



Memorandum

TO: Honorable Mayor &
City Council

FROM: Toni J. Taber, CMC
City Clerk

SUBJECT: The Public Record
January 7, 2021 to January 14, 2021

DATE: January 20, 2021

ITEMS FILED FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD

Letters from Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Letters from the Public

1. Letter from Shasta/Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association, dated January 8, 2021, regarding Diridon Station Area Plan Draft Amendment.
2. Letter from blair beekman, dated January 12, 2021, regarding Blair Beekman. Tuesday. January 12, 2020.
3. Letter from blair beekman, dated January 14, 2021, regarding Blair Beekman. sj council. Tuesday. January 12, 2021. Open Forum.

Toni J. Taber, CMC
City Clerk



Shasta/Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 28634 • San José, CA 95159 • info@shpna.org • www.shpna.org

January 8, 2020

VIA EMAIL (jose.ruano@sanjoseca.gov)

Jose Ruano
Diridon Station Area Plan Project Manager
City of San Jose
Department of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement
200 East Santa Clara Street, 3rd Floor Tower
San Jose, CA 95113

Re: Diridon Station Area Plan Draft Amendment

Dear Mr. Ruano:

I am writing to you as the Vice President and Director for Planning and Land Use of the Shasta / Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association (S/HPNA), on behalf of the NA, with our comments on the scope of the Draft Amendment to the Diridon Station Area Plan (DSAP). S/HPNA represents 4,500 households immediately west of Diridon Station, in the Garden Alameda, Shasta / Hanchett Park, and St. Leo's neighborhoods, directly adjacent to the western boundary of the DSAP; the easternmost portion of S/HPNA is within the DSAP boundaries. For more than thirty-five years, we have sought to work with the City of San Jose, developers, and our neighbors to create a vibrant neighborhood.

While we appreciate the fact that the City has posted the Draft Amendment at this early stage, we must take issue with the revision process itself. Given the scale of the Draft Amendment, we have several concerns regarding expedience taking precedent over thoroughness; our comments include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Comment Period:** The City's website gives conflicting information as to when the comment period for the Draft Amended DSAP ends. PBCE's 'Diridon Station Area Plan' web page lists January 11th and includes a link to the online feedback form; this is the top search result for 'Diridon Station Area Plan Amendment Comment Period'. This is unacceptable and could be seen as a deliberate attempt to sideline commentary.
- **Use of Amendment Process:** A Draft Amendment that cites a previously completed, adjacent EIR, which never included any reference to the specific site, building height, and transit issues associated with the Diridon Station Area (DSA), cannot be considered a full guiding document for future development. This conveys a clear disinterest in any in-depth analysis of the specific challenges posed by the DSA. The revised Ignoring the 2014 DSAP allows PBCE to set aside the guides, considerations, and years of public input that preceded the 2014 document, in favor of unrelated analysis. The agreements and mitigations being consciously discarded include the Strong Neighborhood Initiative Zones, deference to residential building heights at the southern zone of the DSAP, and the 2002 Delmas Park Neighborhood Improvement Plan. Overruling years of community engagement, and multiple agreements and plans, should not be an Amendment process. It is a clean sheet undertaking.
- **Building Heights:** Using the amendment process circumvents the public's ability to comment on the building height and neighborhood interface issues. Projects of substantially smaller scopes have entailed supplemental or new EIRs, when there were no substantive changes to proposed building heights. To now cite an array of disparate documents, previously prepared without reference to the project area or

substantial increases in building height, as the heart of a CEQA document would be laughable, were it not for the decades of impact this document will have. This comes across as an attempt to sidestep the need to address the substantive mitigation issues, sacrificing the ability of the surrounding neighborhoods to engage in the process, for the sake of expedience.

- **Crane Heights:** The Draft Amendment ignores the fact that the substantial increase in building heights would require cranes that would violate FAA guidelines, rendering the achievement of these proposed heights logistically impossible. When asked this question multiple times, in a series of meetings, City staff chuckled, and acknowledged that it is a problem that will need to be addressed. Environmental Impact Reports and CEQA documents are exactly where these issues are to be addressed. Even an Amendment, crafted to circumvent the typical process, cannot be taken seriously if it does not address one of the fundamental challenges of development within the DSA.
- **Development Data / Metrics:** The Amendment should include documentation of all proposed, pending, entitled, and completed developments within the DSAP, dating back to at least 2002. This should also include any projects which are scheduled to be approved or entitled before the final version of this Amendment, including developments which have held publicly noticed meetings. This information is needed to properly understand the context of the DSAP. Individual S/HPNA residents should not have to compile the data themselves, and then provide it to City staff, who were admittedly unaware of the specifics; yet this is exactly what has happened. Planning staff that has no knowledge of the current Planning conditions cannot be relied upon to generate an accurate, complete CEQA document.
- **Separating Means of Transportation:** The City's General Plan Land Use Goals, and its embrace of Vision Zero, emphasize that walking and bicycling become primary transportation methods. The proposed Amendment includes significant negative impacts on bicycle and pedestrian safety, putting it in conflict with these goals. Connecting the Los Gatos Creek Trail across West Santa Clara Street with token crosswalk and curb improvements is inadequate. The Amendment calls for massive intensification of uses at this area; an office building, two residential buildings, an events center, the adaptive re-use of the San Jose Water Company Building, a large plaza, the upgraded Los Gatos Creek Trail, the Guadalupe River Park Trail, Arena Green (with the pending Urban Confluence structure), and SAP Center. The proposed improvements would only nominally improve the congestion caused by SAP Center alone and would do little to substantively protect cyclists and pedestrians. The City has cited an overcrossing as an 'ideal solution', at some future, undefined date. The overcrossing needs to be studied as part of the project proposal, and a solution, based on robust analysis of pedestrian and non-vehicular access, should be part of any development approval. An environmental document cannot rely on ideal future solutions as a means by which to address substantial shortcomings in pedestrian and bicycle safety.

A pedestrian crossover on West Santa Clara Street, close to Diridon Station, would address further shortcomings. The lack of a BART station entrance on the north side of West Santa Clara Street will create a substantial uptick in traffic across West Santa Clara, as will the inevitable substantial developments to the north. The Amendment does not address this order-of-magnitude increase in crossings. A detailed micromodality management plan needs to be produced, with robust community involvement and input.

- **West San Fernando Street and Cahill Park Promenade:** West San Fernando Street between Race Street and the project area is indicated as a protected bike lane. This would bisect Cahill Park, eliminating the promenade between the playground and the open grass. West San Fernando Street is a narrow street that already experiences heavy pedestrian, motorized scooter, skateboard, and bicycle usage. The area was converted to permit parking as part of the Arena Traffic and Parking Management Plan (TPMP) more than twenty-five years ago. The proposed protected bike lane is vital, but it undermines the TPMP's detailed commitments and requirements. The proposal reduces the safety and functionality of the single large park immediately adjacent to the DSA – an area that is already drastically lacking in parks. It reduces the efficacy

of mitigations made as part of the Arena's construction, directly undermining the City's commitments to its residents, and substantially increases the non-vehicular usage of a street that is already substandard in many ways. These are all clear dismissals of Vision Zero principles. Analysis and recommendations for how to improve West San Fernando Street and Cahill Park without causing these substantial harms must be included in any CEQA document.

- **Roadway Network Changes:** Emphasizing Autumn Street and Almaden Avenue as primary circulation paths, while closing Delmas Avenue, would substantively hamper vehicular ingress and egress to the DSA, especially to SAP Center. This directly undermines the TPMP and has the potential to send drivers through residential neighborhoods seeking nearby freeway onramps; one of the very problems the TPMP was drafted to prevent. The TPMP goals must continue to be met.
- **Expedite Downtown Transportation Plan:** West San Fernando Street, Cahill Park, and West Santa Clara Street at Diridon Station will all be bottlenecks that clearly prioritize car and bus traffic. The Downtown Transportation Plan (DTP) should be expedited, so that its findings and recommendations can be incorporated into the DSAP. To undertake an effort as substantial as the DTP, only to have it not apply to the DSAP analysis, is either farcical or a cynical effort to ensure that any impacts are dismissed as 'existing'. The DTP should provide City Council and PBCE staff with the necessary data and models to address the potential impacts of the DSAP Amendment before it is approved.

We take pride in our neighborhood; S/HPNA Board members and volunteers have been diligent advocates for decades. Density and additional development within, and adjacent to, our boundaries are inevitable; documents and plans that ignore precedent, and seek to circumvent substantive analysis and public input, while ignoring or minimizing significant impacts on the adjacent residents, should not be. We welcome development that supports the neighborhoods with community services and amenities, while maintaining and encouraging the walkability and vibrance of the area.

Respectfully submitted,



Edward Saum
Vice President & Director for Planning & Land Use
Shasta / Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association

Cc: San Jose City Council
Mayor Sam Liccardo
Rosalynn Hughey, Director, Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
Robert Manford, Deputy Director, Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
Toni Taber, City Clerk

Fw: Blair Beekman. Tuesday. January 12, 2020.

Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 1/12/2021 5:36 PM

To: Rules and Open Government Committee Agendas <rulescommitteeagenda@sanjoseca.gov>

Agenda Desk

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From: Gregory, Barbara <Barbara.Gregory@sanjoseca.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 4:52 PM

To: Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Fw: Blair Beekman. Tuesday. January 12, 2020.

Thank You,

Barb Gregory



Analyst II

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From: b. beekman [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 11:30 AM

To: Taber, Toni <toni.taber@sanjoseca.gov>; Envrion. Laura Mitchell <l.mitchell@sanjoseca.gov>; zach.struyk@sanjoseca.gov <zach.struyk@sanjoseca.gov>; Parra-Garcia, Sabrina <Sabrina.Parra-Garcia@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; DeCarlo, Lauren

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Subject: Blair Beekman. Tuesday. January 12, 2020.

[External Email]

Dear community of San Jose, and city govt,

There are ideas, of love, truth, beauty, and democratic, community sustainability - in better understanding, the past 20 years, of the electoral process, and voting rights efforts, in this country.

The efforts & accomplishments, of the past 20 years, should be, openly acknowledged, and talked about, at this time.

It may be time to consider, good election practices, that were accomplished, across the country, at the local & state level, in 2020. And during the time, of an international pandemic.

The good electoral efforts, from all sides, of the past 20 years - can help better realize, what can be, continued good efforts, into the 2020s.

And from these previous efforts, what may not be, an overly difficult task, at this point.

These simple realizations, can work towards ideas, of better reasoning, equality, and decency, for everyone, at this time.

To acknowledge, the severity of events & reasoning, around the u.s. capital, this past week,

A good luck, in all of our efforts, these next days, weeks, and months, as we may be addressing, the concepts of falsehood.

I feel, there can be unity, for ourselves, by simply continuing to look for, work towards, and define - the better parts of human nature, and this country's practices, at this time.

sincerely,
blair beekman

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Fw: Blair Beekman. sj council. Tuesday. January 12, 2021. Open Forum.

Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Thu 1/14/2021 10:44 AM

To: Rules and Open Government Committee Agendas <rulescommitteeagenda@sanjoseca.gov>

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From: b. beekman [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2021 10:30 AM
To: Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Blair Beekman. sj council. Tuesday. January 12, 2021. Open Forum.

[External Email]

Dear community of San Jose, and city govt,

Even with the burden, of a current international pandemic - it may be time, to better consider, the work of many people - towards good election practices, across this country, at the local & state level, in 2020.

There are real life stories, about love, truth, accountable practices, and what can be, positive, long term, democratic, community sustainability.

In much fighting & debate, over the electoral process, since Gore vs Bush - as an entire country, we have been, arguing, negotiating, & developing, how to better understand and define, electoral practices & voting rights, over the past 20 years.

This can help, with the most recent, electoral questions - of mail-in balloting - a less difficult task, into the 2020s.

As we should all question, the severity of events, around the u.s. capital, this past week,

We are also at a time, to consider, our better persons, and this country's better reasoning.

It is from, these simple realizations, in how we can all work toward, positive, unified efforts, into the 2020s.

sincerely,
blair beekman

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