

**Menlo Park Community Participation Workshop**  
**Proposal for Development at 1706 El Camino Real**  
**Fireside Room, Recreation Center**  
**701 Laurel St. Menlo Park**  
**Wednesday, April 30, 2008**  
7:00 – 9:00 PM

**Notes prepared by PCRC**

**Present:** Justin Murphy, Development Services Manager, Chip Taylor, Transportation Manager, Lorraine Weiss, Contract Planner, Deanna Chow, Senior Planner ; Phil Giurlani and Susan Fox from Infiniti Partners representing the applicant, and approximately 30 community members. Six facilitators from the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center (PCRC) facilitated the meeting.

Justin Murphy, Development Service Manager, welcomed everyone to the 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.

**City Presentation:**

Deanna Chow, Senior Planner, highlighted:

- History of site (what's been located at this property)
- How long vacant
- Zoning for site – what could go in without changes to zoning
- What applicant has proposed
- Preliminary traffic study
- Process for moving forward

**Presentation from the Developer:**

Phil Giurlani, provided a brief description of the proposed development of a medical office building on the site.

There was a questions and answer period that also included comments from the participants. Questions and comments focused mainly on parking, traffic, occupancy, density and the feasibility of medical offices at this site.

Participants broke into 3 small groups facilitated by PCRC. The small groups discussed the project and considered the following questions:

1. *What would be the public benefit of a medical office building on this site?*
2. *What are your concerns regarding the proposed project?*
3. *How could your concerns be addressed/solved?*

## GROUP 1

1. *What would be the public benefit of a medical office building on this site?*
  - A place for doctors to work
  - Improvement over a vacant lot
  - Serving residents that need medical services
  - Something needs to go there
  - Opportunity for good architecture
  
2. *What are your concerns regarding the proposed project?*
  - Parking stress on an already stressed neighborhood
  - Traffic through the neighborhood
  - No owner present during half the day; no one in the building at night
  - The architectural appearance of the building
  - Conflicts with people going south on El Camino Real (traffic)
  - What is the appropriate use for this part of Menlo Park?
  - Need properly balanced use
  - The current businesses on El Camino Real are pushing parking into the residential areas
  - Under providing parking again on El Camino Real
  - Menlo Park becoming “medical city”
  - Visitor parking for guests and groups
  
3. *How could your concerns be addressed/solved?*
  - If permitted to put in additional floor could meet C4 requirement with underground parking. Density of site. Zoning to put utilities on the roof
  - Angle the building rather than parallel to El Camino Real
  - 1706 get to use parking in 1600
  - Limiting through traffic
  - 1706 to get agreement to use parking at apartment building at 1670 during the day.
  - Reduce demand for parking with better shuttle service

## GROUP 2

1. *What would be the public benefit of a medical office building on this site?*
  - Get rid of eyesore
  - Add sidewalks and curb appeal
  
2. *What are your concerns regarding the proposed project?*
  - Condition of parking lot
    - Christmas trees
    - Broken bottles
    - Why is owner not being responsible and cleaning up debris?
  - Traffic and parking
  - Traffic on Buckthorn and Stonepine
    - One way in and out

- Not enough parking for Curves, dance studio and Pilates (1800)
  - Menlo students also park on Buckthorn
- Architecture of building looks like corporate offices; objectionable. Need more compatibility with neighborhood ie: 1600 El Camino Real
- Project does not have enough parking even at 6/1000
- Residents parking for Buckthorn taken by businesses. This project would exacerbate the problem
- Office space generates more parking needs than it supplies
- El Camino needs more retail. Benefits businesses and residents
- Circulation of traffic within parking lot of proposed development
- Power poles on El Camino are unsightly for type of neighborhood
- What other options make a feasible development?
- What has developer considered?
  - Restaurant?
  - Berrone type café or retail?
- Residents not responsible for problems with other occupants and should not be penalized

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

- Fence off property to enable accurate traffic assessment
- Parking permits for residents
- Limit entrance and exit to El Camino for proposed development
- Put power poles underground (trench) on El Camino
- Before go-ahead with new project, resolve issues with existing businesses
- Traffic light
- No left turn at high traffic hours from Buckthorn
- Underground parking

**GROUP 3**

**1. *What would be the public benefit of a medical office building on this site?***

- Make building like the architecture of 1600 El Camino Real

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

- Not a benefit to neighbors for medical care
- Tax base minimal
  - Not generating tax funds
- Need solution for parking issues with Curves and vendors in 1800 El Camino Real
- Better if have retail building on site which would contribute tax revenue and sales tax
- If parking situation gets worse will decrease property values. The potential decline in property values will decrease tax revenues
- No help for local workforce. Workforce will come from outside Menlo Park
- What will the actual traffic pattern be at this location? Not national averages. Do something based on Welch Rd reality

- Traffic flow research based on local conditions such as medical services on Crane
- Why do we need another medical building? There is one 2 blocks away
- Developer is making excessive profit at neighborhood expense
- Unfair burden of cost is being put on the neighborhood
- Tenants of 1800 El Camino Real (Curves, Pilates & Dance Works) generate a high volume of traffic and noise. They are causing parking problems and these need to be addressed before anything new is built
- Corner visibility hazard at Buckthorn and El Camino Real

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

- Need a traffic light at that intersection because it will otherwise be dangerous to take a left hand turn
- Want to get a more aesthetic building like 1600 El Camino Real. Scrap the current design. Set the building back from the street.
- Use diagonal parking on Buckthorn
- Would like high end, low volume retail like Menlo Commons or Santana Row in San Jose
- Three story building with retail boutiques at street level and residential townhouse units above, with 2 story underground parking garage
- Development that would generate revenue like Beltramo's liquor store
- Should serve the specific community
- Possibly revamp current building to be another restaurant. Get a lot of sales tax – good for tax base

Each Small Group reported out on:

- *Public benefit of project*
- *Community concerns about project*
- *How concerns could be addressed/solutions*

## REPORT OUT

### GROUP 1

- *Public benefit of project*
  - Improvement over vacant lot
  - Opportunity for good architecture
  - Provide residents with medical services
- *Community concerns about project*
  - Parking and traffic stress on neighborhood
- *How concerns could be addressed/solutions*
  - Increase density
  - Add floor for underground parking
  - Limit through traffic

### GROUP 2

- *Public benefit of project*
  - Get rid of eyesore
  - Add sidewalks and curb appeal

- ***Community concerns about project***
  - El Camino Real needs more retail
  - Traffic
  - Architecture of proposed building is objectionable
- ***How concerns could be addressed/solutions***
  - Limit entrance and exit on Buckthorn
  - Permit issues of businesses at 1800 El Camino Real resolved before moving forward with project.

### **GROUP 3**

- ***Public benefit of project***
  - Opportunity for developer to make a profit. No benefit to community
- ***Community concerns about project***
  - Possible reduction in property values due to excessive traffic. This could offset tax revenues
- ***How concerns could be addressed/solutions***
  - Developer should think more creatively - multi-use retail/residential like Santana Row
  - City should get Menlo Park specific traffic data and make decisions based on facts.

### **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

Meeting Facilitated by PCRC 650-513-0330 [www.pcrweb.org](http://www.pcrweb.org)



Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center  
 Empowering people. Building relationships. Reducing violence.