

Menlo Park Community Participation Workshop
Proposal for Development at 1706 El Camino Real
Fireside Room, Recreation Center
701 Laurel St. Menlo Park
Wednesday, June 18, 2008, meeting # 2
Notes prepared by PCRC

Present: Justin Murphy, Development Services Manager, Chip Taylor, Transportation Manager, Deanna Chow, Senior Planner, Lorraine Weiss, Contract Planner, Phil Giurlani and Susan Fox from Infiniti Partners representing the applicant, and approximately 17 community members. Four facilitators from the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center (PCRC) facilitated the meeting.

Justin Murphy, Development Service Manager, welcomed everyone to the second community workshop on the proposed development at 1706 El Camino Real. Mr. Murphy introduced Menlo Park City staff available as resources during the meeting, and representatives from Infiniti Partners.

Shauna Wilson Mora, Manager of Facilitation Programs at PCRC, provided a brief recap of the previous community meeting held on April 30. She highlighted some of the issues and concerns raised at the prior meeting.

Justin Murphy gave an update on 1800 El Camino Real and the permitted uses of the space. He explained that the City received notification from Danceworks, which was not a permitted use, that it would leave the site by the end of June 2008. Curves & Pilates have each applied for a conditional use permit. These applications are in the process of being reviewed and will be forwarded to the Planning Commission as two separate cases. There was a question and answer period about the project process.

Phil Giurlani provided information regarding Watkins Avenue for the 1906 El Camino Real project. He has applied to the Town of Atherton for a left-turn restriction @ El Camino Real and Watkins Avenue between 4pm and 6pm from Watkins to southbound on El Camino.

Deanna Chow, Senior Planner, provided a project update indicating that there has been one Planning Commission meeting and one Community Workshop to date. She indicated that the applicant has committed to using the 6 spaces per 1,000 square feet parking standard and that the architectural style is likely to be different than what has been proposed, but has not yet been designed.

Chip Taylor, Transportation Manager, gave a power point presentation regarding traffic and circulation for the project and noted the following:

- Potential Impacts @ Buckthorn Way & El Camino Real and Watkins Avenue & El Camino Real
- Potential Intersection Modification at El Camino Real and Buckthorn Way

- Site Access Options
- Other Traffic Measures

The presentation included three options for proposed intersection modifications and three options for site access, and stated that a gateway structure could be used to delineate the difference between commercial and residential land uses.

There was a question and answer period before participants broke into two small groups to discuss the proposed options. Each group addressed the following questions:

1. *What would be the benefits to the traffic and access options proposed?*

- Intersection Modifications
 - a) No left turn on Buckthorn
 - b) Signal
 - c) Increase median island
- Access
 - a) Buckthorn only
 - b) El Camino Real only
 - c) Both
- Is there another option?

2. *What are your concerns regarding the proposed options?*

- Intersection Modifications
 - a) No left turn on Buckthorn
 - b) Signal
 - c) Increase median island
- Access
 - a) Buckthorn only
 - b) El Camino Real only
 - c) Both
- Is there another option?

3. *How could your concerns be addressed/solved?*

GROUP 1

Intersection modifications

Benefits:

- Larger median refuge area
 - No one would oppose
 - Is safer
 - The current one is too small
- Recommend no parking North Bound on El Camino Real from Watkins to Encinal
 - This way parked cars do not block vision

- Will provide right turn lanes, not slowing down traffic on El Camino Real
- “melding lane” - keep shoulders open for turning
- Traffic signal would be safer – neighborhood would benefit
 - If traffic signal, it should be at Watkins

Concerns:

- Unanimous agreement at table that no left turns seems unreasonable.
- Reliable enforcement of speed limit on El Camino Real
 - There is still a lot of speeding and acceleration on El Camino Real.
- Recommend no South Bound U-Turn on El Camino at Buckthorn Way.
- Increase of median island might lead to more accidents.
- Traffic signal would slow down traffic on El Camino Real
 - wouldn't happen anyway

Access

Benefits:

- Table unanimously recommends access and egress on El Camino only, along with no parking on El Camino Real.
- Recommend no parking on Buckthorn Way because street is too narrow
- Gateways on Buckthorn Way and Stone Pine
- No access to complex from Buckthorn Way for safety of Buckthorn Way drivers. It would also be safer for patients to enter and exit on El Camino Real.

Concerns:

- People might park in the neighborhood if they cannot park on El Camino Real.
- Site access on Buckhorn Way would put too much traffic on a narrow street.

Solutions:

- Gateways on Buckthorn Way and Stone Pine would cut down on parking in neighborhood and south bound traffic cutting through neighborhood to turn left.

Other Options:

- Shuttle Bus service
 - Would reduce parking
 - Could also serve patients
 - Go to future Watkins Avenue medical facilities

GROUP 2

Intersection modifications

Benefits:

- No left turn on Buckthorn Way would speed up traffic.
 - Benefit to people turning right
- Traffic signal is a moot point
- Increasing median island would make left turns onto El Camino Real safer.
 - Move through intersection more quickly

Concerns:

- No left turn on Buckthorn Way would be an inconvenience to South bound traffic from Buckthorn Way to El Camino Real

- Reroute traffic from Buckthorn Way to Stone Pine to El Camino Real
- People do not understand left turn rules
- Traffic signal is not applicable
- Increasing the median island would lose landscape. Unlikely option. Congest Buckthorn Way turning left.

Access

Benefits:

- Buckthorn Way only entrance would be a benefit to other facilities, i.e., nail salon and Red Cottage Inn.
 - Safer if turning left on El Camino Real
- El Camino Real only would reduce traffic on Buckthorn Way and Stone Pine which are not designed to handle 450-500 cars
- Shared access/exit on El Camino Real
- Like Gateway structure

Concerns:

- Slim chance to have 3 driveways on El Camino Real
- Buckthorn Way only
 - interaction with traffic at 1800 El Camino Real
 - safety
 - overflow parking from 1702 El Camino Real

Intersection Solutions:

- Not build a high volume traffic facility at 1706 El Camino Real
- Put in a park

Access Solutions:

- Enter and exit at shared access on El Camino Real

Each Group reported out their preferred options:

GROUP 1

Intersection Modification:

- Increase El Camino Real median island
- No parking north bound on El Camino Real from Watkins Avenue to Encinal creating a melding lane keeping shoulders open
- No South Bound U-Turn on El Camino at Buckthorn Way

Site Access:

- Access and egress on El Camino Real only along with no parking on El Camino Real
- No parking on Buckthorn Way
- Gateways on Buckthorn Way and Stone Pine

GROUP 2

Intersection Modifications:

- Right turn only lane from El Camino Real onto Buckthorn Way /Stone Pine
- Put in gateways
- No left turn onto El Camino Real during peak hours

- Increase/widen median

Site Access:

- Entrance/exit on El Camino Real from shared access

NEXT STEPS:

- PCRC will provide notes from the meeting to the Planning Department staff
- City will post notes on City website
- Community members will be notified about future meetings