

Attachment A
El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan
Planning Commission Preliminary Recommendations on Downtown
July 28, 2011 Planning Commission Meeting

The following are the preliminary recommendations of the Planning Commission on the Downtown. The recommendations will be further considered and possibly modified prior to forwarding final recommendations to the City Council.

Planning Commission Preliminary Recommendations on Downtown

Chestnut Street Paseo/Market Place (5-0; Commissioner O'Malley absent and Commissioner Riggs recused)

- Pursue implementation of the Chestnut Paseo and Market Place in a phased approach. The first phase would include the temporary closure of Chestnut Street as delineated in the Specific Plan on Saturday and/or Sunday to be used as a public space with seating, food vendors (food trucks), landscaping, and possibly decorative paving. The second phase would be based on a review of the first phase and would be used to determine if the Paseo and Market Place should continue in operation and be made more permanent through extended hours, days and/or installation of new or permanent features.
- With both phases, consideration should be given to Menlo Park merchants for access to the public space and should build upon successful existing businesses, including the Farmer's Market.
- The recommendation is based on a recognition that the Chestnut Paseo and Market Place are closely linked in functionality and that the success of the space will be dependent on uses that would attract people.

Sidewalk Widening (5-0; Commissioner O'Malley absent and Commissioner Riggs recused)

- Retain the sidewalk widening elements and guidelines of the Specific Plan with implementation starting on a temporary basis for smaller block or half-block areas in order to assess the viability of the widening and whether to expand and make permanent the widened sidewalks over time.

Parking Structures (5-0; Commissioner O'Malley absent and Commissioner Riggs recused)

- Include Parking Plaza 2 in addition to Parking Plazas 1 and 3 as a possible site for a parking structure.
- Encourage utilization of parking structures by parking permit users.
- Provide opportunities for businesses to contribute to the financing of parking structures to the benefit of the business through reduced parking permit costs or other incentives.

- Require high aesthetic standards for the parking structures, including landscaping within required setbacks or as a vertical element of the structure.
- Encourage the preservation of as much surface parking as possible within the parking structures.
- Retain the height standards of the Specific Plan as maximums but encourage the design of parking structures that are consistent with the scale of adjacent planned and existing buildings.

The Planning Commission also discussed parking ratios in Downtown in light of its recommendation to reduce residential parking ratios in the Station Area. The Commission intends to continue the discussion at a future meeting.

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