

GENERAL SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Community meetings were held in five locations throughout the City in September and October. Following is a brief summary of the major issues in each location.

North Oakland (9/16/03)

General comments related to how the neighborhood was changing from general or light industrial, to live/work uses and some residential development. Questions were raised about how the new zone will affect property values, how the new development standards will work given the existing pattern of development (i.e., some structures currently built on the property lines), how required parking can be provided when there may not be enough room on the site, how businesses next to housing can operate with fewer impacts, and about legal, non-conforming uses or structures. Also, questions were raised about City streetscape projects and continued maintenance.

East Lake (10/1/03)

Many comments regarding the impacts of zoning changes on small businesses which are becoming non-conforming, such as the auto-related uses (sales, leasing, rental, service station, repair, cleaning, body work, painting). Concern was expressed that they were being “forced out” of business and some believed that they operated better than the businesses that were permitted in the zone (i.e., grocery stores with their products spilling over into the street). Many questions were raised about non-conforming issues and the ability to replace a business if it were destroyed, whether the non-conforming business could be sold to another operator, and whether the business could expand. One person asked what happens if residential units are added above an auto-related use? Is this considered an expansion of a non-conforming use?

Note: there are several zones in the area that are not proposed to be rezoned to BHX and which allow auto-related uses (). Some of the speakers may not be affected by the proposed zoning, but it was difficult to tell without knowing their exact location.

Several letters were received after the meeting in support of the zoning changes that prohibit future auto body and auto repair uses in the area. Comments were made about existing businesses and how they are noisy, dirty, and the cars crowd the roadways and take up parking for other businesses. Letters were also received about opposing the zoning changes that prohibit the auto related uses in the area.

West Oakland (10/6/03)

Several people spoke in general about the zoning code update process and how the zoning code should include standards for personal safety and security, pollution, and truck routes in residential areas. Several speakers spoke in opposition to the requirement for design review and believed that architects and designers should be able to create their own designs in these eclectic neighborhoods. Specific comments were expressed in opposition to the following proposed development standards: Sect. 17.65.120, Minimum Lot Area, Width, and Frontage (minimum lot size 4,000 s.f.); Sect. 17.65.160, Minimum Yards and Courts (minimum side yard 4 feet), and; Sect. 17.65.190, Driveway, Parking and Garage Restrictions (no more than 50% of the front yard can be used for parking; no more than 50% of lot width shall be occupied by garages).

Kennedy Tract (10/9/03)

Comments were received regarding the restriction on parking in the front yard; the 50% limit on lot width that can be devoted to garages; parking standard of one space/dwelling unit is too low; conversions of existing buildings to residential uses without requiring parking; existing businesses becoming non-conforming and what rules apply; auto-related business that are

operating in the public right-of-way; the definitions for “custom manufacturing” and “light manufacturing”; the future of specific companies such as the Garlic Company and Con Agra; and the lack of pedestrian amenities in the neighborhood.

East Oakland (10/23/03)

The meeting began with general comments directed toward the rezoning effort. It was stated that Oakland has always been a manufacturing city with residential and industrial uses existing together. Why is the city staff changing the rules now? The changes do not support the manufacturing businesses and make it more difficult for businesses to continue to operate and expand.

Specific comments were focused on the use classifications and how individual businesses were categorized; what happens when a business becomes non-conforming; what is counted in the 25,000 s.f. of floor area for a food manufacturing business; how can specific businesses which are operating improperly be forced to comply with requirements (i.e., towing companies); and what about businesses that cannot comply with the current noise standards.

Several comments were also raised about the proposed zoning maps including requests not to be rezoned from the present zoning.