

Kaiser Permanente Oakland Medical Center Phase 2 Design

COMMUNITY MEETING RESULTS REPORT

Meeting convened Monday, October 1, 2007, 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Mosswood Recreation Center, Mosswood Park, Oakland

Report prepared by Bluhon Planning Group, October 9, 2007

A. MEETING OVERVIEW

On October 1st, Kaiser Permanente convened the second of a series of public meetings to present and solicit community input on the design of Phase 2 of the Oakland Medical Center. The first meeting was held on September 17th. The agenda for the October 1st meeting consisted of:

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Presentation & Dialogue
 - A. Neighborhood Design
 - B. Landscape Concepts
 - C. Site Access and ED Locations
 - D. Ground Floor Street Activation
~ Q&A and Dialogue ~
 - E. Building Design Issues
 - F. Traffic
~ Q&A and Dialogue ~
 - G. Other Issues
3. Summary of Outstanding Issues
4. Next Steps and Adjourn

Michael Lane of Kaiser Permanente and Jeffrey Bailey of NBBJ Architects presented preliminary proposals for the layout, site access, and design parameters of the new medical center. (A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available on the City's web site.) Peter Bluhon facilitated community discussion and a recorder wrote comments and questions on wall charts. This report summarizes comments made by community members at the meeting. Comments are organized by topic and not necessarily in the order in which the comment was made. For topics discussed at the first community meeting, the report offers a summary of key themes expressed.

ATTENDANCE

Approximately 30 residents and organizational representatives attended the meeting.

Meeting Presenters and Consultants:

Kaiser Permanente: Michael Lane, Project Director; Judy DeVries, Public Relations.

NBBJ Architects: Jeffrey Bailey; Brian Lin.

City of Oakland: Scott Gregory, Contract Planner; Gary Patton, Deputy Director.

Bluhon Planning Group: Peter Bluhon; Julia Kocs; Susan Moffat.

B. COMMUNITY COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. GROUND FLOOR STREET ACTIVATION, NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN & LANDSCAPE

MEETING #1 (9/17/07) SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES

- The retail character of Piedmont Avenue should influence the design of ground floor space at the hospital. Ground floor uses should be consistent with the character of upper Piedmont.
- Utility/service uses such as trash, mobile technology units, or the Emergency Department should not be on Piedmont.
- Shops and other retail uses could also be located along MacArthur.
- The mobile technology center should not be located on the corner of MacArthur and Piedmont.

MEETING #2 RECOMMENDATIONS & QUESTIONS

- Lower Piedmont is not an inviting, pedestrian-friendly environment and could be improved by adding “eyes” to the street. The proposed design does not appear to achieve this and appears like a “back alley” to the hospital with all the service entrances located there. The new facility should enhance Piedmont and make it a walkable, hospitable, and safe street, particularly for pedestrians. The new changes to lower Piedmont will affect residential property values. Therefore the appearance (during day and night), safety, and aesthetics are important.
- Consider alternative locations for the loading dock, mobile units, and oxygen tank unit, such as below grade or underground or on Broadway and MacArthur.
- If the oxygen tank must be located along Piedmont, consider placing it below street grade and/or attractively screen the facility or make it an attractive, integral part of the open space. Similarly, if other unattractive uses must be on Piedmont, consider screening them or designing them to be attractive.
- Consider moving the CUP to Broadway. Illustrate how the CUP will appear.
- The main parking garage should not be located on Piedmont.
- The mobile tech unit should not be located at Piedmont/MacArthur intersection.
- Although MacArthur is not a pedestrian route now, it has the potential to become one.
- Consider adding a water feature near the entrance, particularly if one is located on MacArthur.
- A pedestrian link from this neighborhood to downtown and lower Broadway is a desirable design goal.
- The landscape design along Howe is beautiful because it does not have an institutional character and should be emulated in the new project.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT (ED) LOCATION & SITE ACCESS

MEETING #1 (9/17/07) SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES

- The type and volume of services to be located on Piedmont Avenue in the current plan – CUP, loading dock, ED, tech area, and secondary parking entrance – would negatively impact the Richmond neighborhood. These uses, particularly emergency vehicles and trucks, would increase noise and congestion. Such services and departments should be on MacArthur and Broadway.

MEETING #2: RECOMMENDATIONS & QUESTIONS

- Several alternative scenarios for the hospital entrance should be considered:
 - i. Place the ED and main entrance on Broadway.
 - ii. Place the main entrance on MacArthur at the end of Howe Street with a vehicular drop-off and pedestrian entrance. An underground ramp for vehicles could connect drop-off traffic to the parking garage proposed at the southwest corner of the site. If no underground ramp is provided, then examine alternatives for visitors to access the parking garage. [Community meeting participants acknowledged that they did not want to see the parking garage access be on Piedmont Avenue so that vehicles would not turn right on Piedmont.]
 - iii. Provide a pedestrian-only entrance on MacArthur with an attractive plaza. This would reinforce the historic identity of the hospital being at Howe and MacArthur. The vehicular entrance and drop-off could remain as proposed along Broadway.
- Other design and circulation issues regarding the entrances:
 - The main entrance should be architecturally legible without the use of signs. The Broadway entrance, as currently designed, may not be obvious for visitors to find. A lot of traffic may end up on Piedmont by mistake as visitors look for the entrance.
 - Directional signage for cars exiting from westbound 580 is needed.
 - If all vehicular traffic is moved to Broadway, the pedestrian experience along Mosswood Park and that side of Broadway may be negatively impacted.
 - It is important to connect the project to Bart, Lake Merritt, and the Richmond neighborhood.
 - Large trucks should be on Broadway.
- Connecting Mosswood Park to the community is good goal. The cross-block connection (proposed in the current design) from Piedmont Avenue to Mosswood Park, however, is giving this link too much importance. The proposed plazas between Piedmont and Broadway appear to solve parking issues than create a real, pedestrian-friendly environment.

BUILDING AESTHETICS AND RELATED DESIGN ISSUES

MEETING #1 (9/17/07) SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES

- The proposed design appears square and blocky. The long sides of the building should be articulated and there should be shadow lines.
- The design should create rhythm and not use the same window type all the way down. Each side of the building should be different due to views, solar heat gain, etc.
- The building should look delicate and integrate into the classic style of the existing area.
- Consider ecological technologies and approaches in the design.
- Screen HVAC equipment on the roof.
- Antennas and cell phone towers should not be installed (or visible).
- A committee of local architects should have an opportunity to review the plans.

MEETING #2 RECOMMENDATIONS AND QUESTIONS

- Use high quality materials for the whole podium, not just the ground floor.
- Stucco or cement plaster should not be used because it will become dirty from air pollution, particularly with cars traveling on 580.
- Implement a regular cleaning program for the building.
- Use LEED standards for energy efficiency.
- Use inventive design for the tower.
- The general consensus of participants was that the building should be an interesting, creative, and beautiful design.

MEETING CONCLUSION

The Kaiser Project Team committed to return with more detailed plans and renderings and responses to community comments at the October 22nd community meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.