

**El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan
Planning Commission Meeting – April 30, 2012
Correspondence Received During/After Meeting**

- Charlie Bourne – April 29, 2012
- Patricia Boyle – April 30, 2012
- Jo Eggers – April 30, 2012
- Pam Tyson – April 30, 2012
- Henry N. Kuchler IV – April 30, 2012
- Irwin Chambers – April 30, 2012
- Anonymous (“A M.P. Taxpayer”) –
April 30, 2012
- Tim Draper – May 1, 2012
- Deborah Miller – May 1, 2012
- Patti Fry – May 2, 2012
- Anonymous – May 7, 2012

DRAFT

To: Planning Commission

29Apr2012

From: Charlie Bourne

Re: Comments on Specific Plan Final EIR and Specific Plan

The Plan' Impact

The FEIR Summary Table of Transportation Impacts (in Table 2-1, pg.2-27) simply says for Impact TR-2 that, **“Traffic from future developments in the Plan area would adversely affect operation of local roadway segments. (Significant and Unavoidable).”** The actual findings for individual street segments are not given in the Final EIR. (True?) However, actual findings for individual street segments is given in Table 15 of the April 2010 Transportation Impact Analysis and in the DEIR (Table 4.13-14 on pg. 4.13-80). That data is shown in the attached Table 1.

The FEIR Summary Table of Transportation Impacts (in Table 2-1, pg. 2-25) simply says for Impact TR-1 that, **“Traffic from future development in the Plan area would adversely affect operation of area intersections. (Significant and Unavoidable)”** and then identifies just four intersections. Seemingly, without comment or explanation, eight other intersections identified in the DEIR, and identified in the attached Table 2, seem to be dropped from the FEIR (True?) without comment or discussion. This deserves further review.

With the Plan's emphasis on expanded efforts to increase walking, biking, and use of local transit operations, and expectations of much more activity in those activities, it seems a contradiction for the FEIR (TR-4,5, pg.2-27) to state that , **“Transit ridership generated by future development in the Plan area would affect transit operations (Less than Significant) and Future development in the Plan area would affect pedestrian and bicycle operations and safety (Less than Significant)”**.

The Plan's Impact in the Context of Other Development

The review and acceptance of the Plan must be done in the context of all recent development around us. Our Transportation Dept. says that this is done by simply including all recent regional and proposed development into a single 1% cumulative growth figure added to our current traffic figures. I disagree, professionally, on this approach, and that is why I have assembled a table of recent and proposed developments as additional data in Tables 1 and 2. A review of those Tables will show that the EIRs and their professional consultants have independently concluded that their projects will have Significant and Unavoidable impacts on our streets and intersections. Some of our intersections will receive such an impact, independently, from as many as three different projects.

We can't do anything about those projects, but we can do something about this Specific Plan. We could, and should, drop it, while perhaps picking out some of the better features for separate consideration.

Patricia Boyle
510 Sand Hill Circle
Menlo Park, CA 94025

April 30, 2012

To: Planning Commission Members

Regarding: El Camino Real/Downtown Plan, General Plan Amendments

At long last we have reached this point. The current proposal represents the collective input from many individuals and groups. It also reflects compromise and modifications. It reflects walkable streets, thriving downtown business and a town atmosphere enhanced by nearby housing with an infusion of new customers.

The proposed plazas and park spaces promote greenery and trees, something Menlo Park is known for.

Now for the concerns:

- Can we adequately modify the quagmire at Ravenswood and El Camino Real and promote the connectivity and safety that we seek?

- Can we assure that 15% of the 680 housing units will be available at a below market rate so those with a modest income will find them affordable? Thinking here of our teachers, those working in local offices and businesses and health workers.

- What assurances do we have that Stanford University will develop their holdings on El Camino Real to match Menlo Park's development goals?

In advance thank you for giving these matters your consideration.

Patty Boyle,
Menlo Park Resident and former Housing Commission member

KNOB HILL MINES, INC.

GENERAL OFFICES

1143 CRANE STREET, SUITE 200

MENLO PARK, CALIFORNIA 94025-4341

PHONE: 650-328-0820

FACSIMILE: 650-323-5390

E-MAIL: JKUECHLER@HIHP.COM

HENRY N. KUECHLER IV
PRESIDENT

April 30, 2012

Mr. Thomas Rogers
City of Menlo Park
Planning Department
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

RECEIVED

MAY 2, 2012

CITY OF MENLO PARK
BUILDING

Dear Mr. Rogers:

I read an article entitled **"Menlo 'parklet' idea raises concern"** in one of the local newspapers last week discussing that the City is still proposing the construction of several parklets in the downtown. In particular, the City is considering constructing a parklet in Parking Plaza 3, just off Crane Street. Please let this letter serve as my strong opposition to locating a parklet at this location.

My firm owns the building located at 1143 Crane Street, which is immediately adjacent to the proposed location. Our company's offices have been located in this building since the early 1980's. Our building has several, long-term ground floor tenants that would be adversely effected by the construction of a parklet at this location. Losing direct access to the parking lot would result in a loss of business for them, and ultimately a reduction in my building's value.

Parking is already at a premium in this location, as well as the rest of the downtown. Retail stores need parking for their clients, not mini-parks.

I live in San Francisco, and would whole-heartedly agree with the article that these parks are magnets for the homeless and other vagrants, both during the daytime and at night and they are difficult for law enforcement to patrol effectively. I would imagine that Menlo Park would have an increase in landscape, trash removal and other general maintenance costs to maintain these added parklets.

Fremont Park is located just a short walk from the proposed parklets. While Fremont Park seems to be enjoyed by a number of people on a regular basis, it certainly is not attracting visitors in such quantities that additional downtown park space is needed.

I strongly encourage the City to drop this misguided effort. Parklets are an unnecessary and unwanted change to Menlo Park's downtown that will reduce needed parking and further deter a healthy retail environment.

Sincerely,



Henry N. Kuechler IV

Rogers, Thomas H

From: Gary Eggers, DDS <drgary@garyeggersdds.com>
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2012 7:18 PM
To: _Planning Commission
Cc: drgary@garyeggersdds.com
Subject: April 30 2012: Comments for Planning Commission Meeting
Attachments: 1135n_20120430_19073408.pdf

I want to thank the commissioners who have previously helped ensure ideas and proposals presented during this forum were formally passed on to the City Council for inclusion in the Specific Plan and EIR. I respectfully ask that you consider proposals that are forthcoming tonight and present them to Council as you deem important to satisfy the requirements of an EIR's content and inclusiveness for Menlo Park.

In Section F1 Overview of Specific plan, point 5 states, "the Specific Plan envisions a public parking strategy and management plan that efficiently accommodates downtown visitors and supports downtown businesses." Vol. 1 of the Final Impact Report, on page 3-34 references that the city prepare a Parking Implementation Plan.

I am in full support of having an implementation plan. I am concerned that the management plan is vaguely referenced and I ask that more detail be included about the management plan, such as; the scope of the plan, the "go to" responsible party/office charged to develop, who monitors implementation, impacts and mitigates unintended outcomes.

Plaza 2 was gated this winter for restriping and resurfacing, and 95 parking spaces were not accessible for patron or business parking during the month of December; and parking was not available in Plaza 2 before and after December for 2-3 months. Once I noticed the closure of the plaza, I was very dismayed to see that a shovel sat in Plaza 2 without any apparent work taking place for 3 weeks. (Could our businesses and patrons have utilized the plaza for a while longer?) Our business was not notified before the closure of the plaza so we could alert our patients to leave earlier for their appointments to be able arrive on time during peak hours. From this I see we need better communication and management of parking availability.

Why the concern? Some people don't think we should worry about the elimination of 92 spaces. After all, there were **ONLY** 92 parking places eliminated in Parking Plaza 2. But there were times in Plaza 1 when public parking was not available during the time Plaza 2 was closed.

We had a few patients tell us it took them 10-15 minutes to find a parking place in Plaza 1 during peak hours on the weekday in December. I experienced the same frustration when I left Plaza 1 and needed to re park in Plaza 1 during peak hours. This concern is easily overlooked by some in the short term, but if all future development described in Section 3.4.1 was implemented, it could easily mean 2- 3 X the number of parking places would be eliminated for up to 24 months if a parking garage is constructed-that is a huge concern for businesses that rely on sufficient and accessible parking in the Plaza where business is conducted with the patron. I request that parking space availability downtown be reviewed and reported again using parking stats available during the closure of Plaza 2 for restriping through April and be supplemental information to the 2009 parking study report that supplied data used to make assumptions in the Specific Plan.

It's good the EIR has identified that access routes may need to be re routed, businesses should have at least one door for customers to enter their business. But there should be additional attention to a concern (I don't find discussed in the report) that could significantly affect total parking space needs in the future. Will the city allow parking places to be taken from business and customers and turned over to construction companies for their use every day for 1 ½ to 2 years for say, construction of a parking garage? Anyone who works or shops in downtown Los Altos could tell you about the large number of parking places utilized by construction trucks and workers on a day to day basis at the the David and Lucile Packard Foundation development site in Los Altos. Menlo Park currently has no empty parking area as does Los Altos for workers/trucks close to the construction site.

Plaza 2 was not considered as a potential site for construction of a parking garage until late in the process. But I'm glad that it has been. I believe there is data that will show many merits for its consideration over Plaza 1 and 3. I again request the city actively seek potential parking site(s) on the periphery of town (or downtown should a building be demolished) for lease for the short term in the months ahead.

The City says their plan's survival is dependent on building parking garage, businesses know their survival is dependent on accessibly convenient parking for customers.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe Eggers

Business and Property owner

Rogers, Thomas H

From: P.Tyson Comcast <p.tyson@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2012 9:10 PM
To: _Planning Commission
Subject: Meeting this evening

Dear Planning Commission:

"I would be at this meeting, but I have a business commitment that I cannot miss this evening so I am writing to let you know how important is it to improve the MP El Camino Down Town area to our community and the future of our children in this community.

"I believe now is the time to revitalize MP. It's taken a very long time--we're in year five now—MP hired the consultants who did the work, including plenty of opportunities for public input, which has resulted in changes to the plan over time in response to residents and business/property owners concerns. Now it's time to approve the Specific Plan and clean up MP!

Please help to move this forward as fast as possible! This will not only provide a better opportunity for the down town area but improve our real-estate market for the El Camino area.

Thank you

Pam Tyson



Pam Tyson
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Mr. Irvin Chambers
2160 Menalto Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025-2557

APRIL 30, 2012



USA MENLO PARK CA 94025

30 APR 2012 PM 3:1

CITY of MENLO PARK PLANNING DIV.
701 LAUREL STREET
MENLO PARK, CA 94025

94025343999



Chambers (1)
accompanied by
Specific Plan
postcard

"Eco-Tyranny provides a thought-provoking analysis of the origins of the modern-day 'sustainable' movement."

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ECO- TYRANNY

How the Left's Green Agenda
Will Dismantle America

BRIAN SUSSMAN

Bestselling Author of *CLIMATEGATE*

Chambers (2)

IT ISN'T ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT; LET'S BE CLEAR ABOUT THAT.

When Al Gore rampaged across the cultural landscape on the heels of his devastating election loss to George W. Bush, and with eye-popping pompousness demanded that Americans get with his so-called "green" program, the Tennessee multimillionaire insisted he was motivated only by concern for the planet. *Really?*

As many have suspected, the whole "global warming" charade has much less to do with saving the planet than with profoundly changing America for the worse.

Sussman, an award-winning meteorologist and popular radio talk-show host, documents how and why those steeped in radical-leftist contempt for traditional America—including her free-market capitalism, high quality of life and world dominance—are absolutely determined to reduce America to a shadow of her former greatness and power.

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Chambers (3)



City of Menlo Park
Planning Division
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

To: Planning Division:

April 30, 2012

- Long term planning is wise - but more so, is current maintenance.
Suggestion: spend the taxpayers money repairing the sidewalks.

PRE-SORTED
STANDARD
ECRWS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MENLO PARK, CA
PERMIT # 6

RECEIVED

APR 30 2012

CITY OF MENLO PARK
BUILDING

POSTAL CUSTOMER, LOCAL

MENLO PARK, CA 94025

Oak Lane - as you walk down on the right left hand side of the walkway, about half way, the cement is broken away - pipes

IMPORTANT PUBLIC NOTICE

are sticking up above cement level. Very difficult for aging

Sincerely
(A. M. P. Taraper)

Rogers, Thomas H

From: Timothy Draper <Tim@dfj.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2012 9:40 AM
To: _Planning Commission
Subject: Re: El Camino Downtown Plan

Yay. Someone is finally driving for improvements to Menlo Park's downtown area. The place really looks run down. Please let developers proceed with their visions. We will all benefit from their labors.

Any talk of "parking issues" usually comes from Luddites who fear change. Change is good. Either we change or we deteriorate.

A place that is in the center of innovation should shine like the sun.

Best, Tim Draper

For global venture capital: <http://www.dfj.com>
Invest with the Private Market: <http://www.xpertfinancial.com>

Get a kick out of Valley Girl and pass it on: <http://www.thevalleygirl.tv>
See stuff my family does at <http://www.draper.co>
Join my blog: <http://www.theriskmaster.com>
Buy my dad's book "The Start Up Game." <http://amzn.to/bKUr7c>

Rogers, Thomas H

From: Debbie Miller <millerd@pamfri.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2012 10:56 AM
To: _Planning Commission
Subject: Letter Concerning El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan
Attachments: MenloParkPlanningComm2012.docx

Please see attached.

April 30, 2012

Planning Commission
City of Menlo Park
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

RE: El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

Please use reason in your determination as to development along El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue. Be that measured voice for how our community develops knowing that you will forever have your signature on the outcome of the future of Menlo Park. Yes, Menlo Park will be a part of the linking of all Peninsula communities along the El Camino corridor. Within that realm however; the community can maintain its tranquility and ease without becoming just another max density development within too small a footprint.

By taking a measured approach to development, you have the power to *enhance* quality of life for residents and maintain residential and commercial property values. Do not fall into the trap of making Santa Cruz Avenue a destination venue. If that occurs, the avenue ceases to serve the community and instead becomes Santana Row North or Burlingame Mid-Peninsula. When that happens, the residents will no longer be served and our main boulevard becomes just one more of the many slick new shopping and dining developments along the Peninsula. Then, Menlo Park will have lost its uniqueness and its soul. It is in your hands. Please act wisely.

Sincerely,

Deborah Miller
Menlo Park

Rogers, Thomas H

From: Patti L Fry <pattilry@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 02, 2012 11:34 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Specific Plan - some additional recommendations?

Dear Planning Commission,

Thank you for your thoughtful discussion about the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan and EIR.

I am hopeful that you would consider adding to your green building and public benefit recommendations.

Green Building/Sustainable Practices - as was discussed by members of the public and commission, the LEED standards don't make a lot of sense in California as a means to promote sustainability in a significant way, given the origin of the LEED standards and the fact that California has aggressive green building guidelines in its code. I believe the Commission only recommended an external audit of LEED compliance.

Ideally, this would be a only a short interim requirement, with the LEED standard replaced by a new city-wide Green Building and/or sustainability standard that exceeds the state's minimum. I hope your recommendations would include that possibility and suggest establishing such standards for all projects covered by the Specific Plan. (and no additional FAR Bonus for those that achieve LEED Platinum, as it doesn't necessarily promote sustainability enough to offset the additional impacts of larger projects). Although less costly than full LEED certification, the external audit still might add more cost than a review against new city green building/sustainability requirements that can become part of the city's building permit inspection process.

As a member of the GRCC's green building sub-committee, I believe development and construction professionals and members of the community would be willing to work with staff and commissions (such as the Planning and Environmental Quality Commissions) to craft pragmatic, meaningful, and cost-effective standards and guidelines. It's time,

Public Benefit - The Commission discussed, but I'm not sure whether it recommended, that project public benefits need to benefit the greater community. I hope you did. If not, please reconsider.

What puzzles me is that the Commission didn't discuss the challenges it may face as "the decision-making body on projects proposing public benefits that are incorporated within the project (such as senior housing) and/or which can be memorialized in typical conditions of approval pursuant to the City's normal zoning and planning authority." (from page E17).

When judgment is required, such as for Use Permits and Variances, it is very helpful for decision-makers, the public, and applicants to have guidelines in place. Even then, it can be challenging, as you all well know as this topic came up earlier Monday evening in the discussion about potentially reconsidering a Variance approval. The city currently relies on the state minimum guideline for approving Use Permits (many other cities have additional guidelines), has some guidelines for granting Variances, and no design guidelines for approving Architectural Control (unlike virtually every other city).

While the Specific Plan newly provides design guidelines that can be extremely helpful for the Commission's Architectural Control review duties, it is silent about considerations regarding public benefit. The Commission will have approval responsibilities for some projects, and recommending responsibilities for other projects that

would involve a Development Agreement. It isn't at all clear what happens with projects that don't require discretionary review other than Architectural Control and what the Commission's role would be when Public Benefit Bonus levels are part of such proposed projects.

I hope the Commission would consider recommending creation of some guidelines that could inform discussions about Public Benefit for the newly required study sessions and subsequent decisions or negotiations. Additionally, I suggest that the Commission will seek greater clarity about whether Bonus FAR (total, general office, and/or medical office), residential units, and/or height MUST be approved whenever any of the project elements listed on page E17 for which "a public benefit bonus could be considered", the extent to which the Commission is allowed discretion to determine how much Bonus is approved, and of what type of Bonus (FAR, residential units, height) for a given project, and how "public benefit" is determined when a project doesn't require either a Use Permit or a Development Agreement but still includes Public Benefit Bonus density, intensity, or height. Although the Plan lists some project elements for which a Public Benefit Bonus "could be considered", it doesn't make clear how that consideration leads to approval, modification, or rejection of the Bonus (or Bonuses).

Using the example of a project with some senior housing (listed on page E17 as a qualifying project element), imagine facing project requests such as the following, assuming each is on similarly sized properties in the same zoning district on El Camino:

- Project A includes 1 unit of senior housing, 4 small residential units, and requests maximum Bonus FAR, including maximum Bonus for Office, and maximum Bonus height for the luxury units,
- Project B includes 1 large unit of senior housing, 4 non-senior residential units, and requests maximum Bonus FAR and height so these can be built as "luxury" units
- Project C includes 5 units of senior housing, and requests maximum Bonus FAR for a bank and business services center
- Project D includes 8 small units of senior housing at the maximum Bonus residential density level and requests maximum Bonus FAR for general Offices, and any remaining maximum Bonus FAR for a nail salon
- Project E includes 8 units of senior housing at the Bonus residential density level, a community room and plaza, and requests maximum Bonus FAR for general Office
- Project F includes 8 units of senior housing and requests maximum Bonus FAR for a medical supply store
- Project G includes 1 unit of senior housing and requests maximum Bonus FAR and maximum Bonus Office FAR in an older building that some regard as historic but it has not been officially recorded as a historic resource and only a very small portion of the historically valued features would be preserved and visible to the public
- Project H includes 8 units of senior housing at the maximum Bonus residential density level, and maximum Bonus FAR for some social service agencies

These of course are presented to make a point:

On what grounds would the Commission approve/not approve, seek additional "public benefit", and/or modify project elements prior to approval? Bear in mind that each of the Uses in Projects A through G is Permitted "by right" at the Base level, so none of the Uses requires a conditional Use Permit or Administrative Use Permit. On the above list, only the social service facilities Use requires a Use Permit.

It isn't even clear that the Commission has any voice in approving the above, except Project H, but rather only has a duty to hold a study session regarding public benefit (and architectural review). It appears that projects that consist only of Permitted Uses (and don't require a development Agreement) are approved "by right" -- even at the Bonus level -- making any study session for them a waste of time and money for all involved.

Wouldn't some additional clarity about what projects at the Bonus level are subject to Commission approval other than architectural review/ Is it only Use Permit projects?. Wouldn't it be helpful to have available some several general guidelines, and possibly some definitions (e.g., historic resource), to help project applicants and the Commission understand better what is involved in this discretionary review and approval, and what is expected in terms of community benefit?

Throughout the Visioning process, the community spoke loud and clear: When Bonus levels are granted, public benefit is expected. But it isn't at all clear that there is a strong mechanism in place to ensure that all projects at the Bonus levels provide it adequately. Many, if not all, project applicants may seek the additional development rights available at the Bonus levels, so it's critical that the community expectations for substantial benefit can be fulfilled through a clear and reasonable process. I hope the Commission will recommend more clarity about the process and recommend creation and use of guidelines to provide more certainty while retaining flexibility for applicants and decision-makers.

Again, I thank the Commission for your service and encourage you to consider making additional recommendations regarding the above.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Fry

I wish I could convince everyone to be devoted to this glorious saint. I have experienced the innumerable blessings that come through him from God. I have never known anyone who sincerely revered him and offered particular vows to him who did not make spiritual progress. Saint Joseph comes to the aid of those who commend themselves to him. Year after year, I have made some request of him on his feast day and he has always granted it. If my appeal were twisted in any way, he would straighten it out for me.

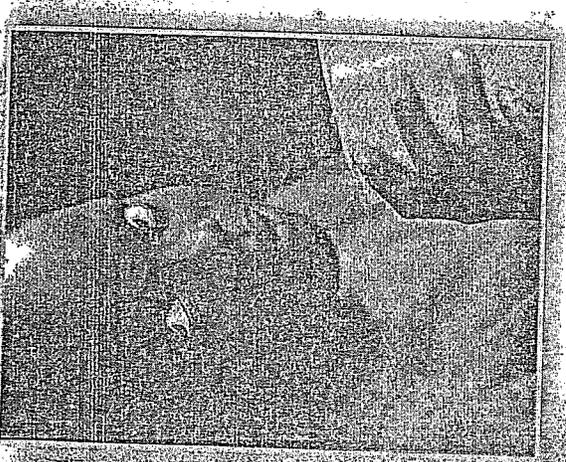
If I were a person with the authority to do so, I would not hesitate to describe in great detail the many favors this magnificent saint has given to me and to others. But since I am constrained by my order to write about certain things at great length and to minimize others, I will have to keep this part much more brief than I would like. In other words, I am going to have to act like someone who has no sense of discrimination and doesn't know what is good!

For the love of God, I ask anyone who does not believe me to put my claims about Saint Joseph to the test. Then you will see for yourself the great goodness that comes when you offer devotion to this sublime patriarch. How could anyone think about the Queen of Angels and how she suffered for the child Jesus and not give thanks to Saint Joseph for the way he helped them both? People of prayer should foster special affection for him. If you cannot find a guide to teach you contemplative practice, appeal to Saint Joseph, and I assure you that this wondrous master will not lead you astray.

I pray that I have not made a mistake in daring to speak of Saint Joseph like this. While I have always made a great display of my devotion to him, I have never managed to successfully imitate and serve him. He cured me of my paralysis and gave me the power to stand up and walk again because of who he is. I, on the other hand, have misused this gift because of who I am.

Who could have predicted that I would fall so soon after receiving so many gifts from God? After his Majesty blessed me with the very virtues that awakened my desire to serve him? After I had found myself almost dead and in grave spiritual danger? After he had raised me up, body and soul, filling everyone with amazement that I had survived?

What is this, my Lord? We live a perilous life. Here I am, writing this



A Prayer for Our Unknown Friends

Heavenly Father, welcome
into your embrace our friends
overseas whose names we
do not know, but whose terrible
plight we rush to remedy.

Bless the suffering people who
struggle and sacrifice on behalf
of their families. Grant them
sustenance, shelter and opportunity.
For this, we give you thanks.

Amen



Anonymous - accompanied by Specific Plan postcard