

STAFF REPORT



City Council
Meeting Date: 8/25/2015
Staff Report Number: 15-134-CC

Study Session: Provide Direction on the El Camino Real Corridor Study

Recommendation

Staff requests that the City Council provide direction and feedback on the El Camino Real Corridor Study Report.

Policy Issues

El Camino Real is a major transportation corridor in the region, carrying approximately 30,000 - 45,000 daily vehicles, buses, and serving local business and school traffic. It is a historic asset for the region, but also a barrier to east-west travel in Menlo Park, and an opportunity for the City to define the desired vision for the corridor. As part of the 2013-2014 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the Council directed staff to prepare the El Camino Real Corridor Study to provide alternatives for potential modifications to El Camino Real consistent with the City's General Plan Circulation Element and El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan. Staff is asking for Council direction on the following:

- Provide feedback on the El Camino Real Corridor Study Report (**Attachment A**)
- Identify any outstanding questions, information or analysis needs

Background

Project Definition and Purpose

The El Camino Real Lane Reconfiguration Study was approved as part of the City's (CIP) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013-2014. A related project, the El Camino Real/Ravenswood Avenue Northbound Right-Turn Lane Design, was also included in the City's CIP for FY 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, and therefore these two projects have been combined into one study/preliminary design. For simplicity, these projects were renamed the El Camino Real Corridor Study (Corridor Study).

The Corridor Study builds on the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan (Specific Plan) to develop consensus around a conceptual design for El Camino Real. Following adoption of the Specific Plan in 2012, several outstanding questions remained about how El Camino Real would best serve the Menlo Park community and its travel needs, including concerns as described below:

- Occurrence of congested conditions and delay to motorists, transit vehicles, and emergency vehicles during peak commute hours;
- Occurrence of a bottleneck for vehicular traffic in the northbound direction, where El Camino Real, Sand Hill Road, and Alma Street (six total lanes) feed traffic to El Camino Real, which drops from three to

two lanes at Ravenswood Avenue-Menlo Avenue;

- Ability to serve local traffic and connect local businesses, including provision of on-street parking;
- Safety of motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians traveling along and across El Camino Real;
- Presents a barrier to vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic attempting to cross El Camino Real;
- Prevalence of motorists making u-turns at Cambridge Avenue
- Comfort of bicyclists traveling on El Camino Real, and bicyclists' need to access local destinations in the corridor; and
- Designation of El Camino Real as a Class II bike lane/minimum Class III bike route facility in the Specific Plan.

The purpose of the study was to identify potential alternatives to modify El Camino Real to better meet the community's needs and evaluate each of the proposed alternatives against a set of criteria including impact on traffic congestion, travel time, safety, aesthetics, parking, and multi-modal access.

Corridor Study Scope

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for this project was approved by Council on October 15, 2013. The RFP summarized the goals, objectives, and expectations for the Corridor Study, including a set of givens adopted by the Council that provide a framework for the Corridor Study:

- Infrastructure and streetscape modifications to El Camino Real between Sand Hill Road and Encinal Avenue will be evaluated as part of this study and, as necessary for connectivity, side-street approaches to El Camino Real within this area. Modifications to side-streets will be considered between the western side of the Caltrain tracks and the eastern side of Curtis Street-Hoover Street-Alto Lane.
- All proposed modifications should be consistent with the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan.
- Only surface improvements will be considered (i.e., grade separation, such as tunneling, is prohibitively expensive for purposes of this study).
- Impacts (both beneficial and adverse) to all modes of travel will be considered in this study.
- It is expected that Caltrans will continue ownership of El Camino Real in the reasonably foreseeable future; thus, ultimate design and implementation of modifications to El Camino Real will need to meet Caltrans requirements and standards. Caltrans representatives will be invited to participate as interested stakeholders as part of this process.

A contract was awarded by the Council to a team led by Whitlock & Weinberger Transportation Consultants (W-Trans) on January 28, 2014, after reviewing proposals from three consultant teams. The W-Trans team was unanimously recommended by a panel, including City staff representing the Public Works and Community Development departments, and two appointed members from each of the Transportation and Bicycle Commissions. The scope of work for the Corridor Study included:

1. Community Engagement
2. Data Collection and Review
3. Identify Performance Metrics
4. Analyze Existing Conditions
5. Develop Travel Demand Forecasts
6. Future No Project Analysis
7. Alternatives Analysis

8. Prepare Report
9. Conduct Environmental Review
10. Conduct Engineering Design of El Camino Real/Ravenswood Avenue Modifications

The consultant team has generally completed tasks 1 through 8, culminating in the Corridor Study Report included in Attachment A. Tasks 9 and 10 will be completed following the Council's review of the Corridor Study Report.

Analysis

Corridor Study Development

Following contract award, City staff and the consultant team initiated the Corridor Study by hosting a community workshop on April 30, 2014 to provide ideas for the vision of how El Camino Real can best serve the Menlo Park community. During the workshop, attendees provided feedback on key issues and concerns and identified problem areas that the Corridor Study should address. This information was used to develop an online survey tool to gauge participants' perceptions and priorities on a variety of transportation issues and sought participants' reactions to ideas for potential improvements along the corridor. The survey was open from June 16 through September 12, 2014, and also available to be completed during the second community workshop on October 2, 2014. A total of 316 responses were received.

Most participants identified traveling on El Camino Real using a variety of travel modes (driving, bicycling, and walking) and to access shopping and local businesses. Traffic and safety were two of the key concerns that participants identified in the survey. Participants' preferences for potential changes were also ranked, with the top priority improvements identified as follows:

1. Enhanced pedestrian safety and crossings – 81% support
2. Inclusion of bike lanes on El Camino Real – 72% support
3. More bike parking closer to downtown – 70% support
4. More landscaping along El Camino Real – 66% support
5. Timing traffic signals to favor continuous north-south flow on El Camino Real – 65% support

A detailed summary of the survey is available in Attachment A (Chapter 2: Community Engagement; and Appendix A: Community Survey Report).

The input gathered as part of the survey was used directly to inform the development of three proposed alternatives to modify El Camino Real. Elements of potential alternatives were presented in the second community workshop on October 2, 2014 for feedback along with an interactive exercise where participants could design their own El Camino Real and submit a proposal to the consultant team. Following the second workshop, the consultant team packaged the feedback into three conceptual alternatives, which were presented to the Bicycle and Transportation Commissions for feedback in November 2014.

Corridor Alternatives

The Corridor Study identifies three potential alternatives to modify the El Camino Real corridor according to the feedback gathered in the early stages of the project, plus a No Project (no change) option. These alternatives are briefly summarized as follows:

- No Project: Existing travel lanes, traffic controls, pedestrian crossings remain with no changes.
- Alternative 1: Continuous Three Lanes. Adds a third vehicle travel lane in each direction between Live Oak Avenue and Valparaiso Avenue/Glenwood Avenue by removing on-street parking.
- Alternative 2: Buffered Bicycle Lanes. Adds a bicycle lane with painted buffer area in each direction by removing on-street parking.
- Alternative 3: Separated Bicycle Facility. Adds a physically separated bicycle lane in each direction by removing on-street parking and modifying right-turn lanes at selected intersections.

The Corridor Study provides a detailed evaluation of each of these alternatives according to travel demand, vehicle travel time, pedestrian safety and comfort, bicycle safety and comfort, aesthetics and parking. Table 1 below summarizes the potential benefits and impacts of each alternative. One-page summaries of each of the alternatives and key findings are included in **Attachment B**.

El Camino Real/Ravenswood Avenue Alternatives

Additionally, three options for modifications at the El Camino Real/Ravenswood Avenue-Menlo Avenue intersection were identified based on the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan. These modifications were paired with the proposed corridor alternatives:

- No Project: No change.
- Alternative 1: Continuous Three Lanes. Adds a northbound through-lane on El Camino Real approaching Ravenswood Avenue by relocating the existing right-turn lane and sidewalk farther east. This new through lane would continue as the proposed third vehicle lane north to Valparaiso Avenue/Glenwood Avenue.
- Alternative 2: Buffered Bicycle Lanes. Adds a northbound through-lane and bicycle lane on El Camino Real approaching Ravenswood Avenue by relocating the existing right-turn lane and sidewalk farther east. This new through lane would drop at the Santa Cruz Avenue intersection, where a right-turn only lane is provided. Through traffic would need to merge left to the existing through lane to continue straight.
- Alternative 3: Separated Bicycle Facility. Adds a northbound bicycle lane on El Camino Real approaching Ravenswood Avenue by relocating the sidewalk farther east. No changes to vehicle lanes are proposed.

Each of these potential modifications at Ravenswood Avenue may result in impacts to the trees at the corner of El Camino Real/Ravenswood Avenue. HortScience, a consulting firm with licensed arborists providing tree assessments and preservation recommendations, reviewed the potential alternatives and identified potential tree impacts from each. Table 1 below summarizes the potential tree impacts.

Attachment C includes the detailed arborist report.

Table 1: Alternatives Analysis Summary				
	No Project	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Alternative Description	No change	Add 3 rd lane between Live Oak and Valparaiso by removing on-street parking	Add bike lanes by removing on-street parking	Add separated bike lane by removing on-street parking
Ravenswood Alternative Description	No change	Add 3 rd northbound through lane, widen to relocate existing right-turn and sidewalk	Add 3 rd northbound through lane and bike lane, widen to relocate existing right-turn and sidewalk	Add bike lane, widen to relocate sidewalk
Travel Demand	All scenarios assume build out of approved and pending projects, and Downtown Specific Plan.	47% to 64% increase in traffic volume north of Ravenswood. 14-16% increase in traffic volume south of Ravenswood	No change from No Project.	1% to 4% decrease in traffic volumes north and south of Ravenswood.
Travel Time	Free flow travel time at 35 mph would be 2.3 minutes. No Project 4.8 to 5.2 minutes.	Northbound 6.7 to 6.9 minutes Southbound 5.7 to 7.5 minutes	Northbound 4.5 to 5.5 minutes Southbound 4.8 to 6.0 minutes	Northbound 4.7 to 5.8 minutes Southbound 5.1 to 6.9 minutes
Intersection Delay	2 intersections operate below City standard	3 intersections operate below City standard	1 intersection operates below City standard	2 intersections operate below City standard
Pedestrian Safety and Comfort	Influenced by width of crossings, adequate time to cross, experience	Decreases compared to No Project since eliminating parking removes the separation between traffic and pedestrians on sidewalks and crossings are lengthened with more lanes to cross	Improved over No Project since bike lane provides separation between traffic and pedestrians on sidewalk and crossings are shortened	Improved over No Project since bike lane provides separation between traffic and pedestrians on sidewalk and crossings are shortened.
Bicycle Safety and Comfort	Influenced by traffic volumes, speeds, provision of facilities, truck traffic	Decreases compared to No Project since traffic closer to bicyclists with additional lane and increased volume. Enhanced parallel	Improved over No Project since designated facility improves visibility of bikes, removing parking eliminates	Improved over No Project since designated facility improves visibility of bikes, physical separation between

		routes would improve conditions overall, but not for those with destinations on El Camino	conflicts with door zone	bikes and vehicles, and removing parking eliminates conflicts with door zone
Aesthetics and Tree Impacts	No change	May remove 7 street and up to 6 heritage trees at Ravenswood Avenue	May remove 7 street and up to 11 heritage trees at Ravenswood Avenue	May remove 7 street and up to 3 heritage trees at Ravenswood Avenue
Parking	No changes to on-street parking (156 spaces total)	Removes 88 spaces (north of Roble)	Removes 156 spaces (north and south of Roble)	Removes 156 spaces (north and south of Roble)

Commission Review and Recommendations

The Bicycle, Transportation and Planning Commissions reviewed the Draft Report at their meetings in March and April 2015 to provide feedback and selected a preferred alternative. The Commissions’ feedback was taken and incorporated into a Final Report, released on August 3, 2015 on the project website. Key modifications included in the Final Report include an updated format to improve readability with enhanced graphics and photos to illustrate the proposed concepts; more detail on the proposed alternatives; more analysis and detail on the potential bicycle routes off of El Camino Real potential (parallel routes); expanded discussion of a time-of-day restricted travel lane; a summary of when buffered bicycle lanes, separated bicycle facilities, and enhanced intersection designs are appropriate, and an expanded discussion of travel demand and neighborhood cut-through traffic.

The Bicycle and Planning Commissions voted to recommend Alternative 2, Buffered Bicycle Lanes, but with elimination of the additional through lane at Ravenswood Avenue to preserve heritage trees that may be impacted by the modification. The Transportation Commission voted to recommend Alternative 3, Separated Bicycle Facility. Meeting minutes from each Commission meeting are provided in **Attachment D**.

Next Steps

Following Council feedback on the Corridor Study and identification of any additional analysis needs, staff will develop a scope of work and schedule to accomplish the additional tasks requested, and schedule the Corridor Study to come before the Council to adopt the Corridor Study and select a preferred alternative to move into environmental review and design.

Impact on City Resources

The cost and staff time for the El Camino Real Corridor Study were budgeted in the City’s Capital Improvement Program for FY 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. No additional funds are currently being requested to complete the Study.



Environmental Review

Construction of any of the proposed alternatives would require environmental review required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Following City Council identification of a preferred alternative, the appropriate level of environmental review will be determined.

Public Notice

Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

- A. Hyperlink: [El Camino Corridor Study and Appendices](#)
- B. Summary of Alternatives and Key Findings
- C. Tree Assessment Report
- D. Bicycle, Planning and Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Report prepared by:

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STAFF REPORT

City Council

Meeting Date: 8/25/2015

Staff Report Number: 15-134-CC

Study Session: Provide Direction on the El Camino Real Corridor Study

Attachment A - El Camino Corridor Study and Appendices

Hyperlink: <http://menlopark.org/DocumentCenter/View/7882>

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Alternative 1 – Continuous Three Lanes

This alternative includes the addition of a third travel lane in each direction between Encinal Avenue and Roble Avenue, where there are currently two through lanes in each direction. The additional through lane would be created by removing all on-street parking north of Roble Avenue and conversion of the existing right-turn lanes into shared through/right-turn lanes. A northbound right-turn lane approaching Ravenswood Avenue would remain as part of the corridor concept plan.

No corridor-wide bicycle improvements are made on El Camino Real. Pedestrian improvements would include adding crosswalks on El Camino Real at five signalized intersections where there currently are none.



Alternative 1 – looking southbound towards El Camino Real/Santa Cruz Avenue intersection



Alternative 1 – looking southbound at El Camino Real/Santa Cruz Avenue intersection

■ Traffic Conditions

Greatest increase in traffic volumes, longest travel time

- Approximately 64% (a.m. peak) to 47% (p.m. peak) more traffic demand in the El Camino corridor north of Ravenswood Avenue with the expansion of capacity
- Increase in capacity attracts through traffic from other parallel routes such as Middlefield Road, Highway 101 and some neighborhood streets; resulting traffic levels on neighborhood streets are anticipated to vary (i.e., some streets increase, others decrease) as travel patterns shift
- With the added capacity and traffic volumes, travel time increases over the No Project condition during both the a.m. and p.m. peak
- Average Travel Time: 5.7 to 7.5 minutes

■ Bicyclist Comfort and Safety

No continuous facilities; enhanced parallel routes

- Conditions would worsen for cyclists on El Camino Real, with vehicle traffic traveling closer, and no protected or continuous path
- Enhanced facilities on parallel routes would improve conditions for cyclists overall

■ Pedestrian Comfort and Safety

Decreased comfort compared to No Project

- Loss of physical separation between vehicle travel lane and sidewalk
- Opportunities to add crosswalks at intersections where they are currently missing, e.g. Ravenswood Avenue
- Lengthened pedestrian exposure with added traffic lanes

■ Parking

Least impact to street parking of all alternatives

- North of Roble Avenue: 88 spaces removed
- South of Roble Avenue: No spaces removed



Alternative 2 – Buffered Bike Lanes

In this alternative, bike lanes would be added on El Camino Real in both directions between Sand Hill Road and Encinal Avenue. Because of the higher traffic volumes, higher travel speeds and exposure to truck traffic on El Camino Real, professional best practices suggest buffered bike lanes over conventional bicycle lanes in this type of situation. The bike lanes would be a minimum of five-feet standard with additional buffering from the vehicle travelway by an approximate three-foot wide painted section on most sections of the corridor. The additional bike lanes and buffering would be achieved by eliminating on-street parking along the majority of the corridor. No vehicle lanes would be removed under this alternative.

Narrow pedestrian bulbouts could be added at some intersections where there are no right-turn lanes, and at intersections south of Roble Avenue. Other pedestrian improvements would include additional crossings of El Camino Real at five locations where there currently are none.



Alternative 2 – looking southbound towards El Camino Real/Santa Cruz Avenue intersection



Alternative 2 – looking southbound at El Camino Real/Santa Cruz Avenue intersection

■ Traffic Conditions

Minimal change in traffic volumes, shortest travel time

- No change compared to 2035 No Project, because minimal new travel lanes are added to attract drivers from other roadways
- Average travel time: 4.5 to 6.0 minutes

■ Bicyclist Comfort and Safety

Significant improvements to conditions for cyclists

- Separation between the cyclists and vehicles
- Removal of on-street parking would eliminate bicycle conflicts with “door zone”
- Removal of parking would increase visibility for cyclists of potential conflicts
- Motorists may be more aware of cyclists with dedicated space
- Bike lane could be painted green in conflict zones such as intersections and driveways
- Estimated to increase bicycle travel approximately 4 times that of existing levels

■ Pedestrian Comfort and Safety

Increased comfort, with slight decrease in crossing distance

- Bike lane separates pedestrians from vehicle traffic
- Decreases pedestrian exposure to traffic in crosswalks by decreasing crossing distance

■ Parking

Street parking on El Camino Real is removed

- North of Roble Avenue: 88 spaces removed
- South of Roble Avenue: 68 spaces removed



Alternative 3 – Separated Bicycle Facility

The alternative would provide a physically separated bicycle facility on El Camino Real in both directions between Sand Hill Road and Encinal Avenue. Each of the five to six-foot wide one-way bike lanes would be separated from vehicle traffic with three-foot wide raised curbs or planters on most sections of the corridor. The facility would be created by eliminating on-street parking and modifying existing right-turn lanes through the majority of the corridor. The existing six through lane section, south of Live Oak Avenue, would remain.

The separated bike facility would include bicycle crossings provided adjacent to crosswalks along the corridor. Some intersections could accommodate bicyclists crossing parallel to pedestrians, and separate from vehicle traffic. While traditional pedestrian bulbouts are not included, crossing distances would be shortened with provision of the separated bicycle facility and the protected intersection design.



Alternative 3 – looking southbound towards El Camino Real/Santa Cruz Avenue intersection



Alternative 3 – looking southbound at El Camino Real/Santa Cruz Avenue intersection

■ Traffic Conditions

Minimal change in traffic volumes; shorter travel time

- No new travel lanes are added to attract drivers from other roadways
- Slightly less traffic volume projected than 2035 No Project
- Average Travel Time: 4.7 to 6.9 minutes

■ Bicyclist Comfort and Safety

Most optimum conditions for cyclists

- Separation between the cyclists and vehicles
- Removal of on-street parking would eliminate bicycle conflicts with “door zone”
- Removal of parking would increase visibility for cyclists of potential conflicts
- Motorists would be even more aware of cyclists with the dedicated space
- Bike lane could be painted green in conflict zones where crossing driveways
- Intersection design would provide the most physical protection vs. vehicles
- Estimated to increase bicycle travel approximately 7-8 times that of existing levels

■ Pedestrian Comfort and Safety

Most potential improvement to pedestrian experience

- Bike facility physically separates pedestrians from vehicle traffic
- Decreases pedestrian exposure to traffic in crosswalks by decreasing crossing distance
- More room for landscaping

■ Parking

Street parking on El Camino Real is removed

- North of Roble Avenue: 88 spaces removed
- South of Roble Avenue: 68 spaces removed

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City of Menlo Park

Tree Report
Intersection Improvements
El Camino Real at Ravenswood Avenue

Prepared for:
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July 2015



Tree Report
Intersection Improvements
El Camino Real at Ravenswood Avenue
Menlo Park CA

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Attachments

Tree Assessment Form

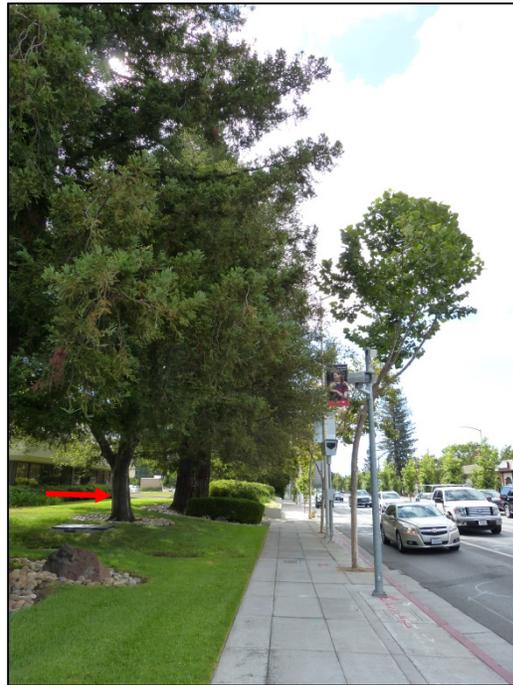
Tree Location Map

Introduction and Overview

The City of Menlo Park is planning to improve a section of El Camino Real in the area of Ravenswood Avenue. The City of Menlo Park requested that HortScience, Inc. prepare a **Tree Report** for 13 trees that could be impacted by the project (Photo 1). This report provides the following information:

1. An assessment of the health and structural condition of the 13 trees.
2. An assessment of the impacts of constructing the proposed project alternatives on the trees.
3. Recommendations for action.
4. Guidelines for tree preservation during the design, construction and maintenance phases of development.

Photo 1. Looking south along El Camino Real near Ravenswood Avenue. Coast live oak #285 is in the left center (red arrow).



Assessment Methods

Trees were assessed in July 2015. The assessment was limited to 13 trees identified by the City of Menlo Park. All were located at 1000 El Camino Real, site of the Menlo Park Office Center. The assessment procedure consisted of the following steps:

1. Identify the tree to genus and species.
2. Attach a numerically coded metal tag to the trunk of each tree.
3. Measure the trunk diameter at a point 54" above grade.
4. Determine if any trees met the City of Menlo Park's criteria for Heritage status.
5. Evaluate the health and structural condition using a scale of 0 – 5 where 0 = dead, 1 = poor and 5 = excellent condition.
6. Measure the distance of the edge of the tree trunk to the face of curb.
7. Comment on presence of defects in structure, insects or diseases and other aspects of development.
8. Assess the tree's suitability for preservation as low, moderate or high.

Results of the assessment are located in the ***Tree Assessment Form*** (see **Attachments**).

Description of Trees

Among the 13 trees were 9 coast redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) and 4 coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*). All trees had been planted as part of landscape development at the Menlo Park Office Center. Although both species are native to the Menlo Park area, none of the trees appeared to be indigenous to the site.

Coast live oaks #275, 276 and 277 were located at the south end of the Office Center (Photo 2). All three trees had been pruned many times to remove interior branches and foliage and reduce overall tree size. As a result, the trees had something of a sheared appearance.

Photo 2. Looking east across El Camino at coast live oaks #275 (right), 276 and 277 (left).



Trees #275 and 276 were adjacent to one another in a small planting area south of the driveway. Both were in good condition with dense canopies of foliage and the form and structure that is typical of the species. Tree #277 was on the north side of the driveway. The trunk was bowed, i.e., curved to the north but overall form was typical. The canopy was much thinner than that of #275 and 276. There was pronounced witch's broom development throughout the canopy. These distorted and discolored shoots reduced the overall appeal of the tree. These oaks ranged from 15' (#275) to 25' (276, 277) from the face of curb.

Coast redwoods #278 – 281 formed a row (Photo 3). This planting condition affected tree development. Trunk diameters ranged from 33" to 39". The two end trees, #278 and 281, were larger in diameter and in excellent condition. Both had somewhat one-sided crowns to the south or north as a result of competition with the interior trees. Trees #279 and 280 were in good condition. Their crowns were flattened to the east and west. Surface and large buttress roots were present. Trees were 28' to 32' from the face of curb.



Photo 3. Looking north along El Camino Real at coast redwoods #278 (right) to #281 (left).

Coast redwoods #282 – 284 also formed a small group (Photo 4). The two end trees (#282, 284) were in excellent condition although somewhat one-sided in form. Trunk diameters were 37" and 36" respectively. The interior tree was 33" and in good condition with a form that was somewhat flat to the east and west. Surface and large buttress roots were present. Trees were 22' to 25' from the face of curb.



Photo 4. Coast redwoods #282 (right), 283 (center) and 284 (left). Note large utility vaults.

A number of utility vaults were located near the trees, between the trunks and the curb (Photo 4). For example, a telephone vault was 8' from the trunk of #283 while a PG&E vault was 4' from the trunk of #284.

Coast redwoods #286 and 287 were at the north end of the landscape near Ravenswood Avenue (Photo 5). Trees were relatively close together. Both were in excellent condition. Tree #286 was 43" in diameter while #287 was 35". Redwood #286 was 24' from the face of curb; #287 was 33'.

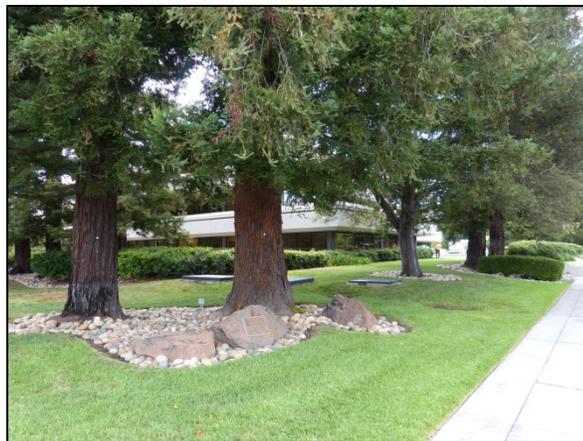


Photo 5. Coast redwoods #286 (right) and 287 (left).

Coast live oak #285 was located between coast redwoods #284 and 286. It was 26" in diameter. The main trunk divided into 3 stems at 7'. The crown was somewhat vase-shaped as it had been lifted and tipped back by pruning. Overall development was also constrained by competition with the nearby redwoods. Tree condition was fair and the canopy was somewhat thin.

Photo 6. Looking east at coast live oak #285.

The City of Menlo Park defines a Heritage trees as having a trunk diameter of 15" or greater; for native oaks, 10" or greater. Using the City's criteria, I determined that all 13 trees had Heritage status.



Description of individual trees is found on the enclosed ***Tree Assessment Form***. Both are included as **Attachments**.

Suitability for Preservation

Trees that are preserved on development sites must be carefully selected to make sure that they may survive development impacts, adapt to a new environment and perform well in the landscape. Our goal is to identify trees that have the potential for long-term health, structural stability and longevity. Evaluation of suitability for preservation considers several factors:

- **Tree health**
Healthy, vigorous trees are better able to tolerate impacts such as root injury, demolition of existing structures, changes in soil grade and moisture, and soil compaction than are non-vigorous trees.
- **Structural integrity**
Trees with significant amounts of wood decay and other structural defects that cannot be corrected are likely to fail. Such trees should not be preserved in areas where damage to people or property is likely.
- **Species response**
There is a wide variation in the response of individual species to construction impacts and changes in the environment. In our experience, for example, both coast redwood and coast live oak are tolerant of site disturbance.
- **Tree age and longevity**
Old trees, while having significant emotional and aesthetic appeal, have limited physiological capacity to adjust to an altered environment. Young trees are better able to generate new tissue and respond to change.
- **Species invasiveness**
Species which spread across a site and displace desired vegetation are not always appropriate for retention. This is particularly true when indigenous species are displaced. The California Invasive Plant Inventory Database (<http://www.cal-ipc.org/paf>) lists species identified as invasive by the California Invasive Plant Council. Neither coast live oak nor coast redwoods has identified as having being invasive.

Tree condition (health and structure) is the starting point for assessing suitability for preservation. In addition, suitability for preservation considers species response to impacts and invasiveness.

Each tree was rated for suitability for preservation based upon its age, health, structural condition and ability to safely coexist within a development environment (Table 1).

Table 1. Tree suitability for preservation. Intersection improvements. El Camino Real at Ravenswood Avenue. Menlo Park CA.

High	Trees in good condition that have the potential for longevity at the site. Coast redwoods #278, 281, 282, 284, 286 and 287 were rated as having high suitability for preservation.
Moderate	Trees in fair health and/or possessing structural defects that may be abated with treatment. Trees in this category require more intense management and monitoring, and may have shorter life-spans than those in the "high" category. Coast live oaks #275, 276, 277, 285 and coast redwoods #279, 280, 283 were rated as having moderate suitability for preservation.
Low	Trees in poor health or possessing significant defects in structure that cannot be abated with treatment. These trees can be expected to decline regardless of management. The species or individual tree may possess either characteristics that are undesirable in landscape settings or be unsuited for use areas. No (0) trees were rated as having low suitability for preservation.

We consider trees with high suitability for preservation to be the best candidates for preservation. We do not recommend retention of trees with low suitability for preservation in areas where people or property will be present. Retention of trees with moderate suitability for preservation depends upon the intensity of proposed site changes.

Evaluation of Impacts and Recommendations for Action

Appropriate tree retention develops a practical match among proposed project plans, the location and intensity of construction activities, and the quality and health of trees. The tree assessment was the reference points for tree condition and quality. Impacts from the proposed project were assessed using the site plan prepared by the City of Menlo Park. Plans were illustrative in nature indicating how various project alternatives would change the existing street alignment. Additional project documents were reviewed at <http://www.menlopark.org/806/Project-Documents>.

Four project alternatives are being considered:

0. Retain existing condition (No project).
1. Continuous 6 lanes of traffic. Adds a new vehicle lane, approximately 12' wide.
2. Buffered bike lanes. Adds new vehicle and bike lanes, approximately 18' wide.
3. Separated bike facility. Adds a protected bicycle lane, approximately 9' wide.

With proposed widening in each of the alternatives, the existing sidewalk must be replaced. For purposes of this report, I've assumed the new sidewalk would be 8' wide, maintaining the width of the existing sidewalk.

Impacts to trees will occur in a variety of ways. First, demolition of existing improvements such as buildings and infrastructure could directly damage tree roots and crowns. As significantly, grading and other construction activities may also damage trees, through both direct mechanical injury and indirectly by altering drainage.

All three alternatives would enlarge the road section and replace the sidewalk. The primary impact to trees would be to construct new improvements close to the trunk. While both coast live oak and coast redwood are tolerant of root severance, there is a limit. Root severance would occur on only one side of the tree with the area between tree and building remaining in place. Secondary impacts would be associated with grade change as the trees at a higher elevation than the roadway and sidewalk. Another impact involves the removal of existing infrastructure such as the utility vaults and entry planter.

For each option, I estimated how close the improvements plus new 8' sidewalk would be to the edge of each tree trunk (Table 3). For example, the trunk of coast live oak #275 is currently 15' from the face of curb. Adding a new 12' wide traffic lane and replacing the 8' sidewalk (alternative #1) would locate the tree 5' inside the new sidewalk. In contrast, coast redwood #287 is 33' from the face of curb. Alternative #1 would result in this tree being 13' from the edge of the new curb.

Using the above approach, I recommend proposed action for each of the trees under each alternative. Given the excellent species response to root severance and the good to excellent tree condition, this group of trees can be expected to survive impacts that would typically be beyond the tolerance of most trees. My recommendations for action for each alternative are:

0. Retain existing condition (No project). Preserve all 13 trees.
1. Continuous 6 lanes of traffic. Remove 4 trees (#275, 283, 284, 286) and preserve 9.
2. Buffered bike lanes. Remove 10 trees (#275, 276, 277, 280 – 286) and preserve 3 trees.
3. Separated bike facility. Remove tree #275 and preserve 12 trees.

In each of the 3 alternatives, one or more trees are noted as "preserve?" In these cases, a final decision about retention should be made after an alternative is selected and improvements are staked in the field.

Table 2. Assessment of impacts and proposed action. Intersection Improvements. El Camino Real at Ravenswood Avenue Menlo Park CA.

Tree No.	Species	Trunk Diameter (in.)	Condition 1=poor 5=excellent	Existing	Tree Trunk to Edge of New Improvements (ft.)					
					Continuous 6 lanes Vehicle (12') + sidewalk (8')	Proposed action	Buffered bike lane Vehicle (12') + bike (6') + sidewalk (8')	Proposed action	Separated bicycle facility Bike (9') + sidewalk (8')	Proposed action
275	Coast live oak	18	4	15	-5	Remove	-9	Remove	-2	Remove
276	Coast live oak	23	4	25	5	Preserve	1	Remove	8	Preserve
277	Coast live oak	24	3	25	5	Preserve	1	Remove	8	Preserve
278	Coast redwood	39	5	29	9	Preserve	5	Preserve?	22	Preserve
279	Coast redwood	36	4	32	12	Preserve	7	Preserve	15	Preserve
280	Coast redwood	33	4	28	8	Preserve	4	Remove	11	Preserve
281	Coast redwood	38	5	28	8	Preserve	4	Remove	11	Preserve
282	Coast redwood	37	5	25	5	Preserve?	1	Remove	8	Preserve
283	Coast redwood	33	4	22	2	Remove	-2	Remove	5	Preserve?
284	Coast redwood	36	5	23	3	Remove	-1	Remove	6	Preserve?
285	Coast live oak	26	3	26	6	Preserve?	2	Remove	9	Preserve
286	Coast redwood	46	5	24	4	Remove	0	Remove	7	Preserve
287	Coast redwood	35	5	33	13	Preserve	9	Preserve	16	Preserve

Tree Preservation Guidelines

The following are recommendations for design and construction phases that will assist in successful tree preservation.

Design recommendations

1. Establish the horizontal and vertical elevation of the trunk of all trees. Include trunk locations and tree tag numbers on all plans.
2. Design grading plans to employ block walls to match grades rather than cutting into the existing slope.
3. Establish a **TREE PROTECTION ZONE** around each tree to be preserved. For design purposes, the **TREE PROTECTION ZONE** shall be 1' behind the edge of new sidewalk and 25' in all other directions. No grading, excavation, construction or storage of materials shall occur within that zone.
4. Install protection around all trees to be preserved. No entry is permitted into a tree protection zone without permission of the project superintendent.
5. Design a temporary irrigation system for use during demolition and construction. Design should prohibit trenching within the **TREE PROTECTION ZONE**.

Pre-construction and demolition treatments and recommendations

1. The demolition contractor shall meet with the Consulting Arborist before beginning work to discuss work procedures and tree protection.
2. Trees to be preserved may require pruning to provide adequate clearance from construction activities and improve tree structure. All pruning shall be performed by a licensed State of California contractor possessing the C61 classification license and the D49 specification. All pruning shall adhere to the latest editions of the American National Standards Institute Z133 and A300 standards.

Tree protection during construction

1. Prior to beginning work, the contractors working in the vicinity of trees to be preserved are required to meet with the Consulting Arborist at the site to review all work procedures, access routes, storage areas and tree protection measures.
2. Any grading, construction, demolition or other work that is expected to encounter tree roots should be monitored by the Consulting Arborist.
3. If injury should occur to any tree during construction, it should be evaluated as soon as possible by the Consulting Arborist so that appropriate treatments can be applied.
4. Fences will be erected to protect trees to be preserved. Fences are to remain until all site work has been completed. Fences may not be relocated or removed without permission of the project superintendent.
5. Construction trailers, traffic and storage areas must remain outside fenced areas at all times.
6. No materials, equipment, spoil, waste or wash-out water may be deposited, stored, or parked within the **TREE PROTECTION ZONE** (fenced area).

7. Any additional tree pruning needed for clearance during construction must be performed by a qualified arborist and not by construction personnel.
8. Any roots damaged during grading or construction shall be exposed to sound tissue and cut cleanly with a saw.

HortScience, Inc.



James R. Clark, Ph.D.
Certified Arborist WE-0846
Registered Consulting Arborist #357

ATTACHMENTS

Tree Assessment Form

Tree Location Map

Tree Assessment

El Camino near Ravenswood
Menlo Park CA
July 2015



TREE No.	SPECIES	TRUNK DIAMETER (in.)	HERITAGE TREE?	CONDITION 1=poor 5=excellent	SUITABILITY for PRESERVATION	TRUNK to FACE of CURB (ft.)	COMMENTS
275	Coast live oak	18	Yes	4	Moderate	15	Partly corrected lean & one-sided to W.; small crown due to pruning; codominant trunks @ 7' with included bark; codominant again @ 8'; dense canopy; oak moth; canopy extends to curb, 8' above ground.
276	Coast live oak	23	Yes	4	Moderate	25	3½' from driveway curb; multiple attachments @ 6'; closed wound on lower trunk on S.; small rounded crown due to pruning; dense canopy; oak moth.
277	Coast live oak	24	Yes	3	Moderate	25	3' from driveway curb; codominant @ 5' with included bark; codominant again; interior branches removed; extensive witches brooming on new growth; bowed N. from base.
278	Coast redwood	39	Yes	5	High	29	Good form & structure: one-side to S.
279	Coast redwood	36	Yes	4	Moderate	32	Interior; flat form to E./W.; otherwise good; large buttress roots.
280	Coast redwood	33	Yes	4	Moderate	28	Interior; flat form to E./W.; otherwise good.
281	Coast redwood	38	Yes	5	High	28	Adj. to planter; good form & structure; one-sided to N.; large buttress roots; canopy extends to edge of sidewalk.
282	Coast redwood	37	Yes	5	High	25	Adj. to planter; good form & structure; one-sided to S.; large surface roots.
283	Coast redwood	33	Yes	4	Moderate	22	Interior; flat form to E./W.; otherwise good; PacTel vault 8' from trunk on W.
284	Coast redwood	36	Yes	5	High	23	Good form & structure: one-side to N.; large surface roots; 4' to PG&E vault on W.

Tree Assessment

El Camino near Ravenswood
 Menlo Park CA
 July 2015



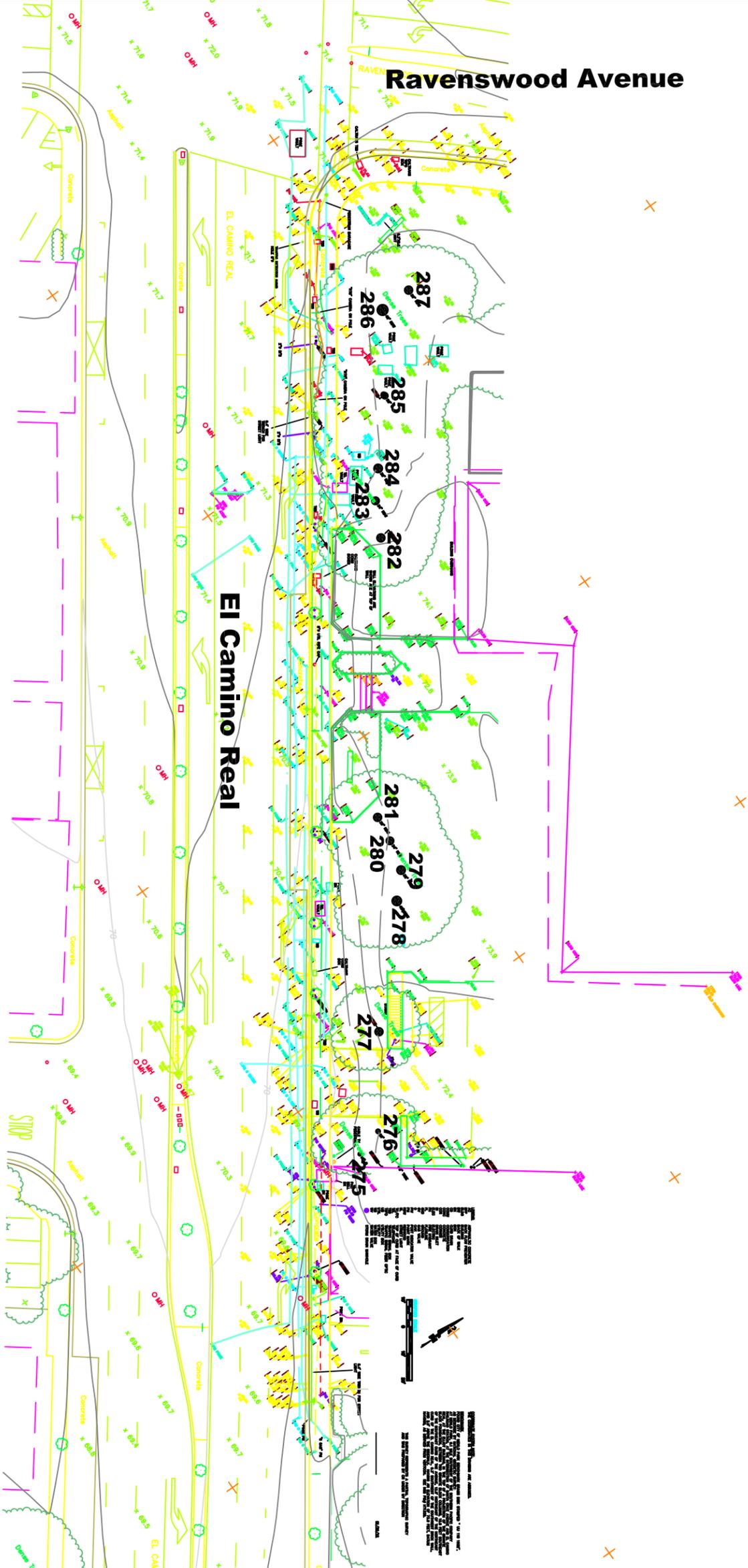
TREE No.	SPECIES	TRUNK DIAMETER (in.)	HERITAGE TREE?	CONDITION 1=poor 5=excellent	SUITABILITY for PRESERVATION	TRUNK to FACE of CURB (ft.)	COMMENTS
285	Coast live oak	26	Yes	3	Moderate	26	Multiple attachments @ 7'; 3 stems; smaller crown due to pruning; suppressed by redwoods on N. & S.; thin canopy; 7' to PG&E vault on N.
286	Coast redwood	46	Yes	5	High	24	Good form & structure: one-sided to SW.
287	Coast redwood	35	Yes	5	High	33	Good form & structure; one-sided to NE.

Prepared for:
City of Menlo Park
Menlo Park, CA

July 2015

No Scale

Notes:
Base map provided by:
BKF Engineers
Redwood City, CA
Numbered tree locations
are approximate.



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BICYCLE COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting
Monday, March 09, 2015 at 7:00 PM
Civic Center Administration Building
City Council Conference Room
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

The meeting was called to order by Chair W. Kirsch at 7:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: F. Berghout, W. Kirsch (Chair), L. Lee, J. Weiner, M. Zumstein (arrived at 7:06pm)
Absent: W. McKiernan, C. Welton (Vice Chair)
Staff: N. Nagaya, K. Choy

A. PUBLIC COMMENT (Limited to 30 minutes)

Resident Robert Cronin suggested the addition of sharrows (shared-lane markings) to northbound Ravenswood Ave. between Noel Dr. and Alma St. There is a dedicated bike lane on Ravenswood that ends at Noel Dr. Cronin pointed out that bikers are suddenly in a lane that is too narrow to share side-by-side, which are the “usual conditions for a sharrows.”

B. REGULAR BUSINESS

B1. Approve February 9, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes and March 2, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes

ACTION: Motion and second (Kirsch/Berghout) to approve minutes as written passes 5-0-0-2 (McKiernan, Welton absent).

B2. Provide Recommendation to the City Council for a Preferred Alternative for El Camino Real Corridor Study

Transportation Manager N. Nagaya reviewed history of project and how it came out of the 2012 Downtown Specific Plan. She also discussed community engagement process of 3 community workshops, and that community input on 3 alternatives was solicited in the last meeting.

Consultant Steve Weinberger from WTrans, representing the consulting team, gave a presentation on the alternatives. The first was the status quo (to do nothing). The other three alternatives remove on-street parking. Alternative 1 adds car lanes for six total lanes. Alternative 2 adds buffered bike lanes with a 3-foot painted, striped buffer.

Alternative 3 adds a separated bike lane, with a raised curb between the bicycle lane and car lane. Weinberger said that Alternative 1 would result in increased traffic due to “induced demand”—45 percent more traffic by 2035—while the other two would not. Alternative 1 would also increase travel time for northbound cars by 17 percent.

Commissioner Kirsch stated that Alternative 3 was ideal but that Alternative 2 was the politically expedient way to get bike lanes on ECR.

Commissioner Lee stated that driving on ECR was too hazardous for bicyclists and particularly for families without a protective barrier.

The following public comments were received:

Beth Bostwick stated that she had initially voted in favor of Alternative 1 since the potential for conflicts between cyclists and drivers was too great to have cyclists on such a high-traffic road. She also stated that she didn’t know that traffic would get worse with extra lanes and that was a very important piece of information.

Peter Bostwick stated that there was a need for people to travel from Redwood City to Palo Alto, but that he didn’t see ECR as a place to ride your bike.

Steve Schmidt stated that he had been riding ECR for 35 years and felt it was ok. He favored Alternative 2 and stated that it was better since cyclists didn’t have to deal with the crescent islands in Alternative 3 or parked cars. He also pointed out that other parallel routes to ECR had unprotected intersections.

Bob Page stated that he had been biking from Woodside to USGS for 40 years by bike, and that he would feel more comfortable bicycling on ECR with buffered bike lanes. He was not in favor of the crescent islands in Alternative 3 because of the opportunities for collisions between cyclists and pedestrians.

Robert Cronin stated that there were problems with protected bike lanes at intersections, when cars needed to turn right and bicyclists were going straight. He was not in favor of protected bike lanes, feeling that a bicycle on the other side of a barrier was less likely to be noticed.

Kristen Keith stated that Mountain View was going forward with a plan to put buffered bike lanes on ECR.

ACTION: Motion and second (Kirsch/Weiner) to recommend Alternative 2 with the modification of removing the additional through lane on northbound ECR before Ravenswood Ave. and moving the bike lane to the inside of the right-most lane, passes 3-(Kirsch, Berghout, Weiner) 1-(Lee, dissenting) 1-(Zumstein, abstaining) 2-(McKiernan, Welton absent).

B3. Consider Creation of Subcommittee on Social Media & Marketing and Appoint

Subcommittee Members

ACTION: Continued to next meeting.

B4. Discuss Commission Interest in Hosting a Bike Menlo Park Street Event in May

ACTION: Continued to next meeting.

C. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

C1. Update from the El Camino Real Subcommittee (Kirsch/Lee)

ACTION: Continued to next meeting.

C2. Update from the General Plan Advisory Committee (Zumstein)

ACTION: Continued to next meeting.

C3. Chair's Report

ACTION: Continued to next meeting.

D. INFORMATION ITEMS

D1. Summary of Recently Completed Bicycle Projects

ACTION: Continued to next meeting.

D2. Update on Upcoming Grant-Funded Bicycle Projects

ACTION: Continued to next meeting.

D3. Commission Attendance Report

ACTION: Continued to next meeting.

E. ADJOURNMENT – 9:10 p.m.

Prepared by: L. Lee



TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, March 11, 2015
City Council Chambers
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chair P. Mazzara at approximately 7:08 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: P. Huang, A. Levin, M. Meyer, M. Shiu, P. Mazzara (Acting Chair), J. Wetzel
Absent: B. Walser
Staff: R. Baile, N. Nagaya

A. PUBLIC COMMENT (Limited to 30 minutes)

None.

B. REGULAR BUSINESS

B1. Approve Minutes from the Regular Meeting of February 11, 2015

ACTION: Motion made by M. Meyer and seconded by P. Huang to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of February 11, 2015 passed, 5-0-1, with P. Mazzara abstaining, with no modification or amendment.

B2. Provide Recommendation to the City Council for a Preferred Alternative for El Camino Real Corridor Study

S. Weinberger of W-Trans, the City's consultant for this project, provided a Power Point presentation. The following was the outline of his presentation:

- Study Objectives and Overview
- Existing Conditions and Survey Results
- Proposed Alternatives
 - No Project (Do Nothing)
 - Alternative no. 1 - Continuous Six Lanes
 - Alternative no. 2 - Buffered Bike Lanes
 - Alternative no. 3 – Separated Bike Facility
- Alternatives Analysis
- Feedback and Identify a Preferred Alternative

The following members of the public spoke regarding this item:

Steve Schmidt, Menlo Park resident, indicated that his personal preference was alternative no. 2 primarily because there is some concern with how the islands are going to work on Santa Cruz Avenue and El Camino Real but that the clear choice is between alternative nos. 2 and 3.

ACTION: Motion by M. Meyer and seconded by A. Levin to approve Alternative No. 3 as the preferred alternative, unanimously passed, 6-0. When reporting this motion to Council, staff will include the feedback that the commission provided to staff regarding this item.

Comments from B. Walser regarding this item are attached (Attachment).

C. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Update from the Downtown Businesses, Menlo Park Signage, and Branding Project Subcommittee (Meyer/Walser)

None.

2. Update from the Subcommittee on Potential Revisions of the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) (Shiu/Walser)

M. Shiu stated that at the last meeting they intended to submit a copy of the report that the Transportation Commission approved to the General Plan subcommittee because it contains a list of items that need to be included in the study.

3. Update from the High School Project Subcommittee Regarding Transportation Related Challenges (Mazzara/Huang)

The subcommittee is on the cusp of reaching out to the middle schools.

4. Update on the El Camino Real Traffic Study Subcommittee (Levin/Mazzara)

Transportation Manager N. Nagaya stated that they would make a similar presentation to the Planning Commission at its March 23 meeting and, based on recommendations from the Transportation, Bicycle, and Planning Commissions and feedback from the community, compile a final report and release it in mid-April. Staff would then take the options to the City Council in early May.

5. Update on the General Plan Transportation Issues Subcommittee (Levin/Meyer)

A. Levin reported that B. Walser has been working with staff to get the Transportation Commission to meet and review the General Plan Transportation Content - the tentative date is June 10. Once that is accomplished, staff will work with the subcommittee to meet beforehand to prepare some recommendations before the full commission.

6. Impacts and Opportunities of Electric Vehicles Subcommittee (Meyer/Wetzel)
None.

D. INFORMATION ITEMS

D1. Update on the Facebook Trip Cap Monitoring

Staff R. Baile indicated that Facebook is currently using the Sensys vehicle detection technology to monitor the trips at its East Campus and that staff is satisfied with the accuracy of the reported trips. Based on the reported trips, Facebook is currently generating trips at its East Campus that are below the following thresholds:

AM Peak Hours (7-9 AM): 2,600 trips; PM Peak Hours (4-6 PM): 2,600 trips
Daily: 15,000 trips

As examples, staff R. Baile provided the following trip reports and presented to the commission:

Friday, March 6, 2015:

AM Peak Hours: 1,650 trips; PM Peak Hours: 2,000 trips: Daily: 11,975 trips

Tuesday, March 10, 2015:

AM Peak Hours: 1,750 trips; PM Peak Hours: 1,600 trips: Daily: 12,050 trips

Facebook will also be using the Sensys vehicle detection technology to monitor the trips at its West Campus.

D2. Update on Transportation Projects

Staff R. Baile provided updates on the following projects:

- Willow Road (between Middlefield Road and Hamilton Avenue) Signal Modification Project – Staff is still waiting for Authorization to Proceed with Construction from Caltrans.
- Sand Hill Road (between Oak Avenue and NB I-280 off ramp) Traffic Signal Interconnect Adaptive Project – Consultant has submitted its 65% complete Plans, Specifications, & Estimates for review.

D3. Update on the City's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program

None.

E. ADJOURNMENT – 9:30 P.M.

Prepared by: Rene Baile, P.E.



PLANNING COMMISSION DRAFT MINUTES

Regular Meeting
April 6, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

CALL TO ORDER – 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL – Bressler, Combs, Eiref (Chair), Ferrick, Kadvany, Onken (Vice Chair), Strehl

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF – Michele Morris, Assistant Planner; Nicole Nagaya, Transportation Manager; Kyle Perata, Associate Planner; Thomas Rogers, Senior Planner

A. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A1. Update on Pending Planning Items

- a. Housing Element Annual Report – City Council – March 24, 2015

Senior Planner Rogers said the Housing Element Annual Report was reviewed and approved by the City Council on March 24, 2015.

- b. ConnectMenlo (General Plan Update)
 - i. GPAC #6 (March 25, 2015)
 - ii. Joint CC/PC Meeting (March 31, 2015)

Senior Planner Rogers said the primary result of the joint City Council and Planning Commission meeting on March 31, 2015 was to conduct more outreach on the General Plan Update. He said at the April 14 City Council meeting, there would be an information item on the next steps and revised dates. He noted the ConnectMenlo survey period was extended.

- c. Planning Commission Appointments – City Council – April 14, 2015

Senior Planner Rogers said that the Planning Commission appointments had been moved to the City Council's May 5 agenda.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS #1 (Limited to 30 minutes)

There were none.

C. CONSENT

Commissioner Onken said he had to recuse himself from the consideration of C2.

C1. Approval of minutes from the March 9, 2015 Planning Commission meeting ([Attachment](#))

Commission Action: M/S Strehl/Onken to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2015 Planning Commission meeting.

Motion carried 7-0.

C2. Architectural Control/Denise Forbes/138 Stone Pine Lane: Request for architectural control for exterior modifications including enclosing the existing second floor balcony to enlarge the existing kitchen by approximately 120 square feet, building a new third floor balcony, and a vertical planting trellis located on the front elevation of a townhouse located in the R-3 (Apartment) zoning district. ([Attachment](#)) ***Continued from the meeting of March 23, 2015.***

Commission Action: M/S (consensus) to approve as recommended in the staff report.

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 1 (Section 15301, "Existing Facilities") of the current CEQA Guidelines.
2. Make findings, as per Section 16.68.020 of the Zoning Ordinance, pertaining to architectural control approval:
 - a. The general appearance of the structure is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood.
 - b. The development will not be detrimental to the harmonious and orderly growth of the City.
 - c. The development will not impair the desirability of investment or occupation in the neighborhood.
 - d. The development provides adequate parking as required in all applicable City Ordinances and has made adequate provisions for access to such parking.
 - e. The property is not within any Specific Plan area, and as such no finding regarding consistency is required to be made.
3. Approve the use permit subject to the following ***standard*** conditions:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans prepared by William Maston Architect & Associates, consisting of six (6) plan sheets, dated received March 17, 2015, and approved by the Planning Commission on March 23, 2015 except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval by the Planning Division.
 - b. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall comply with all Sanitary District, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, San Mateo County Health Department, and utility companies' regulations that are directly applicable to the project.
 - c. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall comply with all requirements of the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Transportation Division that are directly applicable to the project.

- d. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall submit a plan for any new utility installations or upgrades for review and approval by the Planning, Engineering and Building Divisions. All utility equipment that is installed outside of a building and that cannot be placed underground shall be properly screened by landscaping. The plan shall show exact locations of all meters, back flow prevention devices, transformers, junction boxes, relay boxes, and other equipment boxes.

Motion carried 6-0 with Commissioner Onken recused.

D. PUBLIC HEARING

D1. Use Permit/Jack McCarthy/1295 Middle Avenue: Request for a use permit to demolish an existing one-story residence, pool and shed, then construct a new two-story single-family residence on a substandard lot with regard to lot width located in the R-1-S (Single-Family Suburban Residential) zoning district. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Planner Morris said two additional emails were received and distributed to the Commission. She said one email was from the property owners of 3 Hermosa Place, who had questions about the plan, the hedge and the deck. She said the other email was from the next door neighbor who had concerns about their tree's roots safety with the proposed construction.

Public Comment: Mr. Jack McCarthy, project designer, said the existing home would be demolished and the pool removed. He said the home design was a two-story in a Craftsman style. He said he met with the neighbor this evening whose concern was their large tree and protection of its roots during construction. He said there was a distance of 17 feet from the tree to the new house. He said they would also have an arborist review the situation. He said regarding the other email received that property owner had not been able to meet with them this evening. He said in response to that neighbor that they were fine leaving the hedge and fencing as it was, and they would use down lights for the master bedroom deck and across the back of the home.

Commissioner Onken asked about landscape screening. Mr. McCarthy said they had not discussed it yet but they would do additional screening. Commissioner Onken said that this home would be the only two-story home on its side of the street. Mr. McCarthy said to minimize the effect that the house would have a roof element and dormer on the front façade. He said there were two-story homes across the street and nearby. Commissioner Onken noted the garage was very much in the front. Mr. McCarthy explained the design strategy noting the lot was 60-feet wide. He said they would use landscape screening to soften the appearance of the front-facing garage.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Kadvany said he agreed with Commissioner Onken about the obtrusiveness of the garage, which he thought marred an otherwise nice design. He said separating the garage doors was a help and he appreciated the board and batten siding and cedar shingles.

Commissioner Onken said it was an approvable project but he thought the Commission should have been given a more definitive screening plan as it was a tall house in a row of bungalows. He said the materials were good and he did not think the deck in the back was an issue. He said he would like a condition for an acceptable landscape plan.

Commissioner Combs said he thought the project was approvable and was not adverse to some requirement for a landscape plan. He said he had also noted that this project was the only two-story on that side of the street. He said there was not a definitive neighborhood character however as the homes in the surrounding area were set back and screened with shrubs.

Chair Eiref said he liked the home design and thought landscape screening would be desirable.

Responding to the Commission, Senior Planner Rogers suggested adding a specific condition related to submitting a landscape plan to provide screening for neighbors and the public right-of-way, prior to the issuance of the building permit and subject to planning staff review and approval.

Commissioner Onken moved to approve the project as recommended in the staff report to include a condition for a landscape plan for screening prior to issuance of the building permit subject to staff review and approval. Commissioner Strehl seconded the motion.

Commission Action: M/S Onken/Strehl to approve as recommended in the staff report with the following modification.

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 1 (Section 15301, "Existing Facilities") of the current CEQA guidelines.
2. Make findings, as per Section 16.82.030 of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the granting of use permits, that the proposed use will not be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use, and will not be detrimental to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the City.
3. Approve the use permit subject to the following **standard** conditions:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans prepared by Jack McCarthy Designer, Inc., consisting of 10 plan sheets, dated received March 30, 2015, and approved by the Planning Commission on April 6, 2015 except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval by the Planning Division.
 - b. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicants shall comply with all Sanitary District, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, and utility companies' regulations that are directly applicable to the project.
 - c. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicants shall comply with all requirements of the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Transportation Division that are directly applicable to the project.

- d. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall submit a plan for any new utility installations or upgrades for review and approval by the Planning, Engineering and Building Divisions. All utility equipment that is installed outside of a building and that cannot be placed underground shall be properly screened by landscaping. The plan shall show exact locations of all meters, back flow prevention devices, transformers, junction boxes, relay boxes, and other equipment boxes.
- e. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall submit plans indicating that the applicant shall remove and replace any damaged and significantly worn sections of frontage improvements. The plans shall be submitted for review and approval of the Engineering Division.
- f. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall submit a Grading and Drainage Plan for review and approval of the Engineering Division. The Grading and Drainage Plan shall be approved prior to the issuance of grading, demolition or building permits.
- g. Heritage trees in the vicinity of the construction project shall be protected pursuant to the Heritage Tree Ordinance.

4. Approve the use permit subject to the following project-specific conditions:

- a. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, applicant shall submit a landscaping plan which includes landscaping that addresses privacy screening, subject to the review and approval of the Planning Division.**

Motion carried 7-0.

D2. Use Permit Revision/Intersect ENT/1555 Adams Drive: Request for a revision to a use permit, previously approved in June 2012, to modify the types and quantities of hazardous materials used and stored at the site for the research and development (R&D) and production of medical technologies for use in treating ear, nose, and throat patients, within an existing building in the M-2 (General Industrial) zoning district. All hazardous materials would be used and stored within the building. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Planner Perata said staff had no additional comments.

Public Comment: Mr. John Tarlton, Tarlton Properties, introduced Mr. Daniel Castro of Intersect ENT.

Mr. Daniel Castro, Vice President of Operations, Manufacturing and Engineering, Intersect ENT, said the company develops, manufactures and distributes medical devices for the treatment of ear, nose and throat conditions. He said their products have been used in over 50,000 patients and have helped them recover from chronic sinus surgery. He said in 2012 when they first applied for their use permit there had been 80 employees. He said there were now over 240 people and they planned to continue to grow. He said the use permit revision being requested would allow them to increase their manufacturing and expand their development into new products and new tests, the latter currently being done out of state.

Commissioner Strehl asked about notification to East Palo Alto residents and other neighbors of this proposed use permit revision. Planner Perata said for hazardous materials applications that the City sends notices to all properties within a quarter mile of the subject property, and in this instance, notice was sent to a number of East Palo Alto residents.

Commissioner Kadwany asked about the scale of the request. Mr. Castro said their sales and manufacturing had increased. He said part of the request also related to some processes changes they had not anticipated including additional cleaning steps to insure cleanliness of their products. He said they use and dispose of IV solvents which they had not anticipated in 2012 when they applied for the use permit. He said they were using the same solvents but more of them. He said they were relocating some of the points of storage and pickup.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Action: M/S Onken/Eiref to approve as recommended in the staff report.

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 1 (Section 15301, "Existing Facilities") of the current CEQA Guidelines.
2. Make findings, as per Section 16.82.030 of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the granting of use permits, that the proposed use will not be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use, and will not be detrimental to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the City.
3. Approve the use permit subject to the following **standard** conditions:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans provided by DES Architects/Engineers, consisting of six plan sheets, dated received March 19, 2015, and approved by the Planning Commission on April 6, 2015 except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval of the Planning Division.
 - b. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall comply with all sanitary district, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, San Mateo County Environmental Health Division, and utility companies regulations and submit the appropriate permit applications that are directly applicable to the project.
 - c. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall comply with all requirements of the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Transportation Division that are directly applicable to the project.
 - e. If there is an increase in the quantity of hazardous materials on the project site, a change in the location of the storage of the hazardous materials, or the use of additional hazardous materials after this use permit is granted, the applicant shall apply for a revision to the use permit.
 - f. Any citation or notification of violation by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, San Mateo County Environmental Health Services Division, West Bay Sanitary

District, Menlo Park Building Division or other agency having responsibility to assure public health and safety for the use of hazardous materials will be grounds for considering revocation of the use permit.

- g. If the business discontinues operations at the premises, the use permit for hazardous materials shall expire unless a new business submits a new hazardous materials business plan to the Planning Division for review by the applicable agencies to determine whether the new hazardous materials business plan is in substantial compliance with the use permit.

Motion carried 7-0.

D3. Use Permit Revision/John Tarlton for O'Brien Drive Portfolio, LLC/1035 O'Brien Drive: Request for a use permit revision to convert a mixed-use office/research and development (R&D) and manufacturing building to a predominately R&D use to allow for an existing tenant, Avalanche Biotechnologies, to expand to the entire building located in the M-2 (General Industrial) zoning district. The previous (2012) use permit approval limited the office/R&D square footage to 14,432 square feet (40 percent of the building). At this time, the applicant is proposing to modify the uses within the building to increase the square footage devoted to wet-lab R&D and supporting office uses. The building's land use would be generally considered R&D, but would contain ancillary manufacturing, warehouse, and office uses. The proposed project includes a request to modify the types and quantities of hazardous materials used and stored at the site. The Planning Commission approved a hazardous materials use permit in April 2014. All hazardous materials would be used and stored within the building. As part of the project, the applicant is requesting a use-based parking reduction based on the specific tenant operations and its Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan, which is intended to reduce the potential increase in trips from the site. A total of 103 parking spaces would be provided, where 120 parking spaces would be required by the M-2 square-footage-based parking requirements. In addition, the applicant is requesting approval of a Below Market Rate (BMR) In-Lieu Fee Agreement for this project. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Planner Perata said staff had no additions to the written report.

Public Comment: Mr. John Tarlton, O'Brien Drive Portfolio, said that Avalanche was another of their star tenants. He said the company was looking for expansion of their conditional use permit related to hazardous materials associated with their increased area and operations. He said there was also a change in how they would use the building and the implementation of a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan. He noted in response to Chair Eiref's question that their company's TDM program was applied building by building.

Mr. Hans Hull, Vice President of Operations at Avalanche, said the company went public last summer and a clinical trial readout would happen this summer on their lead product. He said their expansion was to use the full building for research and development. He said part of the expansion was the TDM plan, and noted that living in San Francisco he uses the shuttle provided by the property managers from the train to the work place.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Onken said that there was a new TDM plan which was a plus, and moved to approve as recommended in the staff report. Commissioner Kadwany seconded the motion.

Commission Action: M/S Onken/Kadvany to approve as recommended in the staff report.

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 32 (Section 15332, "In-Fill Development Projects") of the current California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.
2. Make findings, as per Section 16.82.030 of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the granting of use permits, that the proposed use will not be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use, and will not be detrimental to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the City.
3. Approve the use permit subject to the following **standard** conditions:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans provided by DES Architects/Engineers, consisting of 10 plan sheets, dated received March 25, 2015, and approved by the Planning Commission on April 6, 2015 except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval of the Planning Division.
 - b. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall comply with all sanitary district, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, San Mateo County Environmental Health Division, and utility companies regulations and submit the appropriate permit applications that are directly applicable to the project.
 - c. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall comply with all requirements of the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Transportation Division that are directly applicable to the project.
 - d. If there is an increase in the quantity of hazardous materials on the project site, a change in the location of the storage of the hazardous materials, or the use of additional hazardous materials after this use permit is granted, the applicant shall apply for a revision to the use permit.
 - e. Any citation or notification of violation by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, San Mateo County Environmental Health Services Division, West Bay Sanitary District, Menlo Park Building Division or other agency having responsibility to assure public health and safety for the use of hazardous materials will be grounds for considering revocation of the use permit.
 - f. If the business discontinues operations at the premises, the use permit for hazardous materials shall expire unless a new business submits a new hazardous materials business plan to the Planning Division for review by the applicable agencies to determine whether the new hazardous materials business plan is in substantial compliance with the use permit.

4. Approve the use permit subject to the following **project-specific** conditions:
 - a. The property owner shall retain a qualified transportation consulting firm to monitor the trips to and from the project site one year from commencement of operations within the subject building and shall submit a memorandum/report to the City reporting on the results of such monitoring for review by the City to determine the effectiveness of the TDM plan (Attachment D). This report shall be submitted annually to the City subject to review by the Planning and Transportation Divisions.
 - b. Prior to or concurrent with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall execute the review to the Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing In Lieu Fee Agreement. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall pay the in lieu fee of approximately \$149,897.60 in accordance with the BMR Housing Agreement (as of July 1, 2014). The BMR fee rate is subject to change annually on July 1 and the final fee will be calculated at the time of fee payment.

Motion carried 7-0.

E. STUDY SESSION

- E1. El Camino Corridor Study:** Status update and opportunity to provide comments and recommendation to the City Council on potential alternatives for El Camino Real within Menlo Park. ([Attachment](#)) ***Continued from the meeting of March 23, 2015.***

Ms. Nicole Nagaya, City Transportation Manager, said the purpose of the El Camino Corridor Study was to focus on the transportation elements of El Camino Real and how it could better serve the community. She said the process was twofold and evaluated the function and vision of El Camino Real and improvements around Ravenswood Avenue as mitigation measures outlined in the Specific Plan.

Mr. Mark Spencer, principal with W-Trans, said the study objectives given to them were for safety and traffic improvement for El Camino Real using a multi-modal approach. He said the given parameters were to stay within the existing right-of-way, keep the medians, look at things from a curb to curb basis, consider surface improvements only, and improvements on the northbound El Camino Real approach to Ravenswood Avenue. He reviewed the public engagement process to date and presented information on daily traffic volumes along El Camino Real. He noted two strong contingents, one of which wanted El Camino Real for motor vehicles and measures to improve traffic flow and the other which wanted to calm the route for safer use by bicyclists and pedestrians. He said the survey asked for the most and least desirable changes. He said the top desirable change was enhanced pedestrian safety in crossing, bicycle lanes along El Camino Real, more bicycle parking close to downtown, more landscaping, perhaps buffers, and timing of traffic signals. He said an undesirable change was more convenient parking along El Camino Real, which became an important decision point in looking at alternatives. He said both higher and lower traffic speeds along El Camino Real were undesirable. He said through lanes along El Camino Real were also undesirable.

Mr. Spencer said there were three alternatives being proposed in addition to a “do nothing” alternative including 1) continuous six lanes along El Camino Real between Sand Hill Road and Encinal Avenue, 2) buffered bicycle lanes, and 3) completely separated bicycle facility with a higher level of protection. He provided visual information on the proposed alternatives in comparison to current conditions.

Replying to an inquiry from Chair Eiref, Ms. Nagaya said there was an increasingly diverse body of research related to the “if you build it, they will come” phenomenon. She said whether a freeway lane, a bike lane, or full out bike network were built that the use would build to fit the capacity. She said New York City has done before and after use counts of protected bicycle lanes.

Mr. Spencer said travel time remained fairly constant throughout all of the alternatives. He reviewed other factors of the three alternatives considered in transportation planning. He said at the last community workshops they had attendees compare alternatives to the others. He said on street parking particularly for alternatives two and three seemed to be viewed as a negative. He said aesthetics was a factor and the number of trees to be removed to provide another right turn lane onto Ravenswood Avenue was a point of discussion. He said most points of comparison were split other than general support that the level of transit was adequate. He said based on the input they did a ranking and a weighted average and found that Alternative 2 probably came out the same or slightly better than Alternative 3.

Mr. Spencer said regarding next steps that they were reviewing the feedback from various workshops, the online rankings that people provided, preparing the draft report for City staff, and making presentations. He said the goal for the discussion this evening was to give City Council a preferred concept. He said from that they would prepare full design plans, environmental analysis and higher level cost estimates.

Ms. Nagaya said letters had been received from the Menlo Park School District and the Menlo Park Fire District and were on the dais for the Commission’s review. She said the Fire District preferred Alternative 1 with three continuous lanes north- and south-bound. She said the School District did not indicate a favored alternative and expressed a desire for improved crossings of El Camino Real and improved intersections for children walking or biking to school.

Chair Eiref said in Table 6 that there was not much difference in travel time but it seemed that Alternative 1 had a remarkably greater impact on travel time being a 17% difference. Mr. Spencer said the 17% difference was from 4.1 minutes to 4.8 minutes, which would not be extremely perceptible to someone driving the corridor. Ms. Nagaya said whatever the alternative even when adding capacity there did not seem to be much improvement in travel time.

Chair Eiref asked about through traffic and local traffic. Ms. Nagaya said in 2010 for Specific Plan the study indicated there was 40% local and 60% regional traffic. Chair Eiref said his original perception was that greater capacity would be better but found the information in the models in the report indicated otherwise. Mr. Spencer said local and regional models were calibrated against existing conditions and regarding the absolute numbers there was justification but no absolute certainty they were correct. He said the difference in volume between the alternatives was good representation as everything else held true. Ms. Nagaya said the C/CAG

VTA model being used to project travel demand was the most sophisticated tool available in San Mateo County.

Chair Eiref said there were five very large projects coming forward in the next few years, and asked if the “do nothing” assumed those projects. Mr. Spencer said the projects assumed and currently approved in the build out of the City’s Specific and General Plan and the County’s General Plan, and the ABAG forecast were built into these models. Replying to Chair Eiref, Mr. Spencer said the 1300 and 500 El Camino Real projects were not approved and SRI was in a holding pattern. He said within the model there was a forecast of growth that could be any and all of those projects. He noted that this question came up often during the public workshops.

Commissioner Bressler asked about bus rapid transit and dedicated lanes and if that could be forced upon the City at a later date. Ms. Nagaya said they have been coordinating with SamTrans whose representative was at the City’s last workshop. She said SamTrans just finished a bus rapid transit study in San Mateo County and they were not going to pursue dedicated lanes in Menlo Park. She said SamTrans could not unilaterally make changes but would need City and Caltrans approval.

Commissioner Bressler asked if their models would say the same relative story whether there was a lot of growth or not as much growth. Mr. Spencer said that was affirmative. He said they would continue to have growth and congestion on El Camino Real. He said this project was not so much a pressure relief valve but recognition that congestion as it comes would have to be dealt with and that they could do better accommodating other modes of traffic and getting people downtown. Ms. Nagaya said the land use assumptions were the same in all the options.

Commissioner Combs asked if Mr. Spencer knew of a community that started with Alternative 2, saw an increase in bicycle traffic volume and then moved to a more built out infrastructure for bicycles. Mr. Spencer said they see a more phased approach. He said San Jose started with some green lanes in some areas, measured traffic and were now moving toward buffered bicycle lanes. Commissioner Combs asked about the suitability of El Camino Real for bicycle lanes. Mr. Spencer said that it certainly was viable. He said there was a wide range of comfort levels that different bicyclists have related to road type and other factors such as speed. He said the biggest question was how to get bicyclists and pedestrians across El Camino Real.

Ms. Nagaya said the City of Mountain View was developing an El Camino Corridor Specific Plan. She said staff understands that they were proposing buffered painted bicycle lanes. She said Atherton was discussing narrowing El Camino Real to two lanes but were waiting until Menlo Park finished its study. She said the City of Redwood City was looking at some turn lanes and median closures. She said the City of San Mateo just finished a Sustainable Streets Plan and through that process identified raised bicycle lanes as the preferred option.

Commissioner Strehl asked what the City of Palo Alto was doing for the El Camino Real corridor. Ms. Nagaya said she did not think they were pursuing bicycle routes on El Camino Real, noting the very good bicycle route they have parallel to El Camino Real on Bryant Street. She said El Camino Real south of Sand Hill Road had higher traffic volume approaching University Avenue. Commissioner Strehl said she was surprised the study did not look at the Bryant Street bicycle route. She asked if they had looked at other alternatives parallel to El Camino Real for bicycle routes. Ms. Nagaya noted that there were three options prepared in

the study for bicycling off El Camino Real that could be combined with the El Camino Real option of three continuous traffic lanes in both directions. She said one from San Mateo Drive to Wallea Drive would use the San Mateo bicycle bridge that leads from Stanford West running north/south along San Mateo and Wallea Drives. She said the second option would start at San Mateo Drive and zigzag over to downtown. She said the third option would start at Alma and the Palo Alto Avenue bicycle bridge that tied into Alma Street and over to the future Garwood extension as part of the 1300 El Camino Real project if developed. She said they did not look at the Willow Place bicycle bridge as a tie-in but could noting they had tried to do routes that were parallel and closest to El Camino Real.

Commissioner Strehl said it appeared that Alternative 1 for three continuous traffic lanes would increase traffic on El Camino Real and reduce traffic on Middlefield Road. Mr. Spencer said that was correct but not at a one to one correlation. Commissioner Strehl asked about cut through traffic. Mr. Spencer said that Alternative 1 would keep more of the traffic on El Camino Real and cause less of a traffic diversion to neighborhood streets. He said with Alternatives 2 and 3 the models showed roughly the same number of vehicles on Allied Arts streets. He said there was the potential to reduce neighborhood cut through traffic and ways to manage cut through traffic with traffic calming measures. Commissioner Strehl asked about Caltrans' involvement in this planning process. Ms. Nagaya said they have kept Caltrans apprised during the process of the different options. She said one of the Council directives was that any adopted alignments or improvements should be consistent with Caltrans design guidelines. Commissioner Strehl asked if Caltrans would look at emergency vehicle and emergency access as part of their approval. Ms. Nagaya said that was part of the City's and Caltrans' processes.

Commissioner Strehl confirmed with Mr. Spencer that about 250 of the survey respondents were from Menlo Park, and that it was a self-selective survey and not random. She asked if there was a test to limit responses to one per household. Ms. Nagaya said the survey tool used was the same as that used for the General Plan Update process. She said respondents could register or respond anonymously. She said more than one response could occur per household. She said the numbers they were seeing from any IP address were not egregious but ranged from two to four responses. Commissioner Strehl asked the number of people that participated in the three workshops. Ms. Nagaya said generally there were 30 to 65 people with the first one in 2014 being the least well attended. She said they had 405 respondents for the last online survey in which people could rank and choose alternatives.

Commissioner Strehl said they did not look at alternatives for bicycle lanes on Alma or Laurel Streets. Ms. Nagaya said they had done some preliminary analysis but the draft report would further enhance the evaluation.

Commissioner Onken asked if there were any changes into the curb cut into private property through any of the alternatives. Mr. Spencer said they were assuming existing driveways and accesses would remain. Ms. Nagaya said the only change to curb would be at the northbound approach to Ravenswood where there was widening to move the right lane toward the railroad tracks. Commissioner Onken said it did not appear there was objection from business owners who have parking along El Camino Real for it to be removed. Mr. Spencer said it was important to keep getting the information out to the business owners through the Chamber of Commerce and mailers to individual property owners and registered business owners.

Commissioner Ferrick said one of the principles of the Specific Plan was creating east-west connectivity and the primary artery for that was the approach to the Menlo Avenue and the Ravenswood Avenue intersection. She said it appeared that none of the three alternatives levels of service were as good as the existing condition for that intersection. Ms. Nagaya said the queue length summary was looking at the approaches on El Camino Real to a particular intersection. She said the existing configuration at Ravenswood was maintained with Alternative 3. She said with Alternatives 1 and 2 there was an additional through lane but no right turn lanes were being removed. She said the improvement in queue length in Alternative 2 related to no project north of Ravenswood Avenue having 3,100 vehicles moving through the corridor in peak hours. She said under Alternative 1 that increased significantly as more traffic would be pulled into El Camino Real because of the greater capacity. She said they did not see a spike in volume under Alternative 2 with an additional right turn lane at Ravenswood Avenue. Commissioner Ferrick asked if the improvements at Ravenswood Avenue might be combined with other alternatives. Ms. Nagaya said they paired the improvements at Ravenswood Avenue fairly independently as part of Alternative 2 but those could be done with Alternative 3 or not at all. She said ideally they would like the Commission's preference as to the alternatives and perhaps look at the Ravenswood Avenue improvements separately.

Commissioner Kadvany asked about buffered bicycle lanes and accessing driveways. Ms. Nagaya showed graphics demonstrating the different forms of painting and buffered bicycle lanes. Commissioner Kadvany said all of the options included completing the intersections and asked if east-west crossing was a separable item. Mr. Spencer said one of the items to pursue was to complete all four crosswalks at each intersection to provide enhanced crossing of El Camino Real in particular with respect to school travel. Commissioner Kadvany asked if the additional right turn lane at Ravenswood Avenue was required in all of the alternatives or if it could be separated from Alternatives 2 and 3. He asked what the benefits were from the extra through lane. Ms. Nagaya said the third through lane was in the Specific Plan as mitigation but was not a requirement. She said it was assumed in Alternative 1. She showed an Alternative 2 graphic with the northbound approach to Ravenswood Drive and a third through lane continuing across the intersection, which would then trap as a right turn lane approaching Santa Cruz Avenue. Commissioner Kadvany asked if the significant redwood tree at the corner of Ravenswood Avenue and El Camino Real would be removed under any of the alternatives. Ms. Nagaya said the trees in front of the Cornerstone building were shown in green in the graphic. She said all three alternatives had some widening and the City Arborist's preliminary review of Alternatives 1 and 2 indicated that all of the redwood trees there would need removal noting there was underground parking under the Cornerstone building, which further inhibited root health.

Commissioner Kadvany said southbound El Camino Real nearing Sand Hill Road was a constrained point for bicycle routes noting the narrow sidewalks there. Ms. Nagaya said putting in a full bike lane would require reconstruction of the bridge. She said widening sidewalks was not part of this study plan. She said sidewalks would occur through development under the Specific Plan.

Commissioner Kadvany asked about the u-turn movement at Cambridge Avenue from northbound to southbound on El Camino Real and if there was a City policy about that. Mr. Spencer said the u-turns exist and its use was high at different times. He said they were assuming no change in functionality for any of the three alternatives. He said restricting u-turns could have unexpected impacts. Ms. Nagaya said they looked at the City's General Plan

adopted in 1994 which did not have a policy specifically around Cambridge Avenue but also predated the connection to Sand Hill Road. She said they considered reactions drivers would take if that u-turn was eliminated, which might have drivers taking several left turns to get back to southbound El Camino Real. She said that might be more impactful to traffic than the u-turn was.

Chief Harold Schapelhouman, Menlo Park Fire District, referred to the letter sent by the District Board noting it was not just specifically related to El Camino Real but also relevant to the ConnectMenlo and Willow Road studies. He said the District has been responding since 2008 to planning efforts with their concerns of impacts to their provision of emergency services but those had not been included with the community goals during the Specific Plan development. He said this study does not include emergency vehicle response and routes, noting El Camino Real is an emergency service route. He said it also does not include El Camino Real as the emergency route to Stanford Hospital, the area's nearest trauma center. He said it also did not consider reciprocal emergency aid agreements that they have with Palo Alto. He said the District supported Alternative 1. He said he thought Alternative 3 would lead to more bicycle and vehicular collisions. He said there were other bicycle routes to get between Palo Alto and Menlo Park. He said El Camino Real was the least desirable route for a bicyclist. He said the discussion should be how to create a bicycle network that did not use busy streets.

Mr. Bill Kirsch, Chair of the Bicycle Commission, said he drives a car and uses a bicycle to do most of his trips around town. He said parallel routes were good for those wanting to get through the town. He said he wanted to access businesses around town and a parallel route on Alma Street would not provide that access for him. He said that was why the Bicycle Commission voted unanimously for Alternative 2 to put buffered bicycle lanes on El Camino Real with the modification of not adding the additional right turn lane off Ravenswood as they thought that would make El Camino Real even more dangerous to cross and would mean removal of redwoods. He said the Transportation Commission voted unanimously for Alternative 3 with separated bicycle lanes. He said he would like the City to get away from the idea of dealing with traffic congestion by adding more lanes. He recommended providing room and access for people who choose bicycles or walking.

Mr. Mark O'Brien, Menlo Park, noted his 40-year career as an arborist and urged further study of the 11 heritage trees before any action was taken to remove them as he strongly believed that all or most of the trees could be preserved. He said they were an important asset now and potentially for hundreds of years into the future. He said he found a report of work done by Caltrans eighteen months ago on a section of Hwy. 101 that was slightly rerouted and widened creating similar impacts to a grove of redwood trees similar to what their heritage trees could experience. He said an independent risk assessment contractor with a track record in this type of high profile projects should be hired before the important trees were removed. He mentioned the contractor that was used for the Seminary Oaks development.

Mr. Henry Riggs, Menlo Park, said he had reservations about this study, how its surveys were conducted, and the conclusion that nine to eleven heritage trees would have to be removed. He said the issue in crossing El Camino Real on bike or foot was not the time allowed for crossing but the two full minute light cycles for traffic to pass by. He asked for the ratio of bicyclists that commute daily versus bus, carpool and train users. He said Facebook, which to his knowledge has the most bicyclist commuters, only has 3% of its employees who bicycle to work. He said the consultants' measurements were not necessarily valid. He said there was no magical cure

for 40,000 vehicles traveling through Menlo Park on El Camino Real daily. He said if El Camino Real worked better for vehicular traffic as residents have requested for nearly two decades it would pull traffic off Middlefield Road and adjacent streets. He said the interest of a few could be well served on a safer bicycle route away from major two-minute intersections, active retail and commercial driveways. He said this bicycle route was already defined in the Specific Plan and required to be done as part of the Greenheart project approval. He said as considered under the Specific Plan, the City in 2018 would have more commerce and more residents, and the question was whether the City would be ready.

Mr. Don Araki, the Tree Specialists, said he was Henry Riggs requested that he look at the heritage trees on the corner of Ravenswood Drive and El Camino Real. He said a possible alternative would be to route the sidewalk in back of the trees as that was City property to allow for more roadway. He said the other alternative would be removal of a few trees closest to the roadway.

Mr. Steve Schmidt, Menlo Park, said in November they concluded a fairly contentious political exercise and the voters decided they wanted to honor the City's Specific Plan. He said that Plan included making the downtown area more pedestrian-friendly, walkable, bikeable and with a more human scale. He said the six-lane alternative would not honor Menlo Park and would degrade the pedestrian experience on El Camino Real. He said they needed to think about what was wanted for Menlo Park. He said if it was more bicycles and a better pedestrian experience that was desired they needed to build an infrastructure friendly to bicycles and pedestrians.

The Commission briefly recessed at 10:10 p.m.

Chair Eiref reconvened the meeting at 10:14 p.m.

Commission Comment: Chair Eiref said his mindset originally had been that the City needed capacity and to get cars through the City. He said the model indicated additional capacity would likely increase congestion. He said he was not now in favor of six lanes. He agreed with Chief Schapelhouman and others that safety was important. He said that he was looking at some version of Alternatives 2 and 3.

Commissioner Ferrick said she wanted them to look to the future and not make things worse. She said the Fire District's concerns were valid. She said studies showed a really protected bike lane could build capacity to use it. She said she saw Alternative 2 as a way to start. She said she was worried about removing the right turn lane at Ravenswood Avenue but also concerned with removing heritage trees. She said Ravenswood was a linchpin for east-west connectivity. She said her concern was if there were fewer cars on El Camino Real if that meant the traffic was using neighborhood streets. She said she liked the idea of Alternative 3 but felt more comfortable with Alternative 2.

Commissioner Kadwany said he shared concerns with implementation but felt the City had delayed improving the infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians, and action was needed. He said he was concerned with the driveway cutouts. He thought the buffer in Alternative 2 might be better than the physical dividers in Alternative 3, which would require traffic stopping. He said four-way pedestrian crossings along El Camino Real have been in the General Plan since 1994.

He said there was an equity issue to provide routes for citizens for whom bicycles were the needed mode of transit.

Responding to a question from Chair Eiref, Ms. Nagaya said only Alternative 2 had parking elimination. She said under Alternative 3 with the buffered bike lane option that the only change in capacity was the turn pockets. She said bulb outs which require elimination of the right turn pocket were discussed during the Specific Plan analysis and whether they would have any capacity impacts or cause additional queuing delay. She said Alternative 3 as defined did not include bulb outs but had protected intersection treatments with median islands that vehicles would have to turn around giving more refuge to bicyclists. She said one of the display boards showed a lane removal but there was no lane removal proposed. She said the graphic would be corrected.

Commissioner Onken said he bicycles every evening from the train station to Stone Pine Lane where he lives along El Camino Real. He said accidents were not from cars speeding by you on the left but from cars turning into you or car doors opening into you from the right. He said Alternative 3 did not do anything about that except remove parked cars. He said he would support Alternative 2. He said he thought Alternative 3 would make bicycling too tempting for novices and that was unsafe. He said Alternative 2 would provide a bit more of a buffer, more of a feel of a sidewalk, and support emergency vehicle passage since cars could move into the buffer space to allow their passage.

Commissioner Bressler said he also supported Alternative 2 and that more attention needed to be given to curb cuts, and that the bicycle safety had not been thought through enough. He suggested there should be more radical solutions to separate bicyclists and cars.

Commissioner Combs said he was against Alternative 1. He said generally he was in favor of building out bicycle infrastructure. He said Palo Alto used Bryant Street, which was not a main artery, for their bicycle route. He said he could support Alternative 2.

Commissioner Strehl said she would like to have some estimation of costs as there were many transportation needs in the City and some were very costly. She said she would have liked the study to look at more alternatives for dedicated bicycle lanes other than El Camino Real that would be safer for bicyclists and motorists. She said she could not support any alternative that would remove any of the heritage trees at Ravenswood Avenue. She said she thought the study was biased and that the Council wanted to look at friendlier environments for bicyclists and pedestrians and not necessarily on El Camino Real. She said she could support Alternative 2 as it would provide a test to see if bicycling was viable for El Camino Real and the bicycling community. She said emergency vehicles were very important and providing access for them was critical. She said she would like the option to convert back if it was not being used by bicyclists.

Commissioner Kadvany said the heritage trees provided a beautiful gateway to the City. He moved to make road and bridge improvements to enhance east-west connectivity. Chair Eiref noted it seemed there was general support of Alternative 2. Commissioner Kadvany moved to recommend adoption of Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative and the preservation of the heritage trees on the corner of El Camino Real at Ravenswood Avenue. He said he would like improved safety measures for the San Francisquito Bridge and Ravenswood intersection.

Ms. Nagaya said the City Council approved two capital projects, the El Camino Real Lane Configuration Study and the El Camino Real Ravenswood Right Turn Lane Design and Construction, which spurred the El Camino Corridor Study. She said they currently have in the consultant's contract and budget the ability to do the full design of whatever option was chosen for Ravenswood Avenue and do the construction as well depending on the option chosen.

Chair Eiref said the motion so far was to recommend Alternative 2, preserve the heritage trees on the corner of El Camino Real at Ravenswood Avenue, and improve safety at the bridge and Ravenswood.

Commissioner Strehl asked if the bridge was in Menlo Park or Palo Alto. Ms. Nagaya said it was in both.

Commissioner Kadvany said the City should think more creatively about alternative routes for bicyclists. He said they also wanted to insure best safety design for driveway curb cuts and crossings.

Chair Eiref said they could add a comment for the City Council to thoroughly explore options for parallel bike routes behind development on the east side of El Camino Real.

Responding to an inquiry from the Chair, Ms. Nagaya said the motion included a preference for Alternative 2, with preserving the heritage trees the highest priority, and insuring the best possible safety outcomes including driveway curb cuts and intersection crossings, at the San Francisquito Creek Bridge and Ravenswood Avenue, and thoroughly explore options for a bike lane or path behind the properties along the east side of El Camino Real.

Commissioner Onken said he thought adding the language about a bicycle path behind the properties was unnecessary. Commissioner Ferrick said she thought that was not needed to be added in at this time. Consensus was to separate the motions.

Commission Action: M/S Kadvany/Strehl to recommend that the Council adopt Alternative 2 (Buffered Bike Lanes) as the preferred alternative, but with preservation of the heritage trees on the corner of El Camino Real at Ravenswood Avenue, as well as ensuring the best possible safety outcomes, including appropriate design of the intersections, driveway curb cuts, San Francisquito Creek Bridge, and Ravenswood Avenue.

Motion carried 7-0.

Commissioner Strehl said she did not fully support Alternative 2 but seconded the motion because of the late hour.

Commission Action: M/S Eiref/Kadvany to recommend to the Council to also thoroughly explore the possibility of a shared-use pathway at the rear of proposed developments on El Camino Real.

Motion carried 5-2 with Commissioners Onken and Strehl in opposition.

Commissioner Ferrick noted that the latter motion was meant as an additional recommendation to the Council and was not intended to replace the initial motion.

F. REGULAR BUSINESS

There was none.

G. COMMISSION BUSINESS

There was none.

H. INFORMATION ITEMS

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Senior Planner Thomas Rogers

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on May 4, 2015



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting
April 20, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

CALL TO ORDER – 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL – Bressler, Combs (absent), Eiref (Chair), Ferrick, Kadvany, Onken (Vice Chair), Strehl

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF – Michele Morris, Assistant Planner; Nicole Nagaya, Transportation Manager; Stephen O’Connell, Contract Planner; Thomas Rogers, Senior Planner; Corinna Sandmeier, Associate Planner

A. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A1. Update on Pending Planning Items

- a. ConnectMenlo (General Plan Update) – Schedule Update – City Council - April 14, 2015

Senior Planner Rogers said the City Council at its April 14 meeting considered an extended timeline for the General Plan Update to allow for more outreach, particularly to the Belle Haven neighborhood.

- b. Public Benefit Study Session – City Council – April 14, 2015

Senior Planner Rogers said also at their April 14 meeting, the Council conducted a study session on public benefit in general and specific to zoning districts. He said the consultant provided a presentation on what other cities have been doing and what the current model was in Menlo Park.

- c. Planning Commission Appointments – City Council – May 5, 2015

Senior Planner Rogers noted that the Council would make three Planning Commission appointments at its May 5 meeting, noting that Commissioner Onken had reapplied.

Senior Planner Rogers said that there would be annual commissioner training and appreciation event on May 12 with training from 4 to 6 p.m. and a reception afterwards.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS #1 (Limited to 30 minutes)

There was none.

C. CONSENT

- C1.** Approval of minutes from the March 23, 2015 Planning Commission meeting ([Attachment](#))

Chair Eiref noted he was absent from the March 23 meeting. Commissioner Strehl indicated she was also absent. Chair Eiref continued the minutes until the next meeting.

Commission Action: Minutes continued.

D. PUBLIC HEARING

D1. Use Permit Revision/Kpish Goyal/957 Rose Avenue: Request for a use permit revision to add an approximately 1,457 square foot basement to previously approved two-story, single-family residence on a substandard lot with regard to lot width and lot area in the R-1-U (Single-Family Urban Residential) zoning district. The previous use permit was approved by the Planning Commission on August 18, 2014. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Contract Planner O'Connell said there were no additions to the staff report.

Public Comment: Mr. Kpish Goyal, applicant, said their project for a two-story, single-story residence had been approved by the Planning Commission on August 18, 2014. He said that he and his wife had reconsidered their project to provide more space for their immediate and extended family, and were now requesting a basement addition.

Commissioner Strehl asked if the original design was the same. Mr. Goyal said everything was the same except for one light well that would require decreasing the size of the bathroom for the first floor bedroom to accommodate.

Commissioner Onken said the arborist report was confusing regarding the heritage oak as it both said the tree would be safe during construction and to remove the tree. Contract Planner O'Connell said the arborist had two recommendations and that was to keep the tree or to remove it.

Mr. Goyal said the oak tree was on the adjacent property and a branch extended into his property. He said the arborist said one option was to remove the tree or the other option was to take preservation efforts to protect the tree, which was what they were intending.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Onken said the excavation for a basement might impact the tree roots. He confirmed with Contract Planner O'Connell that the basement excavation would require stitch piling in front of the oak tree and to follow the arborist's instructions for basement construction to protect the oak tree. He moved to approve the project revision. Commissioner Strehl seconded the motion.

Commission Action: M/S Onken/Strehl to approve the item as recommended in the staff report with the following modification.

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 3 (Section 15303, "New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures") of the current CEQA Guidelines.

2. Make findings, as per Section 16.82.030 of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the granting of use permits, that the proposed use will not be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use, and will not be detrimental to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the City.
3. Approve the use permit subject to the following **standard** conditions:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans prepared by Chris Spaulding Architect, consisting of ten plan sheets, dated received March 30, 2015 and approved by the Planning Commission on April 20, 2015, except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval by the Planning Division.
 - b. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicants shall comply with all Sanitary District, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, and utility companies' regulations that are directly applicable to the project.
 - c. Prior to building permit issuance; the applicants shall comply with all requirements of the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Transportation Division that are directly applicable to the project.
 - d. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall submit a plan for any new utility installations or upgrades for review and approval by the Planning, Engineering and Building Divisions. All utility equipment that is installed outside of a building and that cannot be placed underground shall be properly screened by landscaping. The plan shall show exact locations of all meters, back flow prevention devices, transformers, junction boxes, relay boxes, and other equipment boxes.
 - e. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall submit plans indicating that the applicant shall remove and replace any damaged and significantly worn sections of frontage improvements. The plans shall be submitted for review and approval of the Engineering Division.
 - f. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall submit a Grading and Drainage Plan for review and approval of the Engineering Division. The Grading and Drainage Plan shall be approved prior to the issuance of grading, demolition or building permits.
 - g. Heritage trees in the vicinity of the construction project shall be protected pursuant to the Heritage Tree Ordinance.

Motion carried 6-0 with Commissioner Combs absent.

D2. Use Permit/Malika Junaid/1121 Carlton Avenue: Request for a use permit to allow construction of a second story on an existing single-story, single-family residence on a substandard lot with regard to lot width and area, in the R-1-U (Single-Family Urban Residential) zoning district. The proposal, which includes expansion of the existing first floor, would exceed 50 percent of the existing floor area and is considered equivalent to a new structure. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Planner Sandmeier said there were no changes or additions to the staff report.

Public Comment: Ms. Pushpinder Lubana, property owner, introduced her fiancée Mr. Nathan Henderson, and said they were planning a revision to her home to allow for a merger of their two families including three children and aging parents.

Mr. Nathan Henderson said that in starting this project they reached out to their neighbors, sent out flyers with basic project drawings, and invited neighbors to review the plans. He said their rear neighbors had concerns with construction noise and asked them to observe City codes for construction. He said they assured them they would.

Ms. Malika Junaid, project applicant, said she was the architect for the project. She said the addition was done to create more privacy for the master bedroom and more separate and private rooms for the other age groups in the merged family.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Comment: Commissioner Onken said the design was only a partial second story, which was appreciated. He said also the design controlled side facing windows, which could be a problem. He said the project was a good design and a nice addition to the neighborhood. He moved to approve as recommended in the staff report. Commissioner Eiref seconded the motion.

Commission Action: M/S Onken/Eiref to approve the item as recommended in the staff report.

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 3 (Section 15303, "New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures") of the current CEQA Guidelines.
2. Make findings, as per Section 16.82.030 of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the granting of use permits, that the proposed use will not be detrimental to the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such proposed use, and will not be detrimental to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the City.
3. Approve the use permit subject to the following **standard** conditions:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans prepared by M-Designs Architects, consisting of 14 plan sheets, dated received March 26, 2015, and approved by the Planning Commission on April 20, 2015, except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval by the Planning Division.
 - b. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicants shall comply with all Sanitary District, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, and utility companies' regulations that are directly applicable to the project.
 - c. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicants shall comply with all requirements of the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Transportation Division that are directly applicable to the project.
 - d. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall submit a plan for any new utility installations or upgrades for review and approval by the Planning, Engineering and Building Divisions. All utility equipment that is installed outside of a building and that cannot be placed underground shall be properly screened

by landscaping. The plan shall show exact locations of all meters, back flow prevention devices, transformers, junction boxes, relay boxes, and other equipment boxes.

- e. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall submit plans indicating that the applicant shall remove and replace any damaged and significantly worn sections of frontage improvements. The plans shall be submitted for review and approval of the Engineering Division.
- f. Simultaneous with the submittal of a complete building permit application, the applicant shall submit a Grading and Drainage Plan for review and approval of the Engineering Division. The Grading and Drainage Plan shall be approved prior to the issuance of grading, demolition or building permits.
- g. Heritage trees in the vicinity of the construction project shall be protected pursuant to the Heritage Tree Ordinance.

Motion carried 6-0 with Commissioner Combs absent.

D3. Use Permit/Matt Nejasmich/629 Harvard Avenue: Request to demolish two existing single-story, single-family residences and construct one new two-story, single-family residence and one new single-story, single-family residence on a substandard lot with regard to lot width in the R-2 (Low Density Apartment) zoning district. The following three heritage trees are proposed for removal: a 16-inch tulip, a 28-inch silver maple, and a 58-inch Monterey pine. ***Continued to a future meeting.***

E. REGULAR BUSINESS

E1. Architectural Control/Eric Peterson/718 Oak Grove Avenue: Request for architectural control to modify the exterior of an existing three-story mixed-use building in the SP-ECR/D (El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan) zoning district. The changes include repairing the existing stucco finish, replacing existing decorative trim and materials with new neutral-colored cast stone banding and stone cladding, adding new non-structural columns, new cornice and window trim at the roof parapet and along the front elevation and select portions of the side elevation windows, new metal balcony railings, and a new double entry front door. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Planner Morris noted a correction to the first paragraph of the proposal in the last sentence of the paragraph: “.....and a new double entry front door.” to remove the word “double” before “entry front door”.

Public Comment: Mr. Eric Peterson, applicant, said he was an architect and senior associate with Pacific Peninsula Architecture, and the proposal was to modernize the subject building’s exterior. He said that there was a color and materials board for their review.

Chair Eiref closed the public hearing.

Commission Comment: Chair Eiref said the building was already nice looking and thought the proposed improvements would work well. Commissioner Kadvany confirmed with the applicant that his company had done a new building with stone work next to the Fire District. He noted

that this stone work was more continuous in its application and an improvement over the stone wrap around look application on the other building.

Commission Action: M/S Eiref/Ferrick to approve the item as recommended in the staff report.

1. Make a finding that the project is categorically exempt under Class 1 (Section 15301, "Existing Facilities") of the current CEQA Guidelines.
2. Adopt the following findings, as per Section 16.68.020 of the Zoning Ordinance, pertaining to architectural control approval:
 - a. The general appearance of the structure is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood.
 - b. The development will not be detrimental to the harmonious and orderly growth of the City.
 - c. The development will not impair the desirability of investment or occupation in the neighborhood.
 - d. The development provides adequate parking as required in all applicable City Ordinances and has made adequate provisions for access to such parking.
 - e. The development is consistent with the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan. The exterior changes would comply with relevant design standards and guidelines for commercial ground floor windows and the building entry would remain oriented to the public street.
3. Approve the architectural control request subject to the following **standard** conditions of approval:
 - a. Development of the project shall be substantially in conformance with the plans prepared by Pacific Peninsula Architecture, Inc., dated received April 1, 2015, consisting of twenty plan sheets and approved by the Planning Commission on April 20, 2015 except as modified by the conditions contained herein, subject to review and approval of the Planning Division.
 - b. The applicant shall comply with all West Bay Sanitary District, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, and utility companies' regulations that are directly applicable to the project.
 - c. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall comply with all requirements of the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Transportation Division that are directly applicable to the project.
 - d. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall submit a plan for any new utility installations or upgrades for review and approval of the Planning, Engineering and Building Divisions. Landscaping shall properly screen all utility equipment that is installed outside of a building and that cannot be placed underground. The plan shall show exact locations of all meters, back flow

prevention devices, transformers, junction boxes, relay boxes, and other equipment boxes.

- e. Heritage trees in the vicinity of the construction project shall be protected pursuant to the Heritage Tree Ordinance.

Motion carried 6-0 with Commissioner Combs absent.

F. COMMISSION BUSINESS

F1. El Camino Corridor Study: Potential reconsideration of Planning Commission recommendation from April 6, 2015 meeting. ([Attachment](#))

Staff Comment: Senior Planner Rogers said the Commission had received comments on their group email about its April 6 recommendation on the El Camino Real Corridor study. He noted that some of those who had made comments were present this evening. He said under Roberts Rules of Order that decisions and recommendations could be reconsidered if a commissioner that voted with the majority made the motion to reconsider. He said the Commission's vote on the recommendation at the April 6 meeting was unanimous so any of the Commissioners could vote to reconsider. He said that Commissioner Kadwany had requested reconsideration in writing.

Commission Action: M/S Kadwany/Strehl to reconsider the previous Planning Commission recommendation.

Motion carried 6-0 with Commissioner Combs absent.

Commissioner Kadwany said he had received emails with strong opinions from those who wanted the six-lane option and others, including a prominent bicyclist, who said Alternative 2 was not a good idea without greater protection for cyclists. He said if they decided to do bike lanes it did not have to choose Alternative 2 exactly as presented. He questioned whether the City has a vision of what it wanted for El Camino Real, noting it was auto centric, and people were asking for more than a California highway. He said for those who supported bike lanes that there had to be more emphasis on safe design and that might require stricter speed limits on El Camino Real. He said the Specific Plan recommended Class 2 Bicycle Lanes. He said the General Plan has some parameters about speed on El Camino Real and perhaps those have to be reexamined. He said that at the last meeting Commissioner Onken commented about narrow sidewalks and there was no incentive for property owners to redevelop and widen sidewalks. He said they needed to look at that too within the design of El Camino Real. He said they also had not discussed doing pilot implementations and perhaps they could do pilots for intersection changes, for instance, striping and intersection timing, and perhaps those could be separate from lane changes. He said there was a perception that El Camino Real was different when considering safety but speed limits were greater on sections of Sand Hill Road and Willow Road in places. He said the Urban Street Guidelines by the National Association of Transportation Officials looks at multi-modal issues in design and have a concept of design speed for the roadway. He said their approach was what speed was appropriate for what the designers were trying to accomplish. He suggested the Council familiarize themselves with concepts of design speed, design vehicles, what the vehicles and the conditions were in other

times of the day beside peak traffic times. He said there were bicyclists currently using El Camino Real and either it should be made safer for them or bicycling should not be allowed.

Commissioner Strehl asked if the Specific Plan recommended Class 2 Bicycle Lane for El Camino Real or offered it as a suggestion. Senior Planner Rogers said the original draft Specific Plan carried over the Bicycle Plan recommendation which was for a Class 3 bicycle route. He said when the Specific Plan was reviewed, the Bicycle Commission made a recommendation to the City Council that the City pursue a Class 2 Bicycle Lane on El Camino Real. He said in the final negotiations with the public, the Council set the Class 2 Bicycle Lane as the goal of the Plan but acknowledged constraints such as parking and right-of-way could dictate that Class 3 would be the outcome in the short-term. He said the Specific Plan stated that Class 2 Bicycle Lane was the long-term objective, but that Class 3 minimum could be permitted in the near term.

Public Comment: Ms. Shirley Chu, Sharon Heights, asked the Commission to reconsider its recommendation to add a bicycle lane on El Camino Real. She said she liked the intention to get people out of cars and reduce carbon emission but El Camino Real was not the place for bicycle riding noting traffic there included cars, buses, trucks, 92-year old drivers, and aggressive drivers. She said it was not a safe place for bicyclists, and if they had to add a bicycle lane they needed to design for more protection for bicyclists.

Mr. Richard Li, Sharon Heights, said a bicyclist choosing to ride recreationally would choose Sand Hill Road or Foothill Expressway as although traffic moved much faster on those roads, there was more visibility and less cross traffic. He said very few people use El Camino to ride bikes noting its one-mile length through Menlo Park has an estimated 60 curb cuts, or about one every 90 feet. He said he had heard that the Greenheart and Stanford projects would add a bike lane parallel to El Camino Real which he thought was better.

Ms. Lee Duboc, Menlo Park, noted that people had difficulty getting onto the survey link and that they felt they were unable to express their thoughts. She said some people did not want their names to be made public. She thanked the Commission for reconsidering the recommendation for the El Camino Real corridor. She said that more consideration had to be given to the study.

Ms. Mickie Winkler, Menlo Park, said she was a veteran biker and implored the Commission to change their recommendation to the City Council. She said she would like the Council to work on safe bicycle routes before establishing a bicycle path on El Camino Real. She said with all the curb cuts and intersections, she did not think there was anything that could be done to make El Camino Real safe for bicyclists. She said alternative bicycle routes had been neglected and that the alternatives shown on page 9 did not include some good options such as the end of Willow Place bike bridge that nearly connects to the bike boulevard in Palo Alto. She said there was a bike path that crosses the creek at Alma Street and closely connects to the bike boulevard in Palo Alto. She said there were County bicycle maps that show more alternatives than what was in the Commission's packet. She said El Camino Real was unsafe for bicyclists and there were alternatives to be pursued

Chief Harold Schapelhouman, Menlo Park Fire District, said he was pleased they were reconsidering the recommendation. He said his letter which they just received this evening listed reasons why the Fire District thought this was something that needed to be tabled or looked at as part of the General Plan circulation element. He said the study never

acknowledged the designated emergency routes for the Fire District, noting that El Camino Real was one of those. He said it made no mention that Stanford Hospital was a primary medical emergency facility and Class 1 trauma center. He said no one really looked at the emergency aid agreements among the District, Palo Alto and Redwood City. He said he spoke with the County's ambulance service and they were completely unaware of this study. He said this item should be tabled and research should be done on alternatives for bicycle routes.

Mr. Rex Ianson, Menlo Park resident and member of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District Board, said the Commission should take a look at a comprehensive bicycle plan. He said he was a bicyclist who would not use El Camino Real.

Mr. Peter Carpenter said he also was on the Menlo Park Fire Protection District Board but was not representing the Board. He said he previously served on the Planning Commission for the City of Palo Alto, and that during his tenure they rewrote the General Plan. He said the two things he learned was that a General Plan update was a challenge to do but once it was done it provided a framework to make decisions in a structured and reasonable way. He said the state law on general plans had changed to require that the circulation element include the complete street perspective, and part of that language was very clear about having City bike routes. He said if there was an updated circulation element to the City's General Plan the conversation being held tonight would be much easier. He said that this bicycle lane goal was mentioned in the Specific Plan was to a large degree irrelevant as General Plan required you go to the outermost geographical boundaries. He suggested the Commission recommend tabling the action, finish the General Plan circulation element update, and then start looking at specific issues.

Mr. Henry Riggs, Menlo Park, thanked the Commission for reconsidering this item. He said he did not think the Commission and Council could subtract the core transportation analysis of the EIR prepared for the Specific Plan. He said following the Specific Plan, the Planning Commission was careful to edit the formatted, prewritten Complete Streets Agreement put forward by the County for all cities to sign under the threat of losing transportation funding. He said the Commission edited that agreement to insure the City would not be required to put bicycle lanes on El Camino Real and defined a safe bike route instead. He said if bicyclists were encouraged to use El Camino Real, the City might be inviting an undesired conflict. He asked the Commission to use their inner best judgment and allow El Camino Real to safely serve the population of Menlo Park.

Ms. Honor Huntington, Menlo Park, said she had served on the Budget Advisory Committee, and has tried to avoid partisan politics in Menlo Park. She said she was pleased they were reconsidering the item. She said she went to one of the study sessions and found it was flawed. She said they did not look at impacts on other streets and intersections such as Middle Avenue. She said the Commission should not put a stamp of approval on this study at all, and suggested they table the item and ask for more information. She said if there were recommendations that the City should try experimental things in increments.

Mr. Robert Cronin, Menlo Park, said it was important to make El Camino Real a complete street not just for cars but also for people so that it would accommodate bicyclists safely. He said he supported the idea of buffered bicycle lanes and if it was done in Menlo Park then it would be done on El Camino Real by Palo Alto, Atherton, and Redwood City.

Ms. Adina Levin, Menlo Park, Transportation Commission, said she was representing herself. She thanked the Commission for considering this item at their last meeting and urged them to maintain the recommendation they made at that time. She said considering the counter-intuitive results that were mentioned that often when more traffic lanes were added that attracted more drivers resulting in traffic slowing down. She said consultants found that keeping traffic lanes and adding a bicycle lane would improve traffic flow. She said alternative bicycle routes had been mentioned. She said in the survey it was asked what people use El Camino Real for whether they were drivers or bicyclists. She said alternative routes might help bicyclists get to Palo Alto or Redwood City but not the use of El Camino Real to run ordinary errands locally. She said regarding the idea that young or older people might be encouraged to ride their bicycles on El Camino Real if there was a bike lane that judgment calls were made all the time by parents about where it was safe for their children ride. She said it was important to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists along El Camino Real.

Ms. Cindy Wilson, Menlo Park Bicycle Commission, said she liked the Commission's recommendation that they made at their last meeting. She said the only way to mitigate transportation was to enable other modes of transportation. She said people already ride bicycles on El Camino Real. She said the City has a duty to improve safety for those users. She said the City needed to coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions and prepare a holistic plan to get people out of their cars and ride bicycles or walk. She said improvements on the corridor would also help east-west circulation. She said having a buffered space for bicyclists would create a much different retail experience noting in other areas it improved retail experience.

Chair Eiref closed public comment period.

Commission Comment: Chair Eiref asked which of the alternatives would remove traffic capacity from El Camino Real. Transportation Manager Nagaya said there were currently three lanes in each direction on El Camino Real south of Robles and two lanes north of Robles. She said 10 or more years prior there had been three lanes in both directions. She said one option was to not reduce the number of lanes. She said Alternative 3 proposed a slight change to the right hand turn pocket at core downtown intersections: Santa Cruz, Oak Grove, Glenwood and Valparaiso Avenues. She said where there were dedicated turn pockets currently that could potentially be removed, which would have very small capacity reduction. She said no through lane removals were proposed.

Recognized by the Chair, Mr. Dana Hendrickson, *Re-Imagine Menlo Park* website editor, said whether lanes were added or removed did not address the fundamental issue of whether traffic could get through the existing lanes. He said with 60 turnoffs on El Camino Real and the addition of bicycles, drivers would have to wait until the bicyclists clear the bike lane to go into any of the retail establishments along the corridor and that would impact traffic flow.

Chair Eiref said regarding the model and data there had been comments that the model could not be trusted. He said whether one was a resident or not what mattered was how long it took to get from one end to the other of town. He asked if there was data to support the model. Transportation Manager Nagaya said a two-step process was used to derive the study results. She said first was an estimate of travel demand. She said they needed to know how to get from land use projections to travel demand projections. She said they used the countywide model that was both maintained for Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties in detail and spans the nine-county Bay Area region. She said the Metropolitan Transportation Commission maintains this

model. She said they look at the land use projections assumed to occur in all the different cities in the region, including in Menlo Park, any projects that were either approved or expected to occur on a regional scale in any of the included nine counties. She said that tool was used to estimate how much traffic and how much travel demand would occur both under the existing conditions as well as in future years. She said here they were looking at 2035 build out of the region. She said that provided the demand side of the equation and that model was calibrated both regionally and locally to give assurance that when a change was made it was reasonably predicting the relative differences between different alternatives and that was how they were using it. She said it tells them relative between different alternatives what they could expect in terms of changes across those options. She said once they have the travel demand projections they moved into an operational model so those volume estimates were plugged into a micro-simulation model that broke down the individual user experience. She said it looked at individual vehicles, individual pedestrians, and individual buses and estimates the amount of delay interaction that occurs between them and accounts for those different variables as part of the interaction. She said it was not the same type of analysis they do for every traffic stud. She said El Camino Real was unique and when it was brought up in the Specific Plan previously there were many questions around how it could operate within different scenarios. She said they specifically included that type of modeling in this study, which was why the cost was higher than a study in which they didn't use those types of tools. She said it was much more sophisticated and would help them understand the dynamics both between different users on the street and the interaction in the region of how different options interacted, and to really understand the land use traffic interaction as well.

Commissioner Strehl asked if any lanes would be removed south of Robles to put in a bicycle lane. Transportation Manager Nagaya said that on street parking spaces would be eliminated to allow for a bicycle lane with a painted buffer or the protected separated curb, and lanes might be narrowed but not removed. Commissioner Strehl asked if their projects included the estimated 3,500 cars expected from a large development on El Camino Real. Transportation Manager Nagaya said that the land use projections built into that first countywide model do include build out of everything within the Specific Plan area and account for those additional uses as well as regional growth outside of Menlo Park. Commissioner Strehl asked where those vehicles would go. Transportation Manager Nagaya said that was why they wanted to use the countywide model so they could look at both the impacts to potential parallel routes as well as to shift modes. Commissioner Strehl asked with more constrained lanes and more cars whether more cars would go through the neighborhoods. Transportation Manager Nagaya said what they were proposing was not to provide any more confinement to El Camino Real. She said the traffic that could come as result of development proposals could do different things. She said in the model they saw a mode shift that either existing traffic or future traffic chooses a different mode based on the competitive travel time of taking transit, riding a bicycle, walking or whatever their transit choices were. She said the other place they would go were parallel routes and that could be Middlefield Road or Alameda de las Pulgas, Hwy. 101 or Hwy. 280. She said for trips destined for other places in Menlo Park there could be other parallel streets that were more local serving such as Laurel Street or University. Commissioner Strehl said potentially those cars would go through neighborhood streets. Transportation Manager Nagaya said potentially but giving people options was an advantage. She said the more networks people have to move around the City gave them a better ability to make choices to see what works and enables them to move around the City best. Commissioner Strehl said it was indicated that increasing the through lanes to six lanes increased vehicle demand. She asked if the study showed where those cars were coming from, for example from Middlefield Road, the

neighborhoods or Alameda de las Pulgas. Transportation Manager Nagaya said that was part of the investigation. She said in the summary report a summary showed the change on Middlefield Road. She said based on the Commission's questions at the May 6 meeting, the consultant was directed to expand that analysis and make sure they thoroughly addressed the question before moving this forward to the City Council. Commissioner Strehl asked if they had the results of the last survey. Transportation Manager Nagaya said they did and would have the results published in next few weeks. She said they had 406 responses to the second survey. She said at this point the Alternatives 2 and 3 for a buffered bike lane or protected bike lane outranked Alternative 1 for the continuous three lanes.

Commissioner Strehl said she had discussed her concerns with Transportation Manager Nagaya that the Planning Commission's original packet had not included the letters received and more thorough analysis of the outcome of the study sessions as that was important data for a commission to have.

Commissioner Bressler said this was a deeply political issue and he was not in favor of adding more lanes to El Camino Real to support traffic from large developments. He said there was technology not being used and capacity would be added through different transit options. He said expanding El Camino Real to three continuous lanes both ways did not lend itself to a friendly street face. He said Alternative 2 involved some striping and adding some lanes; there were no bulb outs and could be reversed without too much expense if it proved not to work.

Commissioner Onken said there had been mention of a countywide dedicated bus lane on El Camino Real but that was not considered in this study. Transportation Manager Nagaya said the City had been communicating and coordinating with SamTrans. She said that agency has studies underway to improve transit on El Camino Real, one of which was to create a dedicated bus lane. She said the City understands that SamTrans does not consider Menlo Park to have the ridership and interest to justify a dedicated bus lane on its portion of El Camino Real. She said as the City only has three lanes on El Camino Real in the downtown today that dedicating one of those to transit would be potentially more problematic than cities that have wider cross sections. She said they included transit questions with the survey as well as bus improvement options in the workshops, which got very little public support. She said they did not see a dedicated bus lane alternative as SamTrans was not pursuing it within Menlo Park and residents' feedback did not support that type of improvement.

Commissioner Onken said that this consideration might be better done within the broader perspective of the General Plan circulation element update and in the context of everything that was occurring on El Camino Real. He said he felt the overriding concern was that this study was being done out of context.

Chair Eiref said he felt the matter was becoming a referendum on bicycles and their safety on El Camino Real. He said the study was intended to provide feedback to the City Council on El Camino Real as a transportation corridor. He said the three alternatives resulted in options for bicycles but he did not think it was intended to be a study on bicycle circulation. He asked about the origin of the work and the intention.

Transportation Manager Nagaya said the Specific Plan treated El Camino Real in particular as it related to circulation. She said coming out of the Specific Plan there was disagreement and two entrenched schools of thought on what the vision should be for El Camino Real. She said part of

that was related to bicycles and part of it was related to congestion traffic patterns through the corridor, the pedestrian experience, and how that related to potential economics in the retail experience along the corridor. She said all of those questions related to transportation were summed up and scoped out in the Capital Improvement Program as the El Camino Real Lane Reconfiguration Study as well as the design work specifically for the Ravenswood intersection.

Commissioner Kadwany said in reference to questions about the validity of the model used that he had become familiar with the induced demand concept a number of years ago. He said it was a very well known concept and very standard in the transportation world. He said if they had so many bicyclists using a bicycle lane along El Camino Real that cars and emergency access was blocked they would deal with it. He said he agreed in not adding more capacity noting Sand Hill Road traffic slowdown at peak times. He said whatever they did, there were already bicyclists on El Camino Real. He said they should take responsibility to improve El Camino Real appearance and safety.

Commissioner Ferrick said they were making a recommendation on a preferred alternative. She said in essence they were generally indicating an aspiration to have some buffered bicycle lanes and to protect the trees on the Cornerstone property. She said the chart from the staff report provided a rating of changes to traffic and those were generally neutral whatever the alternative. She said it showed that Alternative 2 the Commission chose to recommend last time would improve the experience for bicycles and pedestrians, was neutral on transit, and would improve aesthetic opportunities as opposed to six continuous lanes that actually would make all those elements worse. She said she would support the separated bicycle facility if it was feasible but she understood the Fire District's valid concern to not create obstacles and gridlock, and also did not want the City to invest in rigid infrastructure that might not work. She said based on the ratings that Alternative 2 seemed the logical and preferred choice as it would improve traffic flow on El Camino Real. She said they did not know what Greenheart or Stanford would propose as part of their projects' development, but she was comfortable with their recommendation to the Council for bicycle lanes.

Chair Eiref said he thought the spirit of reconsidering this item was to be creative and consider different ways, and not be prescriptive so that their recommendations were exactly any one of the alternatives. He said he supported mixing and matching. He said he did not know if they needed to amend their motion to get that message to Council. He said to some degree he heard support for a "do-nothing" option or do something and make it safer for bicyclists from speakers. He said whatever alternative he did not want to slow down traffic on El Camino Real and the table in the report indicated that adding capacity slowed down traffic. He said they have wasted space on El Camino Real noting the expanse across from the Stanford Park Hotel. He said he looked at bicycle lane improvements occurring in New York City. He said one idea was to create two lanes side by side rather than on opposite sides. He said if there was more space on one side of El Camino Real than the other they could consider such a doubling up of lanes for bicyclists. He said regarding safety that people were in charge of their own decision where they would ride bicycles. He said it was cheap to put paint on the street and they could experiment, noting in New York City they got paint from a federal program.

Commissioner Bressler said the large developments along El Camino Real should fund improvements and that the City should not be sacrificed to provide continuous three lanes in each direction.

Commissioner Onken said there was visioning to consider and accommodation, and that he was much more interested in a vision for El Camino Real. He said that buffered bike lanes would not work to make bicyclists' use of El Camino Real safer. He said they should do this study and put it back into the context of the circulation element in their General Plan Update, and that he was open to all of the possibilities. He noted that no business owners had expressed opposition to the on street parking being eliminated. He said he would prefer sidewalks and trees in the area where the on street parking was proposed for removal. He said he would like to amend their original motion to recommend Alternative 2 to include that the Council not act upon the Alternative but fold it into the General Plan update circulation element.

Chair Eiref asked staff about the General Plan Update and the circulation element. Senior Planner Rogers said the General Plan Update was proceeding with a land use focus on the M2 area. He said the circulation element would be looked at citywide. Transportation Manager Nagaya said the circulation element was citywide. She said several of the public speakers brought up the 2008 Complete Streets Act. She said that law required that the next update to the circulation element had to really address complete streets principles. She said they were underway in data gathering and analysis for that update but there were many steps to take before getting to a completed circulation element.

Commissioner Strehl said she did not think any of the alternatives improved the pedestrian experience. She said when they considered this item previously she had indicated she was not happy with the report, but had seconded the motion for Alternative 2. She said in supporting reconsideration she was not interested in mixing and matching their recommendation. She said they had heard from a number of people, whom she felt had thought through their comments thoroughly. She said they did not really know what the Greenheart and Stanford projects would do and she did not think they should do anything for bicyclists along El Camino Real until they knew. She said she had been with representatives from nearby cities over the weekend and had not heard anything from them about plans for bicycle lanes along El Camino Real. She moved to table and rescind their previously made recommendation, and to keep changes to El Camino Real open for more study and information.

Commissioner Ferrick said it was anticipated that retail would increase based on the Specific Plan and the early previews of the kind of projects they had seen over the last few years. She said that could actually make retail successful and having bike lanes there made a lot of sense in making the pedestrian experience that much nicer even if the sidewalk was slightly restricted in certain parts.

Commissioner Kadvanly said the Council should get the best cases for redesigning El Camino Real with goals of safety, enhancement of the business corridor and general experience, and consideration of various tradeoffs such as having or not having future capacity. He said at a certain point there were costs and costs might be in cars or dollars. He said he thought the Council needed something new, a creative vision as to how to make this corridor work.

Chair Eiref said he recalled mention there was a budget to do something particularly for the intersection at Ravenswood. He said they might need to push it out for General Plan circulation element consideration, and perhaps they wanted to recommend doing something in the future.

Commissioner Ferrick said the bicycle lanes had been in the Specific Plan for years and she did not think another level of study was needed for them. Commissioner Strehl said it was a goal or aspiration of the Plan. Commissioner Kadwany said it was a recommendation along with other recommendations on page F12 of the Plan. Transportation Manager Nagaya said that was correct. She said the map on page F11 showed all the recommended bike lanes in the vicinity and El Camino Real was shown as a future Class 2/minimum Class 3 bicycle path. She said since then there had been studies that indicated that Class 3 was not a good treatment for a road such as El Camino Real. She said the separated bicycle lane was not a known treatment at the time of the Specific Plan. She said the Plan did analysis on keeping parking and adding bike lanes. She said in a lot of cases they have the width to maintain parking and add four to five foot bicycle lanes without removing travel lanes except the need to treat right turn pockets. She said however parked cars were a safety hazard for bicyclists and they did not think it a good recommendation to put the two together in a tight span of 12 to 13 feet.

Commissioner Onken said in their recommendation last time they were saying that a protected bike lane with separated curb was not preferred for reasons of luring people into the bicycle lane with a false sense of safety that should not be there and issues of emergency vehicles and reducing the capacity of El Camino Real. He said they also did not recommend increasing lanes. He said regarding the motion on the table he would suggest amending it to indicate a preference for those options but not as a formal recommendation. Commissioner Strehl said her motion was to table the recommendation and since she did not hear support, she would withdraw her motion. She recommended that the Council do some inexpensive experiments to see how options would work such as was suggested with putting traffic cones to get some empirical information.

Chair Eiref said he felt they were supporting their previous recommendation.

Commissioner Strehl said she was withdrawing her support for Alternative 2. She said before they did anything along El Camino Real for bicyclists that they needed to have a discussion on the circulation element of the General Plan and the El Camino Real projects, which she expected would move forward in some months.

Commissioner Ferrick said she was happy when she heard this item was put back on the agenda for greater discussion. She said they did not want to slow down traffic on El Camino Real and Alternative 2 did not do that. She said it would also vastly improve the bicyclist and pedestrian experience along El Camino Real. She said the data really mattered as it helped to make the best recommendation. She said she agreed with Commissioner Strehl about the upcoming development projects. She said she did not think the Alternative 2 recommendation would be implemented before the discussions for those projects occurred. She moved to recommend Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative including preserving the trees on the Cornerstone property. Chair Eiref seconded the motion.

Transportation Manager Nagaya asked if her motion also included the previous motion's bullets to include preservation of the heritage trees on the corner of El Camino Real at Ravenswood Avenue, as well as ensuring the best possible safety outcomes, including appropriate design of the intersections, driveway curb cuts, San Francisquito Creek Bridge, and Ravenswood Avenue.

Commissioner Ferrick said she did not think they should put in a lot of different things and was glad to confirm that Alternative 2 would not eliminate traffic lanes. She said also Alternative 2

was the best public safety option as it had the ability to give cars space when emergency vehicles.

Commissioner Onken said he would abstain as he thought this should be considered in the wider context of the General Plan circulation element update.

Commissioner Bressler said he would support as there were already people on El Camino Real bicycling and this would improve safety.

Chair Eiref said that there had been time and money already spent and he did not like the idea of extending the discussion.

Commissioner Ferrick said she chose Alternative 2 as it addressed public safety concerns.

Transportation Manager Nagaya said that whatever alternative was recommended there would be multiple steps to design the plan and implement.

Commission Action: M/S Ferrick/Eiref to recommend the following.

The Commission recommends that the Council adopt Alternative 2 (Buffered Bike Lanes) as the preferred alternative, but with preservation of the heritage trees on the corner of El Camino Real at Ravenswood Avenue and El Camino Real.

Motion carried 4-1 with Commissioner Strehl opposed, Commissioner Onken abstaining, and Commissioner Combs absent.

G. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

H. INFORMATION ITEMS

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Thomas Rogers, Senior Planner

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on May 18, 2015