



ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
DRAFT MINUTES: November 3, 2016
City Hall/City Council Chambers
250 Hamilton Avenue
8:30 AM

Call to Order/Roll Call

Present: Chair Robert Gooyer, Vice Chair Alexander Lew, Board Members Peter Baltay, Wynne Furth, Kyu Kim

Absent:

Oral Communications

Chair Gooyer: First of all, is there anyone—I should say is there anyone who would like to address this Board on an item that is not on today's agenda? I have two speaker slips. We'll let those people speak. First of all, Faith Bell.

Faith Bell: Good morning. I believe several minutes of the next gentleman's time is being ceded to me, so I'm going to stretch over a little bit, if you don't mind. We've got some documents in front of you from Bell's Book Store concerning Emerson Street, a current, ongoing project. If you would be so kind as to turn to page 2, you'd see that Jackson Pollock has assisted in putting this together. We've been doing business at Bell's Books for over 80 years on Emerson Street. Next door to us is Mac's Smoke Shop. We have a pretty good handle—they've been there 90 years—on what's needed in our area. We've been doing without an ADA curb cut for many years. We're delighted to see that one's going in now because there have been problems there in regards to that. There's a lovely one on the other side of the street that's been added just in the last week or two. When I spoke with City Hall about what was planned for the arrangements around the curb cut on our side of the street, they had not yet developed a plan other than the curb cut. Just in the last few days they have developed the idea of putting a bike rack on a stub-out in the street at the end of the alley. From my understanding from going to multiple meetings about City planning over the years, we are trying to create a situation where it is pedestrian friendly and the visual lines from the alleys are contiguous with moving through the City in the middles of the blocks. I find that that really cuts into what needs to be done for that purpose, especially because the public art program has received an NEA grant for arts to improve the Downtown. I've listed there some of the reasons for that grant. Among them are the idea of improving the alleys. Our alley is definitely in need of that. We have an enormous wall; it's 100 feet long and 28 feet tall. There's nothing on it. We are excited about the idea of doing a project in there. One of the artists that has come forward, who wants to do the work, has something that would be a very exciting use of perspective, so that you enter the alley as if you're entering another realm and things shift. I think the sight lines at that are very important. I think it would be a serious detriment to that art project to block across the entrance. I'd like to see some issues around parking dealt with as well, but that's not maybe in your purview right now. I don't know quite what your role in that could be, except maybe to encourage the City to be a little more forward-thinking in that or maybe to hold off on the bike aspect of that. We could still have the curb cut go through in the timeline that's needed. They can't do construction Downtown after November 18th, so we're in a time crunch, but they only developed the plan for the bike thing in the last couple of days. It's not as if it's a locked-in-stone situation. It hasn't gone before any Boards or anything. It's just a public improvement. I'd like to see that be brought up with the City. Let's leave that alleyway free and clear with a good sight line until it's settled by you all among others what's going

to happen with alleys with this new public accessibility to the Downtown and what you're working on right now in Item Number 2, I think. Thank you for your time. I really appreciate you listening. All the best to you.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you. We also have Jeff Levinsky.

Jeff Levinsky: I just wanted to—in case she needed more time—also add that Faith has mentioned that there are other bike racks already on the street, and they're not fully used. The need to put a bike rack that would block the alley is something that the City could look at and trade that off versus just continuing the use of the existing bike racks and not impeding the view down the alley. Thank you very much.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you. Anyone else that would like to address this Board? Seeing none, I'll close this portion and bring it back to the Board.

Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions

Chair Gooyer: Agenda Changes, Additions, Deletions.

City Official Reports

- 1. Meeting Schedule and Assignments**
- 2. List of Staff Approved (Minor) Architectural Reviews**

Action Items

- 3.** Discussion Regarding Existing Pedestrian-Oriented Design Regulations and Possible Modifications to Enhance the Retail/Pedestrian Experience in the Ground Floor Protection Areas Downtown. For Additional Information, Please Contact Jean Eisberg at jean@lexingtonplanning.com.

Chair Gooyer: The first item is the discussion regarding existing Pedestrian Oriented Design Regulations and possible modifications to enhance the retail/pedestrian experience on the ground-floor protection areas Downtown. For additional information, please contact Jean Eisberg at whatever. Staff.

Elena Lee: Thank you, Chair. Good morning, members of the Board and Chair. This is an outgrowth of a City Council urgency ordinance that was adopted in 2015 for a moratorium on conversion of retail space. There's been a lot of concern spoken by the community about the conversion and the loss of retail in Downtown specifically. I'm Elena Lee, the Interim Advance Planning Manager. Basically this is an outgrowth of that project. Concurrently, we're also working on a—Council has directed us basically to before the end of this moratorium to have a permanent ordinance regulating conversion of retail. There is one that we're working on right now for the Downtown area specifically, also including possibly the SOFA II area. We're also concurrently working on a permanent ordinance Citywide for retail protection. Basically as I said, the moratorium was adopted in 2015. It's due to expire April of next year. Our goal is to have a permanent ordinance adopted before the end of that moratorium. This project has gone to the City Council October 17th for their initial feedback. We're here today to request feedback from the Board about design details on how to help preserve and enhance the retail/pedestrian environment. We have Jean Eisberg, a consultant, who will be the project manager for this project. She will give the rest of the presentation. Thank you.

Jean Eisberg: Good morning, Chair and members of the Board. As Elena mentioned, I'm Jean Eisberg, a consulting planner for this retail protection ordinance. Today our objective talking to you is to get your feedback on potential design standards to include as part of these retail protections in Downtown and SOFA II. As Elena mentioned, this interim ordinance was an outgrowth of—a response to the conversion of retail space in the City to office uses. This moratorium was established 2 years ago; it's expiring in April. We're looking to pursue permanent protections for retail space. The Council has met a couple of times in August and October and provided direction for staff for how to proceed with this ordinance. The

items in bold are what we're going to be focusing on today. First, their direction was to protect all retail uses in Downtown and SOFA II. That means if a retail space vacates, then it would have to be replaced by retail or retail-like. That could be personal services, retail stores. Second, to develop design standards to support active uses, pedestrian-oriented uses just in Downtown. The direction from the Council was not to pursue design standards in SOFA II. Today, we're really just looking at Downtown. Third, to add regulations to the GF district protecting basements. Really we're talking about ground-floor area, but they directed us to also look at basements, which has also been subject to these conversions to office space. Essentially sort of ancillary retail spaces that may have been used for storage in the past converting to small office uses. Fourth, requiring window transparency in nonconforming uses. These might be office uses, financial services in the GF district in Downtown that have started to cover their windows for privacy purposes. Looking at ways that we can encourage behavior that opens up those retail spaces. This is the area that we're talking about in terms of protecting retail uses throughout the Downtown and SOFA II boundaries that you can see in pink. The opaque pink blocks are the GF district. Right now, this is the existing GF district that's shown in those pink-shaded properties. The design standards that we're discussing today will most likely apply to those GF parcels, but that's something that we can talk about and that would be part of the ordinance. Just taking a step back and looking at what you have now in terms of design standards. I looked at the CD district, the P district which is the combining district that you see both in Downtown and California Avenue, and then the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines. Attached to your staff report are those district regulations; they mostly discuss guidelines. They're not standards, but criteria for review for staff or the Board as you're reviewing projects. They relate to findings and criteria around compatibility in terms of adjacent development, materials, architectural form, locating parking behind buildings, sort of good urban design and architectural design practices. They do support a lot of pedestrian-oriented and architectural features that would be supporting pedestrians, a high level of display windows or awnings, canopies, things like that. The Downtown Urban Design Guidelines are a little more focused on streetscape, urban design but also do talk about private development in terms of encouraging four-sided architecture, ground-floor treatments that encourage pedestrians to see inside of windows, recessed doors, courtyards, outdoor seating, things like that. In the conversations with the Council, this was some of the design standards that were discussed with them and that they suggested going forward to explore further. First is a taller first-story height, thinking about creating a high-degree of visibility for pedestrians or even for drivers driving by to see into display areas. Thinking about that in the context of the existing height limit, how would a regulation of 15 feet or 16 feet work with the existing 50-foot height limit that's typical Downtown? Second, regulating the percentage of window transparency. Third, prohibiting reflective glass. Lastly, window openings and transparent glazing again to see into those display areas. These would apply to new construction or really a substantial rehab project, but would not be applied to existing tenants, retroactively existing buildings. You saw in the report we pulled together a few examples just to spur discussion of some of these issues as we're drilling down into these potential standards. First, in terms of first-floor heights, thinking about what it would mean to regulate a first-floor height in the context of the existing development that you have on the ground. You have this Downtown that's really wonderful. It's evolved over time. You have older buildings, newer buildings. How does the new construction fit in with the existing architectural context? Just looking at this one block, even though you have three separate buildings and different architecture, the first-floor height at least from this perspective is somewhat consistent. Thinking about variety in the context of developing a regulation. You might only have properties redeveloping one property per block every couple of years or something like that. Looking at this in the context of some more recent projects and thinking about that 50-foot limit. In this case, you have a four-story portion of the building on the right that meets that 50-foot limit but within four stories. They couldn't fit in five stories in the 50-foot height limit based on the first-floor height and perhaps other mechanical or design issues at the upper floors. Looking at the window transparency. In this example, this property recently had some facade improvements done. You can see in those notations that the first-floor, ground-floor windows go up to 15 feet. You have sort of a clerestory window up above, and then these storefront windows at eye level. Here you have essentially a wall of 3 feet at the bottom, which kind of allows the tables that are inside, people's feet sitting and dining, you can't see them. It gives a little bit more flexibility for the tenant inside to maybe locate fixtures along the wall inside or tables and have a little bit more privacy. They do have some curtains that can be drawn at certain times if you have sun focusing in on the restaurant. By contrast, the Apple

store has this 24-foot glass wall. In this case they don't have fixtures up against the windows. They have a limited amount of merchandise that they're selling, so this works for them. If you're thinking about this type of—a minimum percentage of transparency, not everybody is going to have their needs accommodated in this 100 percent transparency example. We did look at a few other cities in terms of their regulations for transparency. San Francisco and Santa Monica having 60 and 70 percent transparency within this sort of eye-level window, so between 2 1/2 and 8 feet in Santa Monica or 4 and 8 feet in San Francisco. In San Carlos, you see something a little bit similar; 60 percent minimum transparency within that eye-level sort of view between 2 1/2 and 7 feet, but just within 20 feet of the front door. A little bit more flexible there. As I mentioned, we're also directed by the Council to look at nonconforming tenant spaces. Again, these might be financial services in the GF district or even a yoga studio between classes and the idea of encouraging displays or artwork or other items of visual interest. Either it's between classes at a yoga studio, opening up the curtains, but trying to encourage more visual interest at the ground level for these nonconforming uses. Just in these two examples, you can see the more transparent example on the left and these window coverings on the right. In terms of timing, I mentioned that the urgency ordinance is expiring in April. We're looking to adopt a permanent protection before that time. Right now, we're meeting with various stakeholders, residents, developers, architects, the Board here today to discuss this evolving ordinance and then looking to go to the Planning and Transportation Commission and the City Council in the next couple of months. Lastly, these are just a few guiding questions to help focus our conversation. This is where we're really looking for your feedback in terms of the minimum first-floor height, the appropriateness of design standards perhaps on University versus elsewhere in Downtown if you see those as really distinct places. This transparency issue, the storefront systems of more of a curtain wall versus a transparency that allows for a little bit more flexibility for a retail tenant. Lastly, addressing nonconforming uses. That concludes my presentation. I'm happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you. Are there any questions of staff?

Board Member Kim: I have a question. When we're talking about the first-story heights, the 15 or 16 feet, I realize that that won't be for existing tenants. However, you did mention that for new buildings or even for rehab that that may be a standard that is adopted. How would that be adopted for a rehab space? Let's say a building already only has a 10-foot first floor, how would you ...

Ms. Eisberg: I would say most likely the first-floor height probably couldn't come into play for a rehab. Maybe the window transparency if they're replacing the whole storefront.

Board Member Kim: Not all the standards, but to at least try to adopt some of them. I see.

Ms. Eisberg: Right.

Board Member Kim: That makes sense. Thank you.

Chair Gooyer: Anything else? I'll open it up to the public. Is there anyone here that would like to address the Board on this item? Seeing none, I'll close the public portion, bring it back to the Board. Peter, why don't you start?

Board Member Baltay: Sure, thank you. I think I have probably a lengthy approach to this. I'm wondering—Robert, it looks like Alex also has a presentation. I did a quick, informal, scientific survey just walking around University Avenue. There's about—I'm looking at my records here—maybe eight different storefronts I noted and want to make some points about. Can I ask what Alex has got cooking up?

Vice Chair Lew: I did the same thing yesterday. I just have like three photographs from Downtown storefronts.

Chair Gooyer: Why don't we bring those up and start with those?

Board Member Baltay: Why don't we start with Alex's photos and (crosstalk) bring up?

Chair Gooyer: Okay.

Board Member Baltay: I think it's important that we look at some actual examples. From that, I'd like to draw a few points that I think are critical.

Chair Gooyer: Sure.

Board Member Baltay: Let's also take Alex's photos first.

Chair Gooyer: Why don't you start it off then?

Vice Chair Lew: The first image here is—there are two images. The first is the Alma and Lytton, I think. I forgot that particular address. The one on the right is Joya, which is on University and Florence. These are really relatively new buildings. I think my main point here—I have two points. One is that glass has changed. Even clear glass has changed. This is our California Energy Code. Even if we require clear glass, the reality is the amount of transmittance through there is going to be down in the 45 percent to 65 percent compared to an old building which would have single-pane clear glass. That would be like 90 percent transparency. The California Energy Code is getting stricter every 3 years. I would imagine that it's going to continue on that trend. If you look at the image on the left, it's almost half mirror-like. It's really fairly dark. You can't really see very much inside. The Joya on the right is probably even worse. I would argue that Joya on the right has canopies. It has special window mullions. It has a planter and seating. I'm arguing that we actually have to have all of those. Those are in our P zoning. Right? Those aren't required in just the GF zone, if I have that correct. The CDC-GF.

Ms. Eisberg: Right. The way I read it they're not required.

Vice Chair Lew: They're not required.

Ms. Eisberg: These are guidelines and findings and criteria for review.

Vice Chair Lew: I think I'm arguing that all the things that we do for the P zone, which is the recesses and planters and awnings, to me those are highly desirable throughout Downtown even if it isn't an active retail use. Elena.

Ms. Lee: If I may. Generally in the Code they are referenced as guidelines. In general, staff has been enforcing them. When we do review projects, we do require a strong pedestrian treatment and also looking at the retail environment.

Vice Chair Lew: Why don't we go on to the next slide? Again, the image on the left is Alma and Lytton, and the image on the right is Ramona Plaza on University Avenue and Ramona. Again, I think my same comment. All the things like awnings and signs and planters are critical. If you know you're going to have kind of dark glazing, it seems to me you can have color in outdoor seating and furniture. Also, it seems to me there's a difference in the solar screens, the mecho shades that people put in. It seems like the white, to me, is less oppressive than the black. I think there are only two choices in color or maybe there's a charcoal color. It does seem to me to have a difference in the effect on the aesthetics of the building. Why don't we move on to the last image? I have one point here. I think you've sort of alluded to the eye level. You're looking at the 4 to 8-foot high eye level. We do have buildings, old and new, that are a half level up from the sidewalk. I think I would argue that that's not so desirable at least where the buildings are right up against the sidewalk. We have a new building Downtown that's on Hamilton with the setback. It's a half level up, but it has more glass than this particular image on the left. I would argue that it works better than the image on the left, which is on Lytton. There are some things—if you have this particular building, say, if it only has 25 percent glazing and it's a half level up

and you have blank walls, then it just doesn't really work very well in the Downtown area. That's what I have. I will pass it over to you and Peter.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you, Alex.

Board Member Baltay: In the same vein, although I don't have photos, I ask everybody to just use your active imagination. I started out just thinking what really seems to make storefronts pedestrian-friendly is having a lot of people around, inside and outside. It's pretty obvious to say that, but when you look around, what really makes that happen? I went over to Paris Baguette—it used to be the sofa store—and looked at their store. They have 25 feet of frontage, and they have a very large recessed area at the front with a bunch of café tables. The place is bustling. I would certainly say that's pedestrian-friendly, successful from a pedestrian-friendly way. They also have glazing pretty much on the whole street frontage and, as far as I could tell, about 50 feet around the corner. A fairly transparent glazing pretty much from 10 feet up down to the floor as far as I could tell. Further up the street is a tiny, little shop, Café Venetia. It's an old storefront. It's only 15 feet of frontage, but they have a very large, sort of traditional recessed area in the front. It's about 75 square feet of floor area. It's where the front door is; you go in and out through that passageway. The effect of that is to create two little side areas which are very desirable seating, which are always full of people. Again, as you walk by that, it feels very successful because there's such a presence of life. It's fully glazed again from about 3 feet to 9 feet high. I looked at the Design Within Reach store, the current one, which is at 447 University, the corner of University and Kipling. Again, they have 25 feet of frontage for the storefront, and they have about 130 square feet of recessed area. It gives them quite a bit of space to display their furniture. This is a store that you might think is easy to make pedestrian-friendly. I would argue that it sort of succeeds at that. I think again having the recessed area somehow gives it breathing room and space to have pedestrians congregate a bit, stop and look. It feels pretty good. I go across the street to 428 University. I couldn't figure out the name of the woman's athletic clothing store at the ground level, Lululemon maybe. In any case, sort of applying the metrics. It's about 50 feet of frontage. I measured to have about 80 square feet of recessed area, but it's broken into small, little pieces that are sort of storefronts and stuff. I would argue that that's a little bit less successful, I think, from a pedestrian-friendly point of view. There's just something about the commercial stuff being right out to the street. The biggest recess was right at the door. That also has about 60 percent of glazing area, because the glazing is only in these recessed areas, again measured from, I think, the ground level up to about 10 feet high. Then, I turned my gaze across the street to The Cheesecake Factory, which I felt was dramatically not successful from a pedestrian point of view. I sort of said why is it. That's a brand new building. It was recently developed. I paced it out. It's got 75 feet of frontage and about 125 square feet of recess. I'll come back to why I'm measuring all these recessed areas. When I look at the recessed areas, they're almost like they were forced through a planning process or something. Little windows are pushed back and forth a little bit. The mullions are set back further than the wall. It's every trick in the book sort of to get those recesses. There's a large blank wall where they put their menu. There's about 32 feet of glazing that goes quite tall. I guessed about 20 feet high, so quite a tall first-story height. It didn't seem to make any difference having it be tall. The glazing was darkly tinted, and you really didn't see in. That's on purpose. There's banquet booths right next to the glass there, and it's probably not that comfortable if it was too clear, the way it's designed. I called that one not too successful. Further down the street is the Medallion Rug Gallery, which is underneath the—not the Elks Club—Masonic Temple, which I felt was remarkably successful. You think why would that be. It's a big, blank wall of a building. You pace it out, and it's 65 feet of frontage. They have a very large recessed area, 300 square feet, fully glazed once you get into that area. They're also playing music, and they have beautiful products, and they're working hard to make it pedestrian-friendly. That big recessed area makes a big difference. It really draws people in. I think everybody who walks by there, night or day, is attracted to that place. Part is because of the tenant, but I'd argue in part it's because of that recessed area. I looked across the street at the new Walgreens Pharmacy; that's 310 University Avenue. A quick glance says that's very successful at the corner. It's that corner with the large roof overhang, entrance to the store. There's always people hanging out there, of all types, all walks of life. It's definitely pedestrian friendly. Go a little bit further up University, though, where it becomes a commercial entrance, and it's not at all friendly. Go around the corner on, I think, Bryant, and it's not friendly. Measuring it out, it has 100 feet of frontage on

University. There's 100 square feet of recessed area at the office entry and 200 square feet at the corner. That's 300 square feet of recessed area for 100 feet of frontage. Only 60 linear feet are glazed at 10 feet high. You could say that's 60 percent glazing along the street. I'm pointing these metrics out because they keep repeating to me some basic things about what makes it friendly is what makes it open and makes more glazing on the street. The last one I looked at was, trying to look at ourselves here, the Palo Alto Development Center. We all know that building. By any metric it should be tremendously successful. It has an enormous amount of recessed area. It has a big open corner on it. There's 2,000 square feet of recessed area by my count. The glass is incredibly darkly tinted. You would think that's a place that's full, bustling with people all day long. You should be really actively wanting to see what's going on inside as you walk by, and yet you can barely see in. To me, that reinforces what Alex was just pointing out, the importance of the glass being transparent. It really needs to be transparent. There's no excuse to have shades there, and there's no reason that glass should be tinted like that. It's deeply recessed; there's no solar needs for it. That's a real shame. I come back around to saying that that's not successful pedestrian-wise. This leads me then to sort of think what are some parameters that we can recommend as architects, from an architectural point of view. I say that because to a large degree it's tenant-based. Who's doing business in these storefronts is what makes them successful pedestrian-wise, but there's not much the Architecture Board can recommend about that. The City Council is looking into that and other aspects of it. To me, one thing is exactly what Alex was saying about the transparency of the glass. I was thinking anything below about 10 feet is where it starts to get important. It struck me that it didn't matter too much how far the glass was held off the ground. Rather, a Code that just measured sort of linear footage of transparent frontage relative to the whole frontage of the store might make more sense. If you were to say that glazing must be transparent for 70 percent of the frontage, then you've got a separate description of what transparent means. It has to have 70 percent transparency through it or something, rather than getting into a description of which height the glass is from the ceiling down and from the floor up. Those are numbers I know, as a practicing architect, you can manipulate. They're so driven by the structure of the building, by the tenant's demands. If you are selling a furniture store, you want the glass to the floor. If you have a restaurant, you want the glass up a little bit. Those didn't seem to make much difference on the pedestrian-friendly aspect of it. The big gist of what I'm driving at is this. In a pedestrian overlay zone, there's a requirement that you have 1 1/2 square feet of recessed area, open area, per linear foot of frontage. When I applied that rule to the examples I just gave you, that struck me as what The Cheesecake Factory was doing, meeting that rule. I think that's someplace where we could push that closer to about 5 square feet of frontage open area per foot of frontage. That would sort of force larger open areas at the fronts of some of these storefronts. It's not necessarily as draconian as it sounds, because we have a pretty strict 1.0 FAR for these buildings anyway. Just requiring a little bit more open space at the frontage of these stores, I think, would really help. I don't think that the height of any of these stores made much difference to how pedestrian-friendly it was. To be honest, when you're walking there, you can barely tell whether it's 8, 10, 12 feet tall, and I'm trained and think about that stuff. Most people don't. Certainly at The Cheesecake Factory, where they had 20 feet of frontage height, it didn't help at all. It made no difference. When I look at what you're recommending there, I didn't buy that the height made any difference. I can tell you, as a practicing architect again, it makes a huge difference in how you develop the building. If you tie my hands on how tall I can make that floor, you've just got all kinds of fights coming out of it, all kinds of additional constraints. I'd suggest that that not be something we focus on. You asked about basements. Again, practicing, I know that basements are included in the FAR calculations for a building. That makes it very hard to try to get a client to try to use these spaces usefully. Yet, I can think of two examples where I think they're going to be nice. The new Design Within Reach store we just approved a few months back is going to use the basement. They've opened up from the street frontage where you'll be able to look down into that, and that becomes part of their storefront. I think that'll be quite successful and dramatic. Without being able to give a specific example, up on San Francisco on Union Street, there's quite a number of shops and stuff that are sort of split-level. You can go down into the basement or upstairs. Again, they're incredibly successful from a pedestrian-friendly point of view. It really has to do with being able to see in there, making this intriguing-looking place that you might want to go into. One thought to that would be if you could say we're not going to include basement area in the floor area calculation if it's used as active retail space. That would immediately get most people wanting to develop that space. The floor area is what everything is all about in Palo Alto.

It's so important to get as much space as you can. If you could let building owners to develop that as useful retail space and force them to make a creative, interesting way to look at it all, you might get a win-win situation. They'd be really happy to develop buildings and to do that, and we would get more interesting spaces. Similar to the way in residential work the basements are not considered part of floor area because they don't add to the bulk of the building, which is what the FAR generally is intended to regulate. I guess my last comment is reading through this and looking at—I started all this by looking at the contextual design regulations, which is what we're enforcing up here. I put a series of red checks next to every one of them. They're a good set of rules. We don't really need to change them. I couldn't think of a way to improve them. I think what we need to do is enforce them. I think that our Board is perhaps guilty of not doing that as much as we should. I think the staff at the same time should also be pushing back to applicants more. These say guidelines; they're written in that way, but they're part of the Code. Go to the Municipal Code. They're right in the middle of the Zoning Code. They need to be enforced. That's probably the most important thing to do. In summary I suggest that we focus a little bit on the glazing, but also consider the recessed area requirement. That's something we might legislate. Thank you.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you, Peter. Kyu.

Board Member Kim: I guess I'll just pick it up where Peter has left off. I also agree that I couldn't find too much wrong with the existing guidelines. I understand the Council's desire to perhaps update them or add some additional points. I really don't think that it's going to really make that big of a difference. I think we're really trying to restrict too much of what's going on. I think a lot of the diversity and the kind of interesting things that happen Downtown aren't necessarily due to a set of guidelines. It's because there's that flexibility for people and architects and store owners to be able to come up with creative ways about getting a building that's approvable. I think if there's one thing that hasn't been touched on quite as much, tying onto the transparency of the glazing, I think maybe there's a way that we can do something about the use of blinds in a lot of the buildings Downtown. One of the examples that was given in the packet, Yayoi, a fairly new Japanese restaurant, every time I pass by it I see the blinds down, and I think it's almost a shame that we can't look in as much. I don't want to point that out as one single example. There's so many other businesses Downtown where I feel like there's glazing. It's there not only to let in natural light for the interiors but for the people that are passing by as pedestrians to be able to get a glimpse of what's going on inside. To have those blinds down most of the day really restricts and prohibits that. If there's a way that we can encourage the blinds to be up for most of the day except for perhaps when required just because there's too much direct sun, that would be something to think about. I think overall the existing guidelines do a pretty good job of the things that we're going after. Perhaps like Peter said, we either need to enforce them much stricter or to really encourage the applicants to take a thorough look through those. I don't see how we can come up with additional or revised guidelines that would improve what we have going right now. I think some of the suggested recommended design standards—I don't know if they need to be design standards per se. I think when a project comes to the ARB, I think a lot of those things are things that we're actively looking at, whether they're standards or not. Things like the Hamilton Street front picture that you have, it's not by accident that those are the same first-story heights. When we look at a building, we obviously look at the context. Sometimes we may like to vary that, but sometimes we ask that the applicant try to be consistent with some of their neighbors. I think those are all just kind of standard design guidelines that we have regardless of whether they're put down in text or not. I think overall it's really the point that there's only so much we can do as a design board, as a City. It's really up to the businesses that are moving in and the way that they approach things. I commend the Council and the City for trying to take another look at this. Perhaps it's a way that we can refresh ourselves to really look at the existing guidelines that are set forth and that we can push them perhaps a little bit harder. If there are ways of enforcing them, I think that would be a step forward. Thank you.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you, Kyu. Alex, do you have any other comments you want to add to what you've already done?

Vice Chair Lew: I do have a couple of additional comments. One is I generally agree with everything that Peter said. That was generally my take on this item. I would say with regard to the amount of transparency, having a 60 percent or a 70 percent requirement for glazing is—we've been reviewing some of the stores at Stanford Shopping Center, some of the new additions. Some of them have not met—Stanford has their own internal 70 percent guideline. Some of them haven't been able to meet that, but we approved it. The one that sticks out in my mind is the Victoria's Secret store. They really didn't want to, and I think generally the Board didn't think that they needed to increase the amount of glazing. I would say that there are cases where lower can be fine, if it's well designed. On the height, having a 15-foot high minimum retail height would impact some of our newer buildings that have been recently improved buildings Downtown. They're trying to squeeze in four floors in 50 feet, so you're ending up with a 12 1/2-foot average floor-to-floor height. If we make them put in one floor that's 15 feet, it's going to cut out a story of the building. Those particular buildings that I was looking at had transfer of development rights. They were like a 3.0 floor area building, and not a 2.0 floor area which is our maximum for mixed-use buildings Downtown. In San Francisco in the mixed-use areas where they really want active ground-floor uses and they want them at 15 feet with 15-foot ceilings, they increased the height to 55 feet. They did that very selectively, not across the board. They figured out which streets they really wanted more retail. They did it just in those places. It's typically on wider streets, typically on collector streets, not on very small, narrow streets. I think on your photograph with the alignment on the Hamilton Avenue frontage, I generally agree with that. It seems to me we have so many different types of buildings Downtown, I'm reluctant to put that in the Code. It came up recently on a project, and the Board recommended denial of the project partly because of the out-sized glazing. I would say there are places for exceptions. The Apple store, the rationale for the departure there was that it was like an atrium at the end of a block. It's a "T" intersection, and they're trying to make an indoor/outdoor atrium market. There's a place for exceptions in that case. If they were proposing something right in the middle of the block, I don't think it would have worked. I do generally support Peter's recommendation for looking at linear footage and not square footage for the amount of transparency. I think I also would support an increase in the recessed areas. I'm not sure I would go to 5 square feet. I've been working on a Downtown map. I've been mapping all of the recesses, so I might be able to come up with something. I can share it with the staff, and then you can actually look at the areas. My perception of how deep some of those spaces were versus what I actually measured is actually very different. I think that's partly building design. Some of them look deeper than they are, and some of them look shallower. On Peter's comment about the basements, I think the reason why they count the basement square footage is because of parking. It's tied to the parking assessment district. It's a little complicated as always. I'll pass it onto ...

Chair Gooyer: Wynne.

Vice Chair Lew: ... Wynne.

Board Member Furth: Thank you. I always learn a lot listening to you. Thank you all. I've lived Downtown for 18 years, so that's between two booms and two busts or maybe two busts and 2 1/2 booms. I worked Downtown for 8 years, and most of it backstage on the planning process. I have a slightly different view of how good design happens. We have totally client-driven projects. The Apple store would be the prime example. I think it's a success. I think it's a big, wide-open screen basically, but it's got plenty of space to stand outside, inside, stop and talk. People do a lot of that. Venetia or Doge or whatever you think of it, which incarnation, that's the result of the City pushing very, very hard to preserve a historic street frontage which is still very successful, which is essentially what used to be display windows. Now what you display is people drinking coffee with a recessed entry. They pushed up the ceiling to make it lighter and brighter. It flourishes. I didn't go measure buildings because I knew you guys would do it better, but I did go do a little ethnographic research. As I was walking yesterday, I had conversations with strangers and with people I know. The stranger was a woman slumped against the wall by the—not Wells Fargo. What's the bank right over there? The big yellow ...

Vice Chair Lew: Chase.

Board Member Furth: Chase. That keeps changing.

Vice Chair Lew: Great Western.

Board Member Furth: Yes. By the bank, on the Bay side of it where there is quite a lovely garden. There's elevated beds with trees, rhododendrons, no seating, but there's a wall you can slump against. She was slumped against it because she's not strong enough at the moment—she's not sure why—to walk all the way from City Hall to the parking lot at the corner. There is no seating on either side of those blocks. The last seating is the benches in front of City Hall. I would be in favor of incorporating—I am in favor of having this be pedestrian-friendly for a wide range of pedestrians, and that includes people with baby strollers and it includes with people with difficulty walking. It also would include access to bathrooms in my ideal world, but that's probably not going to get addressed in this particular project. In SOFA, we have a standard for seating, and it's a minimum of 12 feet—is it—and 15 percent of the linear frontage. My next conversation when I was walking through town was with Faith Bell, who has been very active in the Downtown streets association and the merchants association. We talked about seating, and she pointed out that merchants generally are not enthused about seating in front of their buildings because it can attract, particularly in the alleys where they're isolated, unfortunately illegal transactions and what they perceive as obstruction of access to their businesses. In thinking about this, one of the characteristics of Downtown is that there's a lot of publicly owned property, specifically City-owned property. Perhaps we can address the seating issue where we can by having that seating front our plazas and our garages, our parking lots. If you look at our garage, for example, on Florence, it's two-thirds of the block and there's endless places for benches for workers and other people to sit. There's no seating anywhere. Perhaps we can address that aspect of it. In those blocks where there isn't already seating that meets a reasonable standard for somebody trying to get down that block, I would be in favor of implementing a SOFA-type seating standard. I agree that recesses are what make these sidewalks work. These are social spaces, and they're very social. If you want to step outside of the flow of pedestrian traffic, that's one of the things that recesses are useful for, even if they don't have seating. I think they're vital for flourishing sidewalks. I'd be in favor of increasing the requirement. I think when we looked at the new Design Within Reach building, we had a silly recess. We couldn't quite figure out what to do with it. That's partly because they wanted good visibility up and down, but I think it's also because it was just too small a space. I'm curious as to why the deep recess as you proceed whatever that was, toward San Francisco past the Divine Center, and there is that deep recess and those retail spaces that at various times have been expensive bedding stores and Provencal pots. The rapid turnover suggests to me that there's something wrong. It never draws you in. It's big, and it's completely unused. It's the curse of that corner extended. A third thing I would think would be good to think about in looking at these pedestrian overlay zones is that pedestrian activity Downtown is garbage. For some reason even relatively new buildings like The Cheesecake Factory—the ARB of the time always assures us it would have been worse—I don't think it's completely successful, but we seem to keep doing buildings which need trash bins in the alleys. That creates visual obstructions to a clear sight to walk through it. It creates a stench much of the time, at least mild bad odors. I think really paying attention to the notion that garbage disposal needs to be handled in a way that doesn't convert alleys, which are designated in our Downtown plan as place alleys or super pedestrian-friendly, would be an important and useful aspect of this. I too think that one of the problems with converting what had been backstage retail space, *i.e.*, basements, to offices which certainly was rampant from 1996 or so on is a problem. We see spaces that are alleged restaurants in office buildings that come to us. You look at them and you know they're way too small. There's not going to be any room for the proper ventilation. They're not going to work as restaurants. They're little spaces designated as retail, but they're not going to work. I would be interested in staff thinking further about to what extent is it important to preserve that backstage space including basement space to support viable retail operations. If you just have the little store frontage, you really may limit what's a practical place where you can buy things. I think basically my definition of retail is a place where customers walk in and out. I am very much supportive of a notion of trying to make the glass actually transparent. It's interesting; we see buildings in which down-to-the-sidewalk transparency works because you're really looking through at display spaces. There are also a lot of spaces where it is not desirable. The picture you have of the office building at—is it 245 Lytton—is a classical example. Until they put the blinds in, you spent a lot of time looking at what people had stowed

under their desks and their ankles. I walked by there ten times a days. I did check with the City Attorney's Office. Apparently nothing we're discussing here would create a conflict of interest. I support deeper recessing standards. I support seating standards which take into consideration the entire block in terms of adequacy of supply. I support transparency. I rather like the idea of higher ceilings on the ground floor when they don't bump up to another constraint. If you don't have a TDR, if you only have a 2.0 FAR, then I would be supporting them unless you all told me that that would be too constraining. I think that a key aspect of retail is high ceilings. Thank you.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you. I agree with pretty much what everybody else says. The thing that over the years I've found is sometimes the biggest deterrent is the retail community itself. Invariably, as you said, they don't like seating right in front of their building because of activities that go on. In many cases, they don't like trees growing in front of their space because, as you're driving by, it blocks the sign that they have on the side of the building. It's sometimes where they're their own worst enemies, where we're trying to make it a lively environment, and they seem to argue the point, and we have to educate the retail community. I agree also that the glazing should be a lineal footage, not a square footage. The Cheesecake Factory is a classic example of that. Nobody really worries about looking 15 feet to see if the glass is there. The one picture you showed on Hamilton actually, where you drew the line, part of it sometimes becomes—if we put too many regulations in, then people start to respond just to the actual regulation. It ends up stifling creativity. It's just "we have to do it up to 8 feet" or whatever the case is. It sometimes removes the idea of something totally different like the Apple store. It's something that's totally different. I guess there are people that love it and people that hate it. At least it is unusual and it meets all the criteria. Let's see. As far as raising the ceiling height or the first-floor height, again that's something that, at least from all my experience, has always been generated by the retail community, because it allows them higher ceilings inside, which allows them to put higher shelves in, which allows them to show more merchandise. It really doesn't always relate to the exterior of the building. Again, just as Alex said, you add 2 or 3 feet to the first floor and you still have a cap at the top. It could mean the elimination of a floor at the top of the building. No developer is going to be in favor of that. That's about it for me. Anything else from anyone else? I guess not. I think that's it. Thank you.

4. **QUASI-JUDICIAL MATTER/PUBLIC HEARING. 3001 El Camino Real (16PLN-00097):** Review and Comment on a Requested Architectural Review Application for a Proposed Mixed-Use Development That Includes 50 Residential Rental Units and Approximately 20,000 Square Feet of Ground Floor Retail/Commercial Space. No Recommendation or Action Will be Taken at This Meeting. This Project is Being Evaluated in Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines. It is Anticipated That the Project Will Require a Mitigated Negative Declaration. For additional information contact Claire Hodgekins at Claire.hodgekins@cityofpaloalto.org.

Chair Gooyer: We'll go on to Item 4 at 3001 El Camino Real. Review and comment of a requested Architectural Review application for the proposed mixed-use development that includes 50 residential rental units and approximately 20,000 square feet of ground-floor retail/commercial space. No recommendation or action will be taken at this meeting. This project is being evaluated in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA, and the CEQA Guidelines. It is anticipated that the project will require a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Claire Hodgekins: Good morning, Board Members. I'm Claire Hodgekins, the project planner for this project. This morning you're being requested to consider the applicant's proposal for development of a mixed-use project located at 3001 El Camino Real. The project site is currently three parcels that would be merged into one as part of a separate application for a preliminary parcel map. The site includes split zoning, Service Commercial, medium density, multifamily residential and single-family residential. This was not included in the Staff Report, but staff wanted to also note that one of the three parcels is located on the housing inventory. Currently developed with 9,100 square feet commercial building, Mike's Bikes, that's surrounded by surface parking. A proposed mixed-use project has 19,917 square feet of commercial area and 50 residential units. This shows the zoning of the proposed parcel. As you can see there is CS zoning along El Camino Real. The RM-30 zone is along Acacia, and there's a strip parallel to

Acacia Avenue and adjacent to the single-family residences that is zoned R-1. This was part of the former railroad right-of-way. The project includes two separate buildings. A four-story building proposed in the area zoned CS includes ground-floor retail/commercial, 30 residential units and one level of underground parking. The second building is a three-story building located in the area zoned RM-30. It includes parking on the ground level and two stories with 20 residential units above. Parking adjustment request of 1 percent is requested to provide 192 spaces instead of 194. An additional adjustment may be required for the proposed location of eight parking spaces. As designed, the project requires a Design Enhancement Exception for a 5-foot encroachment into a 10-foot required setback and vegetation screening buffer. Key issues are highlighted in the Staff Report and include consistency with the Zoning Code, consistency with the El Camino Real Design Guidelines, consistency with the performance criteria, and consistency with the Context Based Design Criteria. Staff is seeking ARB input on the project's overall design and consistency with the design criteria and the project's overall design. Next steps include a review and incorporation, as appropriate, of ARB comments; finalization of studies and the draft CEQA document; and then the site and design process requires review by the Planning and Transportation Commission. It would come back to the Architectural Review Board for a recommendation and then City Council. Staff recommends the ARB provide direction regarding the proposed project's overall design and its consistency with applicable design guidelines and continue the project to a date uncertain. No recommendation or action is requested.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you. Any comments or questions of staff?

Jonathan Lait: I'm sorry. Chair, just if I may?

Chair Gooyer: Sure.

Mr. Lait: Because this is a quasi-judicial matter, we just want to make sure that Commissioners have an opportunity to express any ex parte communications before we commence further with the dialog. Thank you.

Board Member Furth: I've spoken with staff to ask them for the history of the strip of R-1 designated property, to which I now have a partial answer.

Ms. Hodgekins: It's adjacent to all of the single-family residences on Olive Avenue.

Board Member Furth: (inaudible)

Ms. Hodgekins: No, that was part of one of the existing parcels in the CS zone. It's not part of the railroad right-of-way.

Board Member Furth: (inaudible)

Jodie Gerhardt: Our understanding is that this R-1 piece that you're seeing here is part of the old railroad. In this case, this property owner picked up that property. It seems like in this case the homeowner picked up the property from the railroad.

Chair Gooyer: Anyone else?

Board Member Baltay: Yes. I guess I had three questions. I'm still not clear. The Design Enhancement Exception is to allow the ramp for the parking to be closer to the neighbor's property. What is it for?

Ms. Hodgekins: It's an encroachment into the 10-foot required setback from ...

Board Member Baltay: What is encroaching?

Ms. Hodgekins: The ramp is encroaching.

Board Member Baltay: The ramp is encroaching.

Ms. Hodgekins: Yes. It's also a 10-foot required vegetation screening under the performance criteria.

Board Member Baltay: The second thing. I noticed in this letter that came to us recently from Transportation, Item Number 2, after evaluating the topographic survey with the plans, it appears the sudden grade change and high point about the railroad stuff. Could you just explain to me what's going on? Where is the grade changing? I walked around the site. I didn't see big grade changes.

Ms. Hodgekins: There's ...

Board Member Baltay: Just put it out for the record. What is it that we're talking about here?

Ms. Hodgekins: If you watch the pointer on the screen, there's a grade change along El Camino Real. It's a little bit higher here versus here and here. Basically the railroad right-of-way comes through here. It's slightly higher where that former railroad was.

Board Member Baltay: I'm sorry. On the ...

Ms. Hodgekins: The center of the site, of the frontage.

Board Member Baltay: The El Camino frontage has a bump in it?

Ms. Hodgekins: Yes.

Board Member Baltay: I didn't notice it when I spent about half an hour there. I guess I'm just kind of blind. Lastly, through the Chair, Robert, there was a number of back-and-forths about the appropriateness of this whole hearing to begin with. Could we get staff just to put on the record what's going on and why we should be hearing this? Through the Chair, it's your call.

Chair Gooyer: You're talking about the email we got last night?

Board Member Baltay: And then staff's response to it, yes.

Ms. Gerhardt: Staff did respond to Mr. Borock's comments about this hearing. The applicant did not apply for a preliminary review. They just applied for a formal application. That's what we're here with today. We are considering this to be the first of three hearings that we would normally do with a formal application. As far as fees are concerned, we take deposits on these major ARB applications. All of our hours are recovered through that deposit process.

Chair Gooyer: I felt comfortable when it was sort of a fee-based type situation, where they just draw from an account.

Board Member Baltay: I found everything to be reasonable. I just wanted to have it put out on the record.

Chair Gooyer: If there are no other questions—yes?

Board Member Furth: I agree that this seems to be a no harm, no foul situation even if somewhat unusual. I will say that since I don't have the benefit of sound studies and other data that CEQA documents would give me, I may object if you tell us we've hit our three including this one, should we ever get to that point.

Ms. Gerhardt: Yes. That three is at the Director's discretion. We have the ability to have additional hearings if needed.

Board Member Furth: I'm happy to ...

Ms. Gerhardt: Because we don't have the CEQA documents and we're a little bit out of order here too is why we're not asking for a recommendation. We're just asking for some guidance to help this project along.

Chair Gooyer: At this point, I'll open it up to the public. I have one speaker slip at the moment, Jeff Levinsky. Why don't we start with that? Jeff, you have 3 minutes. I'm sorry. You're right. Jeff, hang on. You're right I haven't even done the applicant's presentation yet. Why don't we start with that? I'm sorry. You've got 10 minutes then.

Tim Steele: Good morning. Tim Steele, I'm with the Sobrato Organization representing the applicant. I also have with me the architect, Jeff Berg, from Steinberg. In the audience I have Nick Samuelson from Guzzardo Partnership, who is our landscape architect, and Nick Torres Mathew [phonetic], who is our civil engineer, with Kier & Wright. If you have any questions associated with those, they're available to answer those as well. Thank you for the opportunity to be here, to introduce to you 3001 El Camino, a mixed-use project. We had a few design challenges with three different parcels and two different zonings. Our goal of this team in approaching the project was to make each parcel and each zoning area conforming relative to the Zoning Ordinance and is partially why the decision to come directly to you instead of going through the preliminary review. We've had plenty of opportunities over the years to talk with staff about this and the adjacent Fry's site, which we also own, and getting feedback and context for that. We were hoping we could build on some of that. We looked to the neighborhood for cues. You, a few years ago, had approved the project across Acacia on El Camino, on the Equinox site. We looked to that for a lot of cues on materials and finishes and design features. We tried to pick up on those cues and integrate them here. With that, I don't want to get into all the details. I'll let the architect make his presentation, and hopefully he can answer any questions you might have. Thank you.

Jeff Berg: Good morning, members of the Board and staff. We're very excited to be here. Again, my name is Jeff Berg. I'm an architect and principal with Steinberg. We're excited to bring this first project to you here on El Camino, in this portion of the Fry's site. As Tim said, there is challenges in terms of—there are some wonderful opportunities, but there are some challenges. We had to start kind of somewhere in terms of making some assumptions on how to design our building. I will start off by saying that the project really has three frontages. There's the El Camino frontage, the Olive frontage, and the Acacia frontage. I think we can make a case on any of those as to what we would call the front or side. I think that will come up a little bit later when we talk about the ramp. We saw that as a challenge but also an opportunity. The split zoning also presents somewhat of a challenge. The buildings that were presented to you and drawn here—we've approached this that each building essentially stands alone on itself. The CS building works with the CS zoning, and the RM-30 building works with the RM. We are truly thinking of this as a mixed-use site, and that's what we're bringing forth to you today. We think that there's some very nice solutions that we'll get into on how we believe this works in a mixed-use way. The Board has picked up on the topography; although, you don't necessarily see it. El Camino does have about a 20-inch rise across its frontage. In the world of ADA and flatness, that does present a design challenge for us, especially in terms of consistent retail entries across that frontage and having a flat building and not stepping inside. There's also a number of mature trees that we very much want to keep. The City has a heritage of keeping trees, especially mature street trees. A proposal of lowering the sidewalk or what that impact would be all the way out into El Camino is not considered in this application. We're working with the existing trees. Another item, I think, for consideration is in the El Camino Design Guidelines in terms of how we planned the transportation entry. We're keeping the El Camino frontage very much vehicle-centric. There's no mid-block curb cut. Cars are funneled around and to the sides on Acacia, primarily on Acacia. There's also working within the height restrictions and so forth. I think the project that we'll go through now really responds quite nicely to a lot of those guidelines and have come up with some nice design solutions. If you see these on your

screen here, we'll just go through a number of these slides. You're familiar here with the Mike's Bikes parcel. That sits squarely in the CS zone. What we call the tail or the RM-30 piece runs to the north along Acacia. We did do and put together and stitched a street frontage for you for your reference. I think you've all visited the site probably and are familiar with here. These are for reference. We took a number of our design cues from projects in and around the area and also the project on the Equinox site that was approved several years ago, used that as some cues in terms of what the ARB and City was looking for at that point. Here's the data. We'll talk, I'm sure, about parking. This is pretty straightforward calculations in terms of the floor areas and parking required. I think staff has shown that we're complying with the numbers in terms of floor areas and heights. There is a discussion we'll have about parking and shared use. This slide, again, demonstrates some of those challenges in terms of the topography. What I will say is in terms of the parking and entry here for mixed use, the vehicular traffic is off of El Camino, pointed to Acacia. The main, what we call the vehicular entrance, is right here. We've taken the vehicles and the transportation coming in for all of the residential uses and really the bulk of the retail use and directed that to a mid-block situation here. The turn here and the circle prevents cut-through traffic to Olive. It also directs them to the ramp to the subterranean parking. Note that the ramp starts at the very back—this was intentional—of the adjacent R-1 parcel to get those cars ducking down and below grade before we're next to a home. We think that is a very nice design solution there. Really the other surface parking that would serve the retail use, there's only 30 spaces, and that is accessible off of Olive right here. We've provided really—there is a minimum kind of amount for retail that works well for that quick pick-up, drop-off or jump-in on a trip. That really is limited to the 30 cars right here on Olive. We see this also working well. There's an entry on the building on Olive, and that would focus pedestrians or residents north towards the Caltrain station and that kind of pedestrian and mass transit situation. A couple of cross-sections. There's the architectural site plan; we'll get to the sections. We've put a lot of effort into the landscaping around the perimeter as well as the amenity spaces. We have some very nice buffers on the point that's called out as the R-1 leftover zoning area here, with nice landscaping and features across the back, heavily planted to meet our storm water retention guidelines. Also there's an amenity space for the building on the second floor of the CS building. This place, again, located far away from our R-1 zones. I think this was about 75 feet—no, it was more than that, I think over 100 feet to the back here. Cross-sections, you can see how we're handling our heights here. The 50-foot-high portion of the building is pushed out to El Camino, and then we respect that 150-foot circle and drop the building heights down as we approach and get closer to the R-1 zones. The cross-section here shows this adjacency with the single-family home, which on this drawing is shown there, but it's pushed very much to the front of their parcel. You can see the setback in question and then the ramp diving down to the garage below. We did put in the building that was approved here, so you could see some context in terms of what was approved. We've taken that also in terms of our mass and bulk, materials and colors and used that as cues for our design. We feel very good about the design use of materials. I think this would be a nice addition on El Camino and picks up on other buildings that have been approved closer down to Page Mill, I think, with that variation of plane, color use and then some higher-quality materials at the corners. There's a sample here. This was also included in the submittal package. There are a few renderings here to illustrate the overall architectural design. Thank you very much. Be excited to answer your questions.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you. Any questions of the applicant?

Board Member Kim: I have a quick question. I was looking at the building section on A4.1. I don't think it was actually in your presentation. In our packets, if you look at the left portion of that building section, it looks like there's a parking stacker.

Mr. Berg: Yes. We're proposing in the basement—along the Acacia frontage, we have provisions in the plans to allow for mechanical parking on that wall, on that side.

Board Member Kim: Do your parking calculations take into account the stacked spots as well?

Mr. Berg: They include the stacked spots. The most intensive use we saw on the retail side would be a restaurant. The plan was to build—we conform without putting the stackers in, if it's not a restaurant.

We would put in the pit, and you can cover the way those are designed and manufactured. We build the pit with the basement, and then there's a series of metal plates that cap that off. If there was a conversion or a time when parking was needed, they can go ahead and install the system. The physical bones to do the stacker is in place and built from the outset.

Board Member Kim: The stacker would really be to provide enough parking for a restaurant if it were (crosstalk).

Mr. Berg: (crosstalk) intense parking situation, yes.

Board Member Kim: Thank you.

Chair Gooyer: Anyone else?

Vice Chair Lew: I have a question for you. I guess we are calling it the RM-30 building on Acacia. You have the parking at grade. I was wondering if you had considered doing subterranean parking or a half level down parking.

Mr. Berg: We had considered that. Noting that the heights were at 35 feet we could accommodate all the parking without going through a subterranean situation, we chose to keep that at grade for this exercise.

Vice Chair Lew: Thank you.

Chair Gooyer: Anyone else? In that case, now I'll open it up to the public. Like I said, I have one speaker slip at the moment, Jeff Levinsky. Jeff, you've got 3 minutes.

Jeff Levinsky: With all due respect, I think it's 5 minutes for a hearing like this. That's what it says on the agenda. I won't need it. Two points. First of all, thank you all for hearing this item. The concern I have is about the present parking situation. The Staff Report doesn't really mention this, but the lot that it talks about of 66 undesignated spaces is currently in use. It didn't take long to figure out how. I went over there a couple of days ago and people are parking there all throughout the morning and then walking over to 380 Portage Road, a separate property where there's a company called Playground Global. They were going in there. Those people are all going to be displaced when this project goes up. The question is where are they then going to park. I realize that the buildings are owned by the same owner and there's been an agreement to handle this in the past. I think it would be appropriate for the staff to go through and explain whether the remaining parking spaces are going to be adequate for the parking that's going to be displaced. Acacia is completely parked bumper-to-bumper when I was there. That couldn't absorb these people either. This is actually a pretty tricky issue because we also have seen this over at Foot Locker, which is going to be torn down and rebuilt. Cars are parking in the back of Foot Locker for another property. There are these agreements, informal or formal worked out, where cars aren't parking in spaces that are going to survive. The question is what's going to happen. I've spoken with Becky Sanders, who is the president of the neighborhood association. There's already concern about overflow parking from other projects and such. I think simply counting up the parking spots at Fry's and saying there's enough for all the tenants at Fry's may not itself be adequate. We'd like to know whether or not Fry's store, for example, has the rights to park so many cars for customers and whether that is going to be in—that has to be maintained so that you can't just move the people for Playground Global over to the other side where Fry's customers park. I think that all has to be sort of very carefully explained so that the public can understand what's going to happen. The other concern that Becky and her community are concerned about is sort of the canyonization of El Camino. This building, while it does an interesting job of moving the mass away from the R-1 homes as appropriate, creates along El Camino what's going to be sort of a very vertical facade. We've seen that similar design in other buildings. It would be great if you could find ways to make that more appealing and more attractive rather than what you already have north of Oregon Expressway with the various projects that have gone up, which have

gotten quite a bit of public backlash about how unattractive it is now to have these tall buildings on both sides and such. I hope you can give some attention to those issues. Thank you.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you. Anyone else that would like to address this Board? Seeing none, I'll close the public portion and bring it back to the Board. Kyu, you want to start?

Board Member Kim: Thank you for your presentation.

Mr. Lait: I'm sorry, Chair. I'm the stickler on process here. Typically, we give the applicant an opportunity for rebuttal. Since there was some public comments, there's an opportunity for an applicant to rebut anything that was heard in the public process. I think your agenda (crosstalk).

Chair Gooyer: I was going to do that after we—that's fine. No problem.

Mr. Steele: Specific to the parking question, it's a good observation to see that that portion of the parking is used on a fairly active basis. However, we've been monitoring the parking lot and actually recently signed it because we're finding that that portion of the parking that is subject to this project being displaced isn't used necessarily by our project. Predominately it's used by private parties going across Acacia in the Equinox project. The gym primarily uses that parking lot a lot. For about a 2-month period about 6 months ago, we had a security guard monitoring that portion of the parking lot and checking where everybody is actually moving to when they park their car and walk to, and then asking them if they're not part of the Fry's campus, if you will, that whole parking lot and the facilities that go with that parking lot, the Fry's building, the Global Playground and such, that they not park in our parking lot. We've recently signed it to say they're not allowed if you're not part of our tenancy. We also would like to point out that the Fry's main building parking lot areas have kind of grown haphazardly over its life. As it acquired the railroad easement through the property, they paved it. As they got other pieces, they paved it. There was no rhyme or reason with the layouts of the parking and how efficient they drive and such. We're in the process of actually having the parking lot looked at to make it more logical and efficient. In that we get to add additional parking, which will help offset the displaced parking that would be part of our project.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you. Why don't we bring it back to the Board then?

Board Member Kim: Thanks again for your presentation. I think this is a very interesting site. I remember when it was still a car dealership, and I remember when Verizon was Pizza Hut and so on and so forth. One of the first things that kind of interested me was the fact that this was used as a part of the railroad. I think it's interesting that across El Camino between the McDonald's and the Palo Alto Square we still have that strip of land that used to be the railroad tracks. Just a very casual comment. I think I was a little bit sad to see that there wasn't any kind of association made to that, which I think is fine. Again, it's just an observation to start. As far as looking through your packet and drawings, thank you for providing such a large set of drawings. I mean that in earnest, because it's really important to be able to see a lot of the complexities that are going on. I think there are a lot of things to be applauded with regards to the project. I particularly think that the ramp is a good decision and a good design approach to give some respect to the single-family residence that is neighboring right next to that, and at the same time provide somewhat of a buffer between the more high-density structure that's to be proposed. I think that the elevations along Olive Avenue and even to a certain extent along Acacia have been pretty well thought out. Especially on Olive, I like the breaking up of the elevation and not being so repetitive. However, I do feel like there can be some additional studies along El Camino Real. I understand that it's a certain unit type that's being repeated and mirrored, but I still feel that it's just a little too bland and too repetitive. I think there are opportunities to kind of introduce some more pedestrian scale and pedestrian interest and gathering spaces along El Camino that currently don't exist there the way the site currently is and along with the proposed design. I think the decision to use the roundabout in the center of the site to prevent people from cutting across is important. I know, as somebody that's guilty myself of using Olive Avenue as kind of a shortcut from El Camino to Oregon Expressway, it is a frequently used shortcut by many people in town. To have that linkage from Acacia

would only encourage people to do it more. I think that roundabout is being mindful of that and trying to deter that. I like that decision. I'm a little bit concerned about the parking. I realize that we're not making a decision today and that things may still be in flux, especially with Planning and the Department of Transportation. To me it feels like a lot of those spots are super compact spots. I thought if this becomes a development that's thriving and has a lot of people, I think it's going to be a real traffic jam down there. I don't see how people are going to be encouraged to park down there. With regards to the plans, I thought it would be nice in the future if you could show the outdoor amenity space for the El Camino building on that second-floor plan. I didn't see it currently. I think this would be specifically on Sheet A2.2CS. You do have a note that the podium amenities are there, but I thought it would be nice if you could actually show those amenities and how they relate back to the residences. I was looking at things such as trash and getting in and out of the site. I think those have been for the most part pretty well thought through. I think those can work. I do have concerns if one of the retail spaces on the ground floor of the CS building will be a restaurant. The thought that restaurant customers may have to use the parking lift system is a concern that I have. I also have some issues with the bicycle parking. I noticed that all of the long-term bicycle parking spots were in the Acacia building. The majority of those long-term parking spots are actually for the CS building. I don't know if that's the best way to go about the long-term bicycle parking. It almost felt like "we've got this long-term bicycle parking that we need to address; let's just put it where we have the space to put it." I don't think that's the best solution for that. I also do think that additional surface grade bicycle parking should be encouraged. I realize that you do have some of those spots, but I think more of the people that need to use the long-term bicycle parking spots, I think, will just kind of leave their bikes on surface grade, which will take up those bicycle parking spots for the people that actually bike here for temporary uses. Those were the initial comments that I had. I'm excited for the project. It's a site that can definitely use a more vibrant piece of architecture and land use. There still needs to be some more thought put into the repetitiveness and the use of materials and colors. As a start, I'm excited to see the project move forward. I think the initial pieces are in there for you to clearly show us that you're thinking about some of the more complex issues at hand. Thank you.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you. Alex.

Vice Chair Lew: Thank you for your presentation. I think this is a pretty exciting project. I very much like the range of units that you've put in the project. We haven't really seen very many people propose this kind of project in Palo Alto. I do like that. I do like what you're proposing in terms of the units, and I do very much like that you have private balconies and large common open spaces for all of the units. I think that's very important. I think my main questions on the project have to do with the repetitiveness, which I think Kyu has mentioned. Also for me, when I was reviewing the El Camino Design Guidelines, I think there are some things that you're missing. One is a prominent entrance for the residences facing the street. Yours are kind of in a courtyard facing the back of the property. Our guidelines do actually say that you should have entrances for the retail and also for the residences. It's a guideline, not a zoning requirement. I do want to caution you that the Council has been deliberating whether or not to make the guidelines part of the Code. That's out there. They haven't decided on that. I would just pay attention to that, because that's come up before on other projects. It seems like the guidelines do allow some wiggle room where it could be on a side street if there is a plaza or some sort of pedestrian connector to El Camino. There are maybe some ways around that. The guidelines do specifically mention that. On the repetitiveness and also to Mr. Levinsky's point about the walled canyons, it seems to me the amount of frontage that you have on El Camino, that more variation is warranted. Don't make every window on every building the same proportion. I've worked on projects like this. It's very easy for the architect working on it just to try to make everything the same. That's actually the wrong thing to do on a project of this size. If you carry that through into the materials and colors, again I think we want real variation between the buildings. Don't use the same palette on both buildings on all facades and whatnot. We want more distinction between them. You're starting to do that on the corners. I think the corners are working really well. On balconies, if you have HVAC, like if you're using mini splits with wall-mounted (inaudible)—you're not, good. One, I want them to be screened if you do. If you have Z vents, if there's a way around that and not doing it—we've had some projects do ducting up to the roof so that they're not visible on the El Camino facade—that would be great. On your retail frontage, things like

planters and recesses could go a long way to breaking the repetition. I think the Staff Report also mentioned more prominent awnings. You do have awnings in the sections, but having more prominent awnings and letting tenants—what do you call it? Incorporating a place for tenants to have signs is key. On your RM-30 building on Acacia, I think my suggestion is to lower the building a half level if you can. I've seen projects in San Jose where they actually add front steps to each of the units on the second floor. Instead of just the balcony, it's actually more like a porch. In a way it's a little weird because you have a unit with two front doors, one from the street and one into the corridor. It makes the street a lot better. Right now you have a blank wall. If you guys don't do that, then I really want to see more of what the blank wall looks like. I was looking in the elevations, but I couldn't really tell exactly what you were doing on the garage wall facing Acacia. I do acknowledge that you're trying to do storm water in that setback there. I'm a little concerned about your—what do you call it—your automobile circulation. It seems to me that you're putting more of the access on Acacia versus Olive. The downside is Acacia is narrower, and at least temporarily it doesn't connect to very much. You have to go through that little alley to get to Portage or drive through a parking lot. I know that won't be permanent; something else will happen in the future. The downside to me is that you can't turn, you can't go southbound on El Camino from Acacia because there's a median. You're really kind of forcing people to go through the alley to Portage because of the median. Olive, you can make a left turn or a right turn, because that's also the Palo Alto Square intersection. Olive is 10 feet wider than Acacia. I would imagine that the neighborhood is concerned about cut-through traffic and whatnot and parking. Some of our other neighborhoods, like in Evergreen Park, have put barriers there. The mixed-use projects can access part of Olive, and then there's a barrier, and then the residents have access only from the back side. That's one possible solution if that is an issue. On the grading of your first floor and a lot of the ADA access, I've worked on projects like this. I know it's a challenge. I've worked on ones where we've split the slab, stepped the slab. I know that causes all sorts of problems. It seems to me that may be a better solution. You're saying no. I've gone through it. I've racked my brain over that too. I would say on the Equinox project there, there was a Design Enhancement Exception for that project to help with the ADA access. They tried to take up the grade on the side streets. To make up the difference, they put ramps in there. I would say that at least I'm open to that kind of thing if that helps. I'm not crazy about having the retail floor lower than the sidewalk. That just seems really odd to me. Whatever you can do to get it higher, I think, is better. I think that's all that I have at the moment. Thank you. I look forward to this project.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you, Alex. Wynne.

Board Member Furth: Thank you, and thank you for the large, readable, highly informative plans, as Kyu said. It's a pleasure to be thinking about a project like this and the uses that you propose. It was good to be reminded that when I see an asphalt parking lot as something vastly improved by having housing built on it, there is a loss, namely those parking spaces. I will be interested in hearing how these things work out in the larger neighborhood. I guess I've been hearing about how these parcels are about to change to housing since 1998, when I first showed up to go to work in the Planning Department at least as their legal advisor. I had a question for staff. In the South El Camino Design Guidelines, it talks about the 3000 block, and it talks about a jitney and the old railroad right-of-way. Could you explain how that relates to this project and site? Page 18.

Ms. Hodgekins: I've discussed this with Transportation, and they indicated that, although this notes that there was an old railroad right-of-way here, there are no future plans even mentioned on a potential basis from anyone at this point in time to actually develop that. They indicated that much of the right-of-way already has been developed. There are no ...

Board Member Furth: Do we expect that to change in the Comp Plan revision?

Ms. Hodgekins: They don't expect that to change (crosstalk).

Board Member Furth: No, I mean they would change the Comp Plan, because this is a reference to a Comp Plan note.

Ms. Hodgekins: Yeah.

Board Member Furth: Thank you. This was a question for the applicant. You mentioned that you control other properties in the area. This line of single-family dwellings along Olive, are those also controlled in part by you? No. Are those individually owned houses?

Mr. Steele: We bought the Fry's land that you know as the Fry's building as well as—not Mike's Bikes but the railroad easement that came up was also owned by them. They own going along Olive just, I'd say, about 60 percent of the individual single-family homes, and they kept those. Boyd Smith kept them when they sold us our piece. I think out of all of them on our side of Olive there might be two privately owned, then the bulk of the remainder is owned by a third investor that we're not related to. When Boyd sold us his properties, the Fry's site, he indicated he would not oppose the redevelopment of our parcels. The one parcel immediately adjacent to us is privately owned. We have been attempting to contact them. It appears that they might be an absentee owner. We also looked at the title report, and it looks like there might be some financial issues going on with the property, which is why we can't get a hold of the person possibly. There's a pile of mail on the front porch. We're making an attempt to get a sense of their reaction to this proposal, but we haven't had an opportunity to meet with them yet.

Board Member Furth: Thank you. I was asking these questions because a lot of our guidelines talk about doing various things to be careful with and protect adjacent residential neighborhoods. This site does not mostly adjoin residential neighborhoods. It's hard to tell; it all appears to be in flux. I know we have to start somewhere. Thank you. Basically I was looking at the site. I was thinking ignoring the issue of the R-1 strip which probably the owner would have a right to have re-designated since it's not develop-able under R-1 standards, but it's not an easy process to get a zone change even a correcting one like this. It's basically RM-30 throughout and then with the mixed-use, with the commercial. Just sort of thinking about it. It's a single parcel with a big El Camino frontage, but it's two different zones. When I look at the South El Camino Guidelines, I'm thinking do I apply the residential building only standards to the CS building. I think they're important. I would ordinarily be looking for access from residential units to the sidewalk, because that's one of the things that's encouraged in these guidelines in a residential building. I don't know if that works effectively when what's across the street is not residential uses. It does concern me that this design is so inwardly focused. I would prefer that it address the street more directly and that it be more apparent that there's residential uses than I think this design does. I know our El Camino guidelines—you've got two of them, two sets to think about—talk about big, built-up corners. I actually think that really well designed, truly pedestrian-friendly uses on corners can be more valuable than towers. I think what you have could work. My big concern will be is it actually a place that will be pleasant to be. I suspect 10 years from now the traffic will not be as noisy on that street, but it'll be interesting to see the sound studies and think about how it practically works. I think we have a number of alleged public spaces along El Camino that don't work because they're too noisy. I'm also concerned with having—I'm not supportive of having a block-long facade along El Camino with no significant entry through it. I think it needs to be broken up. Our guidelines unconsciously don't really anticipate block-long developments. We have to read them in that context. If you look at them, they talk about cooperative developments with pedestrian amenities and passages between the buildings. I think you own both those buildings, and I would be looking for that kind of approach. Also generally, there's a lot of really attractive development in this part of the City, a lot of the new buildings. A lot of them are back against Park or Birch, and they don't have to be as armored against the street as your building will be on El Camino. They don't have to deal with as much noise, as much dust, as much smoke. Generally the architecture there is lighter. It's lighter elements. I'm sure my colleagues know how it's done. I am looking for lighter, less heavy architecture in this area. This has always been the less developed, less intense part of the City. If you look across the street, you have a very high urban forest. It's big. That's the tallest thing around. I would like to keep that aspect of visibility and light and greenery. I think this site is under-landscaped as it's presently designed, particularly for an area where the dominant use is residential. I think it needs a lot more greenery, and I don't mean a bunch of horsetails, equisetum, whatever it's called. I very much like the use. I like the mix of units you have. I like the fact that you have outdoor spaces which would be buffered from intense noise. I'm not sure

they're designed to really work yet socially. I think they need perhaps more eyes on them, more to encourage interaction. My principle concern is this long, heavy El Camino frontage and failing to tie that residential in both buildings more to the street. Thank you.

Chair Gooyer: Thank you, Wynne. Peter.

Board Member Baltay: Good morning. Thank you for the comprehensive presentation. I'm very excited about this project. I think the use is great. I find myself in agreement with and actually wanting to build on a lot of the comments of my colleagues. Let me start by saying that I think this is increasingly a pedestrian-friendly area. It doesn't seem so at first blush. It's not if you're not really familiar with the area, but it's so rapidly changing into a higher-density microcosm of an urban area. It's kind of exciting and neat. The scale and the kind of apartments you're proposing really fit into that. I think the architecture needs to be considerably more pedestrian-friendly. I'll build on Wynne's comments right away. I think the El Camino frontage is too much building. I'd love to see some sort of break between the building with an entrance perhaps through some buildings or a large opening between them, somehow to signify that it does front on El Camino. That's the address, 3001 El Camino. I'd really love to see some sort of break in the building. That also responds to what Kyu was saying about the building feeling too monotonous and regular. Again, break it up a little bit. That will help. I feel even more strongly, I think, than Alex does about the residential units. When you lift them off the ground by the height of a parking garage, you don't really have residential units on the street. That's out of context, and I find I really won't be able to support this if those units are a full height above the street. I really think you need to come down at least half a story. What Alex was painting a picture of is really quite attractive houses with porches stepping off a little bit. Up in Redwood City, they just did that on some new apartment buildings off of Veterans where the parking is pushed down a little bit. Each house has this sort of brownstone stoop. Anything you can do to make these apartment homes part of the community, because they are, will really help. Right now, when you look at some of your perspective renderings, it's pretty horrific. On Sheet A3.1, you get a good view of the residential units off of Acacia. That's really not attractive that way, and it's not making any kind of contextual connection to what is a residential neighborhood. I think the same thing applies in the back. You have an outdoor space that you really want, and the residents of these apartments will want to use. Yet, when you lift them up a full floor above it, there's not a whole lot of mothers who are going to be comfortable with their children playing when they can't easily get to them and see them. Being a full floor above it is just not comfortable; it's not appropriate. Again, if you were to sink the parking down just half a flight, just enough that you can still make it all work, you have room for the ramps and stuff. You could then find a way to make more visual and architectural connections from those units to the street and to the backyard open area, which would I believe just make it much more successful. Again, I'm building on what Alex was saying, but I feel even more strongly than he does that it's essential to get that. When I look at the parking situation, in general I think you're making it work. Certainly the 1 percent is not a problem. I do support the Design Enhancement Exception for the ramp. We've done that before. This is such a limiting factor. To pull it a full 10 feet from the property line really limits how you can make the parking work. What you've done is quite nice, and I find I accept that. Again, building on what Kyu was saying, the stacked parking works maybe for residential units. It really doesn't for any kind of retail purpose. I just can't support that at all if you can't make the parking work without the stacked units. I understand that they're not part of the project now, but I just want to put it on the record that I don't think stacked units really work at all, but for residential units at best.

Mr. Steele: Is there a chance to clarify (inaudible)?

Board Member Baltay: No. The last thing about the parking. I've said this on many projects before. If there's any way you can get some kind of a connection from the parking garage up. Right now, I come home and I have to go out through either an elevator or a fire stair to get up to the main plaza and into the houses somehow. If you had some kind of an opening, a staircase, a way to go back and forth between the two levels, you'd just make it so much more friendly. For retail, people are so much more likely to want to go to these shops when the parking is easy to get there. If you think of Kepler's book store and Café Borrone up in Menlo Park, Bob Peterson's building, where they have these huge lightwell-

filled stair areas that you go up and down from. When you're in the garage, you immediately know where to go. It's full of light. It's quite successful. It's a pleasant way to get out of a parking garage. It just makes such a difference. Here it's just an absolute minimum parking garage, fit as many cars in as you can. That comes around to me on the second floor common space for the CS building open space on the outside. Again, if there was some way to connect that space to the parking, to the area, to El Camino, a staircase going down, some level of just connection, visual connection and a practical, physical way to get back and forth between all of this. As you refine the designs, maybe you'll find an opportunity to do that. The more you can get—just a staircase going down is just so much easier for somebody to have two or three ways to come home. It just makes it nicer if you're walking over from the train station, you don't have to go inside some fire stair to get up. All these small things really count. I do share everybody's comments about the buildings looking a little too regular and monotonous. At first I had actually circled the corner thinking where is the corner element. On thinking about it and listening to what my colleagues say, it may well be that the way you've designed this corner will be quite successful. Having a sort of a recess and a strong entrance off of that might well do the corner marking. I do caution you and remind everybody that in our El Camino Design Guidelines we call for buildings to have a base, a middle and a top. Like it or not, that's what we've all approved in our El Camino guidelines. We've talked about this at previous meetings. I remind staff I don't see that mentioned anywhere in your report. My colleagues have all discussed this before. It is in the guidelines, and we can't just ignore those things. It does force a more traditional style of architecture, but that is what we've collectively agreed to do through our Codes and guidelines. We should be enforcing that or at least mentioning it and letting us come back with architectural solutions to it. Two final things. As I look at these elevations, I notice you're proposing some sort of corrugated metal treatment on these taller, vertical elements on the CS building and possibly on the residential one. I find that not to be a very comfortable or timeless element at all. I think it's sort of a catchy, current architectural trend. I'd like to think of us looking for buildings that are more timeless, to have more durable materials that 20 years from now will still be looking strong and solid. I don't think a corrugated metal is one of those. I think we've had a couple of buildings in town where we just go a little bit too far that way. It doesn't really work. Lastly, it really struck me standing on the corner the other day that there's quite a few large redwood trees up and down El Camino, especially looking north across the street. It strikes me as a real source of possible inspiration for your landscape architect. The redwood, El Palo Alto really is the symbol of our City. Here's an opportunity where from this building you're going to see quite a few of them, a whole density of them. Maybe incorporate a few more of those into your design somehow. Just go out there, landscape architects. You can't help but to miss—there's got to be a dozen 50-foot-tall redwoods within a couple hundred feet of this place. It really struck me as a beautiful thing that I think of a lot when I think about Palo Alto. I'd love to see if there's a way you could just get some inspiration from that. Thank you.

Chair Gooyer: Thanks, Peter. I pretty much agree with everything Peter said and actually what most of my other colleagues have said. The residential area in the back, I think, needs to be dropped a half—if you don't want to drop it completely, but at least a half a story which would make it a lot more friendly to the pedestrian sidewalk. It's been used in numerous areas around here. The first thing that comes to mind is Bay Meadows used it very successfully in the same sort of format. The perspective you've got on the front sheet, I really do not like the El Camino elevation. It is way too monotonous. Going back to specifics, also some of the corrugated metal, the type of materials being used. Also the street-level facade, basically other than the two ends, I see no doors, no nothing. If that's going to be retail, that makes no sense to me at all. That needs to be changed. It's difficult and I guess it's become very traditional because of the height limitations, but almost every new building that's being built these days has a flat roof. It's getting very monotonous. When it gets to the point where my wife starts commenting that every new building, then I know it's getting that way. Being in the business, you notice things like that. When a person who's not begins to notice it, it seems to be trend-setting. I think there needs to be some variety. Further down on El Camino, we've had some buildings of this scale approved recently, that are being built. They've got some variety to them. This looks like one large complex, and it doesn't need to be. I would have no problem if this looked like four or five different buildings. It still gets you the type of units that you're looking for. I like the fact that you're creating some 550 plus or minus square foot units. I think that's great, especially right near the train. I think that's all the right way

to do it. Right now the concept is great. Just the way it's being presented needs to be fixed. I'm not happy with it at the moment. I could accept the ramp, the 5 feet instead of 10. I don't really have a problem with that. Let's see. Basically I don't think there's anything I can say that hasn't already been said. I do agree—I know you were raising your hand. I've never seen lifts work successfully with a restaurant or whatever type situation. I've seen it done on a very large scale in Europe. I've seen it done in some areas in San Francisco. The average person in Palo Alto isn't going to want to run into a lift system to go to a restaurant for an hour. I just don't see it.

Mr. Steele: (inaudible)

Chair Gooyer: Like I said, right now this is a preliminary meeting. I don't need you to explain the whole thing. If you want, that's fine. I'm getting the nod here. Come on up and you can explain to me your end of it.

Mr. Steele: It's our fault for not going into that level of explanation. It's not intended for the retail to use the lifts. The way the space is designed the residential is a secure parking space. It's also designed that if we were to add the lifts, we shift the secure gate and fence further in to where the lifts would be added. We're adding surface-level parking for the commercial when we put the lifts in. The lifts would then service the residential only. We agree with your comments that were expressed, I think Kim, Peter and yourself at least. I think this ...

Chair Gooyer: Like I said, we were just making a comment that I've never seen it work. If you agree, then ...

Mr. Steele: It won't work, I agree. I do agree, yes.

Chair Gooyer: Having said that then, any other last comments from anyone? Go ahead.

Vice Chair Lew: I just wanted to respond to your comment about the flat roofs. I don't disagree with you. Our guidelines encourage flat roofs and discourage pitched roofs or mansards or whatever. I think there's an opportunity here. Your top-floor units have some double-height spaces. You could have variation in there, because you've got lots of volume to play with. I don't want the guidelines to discourage you from trying to do something different up on the top floor. You have room to play there. I've seen that done in San Francisco in some south of Market projects, where the top floor has a sloped ceiling up there on the upper units. It's actually really beautiful.

Chair Gooyer: In response to that, it's just like with so many other situations where regulations in some cases are done to have a really good intent, and then all of a sudden it goes to the extreme. It becomes excessive.

Vice Chair Lew: I did want to share that I looked at a mixed-use project down in Los Angeles, in Glendale. It's kind of like their Santana Row. It's called the Americana. There is something there that they did, which I haven't seen before. Instead of having the residential units and the retail all line up in one flat facade, they pushed the units back.

Chair Gooyer: The residential stuff back, yeah.

Vice Chair Lew: The podium landscape that you have, which is facing the back, they have that on the front. You can see it from the street. You see that there's this big garden up there. The public can't go up there. It works. It's a taller building than what you're proposing. I'm not sure that it actually works on the scale of your building. I think we should discuss—I don't know—somewhere offline that there are ways of addressing the canyon aesthetic that some people in the public are concerned about. At the moment, I think our guidelines sort of encourage the wall, so I will stick with the wall. I'll try to bring images of that project sometime in the future.

Chair Gooyer: I guess that's it then. Thank you.

Study Session

None.

Approval of Minutes

None.

Subcommittee Item

None.

Board Member Questions, Comments, Announcements

Chair Gooyer: Anything else? Then we're adjourned.

Adjournment