



MINUTES

CITY OF HALF MOON BAY PLANNING COMMISSION

TUESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2022

ALL REMOTE/VIRTUAL WEBINAR VIA ZOOM

Chair Gorn called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM

PRESENT: Commissioners Gorn, Hernandez, Benjamin, Gossett and Ruddock

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL

Chair Gorn led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 26, 2022

Motion to approve as written

M/S: Benjamin/Ruddock

Roll Call Vote: 4-0-1 (yes, Hernandez, Benjamin, Gossett and Ruddock; abstain, Gorn, he was absent at the 07-26-22 meeting).

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ITEM 1.A. – Hyatt Place Hotel Project – Draft Environmental Impact Report

Receive a presentation, hold a public hearing, and receive comments on the Hyatt Hotel Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Notes:

- This is not a decision-making meeting. The focus of the meeting is to receive comments on the draft EIR.
- Story poles installed in advance of this session represent alternative 2 in the draft EIR.

Jill Ekas, Community Development Director presented the project background.

Juliet Martin and Audrey Zagazeta, with CirclePoint, environmental consultants to the City, presented background about CEQA and EIRs, and highlights about the Hyatt EIR including alternatives.

Adam Noble, FastCast, subconsultant to Circlepoint, presented the method for preparing visual simulations.

Greg Jamison, Applicant - Reviewed the responses from the Planning Commission and Architectural Advisory Committee review from June 2021.

Ruairi O'Connell, Project Architect - Presented an option to double the space between the building from 16 feet to 32 feet with the intent of reducing visual encroachments approaching the ridgeline and to create space to reinforce that the buildings are separate structures. The presentation included views from the Naomi Patridge Trail.

Confirmed that the story poles represent Alternative 2. They do not represent the Project or the potential option to increase space between the buildings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- 1) Kathy Catalano, Half Moon Bay resident for over 30 years** - Concerned about 102 rooms and only 108 parking spaces. Noted that on this span of Main Street cars are parked on both sides of the street all day. Likes the open space. This hotel looks like any other Hyatt Hotel. Could have been some creativity in the hotel design. Reminds her of the hotel at Cameron's. Will have two ugly, bookend hotels. Also concerned about traffic relative to the new light. Prefers to see open space. Parking has not been addressed. Main Street Park residents use the street parking. Concerned about the height of this monstrosity. If this passes somebody's hands are going to be greased.
- 2) Carlisle Ann Young, resident** - The building heights were not listed. Would like that addressed. View number 4 looks like a soundwall. Maybe it looks prettier in normal build out. Very concerned about unavoidable impact of evacuation capabilities for the entire coast. There are only two ways out and these areas get very clogged on weekends. In January 2022, a judge overturned a project approved in another county because it failed to consider emergency evacuation needs in a hazardous area. It seemed that emergency evacuation was not part of the Land Use Plan. Need to consider the cumulative impact of visitation, etc. Mostly the concern is that the lack of emergency planning makes this grossly negligent.
- 3) David Pasternak, resident** - Has provided written commentary, focusing on the traffic issue in particular. The City needs to go back and look at the analysis. Leaving out the baseline for the morning commute. That is not when we have the major traffic. It is weekends and late afternoon. Not even gridlock, it is full stoppage. Cited a situation where someone couldn't get to the hospital and gave birth at fire station in La Honda. Don't look at the details, it is lipstick on a pig, talking a more basic aesthetic. Appreciate the smalltown character, the views, the openness, and no way to mitigate the hideous problems that will be created by this at the gateway. The Planning Commission needs to be cautious and consider this more.
- 4) Judy Taylor** - We on the coastside are a pestilence as far as the Coastal Commission is concerned. It is a pox on our community, and it comes to local control. Something will get built there and appreciates how the local applicant has worked on this. Keep working with applicant to make it as good as it can be.
- 5) Larry Gandelman, 30 + year resident** - Lives near the project and has been following this for many years. Half Moon Bay will always have a traffic and emergency egress issue. These are

long-term issues that this applicant is not going to solve. The southern gateway is not really a southern gateway. Has one little statue.

- 6) Hazel Joanes, 20-year resident** - Has many more comments than can present. The staff report states the purpose of the meeting. This one and only meeting to receive public comments is 36 days premature. The City might consider hosting public forums in various neighborhoods. Could the applicant consider additional feasible alternatives that don't result in significant impacts? Or is this project bound by Hyatt Place standard design? Why are we only considering the Hyatt brand with the Hyatt brand design? What is the price point for low-cost accommodations? Is this considered low-cost accommodations?
- 7) Rick Southern, resident** - Question from executive summary that there are a whole lot of areas about significant and unavoidable impacts, but Alternative 2 does not relative to the land use plan. Speaking to the fact that it has taken so long, it may not be the right project for Half Moon Bay. When showed the views of Alternative 2 with the increased space between buildings, the difference was almost imperceptible. It just doesn't fit. Like trying to get a whale to fit into an aquarium.
- 8) Leslie Hunt, resident** - Has lived here with family for over 30 years. Agrees with a lot of the comments so far. Really surprised that the only significant impacts were associated with aesthetics. Thinks the 16-foot to 32-foot space increase is ridiculous. What about storm drainage and sewage issues? Why weren't these identified in the EIR? What about water usage, even though water is reserved for hotels? Would like to know occupancy rates of current hotels; and do we need a hotel? What about evacuation? Where will these people go? Folks on Kelly have to go to the graveyard. Simulation was really pathetic.
- 9) Brian Holt, 13-year resident** - Remembered attending a meeting at the Johnston House and the need to activate the southern gateway. Has watched this project as it has come through over the years. Has seen how it evolved. There is a saying about CEQA, attack everything you can – traffic, bio, etc. When can't attack anything else, attack aesthetics, which is subjective. Would support a facility on this site that would support visitor services, agriculture, etc. This demand will only increase. Climate change will only increase demand for people to visit the coast. Have an obligation to invite folks to visit the community. Development makes sense at this site, and visitor serving better here than west of Highway 1. There will be a segment of the community that will oppose any development, time to step up and support such a project.
- 10) Jim Mercurio, long-time resident of Pacifica and frequent visitor of Half Moon Bay.** Always looking for an opportunity to be housed in Half Moon Bay on a short-term basis. For years, Half Moon Bay has needed precisely this development. Acknowledges the Planning Commission and the applicant. Understands that Half Moon Bay is sensitive about this development and wants to protect the ridgeline view. Thinks the review has been thoughtful and that the applicant's changes have been responsible.
- 11) Paul McGregor** - Would like to speak about Alternative 2. Looks like have gone above and beyond the call of duty to set it back, push it down and separate the buildings. Has seen the story poles for a year. Has been on the coast for 40 years. The aesthetics have come a long way. Provides jobs for Main Street Park residents. Allows folks to stay in Half Moon Bay and not drive for day trips.

12. Roy Salume - Has watched the development of this project for over 5 years. We have more visitor traffic over the years. This traffic burden is not going to stop. We do not have huge traffic jams south of 92. This is the right kind of project in the right location to serve the long-term planning needs of the town. Alternative 2 fits and is not out of scale.

13) David Eblovi, resident - Lives 2.3 miles south of town and on a busy Sunday cannot drive to town because of back up. Has also followed this project since it was first presented. Has seen and witnessed a responsible developer who lives in the community and modified the project to meet the needs of the community. Notes has met with the applicant and appreciates his focus for recycled materials. If we based every project on how it looks will never get built. For evacuation and sewage, the scope of the project is a drop in the bucket. If the field is an appropriate gateway, then there isn't one south of town. Very important to have the gateway and need this in Half Moon Bay.

14) Chad Hooker resident, not speaking as an AAC member - Wants to speak about the upland slope views. He feels that these views are already blocked by street trees and Main Street Park. The views are already very limited by existing trees and buildings. The real views are not impacted. And this should not be considered a significant impact.

Tom Carey – could not get the microphone to work via the Zoom link. City Staff encouraged him to submit written comments. He spoke to staff on the phone during the session and stating that he was in support of the project and would submit written comments.

Planning Commission Questions/Discussion

- Clarified that it is premature to determine adequacy of the EIR.
- Appreciated the comments, applicant presentation, etc. Heard people talking about ideas of view that are expressly aesthetics. The letters were focused on cited policies of the Land Use Plan. There is a section in the CEQA checklist that specifically asks if there are policy conflicts with the land use plan. Does not see the Land Use Plan issue identified. Need to note that this comment was heard and that it is of concern, and it is in the public record.
- Question about Viewpoint 4. Appreciates that it is not specifically protected under LCP policies, but other policies such as Coastal Act 30251 or Policy 9-12 may address this. Would like to see consideration in the document about the vantage point from pedestrians on the trails.
- Speakers discussed circulation and safety. Would like to hear more about this and noted about the public interest and the Safety Element.
- For Alternative 2, understand the change in intensity for the hotel portion of the site. The proposal needs to consider reasonably foreseeable development for the entire project area.
- Noted that it is very important to make comments on time and encouraged the community to do so.
- It is a complicated EIR. Could not find an appendix for the acronyms. Sometimes defined at first use, and sometimes never defined. A housekeeping item. Would help understand tech discussions in the report.
- Page 7 of staff report: Discussing alternative 2. Proposal for subdivision. How would this work for the buffer issue? Is this a ministerial process?
- Question about rezoning. What is situation of how to consider the 3 parcels and rezoning in the PUD.

- Section 4.14 about schools, parks and other public facilities. Looks like wasn't studied.
- Traffic study seems insufficient. Did not cover worst case conditions such as holidays. Did not study all seasons.
- The simulation slide for the modification to Alt 2 should be rendered better.
- Public comments raised doubts about confidence in the location of the wetlands.
- Street trees on highway 1 side. Why not included?
- Does staff have data about heights of other structures in the neighborhood?
- What is the impact that Alternative 2 has on the ridgeline?
- It is important to think about view of ridgeline from the Land Use Plan, e.g. Policy 9-12 and the Town Boulevard concept and the policies and uses included in the Land Use Plan. Don't want the concept of the Town Boulevard to be lost.
- Coastal Act 30212.5 and 30213 address providing public trails, lower cost visitor serving uses, etc. and the project needs to be consistent.
- Question about other buildings in this space is important. Counted 13 buildings that have interrupted the ridgeline in this area.
- Lighting proposal for Best Western was modified significantly to address the night skies. This project needs to do that too. Include mitigation to help mitigate impacts to night skies
- Wants to see alternatives with visual simulations showing the hillsides behind.
- If the variant of Alternative 2 goes forward, wants to see the visual simulation.
- Wants to make sure lot line adjustment conforms to bio policy requirements.
- With respect to CEQA, transportation needs to address VMT. Building the hotel could actually improve service levels at different times of the day. Level of service issues in conjunction with conformance with the LCP circulation.
- When a project has significant unavoidable impacts, was under the impression that such consideration would be made by the City Council. Would like to understand the PC's role. Assumed it was for City Council.
- Not interested in having an adequate EIR without a project. Need it to be combined. Agrees with comment about seeing the EIR with the project.
- Noted the recent case for the Guenoc Valley Project with respect to emergency egress.

Staff Responses to Clarifying Questions

CirclePoint and staff provided responses to public speaker and Planning Commission questions that could be addressed for sake of clarification.

- Traffic: Clarified the circulation impacts under CEQA pertain to vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
- Parking: Parking is not discussed in the EIR because evaluation of parking and parking impacts it not a requirement of CEQA. However, the City evaluates parking as part of the application process. The project would include 148 spaces, which is greater than City requirement (146 spaces) or the projected parking demand (128 spaces).
- Evacuation routes: These are addressed in Section 4.14, Public Services and Recreation, and wildfires are addressed in 4.17.4 Wildfire.
- Utilities: See Section 4.16 Utilities, and section 4.10 hydrology addressed public utilities, water usage, etc.

- Alternatives: Impacts associated with Alternatives are summarized in Table 5-1, Page 5-48 of Chapter 5.
- Aesthetics:
 - Page 2-10, Table 2-1 lists the significant and unavoidable impacts for aesthetics, all other impacts are less than significant with mitigation in Table 2-1.
 - Visual Simulations: Simulations depict massing, those are not exact renderings of design and do not present architectural details other than massing and basic articulation.
 - There is also a nighttime simulation (Figure 4.1-10). Nighttime lighting is less than significant with implementation of light and glare screening measures (Standard Condition AES-1).
- Public Participation:
 - Reaffirmed that the City will not prepare the Final EIR until after public circulation. This was presented very clearly in the staff report.
 - Staff also reported that during the meeting, staff received a comment via email that the Spanish translation was hard to hear. Staff noted that they appreciated the comment and addressed it immediately. (Note: It was resolved by having the translator raise his voice.)
- Heights: Height of the two buildings are 34 feet (south, two-story building) and 36 feet (north, three-story building). Noted that the Senior Coastsiders building on Main Street is about 43 feet tall.
- Accommodations –
 - Low-cost accommodations – The applicant is working with City staff and Coastal Commission staff regarding the requirement for provision of lower cost visitor serving accommodations.
 - Hotel occupancy rate pre-covid was about 68% but that is an average over the course of the week. Very full weekends, much lower occupancy during the week.
- Scope of Alternatives Analysis – Reasonably foreseeable development was taken into consideration in the study of the project alternatives.
- Zoning: The Land Use Designation is Commercial-General. The Land Use Plan identifies the site for the Commercial-General Zoning District. The Land Use Plan also includes policy indicating that it takes precedence in advance of implementation zoning. For Alternative 2, the housing portion of the project area is already zoned R-2.
- Subdivision: The EIR includes a mitigation measure requiring that the residential subdivision design comply with Land Use Plan policy for not creating new lots where the only buildable site would be an in ESHA or ESHA buffers. The applicant is working with staff to revise the subdivision design to conform.

DIRECTOR REPORT
PLANNING COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:30pm

M/S: Ruddock/Gossett

Roll Call Vote: 5-0 (yes, Gorn, Hernandez, Benjamin, Ruddock and Gossett)

Respectfully Submitted:

Approved:

Bridget Jett, Planning Analyst

David Gorn, Chair

*Meeting Attendance List 08/09/22 – Zoom

12096470581	Dana Riggs	Judy Taylor	Greg Jamison
16508799154	David Eblovi	Juliet Martin	Robert Sweetow
Adam Noble	David Gorn	Kathy Catalano	Roy Salume
Audrey Zagazeta	David Pasternak	Krystlyn	Ruairi O'Connell
Barbra Fain-Mathewson	David Poltorak	Larry Gandelman	Sara Polgar
BH	Doug	Leslie	Sarah Bueno
Big Papa	Es	Liz	Shawn Alexander
Brian Holt	Francisco Dolores	Marco Moctezuma	Steve Ruddock
Bridget Jett	Greg Jamison	Margaret Gossett	Tim Buzzini
Brittany Wheatman	Greg Nasol	marit	tom carey
Caeli Collins	Hazel Joanes	Maziar Bozorginia	Victor Hernandez
CARLYSLE ANN YOUNG	Heidi Frank	Megan Stromberg	Virginia Supnet
Carmela S.	James Benjamin	Michael Adler	Winter King
caroline	Jami Stevens	Michelle Dragony	Rachel
Caroline Stevens	Jill Ekas	paul mc gregor	Rick Hernandez
Chad Hooker	jim	Pete Smith	Jim Mercurio
Curtis		Rick Southern	Juan Ayon