

Bliss, Sandi

From: Denise Hill <faire@sonic.net>
Sent: Sunday, December 1, 2019 6:50 PM
To: _CityCouncilListPublic; _PLANCOM - Planning Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 12/3 Council Mtg - DOWNTOWN STATION AREA SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE
Attachments: Preferred Plan Concept - Map 2.jpg

Mayor, Council, and Planning Commission Members,

Having reviewed the DSASP preferred plan, I have to say I've never been more disappointed by the city's actions as I am with the plan they are presenting at your upcoming Study Session. As a City Merit Award winner for my work on improving our historic neighborhood, I have spent a lot of time coordinating improvements to the neighborhood, researching its remarkable history, and promoting its historic value. I have also been engaged with many city projects and served on a number of city committees over the last 20 years. In fact, I was a member of the DSASP CAC committee since they requested someone from our neighborhood participate, but this "preferred" plan version was never directly shared with the CAC members.

The changes proposed for our neighborhood in the "preferred" plan, is an outright attempt to achieve a higher height and density than our historic district's guidelines state for the purpose of making it easier for a developer who currently has a project going through the application process. Even if that application to develop this block doesn't get approved or never gets built, the FAR designation (an 8 – the highest possible) will put a target on that block increasing the likelihood that another developer will be motivated to destroy part of our historic district to build there. Staff has stated that this level of FAR designation is fine because a developer would have to go through the same H-District process to gain approval, but by suggesting this density is acceptable to the city you are asking residents of our neighborhood to constantly be involved in meetings and lengthy processes to protect our district. A protection we thought was valued by our city.

Additionally, the rationale staff has used to support their preferred plan is that "this block is at the southern edge of the neighborhood and surrounded by parking garages". However, that is exactly why the H-District designation was approved for our neighborhood. The St. Rose Preservation District was the first Santa Rosa area designated as a historic district *because* it's location downtown "made it the historic neighborhood most threatened by development". Thank goodness the Urban Renewal of the 1970's stopped where it did or those southern blocks of our district would probably be parking garages too.

This paragraph on page 4-18 in Chapter 4 of the Existing Conditions report <https://www.plandowntownsr.com/ecr> clearly outlines the hierarchy of the Historic (-H) Combining District standards and zoning:

"The purpose of the -H combining district in the City of Santa Rosa's Zoning Code (Chapter 20-28.040) is to **recognize, preserve, and enhance Santa Rosa's locally-designated historic resources**. Applicability of the -H combining district applies to all properties within designated preservation districts and designated landmark properties. The -H combining district may be combined with any primary zoning district. **In the event of any conflict between the following standards and those of the primary zoning district, those applicable to the -H combining district apply.**"

Of course, we all know actions speak louder than words. I hope that the City Council and Planning Commission's actions on Tuesday show that the City really does put value in Santa Rosa's history and historic resources.

Denise Hill

"General Plan policies strive to ensure long-term historic preservation in Santa Rosa by encouraging preservation of historic structures, as well as their surrounding setting in areas of new development and redevelopment, and by discouraging demolition of historic resources." – City of Santa Rosa 2035 General Plan

Map 2: Preferred Plan Concept: Maximum Base Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for Change Areas





Bliss, Sandi

From: Jenny Bard <jenbard@sonic.net>
Sent: Saturday, November 30, 2019 9:26 PM
To: _PLANCOM - Planning Commission; _CityCouncilListPublic
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Update

Dear City Council and Planning Commission members,

I am writing to express overall support for the preferred plan selection of the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Update whose goal is to concentrate a greater amount of housing in the downtown core – an important goal. I am in full support of increased density in the downtown area in general, as well as along key transit corridors.

However, as a current resident of an historic district, I wish to expressly oppose the inclusion of the block containing the old Santa Rosa General Hospital and several historic properties in the 8.0 FAR designation, due to the location within the St. Rose Historic District. Protecting our historic districts must be prioritized within the new update.

This paragraph on page 4-18 in Chapter 4 of the Existing Conditions report <https://www.plandowntownsr.com/ecr> outlines the hierarchy of the Historic (-H) Combining District standards and zoning:

“The purpose of the -H combining district in the City of Santa Rosa’s Zoning Code (Chapter 20-28.040) is to recognize, preserve, and enhance Santa Rosa’s locally-designated historic resources. Applicability of the -H combining district applies to all properties within designated preservation districts and designated landmark properties. The -H combining district may be combined with any primary zoning district. In the event of any conflict between the following standards and those of the primary zoning district, those applicable to the -H combining district apply.”

Many city documents state the city is in support of preserving our historic neighborhoods and promoting infill and adaptive reuse over demolition. Certainly, there are many fine examples of this in our city, including in the St. Rose Historic District.

General Plan policies recognize the importance of protecting and ensuring long-term historic preservation in Santa Rosa by encouraging preservation of historic structures, as well as their surrounding setting in areas of new development and redevelopment, **and by discouraging demolition of historic resources.** Designating the entire block within the St. Rose Neighborhood District with the highest FAR rating goes against the city’s policies and history of protecting our historic neighborhoods.

Setting policies that can foster increased housing is critical. However, the changes proposed in the SASP preferred plan selection would set an unacceptable precedent for tearing down buildings in an historic district. **By designating the entire block in the St. Rose Historic District with the highest rating of FAR, it effectively would result in existing historic homes being demolished.** That should not be acceptable to the city.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Jenny Bard

641 Oak Street

Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Bliss, Sandi

From: Judy Kennedy <quinkenn@sonic.net>
Sent: Friday, November 29, 2019 11:36 AM
To: _CityCouncilListPublic; _PLANCOM - Planning Commission
Cc: Streeter, Patrick; Judy Kennedy
Subject: [EXTERNAL] THE NEW SANTA ROSA SKYLINE

Dear Council Members and Planning Commissioners,

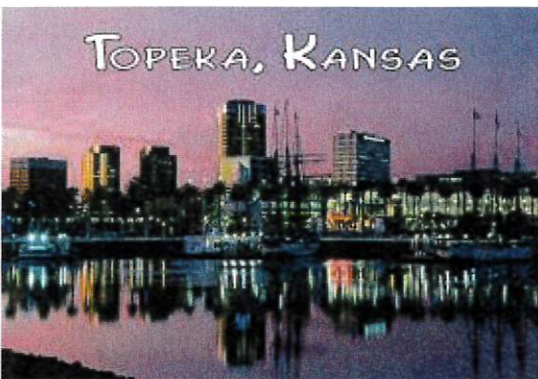
I hope you have a turkeyfilled, familyfilled, friendfilled, lovefilled, pumpkinpiefilled weekend!

I would like to share with you some pictures of skylines across the United States. All these cities have populations less than Santa Rosa.

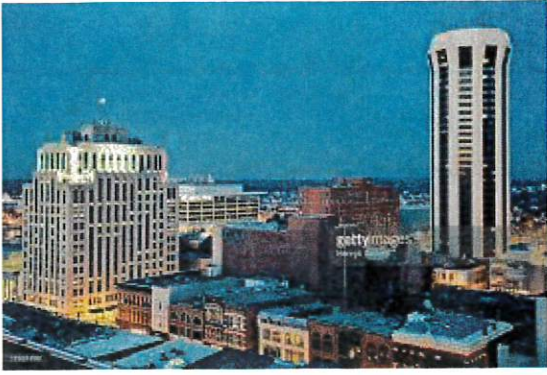
Dayton Ohio, population 140,000



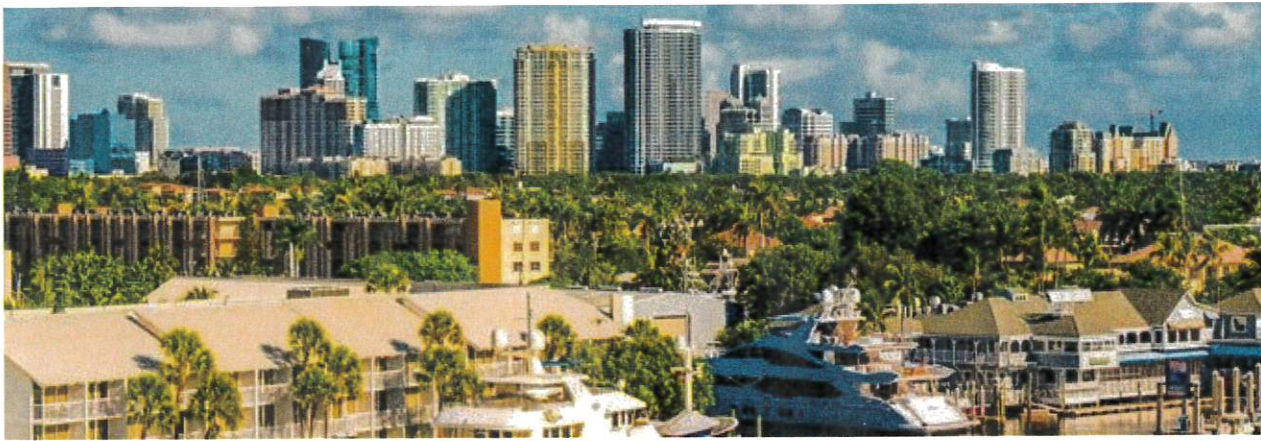
Topeka Kansas, population 122,000



Springfield Illinois, population 116,000



Coral Spring, Florida population 133,000



Cedar Rapid, Iowa



Many of the cities have a waterway or ocean view. If you have ever been to the top floor of the Press Democrat building, you would also experience fantastic views. All around Santa Rosa are low mountain ranges that offer fabulous views in addition to fabulous sunsets and sunrises. The folks with the best views right now are the inhabitants of Bethlehem Tower.

I don't think it would be very hard to "sell" tall buildings with fabulous views.

Also, if we "go tall" in downtown, especially where City Hall stands now, it would take the pressure off the historic

neighborhoods. Although Bethlehem Tower is 14 stories tall, it casts no shadows on residential neighborhoods because of its placement. A 20-story building at the City Hall or White House site would not impact residential neighborhoods either in a major way. (I used the Shadow Calculator to determine this.)

Shadow Calculator: <http://shadowcalculator.eu/#/lat/38.43380221042814/lng/-122.71141513778645>

I hope you look at the pictures above and determine that Santa Rosa can also have a fantastic tall-building skyline where residents and office workers have some of the best views north of San Francisco. This would certainly add to our efforts to make Santa Rosa a livable city.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Judy Kennedy

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Judy Kennedy
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