



**ECOS Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday June 13th, 2016
Mogavero Architects 2012 K Street
6:00 – 7:30 pm**

Attendees: Ron Maertz, Alex Kelter, Alex Reagan, Rob Burness, William Burg, Alan Hersh, Jameson Parker, Barry Wasserman, Veronica Beaty, Jonathon Sampson, Danuta Drozdowicz, Lynne Goldsmith, Lynn Wheat, Karen Jacques, Molly Basinger, Brandon Rose

6:00 p.m. – Welcome, Introductions, Check-Ins, and Changes to Agenda

6:05 p.m. - Railyards Update - Jameson Parker (AIM Consulting) and Alan Hersh (LDK Ventures)

Information from Alan Hersh (LDK Ventures):

- Railyards representatives last met with ECOS on Railyards in November 2015
- A video was showed of architect in shop area of Railyards project
- Since November, community input has been sought
- 3 years out is when we'll see some "activation" of the shops, etc.
 - The "levy/berm" doesn't provide any flood protection to downtown, so now there will be more connectivity and less grade differential. They are now seeking project level zoning.
 - 2022/2023 A Kaiser hospital target date for opening
 - 2019/2020 - MLS stadium target date for opening
- The large homeless population in the area will be solved by the buildup of a neighborhood.
- "Riverfront Access Park/Riverfront Park" will give public more engagement with waterfront
- Hotel with 200-400 rooms planned
- Historic District to include parking and shops, which passengers can visit before they board the train
- **Number of Housing Units:**
 - In November, Railyards plan was for 6,000 housing units. ECOS and Mike McKeever had both expressed concerns about the reduction in housing units. Now Railyards is getting an entitlement for 10,000 units. Hersh thinks only 6,000-8,000 units are probably realistic.

- The zoning entitlement allows for a maximum of 10,000 housing units, but there won't be a minimum requirement of units to actually get built, a requirement that could be created in zoning.
- 100 units per acre are planned
- The density that works in the current market is 4-6 stories wrapped around central parking. This allows for wood frame buildings and significant cost savings per square foot.
- Hersh doubted that there was sufficient demand for units at densities of 200 residential units per acre and that they would be empty and you wouldn't get funding would thus not be available.
- First residential units to get built will be in south Railyards, where there are connections to existing sewer and water lines.
- **Affordable housing:**
 - 267 affordable units (app. 2.67% of total 10,000 units planned) – Housing and Community Development is funding some of the road work in railyards so the 267 units are required from those funds.
 - Housing and Community Development Prop 1C/infill funds put restrictions on project. If the funding was granted through the Infill Incentive Program, there is a 15% affordable housing requirement.
 - More affordable units will be added in the Mixed Income Housing Strategy, which is being created now and it will be the first such strategy under the city's new ordinance. The process of getting a Mixed Income Housing Strategy approved is still being clarified by the city.
- **Remediation of the soil:**
 - Are they satisfied with the remediation? They are really pleased with status of the cleanup; that's why they closed escrow. The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and Union Pacific pushed to clean it to a level to make housing work there.
 - Union Pacific is responsible for soil gases.
 - Usually the soil in a brownfield project like this gets removed and the soil is returned clean.
 - In this case, large amounts of soil were removed, leaving a large hole. Railyards is working with Regional San to use clean soil being removed in the water treatment plant construction as fill.
 - One park is being planned for an area that "isn't where a city would put a park, but it is what it is"
 - Since you can't remove the soil under the buildings, there will be sensors in the public use buildings to help monitor the soil gases to which children will be exposed.

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- **Transportation**

- Transportation Management Plan (TMA) (required by city)
- City has its own Transportation Management Association (TMA) and Kaiser has its own plan. Railyards is trying to figure whether to merge their Transportation Management Plan with the city's plan or create their own.
- Light rail - Green line: Regional Transit is talking about cutting the line to Township Nine until ridership improves.
- Streets are being designed to allow Lyft and Uber drivers to pull over on the side of street.
- Stadium will have giant bike locker - bike storage and spaces, possibly managed by Bike Hub
- Bike lanes will be out of way of pedestrians
- Looking at using a bike share program and electric bicycles
- Barry Wasserman: How do we avoid another Township Nine, where it is taking so long to develop around the initial building that the building is totally isolated? We need to see a strategy for the next three years. What will be done to make it look like it belongs? We don't want to project to come to fruition too incrementally/spottily.
- The Railyards were historically a separate kind of railyard town so there is no infrastructure. No water pipes, sewer lines, storm drains. Therefore, it is an expensive project to build. Right now they are sharing a joint sewer system with downtown, which is unusual.
- "Temporary detention bases" will handle the water, which collected, cleaned and put into the river.
- There will be a master association that will handle a number of fees in the area. Funds will be paid for by assessment fees/lease costs

*Note: a DEIR was released Friday, June 10, 2016 and the official deadline for comments is July 27th, 2016

*Note: There will be an open house on Railyards this Wed., June 15th at the Tsakopoulos library on 8th Street and I Street from 6pm – 7:30pm

6:45 p.m. - Yamanee Project - William Burg and Karen Jacques

- William Burg has filed an appeal on the Yamanee project as an individual
- Yamanee developers weren't required to release an EIR. They only had to do a Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment ("SCEA") – which is like a "light version" of an EIR. The way you get an SCEA is to follow the general plan. An SCEA does not require that alternate sites for the project are reviewed.
- The only allowance for deviation from the general plan is if there is a significant community benefit.
- This is high-rise ownership units, meaning condos for purchase.

- The city went from using the term “variances” to using the term “deviances” in 2013. This change means that the city no longer has to make findings.
- The problem is that there’s no specific standard for what constitutes a significant community benefit.
- There is also not a standard for how much the project can deviate from the general plan.
- The largest deviation in height thus far has been for the new Whole Foods, the developer for which had to do a full Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) and an amendment to the general plan/rezoning for an extra 12 feet of height
- This will set a precedent for more deviations.
- We can achieve high-density housing in many midrises
- There is abundant room for development in downtown – why not put Yamanee there?
- The city council is being asked to approve something that doesn’t have any justification.
- This is not a “Not In My Backyard” (“NIMBY”) issue. The point is that there is nothing exceptional about the project to allow the deviation. The building needs to be built in downtown or prove a significant justification
- To avoid addressing this on a project-by-project basis, we should create a “public benefit zoning ordinance”. ECOS would like to partake in creating this.

*Note: The hearing on William Burg’s appeal on the Yamanee project will be held at the City Council meeting tomorrow, Tues., June 14th at 6pm at City Hall, 915 I Street

7:00 p.m. - Project Updates – Connector, Housing Elements, Elk Grove SOIs, Mather Field Project, Wilton Rancheria Casino, Eastview Specific Plan and Annexation - Galt, MLS Stadium, North Precinct Panhandle Project, Other Projects

Ron Maertz, Rob Burness, Alex Kelter, Molly Basinger and Others

July 28 –The next big meeting on the Elk Grove General Plan, something we should track. Land Use policies will be covered and a map.

7:10 p.m. – Update on CEQA Revisions
Andy Sawyer

Not much is happening in the Legislature on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Most of the bills to amend CEQA aren’t moving.

AB 1886 (McCarty) which would expand the CEQA exemption for transit priority projects (residential projects new major transit stops or high quality transit corridors) passed the Assembly.

The major issue is trailer bill 707

http://www.dof.ca.gov/budgeting/trailer_bill_language/local_government/documents/707StreamliningAffordableHousingApprovals6-10-16.pdf

The proposed budget trailer bill language would provide for approval as of right for attached housing developments adjacent to developed areas if specified criteria are met. Because approval would be ministerial, CEQA would not apply. The trailer bill language is opposed by environmental groups, labor and local governments. Because it is tied to \$400 million for low-income housing in the budget, however, the outcome is uncertain.

7:15 p.m. – Project Monitoring – Review Robert Meagher’s changes to Project Monitoring spreadsheet. Discuss criteria for project importance.

Please review:

<https://www.cubbyusercontent.com/pl/ECOS+Project+List/1b05859a14244240b38a93db8d940d94>

7:25 p.m. – Other Business and Announcements

7:30p.m. – Adjourn