the guideline, and you present that to the Board and staff.

Board Member Lee: That's all very encouraging. I will go ahead and pass the baton.

Chair Baltay: Thanks, Grace. Alex, why don't you tell us what you think?

Board Member Lew: Thank you for the presentation. It was done very well. I guess the way that I've been thinking about it is—I'm trying to think about it holistically. One of the things that people tell me that they like about Palo Alto is that there's consistency, but there's still individuality in the buildings. That's pretty high up on the list, like after picking a school or something. It's up there, maybe Number 2.

With that in mind, I'm thinking in terms of hierarchy. I'm concerned about long facades. Two is connectivity in a large multi-acre site with a subdivision. Typically, we'll find that the existing neighbors won't want any connection whatsoever to a new project. Three is open space. I think we've had a couple of projects where there's been an issue with the open space and the placement of the open space relative to the neighbors. Sometimes they want the open space near them so that the building is farther away. Other times, they don't want the open space near them because they're afraid of noise. As I look at some of those projects, I'm sort of disappointed with the way the open space has turned out. Having prominent entrances has gotten better over time, especially on El Camino. It was something that we had to fight for on a lot of projects. The tendency is still to put the entrances on the back, wherever the parking is. With regard to neighbors, I think they're very concerned about shading and daylight planes and landscape screening. I guess the way that I look at our Codes is that we do have a lot of requirements for low-density residential. When it comes to other higher-density zones or commercial, we don't really have any requirements. We've run into some conflict with that. Our Performance Code is well intended, but it's like Swiss cheese. It's got big holes in it, and maybe we can address that. In particular, in the Performance Code there's a 10-foot landscape buffer abutting low-density residential. That's come up before on some projects. It's a thing that sometimes architects will miss when they're working on their projects. They're looking for setbacks in the development standards, and they miss that, the 10-foot buffer in the Performance Code. Lastly would be the architectural compatibility. In my mind, it's more important on a street like El Camino, where we have this build-to line. I think it's probably less important where we have large setbacks, where we have 25 or 50-foot special setbacks or landscape requirements. With regard to the approach, I think you were talking about trying to make all of the subjective things objective or to use a menu of options or whatever, those four choices. I've done it one way on a project where the firm that I worked at did the master plan as well as the buildings. We did the first approach, trying to make everything objective and quantitative, and it didn't really work. We wrote exceptions to our own rules just to get the project through. It was about really stupid things like something didn't meet one of the rules by a foot or two. We had to go through kind of like a variance process just for that. I just found that not really very productive. I think I like the two approaches you have after that because it shows the intent. If you're an architect and you're working on it, if I read through those two, then I get an idea of what the City wants. When you do the first one, it's like doing your taxes. It's so quantitative and so numerical based that you don't really always understand what the intent is. I think I prefer those two options. The fourth option with the building components, I have not really ever worked on a project like that. I'm kind of curious to go and look at Hunters Point to actually see the results. I think I would need to look at the Code and look at the results and try to see how well they've worked out. On doing standards by zone or neighborhood or building type, I think there's something there that we really should talk about. For example, in our CS zone we have it on El Camino, but we also have it on San Antonio, and then we have a spot rezoning in the Baylands. I think it doesn't really quite work. Trying to apply the standards in the Baylands, it's an urban standard, and putting it in the Baylands just didn't work. We've sort of ignored it or tried to say it's more about landscape than the building. We need to address that. I don't know if doing it by zone or street or building type—I don't know which way is the best way, but I think there's something there. It's also kind of strange to have it redundant in our Code. I've looked at it for so many years, but you don't really know where the differences are. It looks almost exactly the same, but it's not. We should look at that carefully. If we do it by building type, then I guess the question is if I have a housing project and I have a commercial project and they're sitting right next to each other, is it going to work. They're using different standards, and they're sitting next to each other. I guess we have to figure out how do they work together. It seems to me that might be a challenge. I think I do support overhauling our South El Camino Guidelines, especially our Downtown Urban Design Guidelines. They're both draft, unadopted documents. There's a lot of stuff in there that's now covered by our Code. I think some cleaning house in there is due. My last comment is on our landscape finding. This one is really different than the other ones. This one was a top-down. It came from the Council, way at the top, and is implemented without having anything in our Comp Plan to raise it up. It doesn't appear in any of our guidelines or context-based criteria. Trying to have some sort of threshold is tricky. I think (inaudible) as much as feasible and that can be maintained. It's very subjective. I would like to see some sort of statement of intent in the landscape finding. The main idea is that with climate change, we're trying to provide more habitat for wildlife. We do have to acknowledge that there are maintenance issues with that. For example, there's a native lupine plant.

The birds will eat all of the seedlings, and then after that the snails will come and eat the seedlings as well in the middle of the winter. The caterpillars will come and eat the plants to the ground. The bees like the flowers. It's a very desirable wildlife plant, but it's only appeared on one plant list. In the ten years that I've been looking at landscape plans, it's only appeared on one project because landscape architects know that they can't maintain it. If we put in a requirement for 50 percent native plants, that might not be that beneficial if they're just planning a whole bunch of little grasses to meet that 50-percent numerical requirement. It may actually be better to plant one oak tree conceptually. I find that really challenging. I don't have a better suggestion at the moment. It seems like we should have some sort of numerical requirement. It seems to me if you're trying to do something higher, like 75 percent, that might be too difficult to meet. That's my last comment. Thank you.

Chair Baltay: Thanks, Alex. Thank you, everybody. My first thought about this whole thing was similar to what David's saying. I just don't think you can quantify, objectify many of these things that we're deciding up here. The width of an entrance of a building, you just can't tell the designer how wide it has to be and expect to get quality design out of that. The Robie House, Frank Lloyd Wright's masterpiece, has a front doorway on the side. You can't see it. At the time, it violated every objective standard of houses, and yet today it's a masterpiece. You just can't do it. I've been going through a lot of soul searching of do I even want to take part in this process, because I think the State's mandating something that will ultimately result in lower-quality design and a poorer built environment for all of us. All of us up here are struggling with that same issue. With that said, what I've come to think is we ought to create a carve-out in our Zoning Code for certain types of buildings that have an allowable exception to it, similar to the way we've done with hotels. A hotel can have a 2.0 FAR. It's no bearing on the design, the context, anything. It's just we want it to have the capacity to be bigger, so that's what's allowed. I think it's okay to have different kinds of regulations based on the use of the building as it's important for us to promote housing. Let's create a carve-out that says, if you're doing housing that complies with the HAA or these other regulations, whatever comes down the pike, let's create then a fairly objective set of standards that are also fairly strict. When in doubt, we'll make it tougher. An applicant has the option to comply with these very strict objective standards, get their project through quickly, which as David mentioned really is the objective here. The State's not trying to cheapen our built environment. They're just saying we're taking too long, and they're right. We are taking too long. If we give an applicant a path to go quickly, you want to build quick housing buildings, just follow these standards. If not, you go back through the regular process, the way we've been doing it. I think that will meet the requirements of the Code. Instead of having to rewrite our entire Zoning Code, we're creating an opt-out. If you follow this, if you build a hotel, you can go to 2.0. If you build housing per the HA Act requirements, you can follow these objective standards. I've come to the conclusion that I think it's okay for us to try to create objective standards under that very narrowly defined envelope. Then I said to myself, as the ARB we have to make six subjective findings, so how do we convert those findings into objective standards for this narrowly defined thing? I think Findings Number 1, 5, and 6 are already somewhat objective and can be more easily converted. Finding 1 is just compatibility with the other Codes and the Comprehensive Plan. From up here, we can just push it off to that. Five and six are regarding landscaping and green building environmental stuff. We have a very rigorous Green Building Code now, and most of us up here just refer back to that anyway. Landscaping, as Alex was mentioning, with some tweaks maybe in the number of local habitat plants or things like that, we probably can quantify that fairly easily. Really for me, it comes down to Findings 2, 3, and 4. Finding Number 4 really is about functionality. On that one, we just have to compromise and say if it meets the functional requirements of the Building Code and various Transportation Codes and things like that, it's good enough. Us fussing over whether the front door and the lobby is big enough, we just have to compromise and say if it's a housing project that meets these standards, we have to approve it quickly. We're not going to try to regulate that to greater depth. We're really coming down to Findings 2 and 3, which are really about the context, quality of materials, basic quality of design. What I'd like to try to do is get this Board, this body, to focus on a few items that I just made my own list of. What does define context? What about materials? What about design? Can we give them some concrete guidelines to make a fairly stringent set of requirements? What is required? To me, context is about four things: the massing of the building, the articulation of that mass, the materials that create that building, and I wrote down fenestration. It's a very important component of probably articulation. I would say that the massing of a

building in order to be contextually compatible, it can only be one story taller than anything that's near it. I would say that you can't have more than a two-story vertical wall component no matter what. Even if you could do a four-story building, you can't have a four-story, straight-up wall. I would say that step-backs have to be as far horizontally as they are vertically. If it's a one-story step-back, it has to go back the height of a story. That's about 10, 12 feet. I'm trying to come up with things that I think are fairly restrictive. As an architect, I would really chafe against these requirements. I want to have an elevator tower that goes all the way, four stories. Fine, then go through design review because it's too subjective. It's too important to not have it be reviewed. If you want to get it done fast, find a way to do it within the standard where you're only one story taller than anybody nearby because that's going to be more compatible. When I look at the issue of articulation, I think it really has to do with alignment of elements in the building, so roof eaves must align with adjacent roof eaves, the shape and configuration of a front porch or an awning or a cornice on the top, things like that. I think you can just write those things down. Again as an architect, I would really chafe at those things, but it is possible to work within that constraint. Contextual compatibility with materials essentially means matching the materials of the adjacent maybe two or three buildings on either side. You can match that kind of thing or you can selectively contrast in a way that complements them. It's hard to define perhaps, but it could be done. We could also say that you have to have some sort of historical reference or lack thereof won't work. You couldn't on University Avenue build a stone building. There's not too many stone buildings there. I'm just trying to find a way to objectify something. You meet this requirement, then you have a path towards quick review and approval. On fenestration, I would say that you have to have similar size with the windows of the buildings adjacent to you. Maybe no more than 20 percent difference in square footage, and it has to be the same type of horizontal or vertical orientation. Architects think of windows on a building as either a wall of windows or a window in a wall, that's a punched opening in a wall. It's two fairly discrete ways of treating windows. You might say, the way we do for garage setbacks now on residential, where you survey a block, see what the average is and then decide, you could survey a block, see whether the windows are ribbon windows or punched windows and require that design treatment to make the building compatible objectively. That's my thoughts on contextual compatibility. If we want to go down this road, I'm sure everybody else could contribute on what other things might help with that. On the materials for a building, the finding we have to make is that it's a high-quality material. That's sure tough. Maybe we come up with a list and say this is what we think is high quality. For example, high quality means natural stone materials, no artificial stone, cement stone, that kind of thing. I've worked at other districts where we're had planning requirements like that, and it sure is constraining. There are some very good artificial materials out there, but nonetheless you say the gold standard is real stone if you want it to look like stone. Otherwise, go back through design review and let them judge. There are some pretty bad materials out there too. You could do the same thing with wood siding, for example, and require at least a half-inch reveal or shadow line between each element or something like that. It's awfully restrictive, but I'm coming at this thinking we make just a minimum standard that can fly. Otherwise, it goes back through design review. On the design element of it, just quality of design, I think that's Finding Number 3. Alex's comments about long facades without articulation, so say no facade no more than 100 feet in length without articulation of at least 3 or 4 feet of depth. I think he's correct about open spaces. We have regulations about the amount of open space but not the location. We would have to say that it can't be in a location that affects or is within 50 feet of a neighboring property, something like that. Prominent entrances, I guess you have to go into the standards, the kind of things you were describing earlier in your report. I think that's as good as you can do. Again, try to make it restrictive enough that, if it's enacted, it will pass. Shading, Alex is correct again. We don't have a current enough standard, but if you just said that your building cannot cast a shadow on neighboring properties, point blank, that can be objectified pretty easily. If you are, then it has to go back through some sort of subjective review. I just don't see how else you can handle it. It is possible to design a building that doesn't cast a shadow on other people's property. If you set that as the standard, that's an objective standard. The neighbors would certainly appreciate that. Landscape buffers, you just say you have to have a 10-foot landscape buffer. You can define it as it has to be trees at least one story in height or something like that. To my colleagues on the Board, I suggest that we focus on something like this list of things I just went through and try to give back to the staff some other or additional ideas that they might use to create these objective standards. I think they're coming no matter what we do. We

might as well engage. Again, my feeling is that we should do something and make it a strict, single standard. Anybody else?

Board Member Lee: I'll jump in. I appreciate your comments and how we might enable this process. I hesitate at drafting highly restrictive, so there's no choice to go to design review, in terms of our tone and how this is drafted. I think we need to think carefully about highly restrictive to force a direction by an applicant, particularly when there are applicants who are working on sites that are different from the neighboring site or in an area where there's high change or not a lot of change. It's hard for us to have the big hand of predicting the future. My issue also is that some applicants are going to be coming with—please correct me. This would affect mixed use in terms of two, three housing units you said, above three housing units.

Ms. Eisberg: If there's more than two-thirds of residential floor area.

Board Member Lee: That's what I thought. How do we make objective where it makes sense, again where we can? I believe, Chris, you worked in Hunters Point. I'm looking a little more closely at these. Maybe this is the way we can start because it does include some of what Peter—I'm sorry. Alex, you also did refer to specific dimensions. Again, what I heard from Jean was that here is a set of systems of building components or a menu that applicants can use as possibilities or guiding, with a range of dimension perhaps. It's not restrictive in the sense that it's this or nothing. I do think, given the kinds of projects that will be coming through, we don't want to be so restrictive that this is the one way to go. If you do not comply, you need to move in this direction. We do need to give applicants enough direction where there's a clear direction that we're trying to do exactly what the State is telling us to do but with a menu, for example. I just want to throw that out there for our discussion.

Chair Baltay: Can we try to focus though? Say the issue is one of massing, and they're asking us how do you objectify massing. Throw out three ideas that you think that will objectify massing. Can you do that for them, for all of us? Give them something concrete to write down.

Board Member Lee: I'm very comfortable with the way that we're talking about—I don't know if long facades are the right way to describe it, but facade composition and scale. Perhaps there's a range of dimensions that relate to a building block. However, we would need to look at El Camino and quantify what those building blocks are compared to another location. I do think this should be tied to looking at the City in a careful way. That is the difficulty with design guidelines by type and without a specific area.

Chair Baltay: Anybody else on the question of massing? How would you objectify massing?

Board Member Hirsch: For one, I think that there ought to be some—the zoning ought to answer a lot of those issues. I also believe that context is really important and scale relationship to neighboring buildings. There are some ways to quantify that relative to the way that buildings are designed. We have to leave a lot up to an architect to find ways to deal with that. I want to get to what Grace has just said. We shouldn't be so overly restrictive that we come up with a standard, and if you meet that standard, you zoom right through and don't even come here at all. I think it's critical that we maintain our input into projects as we go forward. Otherwise, everybody's going to try to squeeze into that program and use those materials. Then there is no creativity out there anymore. The samples in the back of the book are really very, very informative. I'd rather live with this way of agreeing with Grace that these are really an excellent way to begin this process.

Board Member Lee: Just really quick, I just want to hop on. In this last page, 39, one of the great things is there is a discussion of variation in bulk and massing, in the facade, verticals and horizontals. There is a range of—not a range, but I think you have 100 feet or 150 feet. This is per Hunters Point, so this is a specific area in San Francisco. Maybe we can learn from this and not think that we have to do it exactly this week because we're talking about Palo Alto, we're talking about different types of buildings. There is still some objectivity here, but it is not restrictive and prescribed. There are examples. In my previous comments, I talked about photos that were too leading in terms of materials. Is there a way for

us to—like in these commercial, you have the Context-Based Design Criteria that are simple sketches but really speak to a scale with a range of dimensions. I'm just throwing it out there.

Board Member Lew: I am with Grace and David. I think I'm opposed to being overly restrictive for affordable housing projects. I've built 500 affordable housing units. My projects would not meet Peter's test for quality of materials, but I think the projects are fine. If you were just walking down the street, most people would think they're fine. If you got up really close and looked at the vinyl siding and all the details, you would cringe. It's really difficult building at \$100 a square foot. You just don't have the choice. I would go to the catalog or talk to a material supplier, and I would just ask them, "What is the cheapest thing in your product?" That's what would get put in the spec. You're just trying to make do with the most affordable thing. Most affordable housing projects have good architects. Affordable housing architects look at it differently. They actually consider that they do better work than the market-rate builders because they don't have to deal with the 20-percent profit margin of a commercial developer. If you're building 100 units, you often get a lot of economies of scale, but it's vinyl windows, it's vinyl siding, it's inexpensive detailing that can be built quickly. It's not having step-backs and changes in materials to make the construction less expensive. At least for the affordable housing projects, we can lower the standards for that. I'm actually comfortable with that. I wouldn't want to do that across the board. I'm saying it's just the affordable housing projects.

Chair Baltay: But, Alex, this is across the board. This Housing Accountability Act is all housing, not just affordable housing. That's the big catch here, that it's not just affordable housing. It really isn't. That's Section I in this new Code. All housing's got to be in (crosstalk).

Board Member Lew: It seems like we have two thresholds. We have SB 35 and then the other one, SB 330. I think I still stand by that, though, just generally. I think we do have to make it easier to build housing. Basically, what's happening now is with construction costs of over \$400 a square foot, we're barely getting any housing as it is. I think there has to be some give and take on this. I want to throw one other thing out there. When we revised the findings last time around, a couple of years ago, we debated removing the sustainable design finding because the Building Code addresses that. I think staff had recommended removing it, and there was some pushback on the Board where the Board wanted to continue discussing things that were maybe beyond the Code. I'm thinking maybe now we should actually remove it. It seems crazy to me that there could be a no vote on the current Board because something doesn't have operable windows. That's our current Board. That seems to me not quite right. It'll have to meet the Building Code, the Cal Green Code, so why don't we just let that be the standard. The Board could still talk about sustainable design in a different context. If there are things that the Board wants to see improved with regard to sustainable design, we can lobby to have the Codes changed as the Board has done in the past. I'm sorry. Peter, you wanted to say something.

Chair Baltay: Go ahead, David.

Board Member Hirsch: Just to add one more to it. The streamlining issue, as much as the Code and other sources of review before we get a project can do it, I would hope it could be very much like the Building Department requirements of floor area ratio, height restrictions, daylight planes, yard requirements, courts, setbacks, exit requirements, corridor dimensions, light and ventilation, handicapped requirements. Those things are really all Code requirements and ought to be on the front sheet of any submission. We should know that they passed, and they will be reviewed by Planning who know everything about that as well. We will get them complete. Those are objective requirements and are really important. Another one, which I had to deal with a lot, is the setback and the fifth floor, sixth floor, whatever, which is in the diagram. You put it in a diagram like this, and you're going to eliminate other possibilities. For example, on that fifth and sixth floor, suppose the frontage is set back for an area and two apartments can look on an open middle court on that top floor, is that shown in this diagram or is the description of what happens on the top of building flexible enough so that an architect can use that language to create a form that suits their planning? You have to be very careful in doing a diagram like this, that you don't miss an opportunity like that. That would affect sort of a rear sky exposure plane if there is one. I was surprised by finding that in a project I had to adjust the project to a rear sky

exposure plane. I think it's very difficult, but you should look to all of those opportunities somehow, where a designer is going to get this and want to do whatever they want to do, so the language is very flexible in that way, so it isn't too prescriptive, an overly prescriptive diagram. Those two additions to whatever have been discussed today.

Chair Baltay: Can we offer additional feedback as to how to objectify pieces that we've been talking about? Let me ask about materials, for example. How can we give them some guidance as to what would be an objective guideline promoting high-quality materials? Any ideas? Something has to get written down or else it's anything goes. We're the ones with the expertise, so let's give them something concrete to write down.

Board Member Hirsch: I would like to see a lot of flexibility there because who knows what's coming down the pike in materials on the surface of buildings. A lot of different things are being used, and a lot of that technology is changing today. I don't think we should be too specific about it. It has to answer certain environmental issues, heating, and has to be properly insulated materials and whatnot. I don't think we should be overly specific about it.

Chair Baltay: Any other ideas?

Board Member Lee: I do agree in terms of new materials that are on the market and are attractive and high quality. In our findings, we try to talk about construction techniques that are appropriate, that will stand the test of time, for example. I think that's what we're worried about. I don't know if there's precedence. I'm curious what other cities are doing. I don't know if this is too prescriptive. Would it be too much to ask for evidence of use of those high-aesthetic-quality materials, to provide examples of where they have—is that too much work for us to review? I'm trying to think of ways where there is evidence. When we're talking about quality versus quantity or something that's criteria versus actual facts, just something that we can test. I'm wondering if we want to go that route. Is that asking too much of an applicant? Is that inappropriate given the new technologies and new ways of doing things that come on and are not tested? I do think that Palo Alto has some terrific examples of good work where they might be in the view that are using this material, and it's all gone quite well. Another brief discussion. I don't know if we have any examples of other cities doing this.

Chair Baltay: Other cities, other places who have answered this better, any ideas? I'm just putting my head on the chopping block here. If you said something like all windows must be made with frames of metal or wood, you've immediately cut to what most architects would think of as high-quality windows. It excludes vinyl windows and fiberglass windows. I grant you that there's some manufacturers out there making good-quality products out of vinyl and fiberglass. If you're trying to get it objective, either we say anything flies or we have to give them something. We're making a tough choice here. I'm really feeling forced. I don't like to say that, but it's that or nothing. What do we do?

Board Member Lee: Absolutely. I think prescribing specific materials would not be the direction to go.

Chair Baltay: Other ideas? What direction is the direction to go? How do we do this, David, to get what you're saying without—I mean, the State law says you have to say something. We can't just say it has to be good.

Ms. Eisberg: If I may interrupt. Just to be clear, one option is we don't do anything. We make no changes to the Code. It's just the understanding that with an SB 35 project or other streamlining that may come down the pike, there will not be an opportunity to use the Context-Based Design Criteria that is subjective or the findings to approve the project. As long as it meets all the standards that are currently in the Code, staff would have to approve it. We could do nothing. The State is not saying you have to adopt objective standards. It just says that a project only needs to comply with what you have. I'm just putting that out there. Also thinking about how your Code is set up now, there are standards, and then there are exceptions to that. Here's the parking standard. If you want to have an exception to that, you need to provide a parking study. The Director reviews it and says yes or no. You could have a

list of materials. All windows must be metal or wood frames unless you go through design review. Even an SB 35 project could not have vinyl windows. We can also have exceptions. Right now, as I recall, the Retail Protection Ordinance doesn't apply to a 100-percent affordable project. A 100-percent affordable project can be 100-percent residential in certain commercial districts, whereas market-rate projects need to be mixed-use. The thing that we can't do is create essentially a new class for projects that are trying to streamline. That's sort of this section of the Code only applies to SB 35 projects. I don't think we could do that under State law and meet the intent of SB 330. Do you have something else?

Ms. Gerhardt: Just to drill down on the window topic, just because we can get our arms around it. Chair Baltay is saying that we could say that metal and wood windows are high quality if we can automatically agree to that. There may be some vinyl windows that are high quality. Depending how we write the guidelines, those vinyl windows would have to come before the ARB. The ARB would be able to make a subjective decision about are these particular vinyl windows high quality. It would give you that. There's still the freedom of vinyl windows happening, it's just that it would come before the Board, and there would be discretion.

Board Member Lee: That's really helpful to know. I do think that works against our larger objective of accelerating the process. In my mind, that's not a direction that we would want to move towards since that would delay the projects in actually moving to completion, particularly SB 35 projects.

Ms. Gerhardt: Very good point. In this change we're not actually changing the process necessarily. Even if a project met all of these new objective standards, we still have an ARB process. Projects are still going to come before you. In the effort of streamlining, because they've met all these objective standards, maybe we can do it in one hearing. That would be streamlining. They still all will come before you.

Ms. French: Jeannie, you were getting to a point about you can't just say SB 35 or affordable housing projects, let's say, have this criteria. On Alex's point, let's say a 100-percent affordable housing project can use vinyl windows. Are you saying we're not able to just isolate and say those types of projects can follow these guidelines or are you not saying that?

Ms. Eisberg: No, I think we could make exceptions for certain types of projects, like the 100-percent affordable projects. It's a little dicey if we're applying separate criteria to projects that qualify as Housing Accountability Act projects or as SB 35 projects. On that, we'd want to check with the (crosstalk).

Ms. French: By that, you mean market-rate projects providing housing ...

Ms. Eisberg: Yes. That otherwise meet all objective standards but have this additional threshold that they also have to meet.

Ms. French: When you say exceptions, I mean, we have an exception process, which kicks it into something. What we're saying is the Code or the objective standards as written could have exceptions for specific types of projects, like 100-percent affordable. If it's market rate, you don't get the exception for the vinyl window or what-have-you. That would be okay to consider?

Ms. Eisberg: Right. I think so. As I mentioned, you have that now, as I recall, for the Retail Protection Ordinance, 100-percent affordable projects are exempt. That certainly meets the intent of these State laws.

Mr. Sensenig: I just wanted to add something. On the windows, one of the things that we're doing in other cities, instead of restricting the material of the windows, is requiring that the window be punched or have trim that is in excess of 2 inches. Even though you might be using a lesser quality actual window, you're getting the reveal and the quality of construction and detailing that you may want in your city.

Chair Baltay: That's a good idea. I know we've been at it a while, but I want to be sure we give them the feedback that we can. The issue of open space is something Alex brought up. Is there any way you could objectify not the amount of open space but where open space on a project is located? It's something I know on the Board we debate quite a bit, is it usable open space on the roof or in the back corner where there's no sunlight. Is there a way to objectify that to give them guidance on that? Anybody? Alex, what do you think? Grace? Anybody?

Board Member Lee: I very much hesitate in prescribing location of open space in housing. I would really hesitate in doing that given the difficulties in how to achieve it. There is a percentage of open space that is required when you're doing an affordable project per your funding, but also for the City. It's amount of open space per occupant. I'm very comfortable with that.

Chair Baltay: For example, we often encourage applicants to have private balconies on units as much as possible. I know with affordable housing that's very tough. It's something, again, if you don't put it down, we'd have no say in the process.

Ms. French: If I can ask. Is that another item that could potentially be on a list of if it's affordable, then no balcony required or no private open space required, but you have to have, say, additional common open space or something? We have this family housing on Alma where they just don't have those balconies, but they do have homework area, a common area for the people to hangout and do their ... Is that something that could be ...

Ms. Eisberg: Yes, I think we could do that. I remember as part of the Housing Ordinance last year, the ARB weighed in on some ideas about now rooftop open spaces are allowed in certain districts to qualify as common open spaces. We did include some setbacks of where that was located in terms of noise and light that would affect neighbors. As long as we're helping to generate housing and helping to generate affordable housing, we can make those types of exceptions. It's when we're going in the reverse and maybe creating a separate class for other uses (crosstalk).

Ms. French: It seems a little sensitive too. If you're saying the market-rate units get to have private open space, but affordable—it's not that we're saying you can't do balconies on affordable housing, but it's just the notion of writing it so it's streamlined. If they don't provide the balconies, then it's looking like people that live in affordable housing don't get balconies. It's a sensitive dance.

Ms. Eisberg: That architect and developer gets to choose whether it's balconies or common spaces. Sometimes I know they're required to have the play structures.

Board Member Hirsch: I want to speak to that a little bit. Supportive housing, where you have a clientele that—let me put it bluntly—might jump, you give them balconies, and they might jump. Those agencies really resist using balconies at all. It's a warning here that there are other issues that affect the use of balconies.

Chair Baltay: One more time, I'm going to ask everybody on a different topic of when it affects privacy around the community. When a building goes in, we have issues about shading. We can ask for a shadow study. Our Code just says it can't have too much of an impact. I forget the exact wording, but it's fairly vague. The same thing with asking for landscape buffers. Is there any way we can objectify or give them more clear guidance what might be a good idea regarding shading and landscape buffering? Any ideas again?

Board Member Lew: On the shading requirement, I think the Code says to minimize the impacts of shading. My take on it is for the neighbors—even understanding the shading thing is difficult. My hunch is that just having a daylight plane is simple to understand and simple to enforce and set the standard. The daylight plane doesn't really take into account the solar orientation. It seems to me that to be easy to implement, the trick in the daylight plane will be—like on El Camino in our CS and CN zones where we have zero setback, on a small lot, on like a 50x100-foot lot on El Camino, a daylight plane could make a

project infeasible. I think we'll have to look at that really carefully or maybe set up a threshold, a standard where maybe it's only on lots of a certain size, like over an acre, then maybe the daylight plane is triggered. If it's a 5,000-square-foot lot, maybe there isn't a requirement. I think the landscape buffer is important. I think there may be a way of doing it less than 10 feet on a small lot.

Chair Baltay: How would you specify what the landscape buffer is composed of?

Board Member Lew: I think we already have that in our Performance Code of trees and shrubs. At the moment, we don't have any requirement for ...

Chair Baltay: How about something like it must be an evergreen tree, not a deciduous tree?

Board Member Lew: I think we actually already have that in the Code. I think we actually have provisions for that. I think it's supposed to be mixed. On the open space, why don't I just cite two examples. We have Oak Court here in South of Forest, and then we have 801 Alma in SOFA II. I would argue that the Oak Court one, the playground is great. It's open to the street. It looks open so that any neighborhood child could use it. It's that inviting. It looks open and welcoming. You go the playground at 801 Alma. It's in the back. It's in the shade. The gate is sort of forbidding. It looks like a keep-out design to me. It's not that attractive. The times that I've gone by there, I haven't really seen anybody use it. It was put there to sort of appease the neighbors, so that there was some sort of playground between the market-rate and the affordable housing project. Maybe there's a way of saying that has to be visible to the street, that gates are visible from the street, that it is not walled off by high fences. Maybe there's a maximum height for the fence. Maybe it's an open fence and not a solid fence. I think there may be ways that we can address it in a small way.

Chair Baltay: How about solar access on open space? Seventy-five percent of it has to have full sun access between 10:00 and 3:00 in the afternoon or something.

Board Member Lee: I apologize, but I think both the comments that were just made are highly prescriptive and would be difficult to achieve for some applicants given a specific site. I really hesitate at those prescriptions.

Chair Baltay: Grace, if they have the option to go through a design review instead, aren't those prescriptions better than nothing? Otherwise, you create ...

Board Member Lee: Again, we're trying to streamline housing approvals and accelerate housing. I'm worried that these very prescriptive treatments are going to deter housing proposals in our City. I'm sorry. That's how I feel.

Chair Baltay: Let me throw at you, though, from a high level. Every affordable housing unit is required to have an ADA compatible bathroom. We've all agreed to that, even though we all know it dramatically increases the cost of the project. Yet, we're never questioning that. It's ADA; it still has to have it. Why would we say it's okay to have a playground in the shade at the back of the property, but they still have to have the ADA bathroom? It's the same type of thing.

Board Member Lee: I'm just speaking for the 50-percent or more, 100-percent or more housing in terms of affordable housing. I just know those requirements per funding, that is grants, are highly prescriptive regarding the mix and how the open space is achieved. We won't be able to receive those projects from affordable housing developers with those restrictive guidelines. Those are not guidelines; those are restrictions. We will not receive applications. We're trying to enable that process, and that's why I'm hesitating.

Mr. French: I keep asking the question if we can have that set for the market-rate projects as opposed to the affordable projects where you have to have more flexibility to get the grants and afford it. Again, without seeming like we're saying we're going to create substandard playgrounds for affordable projects,

if there's a delicate way to enable affordable projects to happen, that's what I keep coming back to. Is there a way to do that?

Ms. Eisberg: I think we can exempt them from certain standards and criteria. That seems to be in line with the intent behind the State law. We would just check with the City Attorney.

Chair Baltay: Is there anything else from staff, topics that we haven't tried to address? Maybe we've gone enough today on this.

Board Member Hirsch: Yes. I think it's been incredible, a good review. We have two sessions coming up, and we need to move forward.

Chair Baltay: I will caution my colleagues. They're going to come back to us with some of these questions we've not addressed today. They're going to say, "What can we do with open space?" Now or the next meeting or the meeting after that, we have to either say, "Forget it. We're not going to put our stamp on it," or come to something that we can hold our noses and go at because it's going to be that kind of choice. This is an earlier opportunity to affect what comes later. Anything else from you, Jean? What are we missing?

Ms. Eisberg: We've gotten a lot of great information. As you've struggled with it, this is really challenging. I know we have different opinions about approaches. We have a lot to chew on. When we do come back, I think we'll come back with actual Code sections, ideas maybe for just certain topic areas or certain locations. We're going to be doing work with staff over the next few months, as I mentioned, to potentially adjust some of the scoping related to some of the issues you brought up, that El Camino is different, that San Antonio is different, maybe reopening some of the design guidelines that exist in some of those locations. I think this has been really helpful. Hopefully, reacting to something concrete at the next meeting will be helpful for everybody and you can comment on if we've gone too prescriptive, too open-ended. Maybe we can also identify where some of those holes will be with what we lay out.

Ms. French: I wonder if there's an advantage to having a subcommittee of members. If we don't come back until summer, because this is such a huge work effort, we might identify these areas of town and have discrete tasks that can involve focus on the SOFA area or where we do have these guidelines, Downtown or where we haven't yet cracked those open. If there's a subcommittee that's interested in forming to help us in the coming months before we do come back?

Chair Baltay: I think we would all be more than happy to help in that manner. Why don't you see what committees or topics you'd like and, if you could just put it on one of our agendas, we can see who's suited or interested in addressing it. Is that a fair statement to everybody, that we're willing to help that way? Put extra time in as a subcommittee too.

Board Member Lew: Yes.

Ms. French: Another thing I heard was, is there a field trip to Hunters Point?

Mr. Sensenig: Let me clarify those were just approved. There's nothing built. There's still potentially dangerous waste there, so there might not be anything built for a while. I would say the two projects that OCII in San Francisco over the past five to seven years has really been struggling with—not struggling with but trying to figure out how you create objective standards is the Pier 70 and Hunters Point are two documents to look at. Pier 70 uses a point-based system. Hunters Point took a different direction. I just also want to say I'm under no belief that creating objective standards makes good design. I understand that; I know that. What we're trying to do is preclude the worst offender and not step on the toes of architectural review boards and stuff like that and provide guidance. That's where we're coming from. As we present numbers and stuff and some options of how some of these design guidelines can be quantified, I expect it to be a big back-and-forth on what the dimensions are. Each city

is different. I look forward to working with you all on creating that balance and creating the right range and hopefully get to something where everyone feels comfortable that the City is getting what they want.

Chair Baltay: We're going to close the hearing on the study session for today, on that one. Thank you very much, everybody.

Action Items

3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair.

Chair Baltay: We have one action item, which is election of Chair and Vice Chair. Does anybody have any comments, suggestions, concerns, make a motion?

Board Member Lew: Which one are we going to do first? Chair first?

Chair Baltay: Yes.

NOMINATION

Board Member Lew: I will nominate Peter Baltay to be Chair.

Board Member Hirsch: Second.

Board Member Lee: We both second.

Chair Baltay: It's been moved and seconded. All those in favor. Very good. That motion passes 4-0 with Osma Thompson not here.

NOMINATION APPROVED 4-0

NOMINATION

Chair Baltay: I will make a motion to nominate Osma Thompson for Vice Chair.

Board Member Hirsch: Second.

Chair Baltay: Moved and seconded. All those in favor. Opposed. That motion passes as well 4-0 with Osma Thompson not being present.

NOMINATION APPROVED 4-0

Approval of Minutes

Chair Baltay: Next one is approval of Minutes. Do we have any Minutes?

Ms. Gerhardt: We don't have any Minutes this time actually.

Board Member Questions, Comments, Announcements

Chair Baltay: We have Board Member announcements. Alex, your announcement.

Board Member Lew: On February 27 from 6:00 to 9:00, there's going to be a North Ventura community meeting for the public. It's at Gunn in the new Student Activity Center, Room P-16. The three alternatives that the design consultant has been working on will be up for comments. They're very different, so now's the time for the public to weigh in.

Chair Baltay: Are those alternatives available for review in advance?

Board Member Lew: There is a dedicated website for that. I think they're probably not up there yet, but I can alert the Board when they're posted to the website.

Chair Baltay: Please do that. Anything else? Any other announcements? With that, we're adjourned. We have one subcommittee item. Let's resume for that in five minutes' time. Thank you, everybody.

Subcommittee Items

- 4. 744 San Antonio Road (15PLN-00347):** Subcommittee Review of a Previously Approved Project with Applicant Request to Change the Color of the Former Courtyard Hotel (now Tribute) Wall Elevations. Environmental Assessment: Exempt from the Provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in Accordance with Section 15061(b)(3) (No Significant Effect on the Environment). Zoning District: CS (Service Commercial). For More Information Contact the Project Planner, Sheldon S. Ah Sing, at sahsing@m-group.us.

Adjournment