

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

Livable Communities Working Group

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome & Introductions

Attendees:

Niki Cutler (Rolling Hills Estates), Eric Haaland (Manhattan Beach), Otis Ginoza (Lawndale), Saied Naaseh and Sharon Song (Carson), Rebecca Cutting (Torrance), Masa Alkire (El Segundo), Lisbeth Sinclair and Patricia Hachiya (L.A. County Regional Planning), Yvonne Mallory (Gardena), Jacki Bacharach, Wally Siembab, David Magarian, Rosemary Lackow (SBCCOG)

II. Minutes for October 20, 2010: Received and filed, no changes

Brief Announcements: Jacki reported on a recent sustainability workshop attended by the Board, and felt this was an opportunity for brainstorming that went very well. Wally is starting to make South Bay Sustainability Strategy presentations to cities – Gardena Planning Commission in January, and Hermosa Beach Pacific Coast Highway Committee in December. On December 7, Jacki and Wally will be leading a tour of the Palos Verdes Peninsula cities, as requested by those elected officials, to examine how trip reduction strategies might be applied. Wally requested a copy of the full Bill Fulton report that was done for Rolling Hills Estates; Niki Cutler will get to him; Jacki requested any ideas of tour locations be forwarded to her.

III. Creative Housing Solutions for the Redevelopment of Major Commercial Corridors

Alex Hernandez, Senior Advisor
John Reischl, Director of Development
The Olsen Company

PPT Presentation “Creative Housing Solutions for the Redevelopment of Major Commercial Corridors”

Main Points

- Company Background: founded in 1988, nationally ranked for customer satisfaction, over 120 residential in-fill communities developed in California, LEED certified, over 100 awards, planning through community consensus, many partnerships with cities, redevelopment agencies, universities.
- Livable Communities – Goals:

- South Bay Growth Strategies: reshape and redevelop built-out areas; improve transportation and overall quality of living
- Transportation: implement SB 375 and improve alternatives
- Quality of living: create housing near commercial and vice versa; revitalize aging corridors for enhanced retail and housing; review development standards to achieve development goals on major corridors.
- How goals are implemented
 - Redevelopment solutions for areas suited for commercial and/or retail
 - Affordability enhanced by thoughtful site planning, development of new product types
 - Use of flexible development standards to allow more density, more intensity of uses: e.g. tandem parking, reduced parking ratios
 - New product types: e.g. 3-story townhomes, small lot single family homes.
- Representative Projects (all fronting on major corridors):
 - Sycamore Walk, Garden Grove Blvd., Garden Grove – 48 homes (partner with City RDA – included a prior contaminated site)
 - Renaissance Walk, Atlantic Ave, Long Beach – 40 single family homes and child care center near Blue Line (partner with City RDA)
 - Village Walk, Torrance Blvd, Torrance – 44 single family homes higher density (just under 15 du /ac) near historic downtown (partner with City RDA)
 - Founders Walk, Artesia Blvd, Buena Park - 192 townhomes – former industrial parcels near Metro Link station, attached units with front setbacks, two different product types approx 14 du/acre.
 - Fair Oaks Walk, Foothill Blvd, Pomona – 34 townhomes (partner with Cal Poly, Pomona), horizontal mixed-use development (commercial sold off to another developer).
 - Willow Walk, Willowbrook Ave, Compton – 124 units (partner with City RDA) former commercial uses with remediation, near MLK Transit Center, some affordable units.
 - Rio Walk, Washington Blvd, Montebello – 60 townhomes (partner with City) former hotel site, high density (30 du/ac), reciprocal parking with commercial, tandem parking.
 - Artists Lofts, Main Street, Santa Ana – 86 lofts and live-work units (partner with City RDA)
- Conclusion: the communities they build are a result of building consensus with each city to provide local housing solutions, with innovative products, sometimes utilizing flexible standards, especially parking.
- Questions and Answers

Q. When you come into a city how do you figure out the mix of the units (affordable vs market rate)?

A. Aside from addressing City housing standards (e.g. inclusionary zoning), it comes down to working with the city to determine their goals and whether the city can put some money into the deal.

Q. Why no projects with underground parking?

A. Projects with “podium” style parking structures not being financed – due to problems (e.g. leaks are common).

Q. Are there adequate sidewalks?

A. Yes, all have public sidewalks, and they often have special features to make them visually appealing as well as safe.

Q. What is smallest size project?

A. Minimum for a project: 10 units.

Q. How do you make mixed use successful?

A. Need to have a commercial developer involved for the commercial portion; use their models, and ask local commercial real estate brokers about the site.

Q. How does Olsen market seniors who are looking to downsize?

A. There is expectation that seniors may be downsizing from 4,000 - 5,000 sq. ft homes to 2,000 sq. ft. – and there is strong demand for that size of smaller housing product.

Q. How does Olsen determine the mix of approach the City?

A. Olsen will meet with the City and first need to determine the goals of the City – what are they looking for?

Q. How do you deal with resistance to density?

A. It’s normal to encounter resistance to increased density in public hearings - this is an issue that needs to be worked out in advance.

Q. Why do you focus on infill vs. greenfield development?

A. Olsen’s basic goal is to promote first time buyer homes and beyond that, economically, even in down times, there will always be a market for the first time homeowner.

IV. LUV Status (more discussion of December event with AQMD plus Complete Streets information)

David Magarian

Jacki distributed a flyer for the December 9th “EV101” workshop. David gave PPT presentation, requesting input on how to improve prior to December event. He noted terminology is important, and a main issue is understanding range of EV’s. - e.g. should they be called “long trip” vs. “short trip” cars (based on range of time) or “long” vs. “near” cars (based on distance can travel)?

Suggestions:

- Give presentation to transportation directors
- Define “cold start” somewhere
- Would it be helpful to target data on ten drivers?
- Re slide showing preliminary mode sharing data: add a conclusion that shows that significant increases in density will dramatically affect reduction

of VMT's, and clarify the color coding (red for total household trips, blue for LUV trips)

- Provide info on insurance costs?
- Provide data on VMTs for each driver, per month
- Provide bullet point slides after each graphic to explain

V. Charge Port Infrastructure Study Update

Wally Siembab

Forecast: 5,000 more EV's will be in the South Bay by 2015 (?). His study will need to review and add in applicable research, including COG LUV study, and include behavior of drivers, the goal being to develop a model for the South Bay and region. He will:

- Look at major destination (retail malls etc)
- Allocate 5,000 EVs to the major destinations
- Talk to people at these destinations and determine feasibility of charging ports
- Inventory apartment buildings, homes, to see real physical conditions
- Adjust allocations based on his survey

In response to a question, it was explained that you need a 110 electric outlet for LUV's and a 210 outlet for those with more range (e.g. Nissan Leaf)

VI. SB 375 Update – Issue of Best Management Practices (examples from OCCOG and the CEDP) Plus SCAG News

Wally Siembab and Jacki Bacharach

Main points:

- A recent forecast from Metro indicates that the mode share for public transit is expected to be same in 2020 as in 2010, only 2.6% despite historical funding for transit
- RHNA news:
 - South Bay Cities: half out of compliance – per SCAG, vulnerable to lawsuits
 - RHNA allocations must match growth strategy
 - SCAG is 2 months late, cities should make their growth allocations and give to SCAG, who will run through a model. Problems with the process: not transparent, difficult to defend to local city councils - however it was noted that transparency is inherently difficult as information can be hard to swallow, and there is potential for negative political fallout
- Best Management Practices/OCCOG/CEDP - Climate & Economic Development Project (SCAG committee)
 - CEDP group is cataloguing BMPs to get to a short list of 30 for more research
 - Doesn't appear that there is any strategic design to the process
 - Questionable value to cities: what will be the result?

- Thinking is to determine economic viability of BMPs, but relevancy of this is questionable

VIII. Other Business

- Jacki announced COG General Assembly speakers including a well known journalist (futurist) and an Edison representative. Looking for a college student in panel discussions as future very relevant to that age group. On-line registration has been activated, need financial sponsors.
- Jacki noted on-going monthly “brown bag” lunches are excellent legal mini conferences with much to offer cities - presented pro bono by Mike Jenkins (city attorney for several cities).

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm