

Summary of Round 3 Community Meetings

- SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2009
- THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2009

INTRODUCTION

In November of 2009, the City of Oakland held a third round of community workshops as part of the Citywide Zoning Update about the City's residential and commercial zones. Numerous other community group and stakeholder meetings have been held on focused topics. The next round of community workshops on residential and commercial zoning is anticipated in the Spring of 2010.

The same workshop was held at two different times and locations. The first meeting was held on Saturday November 7, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Peralta Elementary School located in north Oakland, where there were 88 attendees who signed in. The second meeting was held on Thursday, November 12, 2009 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Unity Council's Fruitvale San Antonio Senior Center, located in Oakland's Fruitvale neighborhood, where there were 41 attendees who signed in. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss with the public the City's draft residential and commercial zoning proposals, and for staff to hear comments and concerns from the community. A summary of the meeting format and public comments given during the large group discussion session at the end of the workshop is provided below. All information related to this round and previous community workshops, Technical Advisory Group and other meetings and hearings is available at the Citywide Zoning Update website: www.oaklandnet.com/zoningupdate.

MEETING FORMAT

Both meetings followed the same agenda. The meetings began with a presentation that included an overview of the Citywide Zoning Update process to date, and that highlighted significant changes proposed from existing zoning regulations for the commercial and residential zones. In an effort to provide meeting attendees with the opportunity to learn more specifics about the zoning proposals in which they were most interested, the next portion of the agenda was devoted to an "open house" format. Several "information stations" were set up around the meeting room which had more detailed information about the preliminary draft zoning proposals presented on display boards and in handouts; City staff were on hand at each table to run through the material and answer questions. Meeting participants had approximately 45 minutes to visit information stations.

Six information stations were set up around the room that displayed information about the proposed zones that corresponded to the residential and commercial General Plan land use classifications. Three stations were dedicated to the proposed residential zones: Residential Hillside and Residential Detached Unit Zones; Residential Mixed Housing Type Zones; and Residential Urban Zones (not located along the City's major corridors). Another three stations provided information about the proposed commercial zones: Residential Urban (on Corridors), Neighborhood Center, Community Commercial and Regional Commercial. Display boards and handouts provided at each of the stations may be downloaded from the Citywide Zoning Update website (www.oaklandnet.com/zoningupdate) under the appropriate meeting date in the "Schedule+Meetings" section.

At the November 7th workshop, several meeting participants expressed a desire to have a comment and question period as part of the meeting, which was not programmed as part of the original agenda. It was

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decided that a large group session would make the most sense after participants had the opportunity to learn more about the proposed changes to the City's commercial and residential zoning.

Meeting participants were invited to reconvene to ask questions and/or provide comments before the larger group after the open house portion of the agenda. The large group discussion was also part of the agenda at the November 12th meeting. Meeting participants at the first workshop also provided very useful feedback about how to make the meeting displays and materials more user-friendly. Staff endeavored to incorporate as many of these suggestions as possible for the November 12th community meeting.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC FEEDBACK

The following is a summary of comments and questions during the large group questions and answers session that concluded each workshop (responses from City staff are *italicized*). Comment cards were also submitted by the public, and will be available to read at the City's Citywide Zoning Update web site.

Saturday, November 7, 2009

When is the next round of community meetings?

The next round of community meetings is tentatively planned for the spring of 2010.

When can the public ask questions about where the new zones will be mapped (parcel-specific mapping questions)?

Once draft zoning maps are produced by City staff, which we anticipate to be done some time early next year (February/March), the public will have an opportunity to comment on the proposals.

How will the C-31 zone be changed? (The original purpose of the C-31 zone was to promote a pedestrian-scale shopping opportunity). Will the purpose of the CN-1 zone be the same?

The purpose of CN-1 zone is similar to that of the C-31 zone.

A purpose and rationale should be developed for each zone.

The zones, when written into the text of the Planning Code, will include a purpose and intent statement.

Oakland needs to re-examine its industrial land conversion policy. For example, Mandela Parkway was traditionally industrial, however, new housing has been introduced, which negatively impacts the industrial businesses (through complaints from new residents). Oakland needs to preserve industrially zoned land that can be used to generate jobs.

At this point in time, we are focusing on the residential and commercial zones. The industrial zones were updated in 2008 by the City Council. However, your comment is duly noted.

The allowed uses in the C-31 zone are not very "neighborly". This zone should allow dentists and doctor's offices on the ground floor. These types of activities should be permitted on the ground floor in the proposed CN-1 zone.

College Avenue (zoned C-31) does allow neighborhood-serving uses. Doctor's offices are allowed on the second floor.

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The General Plan areas designated as “maintain and enhance” and “grow and change” need to be honored. Mapping subzones will be more controversial. Block-by-block issues will arise. You cannot

expect the “theoretical correlation” to dictate the zoning because circumstances may be very different on the ground, e.g. an area currently zoned as R-70, but is actually comprised of low-density single-family homes and duplexes, should not automatically be rezoned as RM-4 which will permit up to 1,100 units per acre.

The Technical Advisory Committee has done a good job in helping to develop the proposed new zoning. I support higher density on the corridors.

The City needs to promote urban agriculture as part of the zoning update. The Oakland Food Policy Council just released a report titled *Cultivating the Commons*.

The Strategic Planning Division is coordinating with the Alameda County Health Department on how to allocate money from the Federal stimulus package to investigate urban agriculture. Urban agricultural opportunities will be a separate program (from the zoning update) if resources are secured.

The Temescal neighborhood is a unique area and we want to maintain the character of this area. There are many historic buildings and opportunities to revitalize the area with low-scale development, as well as reuse historic buildings. How will the new zoning treat open space? Will area plans be developed?

The first phase of the Citywide Zoning Update is to establish base zones for the City which will include developing more stringent historic building demolition findings. A second phase is to develop area plans to address neighborhood specific issues.

In some cases there is a mismatch between the proposed zoning designation and on the ground conditions. Planners need to conduct a block-by-block analysis to develop the zoning map.

I’m concerned about the timeline for developing the height map for commercial corridors. What if it is not done by the time the next mayor is elected and the priorities shift, and it is never completed?

The target completion date for a preliminary draft the height map is mid-December 2009.

The display boards today were good. However, the auditorium space was noisy and it was difficult to learn. The neighbors don’t understand. Staff needs to communicate the proposal better. R-40 in Piedmont is appropriate for the entire area; the new zone should be RM-2. Allowing a flat roof home to be 30’ and a pitch roof home to be 30’ is problematic. The flat roofed building may be 3 stories as opposed to the pitched roof building which would only be 2 stories. The height proposal for RM-2 and RM-3 should be 25’ or 30’ with a pitched roof. A flat roof is perceived as much higher than a pitched roof.

The Northgate area arts space located next to auto uses seems to work, however there is not much open space, and there should be more. I support preserving and enhancing what’s there. Some of the buildings are historic resources, and I’m concerned about developers ruining character of the neighborhood. We need low density zoning in the area. It is important to reuse existing historic buildings. I don’t want density – no condos. We need to address the quality of life.

Neighborhood preservation is the most important thing. There is a class war – we don’t want density. The City of Oakland should not just roll over for well-connected developers. Rather, the City should support neighborhood citizens and small businesses.

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Thursday, November 12, 2009

I question the validity of merging the R-36 and R-40 zone. The reduced setback requirements of the R-36 zone were designed to address a very specific problem (narrow lots, 25 ft wide). If this merger occurs, there will be no regulations to accommodate such narrow lots.

Actually, that is not correct. The proposal would actually extend the provisions of reduced setback requirements to substandard lots citywide, rather than just allowing reduced setbacks in the R-36 zone.

Due to the variety of lot sizes in the R-30 zone, conforming to setback regulations has been a problem. Typically, lots less than 50 ft wide were built with setbacks that are less than today's standards, so they are considered non-conforming. It becomes difficult to operate (build additions, etc.) when the structure is non-conforming.

The proposed reduced setback requirement was designed to enable more flexibility in constructing additions to non-conforming structures.

Will reduced setbacks be allowed for standard-sized lots in the R-40 zone?

No, standard sized lots in every zone will be required to meet the regular setback regulations.

Reduced setbacks means that homes will be closer to the property lines and therefore, closer together?

Yes. The purpose of allowing reduced setbacks is to allow lots of varying size to enjoy similar development rights.

Could the reduced setbacks allow a property owner to subdivide a 5,000 square foot lot into two lots?

No, the minimum lot size standards would prevent a 5,000 square foot lot from being subdivided into two 2,500 square foot lots.

When will draft zoning maps be prepared?

The estimated date to release the draft zoning maps to the public is March, 2010.

Is the zoning text fixed at this point, or can residents make comments?

The zoning proposals described tonight are draft preliminary proposals. The City welcomes your comments.

The extent of the existing R-50 zone is wrong. R-50 is mapped in neighborhoods that are mostly single-family. Why can't we re-zone R-50 to a lower-density zone or re-designate it to a lower-density General Plan designation?

The City Council has directed staff to implement the existing General Plan through the Citywide Zoning Update, so a wholesale re-designation of General Plan classifications is beyond the scope of this effort. The Mixed Housing Type General Plan classification, which contains the majority of the existing R-50 zoned parcels, is proposed to have four zones RM-1, RM-2, RM-3 and RM-4, with densities ranging from one unit per lot plus a secondary unit (similar to the density of the existing R-30 zone, the typical single-family residential zone) to one unit per 1,100 sf. Staff will work with the public to assign the appropriate zone based on existing densities.

Is the density of the proposed R-50 equivalent zone being lowered?

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In some instances, the densities of parcels located in existing R-50 zones may be lowered. Staff, in consultation with the public, will determine the appropriate zoning designation based on the General Plan classification and existing densities.

What is the Planning Department's approach to density?

The Planning Department is following the direction provided by the City Council to implement the densities provided in the General Plan. Many residential neighborhoods will be "maintain and enhance," so not much change will occur, and in some locations there will be a general lowering of the intensity of development.

WRAP UP/NEXT STEPS

The next round of community meetings is scheduled for Spring of 2010 to discuss draft zoning mapping. The Zoning Update schedule and other information are available online at the Zoning Update Website at www.oaklandnet.com/zoningupdate. Members of the public may send questions or comments to Planning staff via email at zoningupdate@oaklandnet.com or call the Zoning Update Phone Message Line at (510)238-7299.

Attachment A: Residential Zoning Display Boards and Handouts

Hillside Residential and Detached Residential Proposed Zones

- Hillside Framework and Uses
- Detached: Framework and Uses
- Development Standards: Bulk regulations (Hillside, Detached Unit and Mixed Housing Type)
- Development Standards: Height regulations

Mixed Housing Type Residential Proposed Zones Station

- Framework and Uses
- Permitted Density and Development Standards

Urban Residential (not located along corridors) Proposed Zones Station

- Framework and Uses
- Permitted Density and Development Standards

Handouts

- Proposed Residential Hillside Zones Development Standards
- Proposed Residential Detached and Mixed Housing Type Development Standards
- Proposed Residential Urban Development Standards
- Proposed Summary Comparison of Changes in Uses for All Residential Zones

Attachment B: Commercial/ Corridor Display Boards and Handouts

Commercial/ Corridor Zoning Station (Three stations with the same information at each station covered information about all the zones proposed for the corridor and commercial General Plan land use classifications)

- Basic zoning framework
- Proposed conceptual zoning map
- Proposed design standards
- Height map methodology

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Handouts

- Proposed Activity Table
- Proposed Design Standards by Zone
- Proposed Commercial Zones Framework