



# City of Santa Rosa

City Hall, Council Chamber  
100 Santa Rosa Ave  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

## Design Review Board/Cultural Heritage Board Special Meeting Minutes - Draft

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Wednesday, August 19, 2020

5:00 PM

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### 5 PM SPECIAL JOINT SESSION (TELECONFERENCE)

Chair Edmondson read the summary of the Provisions of the  
Governor's Orders at 5:09 pm:

**DUE TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDERS  
N-25-20 AND N-29-20 WHICH SUSPEND CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS OF  
THE BROWN ACT, AND THE ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE  
COUNTY OF SONOMA TO SHELTER IN PLACE TO MINIMIZE THE  
SPREAD OF COVID-19, THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD AND CULTURAL  
HERITAGE BOARD MEMBERS WILL BE PARTICIPATING VIA ZOOM  
WEBINAR.**

### 1. 5 PM CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Edmondson called the meeting to order at 5:11 pm.

**Present** 9 - Chair Scott Kincaid, Vice Chair Warren Hedgpeth, Board Member Drew Weigl, Board Member Mark DeBacker, Board Member John McHugh, Board Member Brett Kordenbrock, Chair Casey Edmondson, Board Member Henry Wix, and Board Member Curtis Groninga

**Absent** 2 - Board Member Adam Sharron, and Board Member Laura Fennell

### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1 Draft Special Joint Meeting Minutes - August 6, 2020

Approved as submitted.

### 3. BOARD BUSINESS

Chair Kincaid read aloud the Design Review Board Statement of Purpose.

Chair Edmondson read aloud the Cultural Heritage Board Statement

of Purpose.

#### **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Edmondson opened public comments at 5:14 pm.

Chair Edmondson closed public comments at 5:14 pm.

#### **5. STATEMENTS OF ABSTENTION**

Board Member Kordenbrock abstained and left the meeting at this time.

Board Member Meuser abstained and left the meeting at 5:39 pm

Meeting went into Recess at 5:20 pm and Reconvened

#### **6. SCHEDULED ITEMS**

##### **6.1 REPORT ITEM - DOWNTOWN STATION AREA SPECIFIC PLAN-ST18-002**

BACKGROUND: The project includes an update of the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan consisting of goals, policies, standards, guidelines, and diagrams to guide the future development of the Planning Area. The Proposed Plan will legally function as a Specific Plan for regulating land use and coordinating the provision of public services and infrastructure.

Presenter: Supervising Planner Amy Lyle

Supervising Planner Amy Lyle gave the staff presentation.

Chair Edmondson opened public comments at 6:25 pm.

Chair Edmondson closed public comments at 6:25 pm.

Meeting went into Recess at 6:53 pm.

Meeting Reconvened at 7:02 pm.

#### **BOARD COMMENTS:**

Design Review Board Comments:

The Public restroom/washroom component is important for the public plaza option. The Downtown library is historically and architecturally significant. Transitions are important; also explore connection to the greenway. The active overlay zone Chapter 4, discusses design guideline standards for retail mixed uses at the ground floor, but residential is mentioned only once, i.e., un-tinted glazing. Residential component review needs to be expanded upon; this is a good opportunity to expand Sections 4-3 through 4-5 to include residential components. FAR (floor area ratio) is an excellent approach. Show more justification for unbundled parking; what happens when the surplus parking goes away? It is important to account for ability to find parking or street parking downtown for people who do not live downtown. Need accountability for what happens in the future when surplus parking is gone. Would like Design Review Board and Cultural Heritage Board to have continued review of the projects, on more than concept review level, for an active role in development of the plan.

Chair Edmondson opened public comments.

Chair Edmondson closed public comments.

Continued Design Review Board Comments:

Cultural vibrancy is important; what will bring residents downtown is that it is not boring. Invite 100% affordable or market-rate housing; have flexibility in the plan. Possibly capitalize bus service to downtown from other places. Downtown library could transition into a cultural center. Maker Zone and traffic components; if ground floor had Maker Zones, and housing, how will Maker Zone interface with mobility and dwelling zones? Neigh transitions - a lot of parcels in Santa Rosa are small, and catalyst parcels are larger; there may be a desire for smaller parcels in the future, and a point for discussion. Flexibility is wise in areas with potential for public/private partnership; leave it open as much as possible, to do what is best for the development to succeed. Live/work units have not worked yet in Santa Rosa, but if it can be

dually zoned, or if it can transition later to live/work, it may succeed. Continue to be mindful of infrastructure phasing.

#### Cultural Heritage Board Comments:

Plan shows great possibility; reconnection between Downtown and Railroad Square is needed. To develop the plans, get a better long term picture of the plaza itself. Surplus parking could vanish quickly. Be very clear with developers as to what they can or cannot do, and they should show solid plans for use of parking. What is being asked of the Cultural Heritage Board in future review of portions or all of the projects? Give the Cultural Heritage Board role serious consideration, as the Board wants to be a purposeful review board with a positive influence, and there appears to be a changing role for the Cultural Heritage Board. The Board may want to initiate a discussion with staff regarding the Board's role. How does the City monitor surplus parking and unbundling, if it starts to get used up? Keep looking at possibilities to help transit-oriented areas.

How does the Cultural Heritage Board mitigate politics in reviewing the plan; what is the flexibility for the Board to be more effective? in 1964 downtown was vibrant. in 1974, all the vibrant theaters etc. were gone. Now we are tearing it up for something else. Hugh Coddington advocated against the mall and was right; it was not an attractive use. Now we are going to tear it up again. We need to be careful and pay serious attention to historical sites and buildings that we have. Make the change in a way that makes sense of the City. Has the planning process taken into consideration Covid-19? Consider how the plan makes Downtown more viable for rent. Think about how we are going to tear Downtown up again and make it more viable. Surveys are important to find where the cultural heritage sites are, with focus on our heritage.

Show more information in the higher-density model without private transportation, how to get people out in case of

evacuation. There is concern about people trying to evacuate to the train station with their possessions; we cannot take away people's transportation options. Show an evacuation plan. Expectation that the historic aspect be given its due, and buffers are not being taken as seriously as needed. Survey is important, but the survey is only planned for the higher concentration of work. Keep looking for survey funding. Downtown mid-century assets need to be given their due; show what is specifically intended. Concern regarding changes to the guidelines and processes. Do a survey to establish significance to guide development; as other resources of similar nature are lost, the significance of the remaining becomes greater.

The Roberts area, design and interaction with Olive park is the same as last time. There is no park in the Roberts area where there is the highest floor area ratio (FAR), and no auto or transit connectivity. The Roberts area is part of the plan, but is left out of the plan benefits. The plan is an improvement for circulation, especially for pedestrians, but a lot of aspects are under-inclusive; represent a history of brutality. Look at how are the homeless population and their living circumstances addressed; the homeless problem will exist for a long time. The public services/sustainability section is in part anti-homeless, i.e., benches the homeless cannot sleep on, places they cannot go, a dedicated police department. There is concern with give-away of City lands and the lack of restriction on opportunity-priority development sites on public property. Public/private partnerships tend to not work in favor of public authorities. We need all the public space we can get for quality of life and historic neighborhoods. The preference for cars will go on longer as we enable it; and there are evacuation concerns, but take into consideration the pedestrians who get mowed down by cars. The Roberts Road area is the biggest problem is a total afterthought and fails to unite the area, and fails to create a development pattern that can possibly be historic. The large parcels that are easy to assemble and develop, and that is why there are not commitments to infrastructure improvements; the

intent is to develop swiftly, which will affect Olive Park in a negative way, as people will drive cars through Olive Park, creating a car-river. There is no park in the Roberts Road area, despite being a high-density area and distant from Downtown. The lack of historic neighborhoods and districts is reflective of lack of commitment to historic surveys and resources, and less commitment to neighborhoods which are less-wealthy, and therefore considered less historic. Parking should be unbundled. Active ground floor encouraged in as many places as possible. Automatic Cultural Heritage Board review of historic projects that do not have vested rights; policy authority should be effective.

## **7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

Board Member DeBacker - Last year an assembly bill was passed increasing historic tax credit from 15% to 20-25%. Asked that Board Members look at SB35 that is now in effect and affecting the City, with several local sites being affected - Carrillo Adobe-creekside, and Cannery structures in Railroad Square area; SB35 takes review out of the City's hands, for administrative review.

## **8. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Executive Secretaries Bill Rose and Susie Murray thanked the Chairs for a well run meeting.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Edmondson adjourned the meeting at 7:44 pm.