

December 13, 2010  
Laney Bistro  
Laney College Campus  
900 Fallon Street, Oakland, CA 94607  
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

**LAKE MERRITT STATION AREA PLAN**  
**COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS GROUP (CSG) MEETING #5**  
**UPDATES ON RELATED PLANNING PROCESSES, CONSENSUS ON SUBAREA MAP,**  
**AND DISCUSSION OF SUBAREA WORKSHOP APPROACH**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

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Thirty-one members of the Community Stakeholders Group (CSG) attended the meeting on December 13, 2010 from 5:30 to 8:00 pm to hear updates on related planning processes, review the subarea map, discuss the subarea workshop approach, and review the revised vision and goals. The meeting began with updates on related planning processes including the potential ballpark at Victory Court, Broadway/Jackson interchange improvements, Laney College Facilities Master Plan, Measure DD funded Lake Merritt and 12th Street projects, the Merchants' Tea, and the Jack London District charette. Then, the revised subarea map, which was updated to reflect two subareas rather than three based on feedback at the CSG Meeting #4, was reviewed by the group. Finally, the group discussed the subarea workshop approach. There were several concerns and suggestions related to the approach; the approach will be refined based on suggestions and finalized at an Executive CSG meeting in January.

Time ran out before addressing the revised Vision and Goals. This component will be addressed via email.

**DETAILED COMMENTS**

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**UPDATES ON RELATED PLANNING PROCESSES**

**Ballpark**

*Update presented by Gregory Hunter, Community and Economic Development Agency Deputy Director of Redevelopment and Economic Development and Blair Miller, Community and Economic Development Agency, Project Manager for Ballpark. The update noted that the City has not yet entered into negotiations with Major League Baseball. In January, City Council will vote on whether or not to proceed with concrete steps to continue to study the Victory Court site.*

CSG members asked about backup sites for the ballpark if the Victory Court site is not chosen, and staff noted that Victory Court was the preferred site, and there is no other backup site. It was requested to label "Victory Court" on street maps. Additional questions included whether the ballpark would be included in the subareas and how the ballpark area would be addressed in the subarea workshops (this topic is addressed below in more detail).

CSG members asked if there would be an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to study the effects of the ballpark proposal, and staff answered that there will be an EIR to study the effect of the ballpark area and a separate EIR to study the effects of extending the timeframe of the

Central City East Redevelopment Project Area. In terms of mitigations to traffic impacts, CSG members asked if there is a financial limitation on the type of mitigations that might be necessary to address traffic issues related to the ballpark. They asked if there could potentially be a bigger, global solution that would be expensive. Staff noted that there is not a dollar limit on the types of solutions that will be necessary to mitigate impacts.

One CSG member expressed concern about the effect of the ballpark on the industrial uses and jobs in the Victory Court area, to which staff noted that the City will work with existing land uses to help them relocate.

Finally, CSG members wondered how other projects, including the ballpark, will take into account the recommendations of the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan. Staff noted that that is a dialogue that is starting at this meeting by making connections.

### **Broadway/Jackson Interchange**

*Update presented by Dave Dickinson, Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC), Broadway/Jackson Interchange Project Manager. Dave Dickinson described the major goals of the different Oakland neighborhoods impacted by the Broadway/Jackson Interchange:*

- *Chinatown: reduce through traffic, increase pedestrian friendliness.*
- *Jack London District: improve freeway access.*
- *West Oakland: improve air quality.*

*He also described some possible ideas for the Chinatown area:*

- *Remove I-880 Broadway off-ramp extension; have it touchdown earlier instead and allow 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets to carry some more traffic.*
- *Beautify 6<sup>th</sup> Street, create a gateway to Chinatown, Jack London District.*
- *Improve under-crossings.*

CSG members expressed concern about several issues related to the Broadway/Jackson Interchange, including:

- Air quality impacts from a possible option to lower the Broadway off-ramp extension to grade-level along 6<sup>th</sup> Street that would put more cars down onto surface streets. A representative from Asian Health Services noted that they are initiating studies in partnership with Human Impact Partners, Alameda County Health Department and philanthropy organizations to look at air quality issues.
- The illustrative images showing the ideal vision for 6<sup>th</sup> Street may not be possible after traffic studies are done.
- New traffic on 6<sup>th</sup> Street may actually create a physical divide between Chinatown and Jack London District Association.
- Perceived positive and negative aspects of the possible options are all conjecture at this point, pending studies to see what the health and traffic pros and cons might be.

There was also a question related to the health impacts study in the Central Estuary Implementation Guide EIR, and if that type of study will be part of all future Oakland EIRs. Staff explained that public health issues were identified in the Existing Conditions Report for the Central Estuary project and that public health-related design guidelines will be incorporated into the Central Estuary Implementation Guide. Generally, public health issues are addressed in the air quality chapter of EIRs.

Dave of ACTC noted that they would like to get started on traffic studies to see what is possible and examine the environmental effects.

### **Laney Facilities Master Plan**

*Update presented by Marco Menéndez, Dean, Fine & Applied Arts/Communications/Physical Education. Key components of the update included:*

- *The Goal of the project is to reconfigure Laney campus to become more outward focused, more open to the public, more pedestrian friendly, and provide more retail opportunities (salon, bistro, tai chi).*
- *Laney has 15,000 students and 600 instructors (more than 2 times the amount of other Peralta campuses); and brings in 57% of the revenue.*
- *Student population at Laney is 30% Asian, 29% African American, 13% Latino, 16% white.*
- *BART riders use Laney parking lot, reducing the amount of parking spaces for Laney students – and it is difficult to prevent this from happening.*
- *30% of students are night students.*
- *Laney rents out their facilities, including the gymnasium and theater – one of the most popular mid-sized theaters in the Bay Area (these are a revenue source).*
- *Laney has issued an RFQ to bring on an architect to study the feasibility of some of the project ideas included in the Master Plan.*
- *Working on ADA compliance campus-wide (grading, elevators, ramps).*

CSG members had several questions, including:

- *Is student housing contemplated as part of the Laney Master Plan? It was noted that the Master Plan does not include housing for students, partly because Laney has found it difficult to study the housing demand and needs of its students.*
- *Does Laney incorporate English-as-a-Second Language into its programs? It was noted that Laney does have some ESL in its career technical education (vocational) programs, such as Carpintería Fina, a Spanish-language carpentry program.*
- *Are there growth projections for students? How is that being accounted for in facilities planning? More buildings? Massing? Intensity of uses? It was noted that availability of funding limits potential growth at this point.*
- *Timeline for Facilities Master Plan? Will that be publicly presented?*

- Has the City approached Laney regarding use of parking lot?
- Any proposal/plans for 7<sup>th</sup> Street? Or waiting for architect?

Members noted the importance of collaborating with Laney since the entire campus is within the Planning Area.

### **Measure DD Funded Lake Merritt and 12<sup>th</sup> Street Improvements**

*Update presented by Ed Manasse, City of Oakland, Interim Strategic Planning Manager.*

CSG comments and questions included:

- What happens to the Kaiser Auditorium after the improvements are made?
- Will there be potential for cafes and entertainment?
- Are there any study documents regarding the project? Staff provided the Measure DD project website.
- Is there opportunity for gateway to Downtown or gateways to districts on other side of the lake? Maybe two gateways?

### **Neighborhood Teas: Update on Merchant's Tea**

*Update presented by Christina Ferracane, City of Oakland, Project Planner.*

CSG comments focused on ongoing outreach to businesses, noting that there are still a lot of businesses to interview and asking if there had been any outreach to Peerless Coffee or other businesses in that area (west of I-880). There was also interest in continuing the outreach survey for merchants.

### **Jack London District Association Charette Freeway Underpasses**

*Update presented by Alicia Parker, City of Oakland, Project Planner.*

CSG asked which staff person to contact if they want staff to attend small community meetings. It was noted that any staff member could be contacted.

### **SUBAREA MAP**

CSG member comments about the revised subarea map focused on the potential ballpark, whether it would be included in the subareas, how the ballpark would potentially impact the Plan, and how the ballpark plans would consider the recommendations of the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan. CSG members noted that the ballpark would have the greatest immediate effect, so there is a need to focus on it. There was overall concern about the timing of the ballpark as it relates to the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan. It was noted that the ballpark should not be ignored or downplayed. If the ballpark does happen, there will be a need to look at the freeways and other access and circulation issues (including Lake Merritt BART station use). There was concern about who would be in charge of that analysis. One member asked if the ballpark plans meant the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan needs an alternative plan. One CSG member suggested that if the subarea workshops happen before the ballpark EIR, then at the subarea workshops people should be asked to envision the area with and without the ballpark to

spark conversation that addresses both scenarios. It was suggested that the planners involved in these other plans should regularly attend the CSG meetings.

## **DRAFT SUBAREA WORKSHOP APPROACH**

### **Outreach Process and Meetings**

There was a concern that the time allocated for small group discussion was insufficient and that too few subarea workshops were planned. It was explained that the subarea workshops are only one method for obtaining community feedback. It was explained that Neighborhood Teas, CSG meetings, merchant surveys and public meetings are also part of the community outreach process.

#### *Community Workshops and CSG Process*

It was noted that the whole outreach process is important, and that it is hard to evaluate this draft approach without knowing when the other pieces of the outreach will happen. The CSG requested a schedule of workshops and meetings that includes the goal/desired outcome of each meeting so they can see how it can become one cohesive process, and how the various meetings will all add up.

CSG members discussed the role of the CSG in the outreach process, noting that defining the land use character of the subareas will also occur at CSG meetings, and that community workshops would be more to mine raw data, which the CSG will then hash out. It was noted that there is not an expectation that consensus will be reached at the large community workshops, and that the role of the CSG will be to identify and resolve areas where the community cannot achieve consensus.

#### *Options for Additional Meetings*

Several members expressed interest in additional meetings. Representatives of the Jack London District Association noted that they met separately to focus on underpasses, and that perhaps similar meetings could be held by other groups as well. It was suggested that each constituency meet on their own prior to attending subarea workshops to develop their ideas for the character of the different subareas and bring those cohesive ideas to the workshops, and that they could request information from staff when needed. There was a request for resources from the City to support meetings that occur separately. It was suggested that support could be provided through help with finding meeting spaces.

### **Suggestions Regarding the Workshop Format**

#### *Topics addressed*

CSG members were concerned that the first two workshops would focus only on land use and would not address circulation, which would be addressed at the third workshop. Participants felt that circulation is a vital topic for the subareas, and a discussion of connections and streetscape in the geographically-focused subarea workshops should be included in the first two meetings. In general, members suggested that the meetings should unite land use character and circulation.

There was some discussion around keeping topics for the small group break-out exercises simple, and not addressing enough topics. One suggestion was to pick one topic for the meeting

to focus on, and to address other topics later. It was noted that since time is limited, workshops should focus on the important topics.

Members suggested that the workshop focus on available/opportunity sites, but also be flexible and allow people to consider other sites. In particular, it was suggested that the workshops focus on the BART station blocks as key opportunity sites.

#### *Incorporation of Previous Feedback*

CSG members noted that since many people have already attended workshops, it will be important to communicate back what has been heard so far. In particular, it would be helpful to recap findings to date for each topic, and add a “where we’ve been” and “what have we heard” to the meeting agenda.

#### *Facilitation and Guiding Questions*

It was noted that facilitation would need to be focused to help guide people. It was suggested to ask facilitators to keep people on the key topics and noted that at the merchant’s meeting a lot of the conversation was peripheral, rather than focusing on the bigger picture. It was suggested that participants should be asked to consider how to knit together the best elements of existing plan area characteristics and proposed improvements.

It was noted that the guiding questions will be essential to move the conversation forward, and to get people to be more specific. It was also noted that different topics might be needed for subareas 1 and 2 since subarea 2 is more institutional in focus.

#### *Mapping*

CSG members had several questions about the maps that would be used at the workshops. They wanted to know the size of the maps, and what information would be on the maps. A comment was made to display the underpasses under 880 correctly. Members also asked which existing conditions would be shown on the map, such as historic resources, bus lines, bike paths, and one-way streets. It was suggested that people be able and encouraged to write on/modify the maps.

#### *Land Use Character Ideas*

CSG members made several suggestions related to the land use character types that would be displayed and used as stickers. They also noted that participants should have an opportunity to write down what they want, and not just have predetermined stickers. There was a suggestion that the stickers not focus on land use types, but on building types (i.e. high rise, low rise rather than specifying residential be on top of entertainment). Comments also related to the difference between jobs and businesses, and some members requested a clear link between businesses and jobs. It was suggested that for each building type or land use, information on the pros and cons be provided before participants are asked to make decisions.

Changes to the land use/building types included the request to remove single family/duplexes and add the following categories:

- Mixed-use.
- Community gathering places.

- Educational/institutional.
- Cultural resources.
- Historic resources.

### *Timing*

CSG members felt that the workshop was too short, and recommended a three hour workshop. They felt that 15 minutes per topic for the small group break-out exercise was insufficient, but that with a three hour workshop there could either be thirty minutes per topic or one hour per topic and people could choose two to participate in. It was noted that there could be different time frames for different topics so people could choose which to attend.

CSG members also suggested that there could not be a workshop for Subarea 1 before March given the Lunar New Year, which occurs on February 4th.

### *Other Details*

It was reiterated that translation needs to occur in Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese. It was also reiterated that materials should be made available in advance so participants can come to the workshops prepared. Members emphasized that the workshops should provide food, and not just light refreshments.

### **Comments on Inclusion of the Jack London District in the Planning Boundary**

As a related topic, there were several comments on the planning boundary and if it should include the Jack London District. There was a concern related to economic development, and that job training might focus on particular uses that would flourish in Jack London District, such as specialty foods that use warehousing space. It was noted that given that opportunity, and that businesses (other than retail) are more likely to develop in the Jack London District, it should be included in the planning boundary. It was noted by City staff that the planning boundary has already been determined.