

SOLANA BEACH CITY COUNCIL
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AND PUBLIC FINANCING AUTHORITY

JOINT **SPECIAL** MEETING

MINUTES

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 2007
9:00 A.M.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
635 S. HIGHWAY 101,
SOLANA BEACH, CALIFORNIA

The City Council acts as the City of Solana Beach Redevelopment Agency and the Public Financing Authority.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

Present: Heebner, Kellejian, Roberts, and Nichols.
Absent: Campbell.
Also Present: Leticia Rodriguez, Deputy City Clerk

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP FACILITATED BY FRED KENT TO DISCUSS SOLANA BEACH LIVABILITY (File No. 0640-80)

- A. Presentation by Fred Kent, Project for Public Spaces, to review what constitutes a "great place" in a city, educating participants and observers.**

Councilmember Kellejian was present via conference call in the City Managers office at City Hall, but did not participate in any discussion.

Mayor Heebner introduced the workshop and the presenter of the workshop, Fred Kent. She spoke of her knowledge of Mr. Kent and his previous work on the topic, "what makes a great place." She said that she and Fred Kent toured Solana Beach and he made suggestions on how to make the City more liveable. She stated that Council wanted to host this workshop due to their common love of the City and that the goal of the workshop was to work together to find ways to make Solana beach a better place to live.

Fred Kent, Consultant, spoke about the benefits of having public comment on making

Solana Beach a great place. He said that the topic of the day was to evaluate 8 sites in the City based on comfort and image, activities and usage, access and linkage, and sociability. He said that the groups will discuss the positives of the site, what they would do in the short term and long term to improve the site, gather comments from visitors at the sites, and discuss what kind of community partners can help in making the site better. He said that the key issue for Solana Beach is that it should be defined by public places rather than by automobiles.

Mr. Kent talked about a project for livability currently going on in New York City called Streets block.org, and how traffic is not the solution, but that the solution is building places that are sacred to people. He said that the focus was on how to make these 8 destinations in Solana Beach work. Fred Kent spoke about the workshop being about place making, and how place making is about people in the community trying to make a place for themselves.

Mr. Kent stated that the way to make destinations work is to gather input from the community about solving this problem and to build on each others' ideas. Fred Kent presented a power point presentation discussing building Solana Beach around places, and how the community is currently designed around traffic and cars and organized around disciplines.

Mr. Kent discussed how everything on Highway 101 is on a vehicle scale and not on a pedestrian scale and that pedestrian usability on Highway 101 needs to be addressed. He said that his primary clients are elderly clients and children and that his organization works in transportation, public markets, local economies, public buildings, parks, and plazas.

Mr. Kent described "What is a great place," as comfort and image, uses and activities, sociability, and access and linkage, whether it feels safe, charming, clean, and attractive. He discussed the benefits of good places which included fostering more frequent interaction and the interaction having a ripple effect throughout the community. He said that his website is pps.org.

At the conclusion of Mr. Kent's presentation, Mayor Heebner explained where the 8 sites were, announced the facilitator of each group, and stated that the facilitators' role was to organize the group to ensure everyone gets an opportunity to share their comments.

Mayor Heebner recessed the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

LOCATIONS:

GROUP LEADER:

1. Train Station and the proposed development	Torgen Johnson
2. S. Cedros – area where there is a "gap"	Gerri Rhetman

3. Plaza Street	Gary Martin
4. Intersection of Lomas Santa Fe & Cedros	Sean Macleod
5. 101 side of Dahlia/Rosa St. Bridge	Vicki Cypherd
6. S. Cedros side of Dahlia/Rosa St. Bridge	Mary Jane Boyd
7. N. Cedros across from the Train Station	Tim Caughlin
8. 101 side of Cliff Street Bridge	Bridget Augusta

The groups left City Hall to visit the eight locations.

B. Visit 8 Solana Beach locations.

1. Train Station and the proposed development, focusing on the public areas of the project.
2. S. Cedros--the area where there is a "gap" in walkability.
3. Plaza Street.
4. Intersection of LSF & Cedros.
5. 101 side of the Dahlia/Rosa Street Bridge.
6. S. Cedros side of the Dahlia/Rosa Street Bridge.
7. N. Cedros across from the Train Station--Participants to choose one area.
8. 101 side of Cliff Street Bridge.

Mayor Heebner reconvened the meeting at 11:50 a.m. in the Council Chambers.

Fred Kent called the group leader from each group to present their findings on the site that they visited.

8. Location: Train Station on N. Cedros and the Cedros Crossing/NCTD mixed use project.

Group Leader: Craig Williams

What the group liked:

- The bridge is on the coastal rail trail providing good access.
- The area is a blank space.
- It is a good link to Hwy 101 and the west.

What the group did not like:

- Needs to be traffic calming, as traffic is loud.
- There is the fear of getting hit by a car .

Suggestions for this place:

- Need for angel parking.
- Create a bump out.
- Narrow the streets.
- Create an attractive median.
- Once traffic is slowed add a crosswalk.
- Add a cross walk on the other side of Cliff St. Bridge.
- Add a water feature - would be attractive and calming.
- Add a trellis with vegetation to create a feeling of not being on the street.
- Add a drink cart.
- Add trees for more shade.
- Paint a hopscotch on the sidewalk.
- Add a dog park on the other side of the bridge where the apartments are going to be located.
- Add community tiles that everyone can make.
- Enclose the bus stop with a nice shelter with something that is representative of the community.

Craig Williams suggested that volunteers could help create the space by building the trellis without having to wait for bids.

Network Partnerships:

- Schools - to help paint the benches or donate benches, benches should all look different to be eclectic.
- Mutropolis for the dog walk area.
- Solana Succulence to assist with plants that are drought resistant.
- North County Transit District.
- Civic and Historical Society.

Fred Kent stated that artists could dress up the benches which is a way to make connections at locations.

- 7. Location: N. Cedros across from the Train Station
(north east corner of Cedros and Lomas Santa Fe)
Group Leader: Tim Caughlin**

What the group liked and disliked:

- There is a lot of parking.
- It is mixed use retail space.
- There are green banners 20 ft. up.
- The building cascades down the hill, it is not overwhelming.
- It is a flat facade, more articulation of the building is needed.
- There is a 2 ft. high hedge that is on both sides of the property, and people have to hop over the hedge to get in the center.
- The hedge acts as a barrier from the sidewalk into the property.
- There is a sea of asphalt to get to the property.
- The building has recently been re-stuccoed.

Suggestions for this space:

- Bring the building closer to the sidewalk.
- Put parking behind the building.
- Improve Chief's seating area
- Move the 5 ft. high utility box on the corner which sticks out.
- Bike racks are hard to find.
- Landscaping is palm trees and then a 2 ft high hedge with nothing in the middle to fill the space.
- Entering the property one looks at South Cedros, cars are flying down the hill, people are driving about 50 miles per hour.
- Traffic needs to be slowed coming down the hill.
- Move the Thrift store further back on the street and lower the Webb Bush building.
- Add a mixed use area.
- Add a traffic circle to slow traffic.

Tim Caughlin spoke about the automotive shops that are at the end of the property, and that the Cavanaugh's property is nicely done with hardscape that looks like cars should not drive there, that the scale of this area is nice, and it would be nice to balance the uses of these properties with the use of the train station property.

Fred Kent stated that utility boxes can be covered so that they do not resemble utility boxes in order to change the perception of objects.

**6. Location: S. Cedros side of Dahlia/Rosa St. Bridge
Group Leader: Mary Jane Boyd**

Mary Jane Boyd reported that the group wanted to walk to the bridge from City Hall on the Coastal Rail Trail but they could not do that until they walked down to Dahlia St. for the bridge crossing, and that the sidewalk on the west side of Hwy 101 was too narrow as they had to walk in single file to let others on the sidewalk get by.

What the group liked:

- It is clean.
- It is linked to the bridge.
- There is an open feeling, there are flowers.
- It is well maintained.

What the group did not like:

- The bridge area ended so abruptly with a wall.
- The road was too close to the end of the bridge.

Suggestions for this space:

- Needs to be a bump out to create a meeting place at the entrance to the bridge.
- Add a seating area instead of a wall.
- Add umbrellas to protect people from the sun at the seating area.
- Add an awning on the bridge for sun protection.
- Misting devices for the summer time on the bridge.
- No cars parked right in front of the bridge.
- Add a cobblestone road on Cedros to slow traffic.
- Widen the sidewalks.
- Narrow the roads.
- Take parking for Cedros off the street and put it off site.
- Create a gathering place at end of bridge.
- Keep long term mixed use of businesses.
- Parking lot currently across from bridge would create a nice area for tables.
- Spread art galleries throughout Cedros – they are currently clustered in one area.
- Add strolling music on the street, not only for the farmers market, and have bands to make this area more of an exciting place.

Comments from Pedestrians:

- This area was very nice, but the people were eager to get to North end Cedros.
- This site is a pass through place to get to other side of Cedros.

Network Partnerships:

- Cedros Association since they have been involved in the planning of this area in the past, there could be opportunities for business promotion to promote the Belly Up, or the Theater.
- Art galleries on Cedros.

5. Location: 101 side of Dahlia/Rosa St. Bridge Group Leader: Vicki Cypherd

What the group liked:

- They liked the east side of the bridge and not the west side the of the bridge.
- There is a lot of opportunities for planting in the area.
- Liked the water fountain and dog fountain.
- Bus bench in close proximity to the bridge.

Suggestions for this space:

- Improve the bus bench with shade.
- Add signage to direct people that the bridge will take you to Cedros.
- Improve trees near the Rosa St. Bridge.
- Add more plantings.
- Improve the wall.
- Add a seating bench or seating wall.
- Slow traffic on Hwy 101 by:
 - painting the main intersection which could be maintained easily.
 - paint a sun mosaic at the main intersection.
- Expedite City laws for more public seating.
- Improve public lighting.
- Add art piece to the area.
- Bank of America building needs a face lift, possibly adding murals on the walls.
- Widen sidewalks.
- Move the bike lane to Sierra.
- More planning of the area to have sufficient watering for plants to go in.
- Relocate city hall to the corner of Dahlia and mixing it with public use.
- Trailer park area needs to be developed better for gathering spots like cafes.

Comments from Pedestrians:

- Improving the maintenance of plants.
- Want the trailer park to disappear.
- People like the water fountains.
- Want to get the Hwy 101 plan going as soon as possible.

Network Partnerships:

- Chamber of Commerce.
- Hwy 101 village walk.
- Involving students for artwork.

4. Location: Intersection of Lomas Santa Fe & Cedros

Group Leader: Sean Macleod

Sean Macleod reported that anything would improve the area, that it is a sea of asphalt and no one wanted to cross the intersection. He reported that this was a traffic centric area that could potentially be a key area and that the group wanted to add in any element that would reverse the anti-pedestrian area.

Suggestions for this space:

- Add plants to the area.
- Paint the street lights – where paint is peeling off.
- Add enhanced cross walks for pedestrian safety on the east and west side.
- Put in median on Lomas Santa Fe for pedestrian crossing.
- Pedestrian safety is the most important thing for this area.
- Create warmth with large planters.
- Add flags and banners to bring the scale of area to pedestrian level.
- Put dining on corners.
- Add protected seating bench areas.
- Sean reported work would have to be done with the property owners.
- Widen sidewalks in every direction by 2-4 feet.
- Put in enhanced material instead of concrete.
- Make the area more enjoyable for pedestrians.

Comments from Pedestrians:

- There are all cars all the time in this area.

Fred Kent said that mental speed bumps cause people to slow down and recognize the beauty of a street, and that the City may consider installing a roundabout on Lomas Santa Fe. He said that pedestrian bridges are not a good idea, and that pedestrians fit into a roundabout by designing the street for the speed desired in that area so that it makes the street more pedestrian friendly.

3. Location: Plaza Street

Group Leader: Gary Martin

Gary Martin reported that Plaza St. is not a plaza or the center of town, it is a busy non-pedestrian friendly area and it does not link Hwy 101 with Fletcher Cove.

What the group liked:

- Eclectic mix of businesses in the area which is great.
- Large trees which would be a good place to gather.
- Great potential for ocean views.
- Historical significance to the area.

What the group did not like:

- Sidewalk is really small in the area.
- Sociability is negative.
- Benches hidden by bushes, it is not very inviting.
- Sidewalks do not line up or connect and are very skinny.
- No way to enjoy the area as a place.

Suggestions for this space:

- Cleaning up side walk.
- Connect the sidewalks.
- Re-landscape.
- Make the area more pedestrian sensitive.
- Narrow the traffic lanes.
- Widen the sidewalks.
- Move the bus stop to Hwy 101.
- This area should be a Plaza that connects Hwy 101 and Fletcher Cove.
- Long term goals include turning this area into a real plaza one day.

Fred Kent commented that this is a prime area and that Plaza St. is under performing. He said that this area is a signature place that would define the City of Solana Beach.

2. Location: S. Cedros the area where there is a “gap”

Group Leader: Gerri Rhetman

Gerri Rhetman reported that there is a gap on Cedros across from Cedros gardens, where a lot of space could be utilized.

What the group liked:

- Décor and Style magazine is there and could maybe help with the area.

Suggestions for this space:

- Remove shrubs from the area so that the pedestrian walk way will be visible.
- Widen the sidewalk.
- Add signage.
- Add more retail stores.

Long term goals include:

- Take out the asphalt and replacing it with geo-grid for a greener look.
- Add bike racks.
- Add a dog water station.
- Add a café to give the space a garden feel.
- Add a post office box to the area since it was taken out of Hallmark.
- Add a news stand.
- Take the space between the 2 buildings and connect them with an awning, and making this space multi use at night by having an outdoor cinema showing old movies.
- Have a clock with kinetic parts on it at the street level to bring people to that area.
- Add benches at the street level.
- Add entry to the site from the edges of the site.

1. Location: Train Station and the proposed development

Group Leader: Allan Ryan

Allan Ryan reported that Cedros Crossing is a focal point of the City and that it has the opportunity to act as a hub for the City but it lacks identity other than the train station, that the group did not want it to be a stop-and-go kind of place but instead a place to get off the train and stay. He reported that the current look of the train station did not state that this was a beach city.

Suggestions for this space:

- Add art on the hardscape to tie in the beach town.
- Place information and signage about City in that area to allow for people to know and understand where the beach is and where Cedros is.
- Improve the entry way to the station.
- Add more space in front of the station with public seating.
- Make the area more pedestrian friendly.
- The theater is the hub of the project.
- Add space in front of the theater for gathering.
- Expand the outside area of theater to put in seating, coffee etc.
- A plaza is a good feature, good functionality, and nice flow into the design district.
- Public seating is needed.
- Underground parking is a positive feature.
- Work on the design of the train station such as possibly getting rid of shed roof designs and having more of a curved roof.
- Improve plantings and trees.
- Have a pedestrian friendly crossing.

Fred Kent made concluding remarks stating that he had a different vision of the City now than prior to this event, that Cedros is a wonderful street but there are issues as well as potential and that the intersection needs to be transformed to connect both sides of Cedros. He said that the ground level architecture should not be focused on but instead be used for activity and people.

Mayor Heebner made concluding remarks and said that all changes that have been presented will be agendized and the Council will be discussing them.

Ryan Allen asked about Del Mar's traffic calming. Fred Kent responded that the drive through Del Mar highlights the City and what is going on there.

Councilmember Nichols stated that traffic calming is a trade off in that traffic calming affects the ability to get from point A to point B.

Katie Pelsik stated that the pedestrian crossing, colored concrete and landscaping near Panera has created a nice transition for pedestrians and the narrow roads have slowed traffic.

Peggy Sarif asked if Mr. Kent could assist the City with designing the land over the train tracks.

Mr. Kent suggested that there could be a combination of development and public spaces, extending Cedros and Hwy 101 to the water and pulling together the spaces to define Solana Beach.

Sharon Garrow commented that the center point of the City is Lomas Santa Fe and Cedros and suggested putting a fountain or statue in the median.

Torgen Johnson stated that Solana Beach is a coastal beach town rather than a coastal beach city like Manhattan Beach, which makes Solana Beach a unique place with a unique identity.

Fred Kent said that sometimes a two story building can feel like a six story building because of its character and posed the question of what gives a town character.

David Cain said that spaces should be created on the east side of the freeway and that the City exemplifies the shape of a "T" with the east side of the City.

Fred Kent said that a great destination should have 10 places within it. He said to consider starting with 10 places on Highway 101, 10 places on Cedros, and 10 places on the east side of the City.

Mayor Heebner stated that the comments have been documented and that there will be DVDs of the workshop available. She stated that UCSD is documenting the workshop and a documentary will be available in September, that the Council is going to get a transcript, and a report will be produced which will be sent to everyone who attended the workshop.

Mayor Heebner stated that it is the responsibility of the community to keep the Council on track and make sure the Council is doing what they said they would do at this workshop, that the Council has a commitment to work on this project to create great places in Solana Beach, that there are some ordinances that are not serving the City well, that the Council will be working on them with the business development community, and that all the issues presented will be on the workplan and on future agendas.

Gary Marin commented about the scale of buildings and asked for suggestions for a City that does not have design review.

Fred Kent suggested obtaining pictures from other similar towns. He said that the scale of buildings adds life to the City and adds a sense of place and that all one-story buildings create a feeling that nothing is going on.

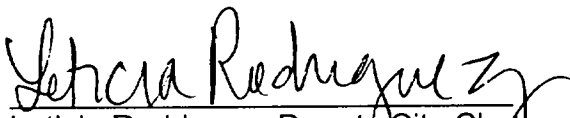
Mayor Heebner agreed with the idea that a sense of place should contain buildings with plain lower levels and second levels that have articulation.

Fred Kent stated that scale is important as well as what people are doing in and around buildings.

Mayor Heebner adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.

No action taken.

ADJOURN:


Leticia Rodriguez, Deputy City Clerk

Approved: June 13, 2007