



City of Petaluma, California
Community Center
320 McDowell Boulevard North
Petaluma, CA 94954

CORRECTED 0904

1
2 Planning Commission Workshop Notes
3 June 15, 2004 – 7:00 PM

4
5 **Commissioners:**

6 *Present:* Asselmeier, Barrett, Dargie*, McAllister, Rose, von Raesfeld

7 *Absent:* Harris

8 * Chair

9
10 **Staff:** Pamela Tuft, Director of General Plan Administration
11 Scott Duiven, Associate Planner, GPA
12 Mike Moore, Community Development Director
13 George White, Asst. CDD

14
15
16 Public Workshop began: 7:00 p.m.

17
18 **NEW BUSINESS:**

19
20 **GENERAL PLAN 2004-2025: Discussion and comment on the Land**
21 **Use and Mobility Alternatives Report**

22 **Present:** Rajeev Bhatia, Dyett & Bhatia

23
24 Janice Cader-Thompson: It seems like the General Plan process is kind of a done deal by
25 Council. We are spending too much money. Believes that the Planning Commissioners
26 thoughtfully went through the information and made good recommendations but if the
27 recommendations are not what the developer wants then they go to the City Council and
28 they get everything reversed. Why go through this process when one body is trying work
29 for the community and the City Council is working for the developers?

30
31 Geoff Cartwright - 56 Rocca Drive: City Council approved the forward motion of Rainier
32 even though there are so many things against it, such as Caltrans not buying into Rainier.
33 This should not be decided ahead of the General Plan process. Next week the City
34 Council will be reviewing the Factory Outlet expansion in the floodplains. Again, this is
35 all being moved ahead of the General Plan process. I haven't seen good identification of
36 the floodplain as it presently exists because of the development that has already occurred
37 in the floodplain, again ahead of the General Plan process. Believes the City Council is
38 working in the best interest of their contributors and commercial interests.

1
2 Daymon Doss – Petaluma Health Care District: On several occasions we have
3 participated in the development of plans and had an opportunity to present a position
4 paper to the City Council and would like to share it with the Planning Commission. Is
5 looking at healthy, sustainable communities and has concerns regarding: the ABAG
6 projections and use, low-cost housing, transportation, parks, health care issues, and
7 financial balance regarding sustainability. We are hoping to give you information and
8 ideas regarding healthy communities as well as a profitable community.

9
10 Pamela Tuft: The Chronology of the General Plan Process is:

- 11
12 — Preparation of Scope of Work done by General Plan Executive Team
13 — Scope of Work Reviewed by Planning Commission with Recommendations to
14 City Council
15 — City Council Authorized the Scope of Work
16 — Request for Statements for Qualifications Sent to over 100 Firms
17 — Executive Team Reviewed Statements of Qualifications
18 — Distributed Request for Proposals to all Firms who responded with Statement of
19 Qualifications – received 13 Proposals back
20 — Executive team interviewed all 13 firms
21 — Two teams were identified and interviewed by the public and all of the
22 Commissions
23 — Recommendations were presented to the City Council
24 — Team of four consulting firms were hired: Dyett & Bhatia, Fehr & Peers (Traffic),
25 Mundie & Associates (Economics); Black & Veatch (Water Resources)

26
27 Rajeev Bhatia: Keep in mind that we are writing policies within the Urban Growth
28 Boundary (UGB) area and to keep the area outside of the UGB with no specific land use
29 designations or requirements; you want it to be so the two compliment each other. Staff
30 spent time compiling information into a land-use database. It lets us know how much
31 land is vacant, open space, etc. Examined neighborhoods and how they have changed
32 over time, for example density.

33
34 David Keller: Is concerned with the results of the XP-SWMM model and concerned that
35 a large portion of the existing FEMA Map floodplain is tentatively noted and as being
36 reduced or eliminated. How is a floodplain reduced above the weir flood project when the
37 Corp explicitly designed that flood project weir to capture no more water than prior gone
38 down the river and it was intended to prevent scowring and additional downstream
39 flooding? In conversations with Phillip Williams & Associates (modeling for the Chelsea
40 Expansion) showed a three to four foot rise based on field data. Chelsea is raising their
41 pads three to four feet above the existing walls. They are not banking on this model so is
42 this model reliable? Has had conversations with hydrologists and they said the XP-
43 SWMM model is great for culverts, pipes, open channels and does not do dynamic
44 modeling very well between natural channels, floodplain storage and movement through
45 the floodplains. Think the wrong model is being used. Need to use Mike 11 model. What
46 risks are we assuming as a public policy?

47
48 Daymon Doss: As we grow in the City, part of our responsibility is the sustainability and

1 liability of healthcare systems and recruitment of physicians so it is critical that we
2 understand as we look at building medical offices what we are looking at as population
3 projections for Petaluma. One of our concerns is that maybe we should go back to the
4 ABAG numbers which are lower and maybe more realistic than Alternatives A, B and C.

5
6 Scott Voorhees: The General Plan is about us designing the future that we desire. People
7 want small town feel and hate the traffic.

8
9 David Keller: In the New York Times there is an article about Las Vegas which has
10 thousands of acres of land open up for development every year for the past 20 years and
11 has housing prices doubling in the past three years. They are running into affordable
12 housing problems and how they are going to house the people who work in the city. We
13 need to be looking at encouraging supporting, subsidizing if necessary, and a different
14 series of housing products. If you want the population you have to provide the density.

15
16 Pamela Tuft: We would all say that we love the small town feeling. We need less big
17 houses on big lots and more density. It was voiced many times at the workshops that we
18 need to get more rentals, townhouses and condos. We want to look at the densities, yield,
19 and growth management system and ratchet it down. That is a policy decision that can be
20 made. We want you to be informed in making that decision, what the ramifications are
21 with regard to economics and balance. Then the Planning Commission can recommend
22 what they feel comfortable with to the City Council with full knowledge of the impacts.

23
24 Matt Maguire: We appreciate where staff is going to go but those of us who worked on
25 the Petaluma Specific Plan a good part of the thinking was that the condos and the
26 available affordable housing was going to be in the downtown area and that is the
27 purpose of the increased density. Decide what vision is appropriate and try to keep the
28 small town feel and hopefully not exasperate the traffic problem. Feels that people are
29 extremely concerned with the numbers that we are seeing and ABAG numbers are a
30 workable balance but going beyond them scares people. Feels people stand strongly
31 behind the UGB for another 20 years not just another 14 years. If we continue with that
32 other column there needs to be a big, bold asterisk saying we are just looking at this
33 column for comparison purposes and not being planned upon and that this message needs
34 to be delivered to the public.

35
36 Pamela Tuft: That would be delivered to the public through the Planning Commission
37 and the City Council in the development in the preferred Land Use Plan.

38
39 Steven Kirk: Regarding Scott Voorhees comments on population growth and the survey,
40 the results showed that 95% deemed congestion important and only 8% sited lack of
41 housing as a top priority. We don't want a lot of growth as far as population is concerned
42 and that housing is not that great of an issue compared to all the other issues.

43
44 David Keller: Are the parks projections based on number of acres of what specific type of
45 park would be needed for what population?

46
47 Rajeev Bhatia: Yes, I believe that is correct.

48
49 David Keller: If we want that quality of life in Petaluma, does development help pay for

1 it?

2

3 Rajeev Bhatia: Development is helping to pay for it. This says that over time if you add
4 what's left over in the kitty in the bank, at the end of the year, and you have all this
5 development and you maintain the current level of services for everything, over time you
6 will see a positive in the reserve fund. If you increase the levels of service you will still
7 have a deficit despite growth.

8

9 David Keller: Would this also apply in the fiscal analysis if we wanted to improve the
10 emergency or health services?

11

12 Pamela Tuft: Yes.

13

14 Commissioner Barrett: Does this analysis and the one on the previous table hold fees at a
15 set rate.

16

17 Rajeev Bhatia: Currently.

18

19 Commissioner Barrett: So they are only looking as the income being generated by more
20 development, the red line?

21

22 Rajeev Bhatia: Combining the existing uses and new uses through the business and sales
23 tax.

24

25 Commissioner Barrett: But they are not looking at changing those fees and using that as
26 another means of generating income? Is this saying you cannot build your way out of
27 fiscal debt and that you may have to use fees?

28

29 Rajeev Bhatia: Absolutely. If you held the current level of development and services, you
30 may have the city remain the way it is, but you are actually seeing a huge decrease.

31

32 Commissioner von Raesfeld: Isn't it reasonable then to expect that somewhere in our
33 General Plan were are going to address this issue and get us out of that deficit position?
34 How are we going to fix it?

35

36 Matt Maguire: Is the adopted General Plan one of the legal tools that the City can use to
37 determine the next development impact fees?

38

39 Pamela Tuft: Yes.

40

41 Clayton Ingstrom: Can you break out how many houses a year we are supposed to build?
42 How much of that property is going to operational costs and built infrastructure?

43

44 Rajeev Bhatia: They went through systematically for every land use.

45

46 Councilmember Torliatt: The parks scenario is just one of the services that the
47 community provides, and when we are looking at parks that is one of the services that is
48 normally a real drain on the General Fund. When we are looking for additional services
49 for Police, Fire, sewer and water for storm drains, we have a huge amount of

1 infrastructure in this community that used to be addressed and the only way we are going
2 to address that need is through redevelopment. We are looking at redevelopment, which
3 in the community can help pay for some of that infrastructure along with the fact that we
4 are going to have to repair it anyway. Need to look at that particular cost center overall
5 with all the City services and how it impacts. Need to be more realistic about the
6 operating expenses that need to be addressed.

7
8 David Keller: There was a substantial projected increase in employment within the City
9 from 27,000 to 44,000 jobs which is a 17,000 job increase. Where is that happening and
10 what kind of jobs are they? The fiscal aspect of the General Plan should be organized
11 around the creation and reinvestment of wealth so we see the wealth turned over in the
12 community. What kind of assumptions do you have on job growth?

13
14 Rajeev Bhatia: They were projected by each land use category.

15
16 David Keller: In terms of long-term trends with job creation/job loss, how is that factored
17 into the presumption?

18
19 Rajeev Bhatia: We did development density, population, and job projections for each
20 land use category.

21
22 Commissioner Asselmeier: Not clear on the process. *Tapes were switched and lost some*
23 *words.*

24
25 Pamela Tuft: We presented the index list that starts out with the general topics.
26 Regarding Surface Water Management, we are working on position papers for the 15
27 General Issue topics. We are still working on the position papers, will review the draft
28 reports with the General Plan Executive Team. The Planning Commission will weigh in
29 at a discussion level that has to happen on the General Issue topics.

30
31 Commissioner: How would working through these relate to the Alternatives? We have
32 three Alternatives; not sure if he gets a linear connection between how these were created
33 and what has been laid out for us in this index?

34
35 Pamela Tuft: For example, the Old Royal Tallow Rendering Plant on Casa Grande Road,
36 the property owner, in reviewing the Alternatives, said they would prefer Alternative B
37 with high-density residential. The existing General Plan land use designation for this
38 parcel is industrial and open space. We presented the following Alternatives: open space
39 on Alt. C, high-density and open space on Alt. B and mixed use on Alt. A. This is
40 considered a change parcel. It is a parcel that we see as an opportunity to look at other
41 than industrial, something in that quadrant and most importantly because of what has
42 happened in the last 15 years in that area. The complex directly east is strictly residential
43 and there is a proposal to change the rest of the remaining portion of the parcel all the
44 way to Lakeville primarily to residential. Do we want to, between Rocky Dog Park and a
45 rental apartment complex; keep an industrial site that is surrounded on two sides with
46 open space, wetland preservation and recreational trails, or is it a change parcel? The
47 owner agrees that yes it is a change parcel.

48
49 Commissioner: As you present these Alternatives in these Position Papers, do they

1 correlate directly to the three main Alternatives?
2

3 Pamela Tuft: Yes. Through your collective and individual direction to us, we are
4 basically creating the Preferred Plan. We will then come back to the Commission and
5 ask you if this is what should be presented to the City Council. That is not to say that it
6 will be Adopted Land Use Plan, but rather it is the Preferred Plan from which we will
7 build the General Plan and hold the Public Hearings. It will be subject to change but
8 allows us to analyze the Preferred Plan through the various models and the Draft
9 Environmental Impact Report, to share with the community the long-range impacts and
10 results of that analysis process.

11
12 Commissioner Asselmeier: Are we to understand that in the Southeast area that this set of
13 parcels are those all of the potential change parcels or are there more that would be
14 affected depending on whether we chose Alternative A, B or C? Is it exemptory?
15

16 Pamela Tuft: It is not cumulative and is not all of the change parcels; we may be bringing
17 more to the Commission as we go. These are the parcels that have created public and
18 owner discussion.
19

20 Commissioner Barrett: How does this discussion process work with very micro
21 discussion as we are looking at each lot of land and how does that take effect to the
22 macro problem of this General Plan? How are we looking at what the community actually
23 really says that they wanted in that list of 10 things with the filtration from the
24 community meetings? Do those three Alternatives a result of those 10 desired goals?
25 When we see problems, how do we look at that—cannot solve the problem by looking at
26 each parcel? Shouldn't we be taking some leadership from the community?
27

28 Pamela Tuft: The intent of the Executive Team and Consultants, after we heard from the
29 community, was to prepare three plans that offered viable alternatives. If the Planning
30 Commission begins to look at the big topics such as Residential Growth Management and
31 Population Projects and at the same time we start looking at the site specifics, what we
32 will feed back to you is the numbers.
33

34 Commissioner Barrett: I can see that this can work but it really is multi-layered and is
35 going to be constantly flipping back and forth.
36

37 Pamela Tuft: In the Position Papers, for example, two sites were presented in the
38 Southeast quadrant. One on Garfield Drive is a surplus Elementary School site that the
39 School District has said it does not need; in Alternative C it is commercial site. If you
40 look at the concepts of connectable and walkability for a neighborhood, it is a good
41 potential to put a shopping center on Garfield Drive. However, staff did not believe at
42 this point in time that this concept would be acceptable to the established neighborhood.
43 We have tried, throughout the alternative development process, to keep the comments
44 received from the public in perspective. If density ranges get reduced, it will reflect in the
45 population. If we look at employment-based sites and the Planning Commission leans
46 toward reducing those designations to add additional open space; we will keep you and
47 City Council informed of the ramifications, which is employment numbers will drop. We
48 hope that the Preferred Plan gets us to a goal with full knowledge of what it is going to
49 cost us to get to that goal over a period of time; including maintenance of those amenities

1 that we wish to sustain for our community and long-term population.

2
3 Commissioner Asselmeier: Is concerned about losing opportunities for pieces of property
4 that cannot be recreated if we default to housing. Believes many of the recommendations
5 seem to come down to housing. Housing seems to turn the most dollars and maybe we as
6 a City should not allow that to drive the decision.

7
8 Pamela Tuft: It is time to tell us if we have given you enough information and start
9 weighing in on the decisions or tell us what more we can do for you to facilitate you
10 weighing those options. We need to start discussion of policy options and receive
11 direction from this Commission.

12
13 Commission von Raesfeld: Is it anticipated that the rough format of this General Plan will
14 be in the general sense similar to other types of General Plans where we will have land
15 use elements and growth policies? The new twist is the UGB. This General Plan gets
16 more parcel specific because you take the land use inventory and put your fingers on the
17 parcels with reasonable development potential. In the end do we anticipate this product
18 will work off the traditional Plan?

19
20 Pamela Tuft: The City Council provided direction specifically on what Elements are to be
21 included in the Scope of Work that are not necessarily required by State Law, one of
22 which is Water Resources. Will get the Planning Commission a list of Elements that were
23 proposed in the Scope of Work. I do not believe that it is going to be a “Typical Plan”
24 other than the fact that it is focused on being an “Infill Plan” and talks about preservation
25 and compatibility in maintaining the existing quality of life.

26
27 Commissioner Rose: The current General Plan possesses a vision that we have been
28 fortunate to see accomplished so is concerned that we will not be able to accomplish
29 goals with infill. We need a formal proactive position for land use.

30
31 Commissioner von Raesfeld: The Team has decided that this is the best working tool and
32 is concerned this tool is playing a land-use shuffle game. Feels like a Land-Use Plan
33 instead of a General Plan.

34
35 Commissioner Asselmeier: Maybe another tool would be to develop some of the
36 language—language to guide the process. Can we bring along some of the other Policies,
37 Objectives and Programs?

38
39 Rajeev Bhatia: We could do it two ways; by topic or geographically looking at areas
40 together. The danger of looking at things topic-to-topic is that you lose sight of the big
41 picture. Would encourage thinking of everything together.

42
43 Commissioner Barrett: How can we approve development that we know will have the
44 money to increase the infrastructure? Re-look at growth numbers. How does the General
45 Plan address traffic problems?

46
47 Pamela Tuft: It addresses traffic issues through the Mobility Element. It will identify
48 Capital Improvement Programs and show the mechanism of how to pay for it, as defined
49 in the Scope of Work. There are no guarantees for implementation, i.e., Capital

1 Improvements.

2

3 Rajeev Bhatia: Suggested that the Commissioners talk about the areas as a whole and the
4 goals and then try to reach some closure on the sites.

5

6 Commissioner von Raesfeld: Does not want a parcel-by-parcel Policy book.

7

8 Commissioner Rose: Community Development is integral in this discussion and would
9 like more input in this process from them. Is not clear that this approach is addressing
10 those issues in the way that a comprehensive Plan has got to do it. Needs to be an
11 integrated approach. Regarding increased traffic, we are not mitigated. Have not heard
12 enough common pieces. We will be invested in key Objectives.

13

14 David Keller: Getting those core goals clear for you, so there is a consensus language, is
15 critical. Regarding land use, it is critical to say that this is the land that we need for the
16 public infrastructure. We need the open space, parks, gathering places and infrastructure.
17 No private property owner will donate their land for the public good unless the Planning
18 Commission says this is what we need. Give up your industrial land ~~so~~ and we won't
19 have them again. Suggested to watch out for mixed use. *[correction requested by speaker at*
20 *meeting of July 7, 2004.]*

21

22 Geoff Cartwright: In the previous General Plan in the Water Element they had a section
23 on flooding with a Policy Statement that generally they do not want to develop any
24 projects that will affect other areas that would create flooding problems. Also created was
25 the Petaluma River Watershed Master Drainage Plan that had several projects. None of
26 the projects were ever built. Need to consider a Policy Statement then need a document
27 that states how you would achieve that.

28

29 Larry Modell Petaluma Tomorrow: They are not satisfied with any of the three
30 Alternatives. Suggested that Planning Commission take this Committee's vision and
31 thoughts and translate it into a map.

32

33 Councilmember Torliatt: Suggests explaining the Floodplain Policy and what the
34 elevation is on the current existing Floodplain Policy and what is being shown as FEMA
35 mapping. Need to look at adopting a Policy with existing as our floodplain area or
36 increasing/decreasing it. Is there a clear snapshot of where existing Conditions and their
37 timelines are? Regarding how many units are allocated to growth, need to look at
38 potentially using the small water that we do have, allocated and focus that as an
39 infrastructure constraint. Regarding the financial issue, we all want a vision that we can
40 implement.

41

42 Commissioner Asselmeier: Regarding the unfunded traffic improvements, would like
43 language so we could assess and potentially incorporate into the General Plan. Need
44 guidance on losing out on opportunities.

45

46 Commissioner Barrett: Is concerned with committing ourselves to developing in such a
47 way that we do not have the infrastructure to support. Need to look at the quality of life.

48

49 Commissioner Asselmeier: Do we want to say something about other kinds of

1 development in the City and link it to the Central Petaluma Specific Plan? How far can
2 we go, give every opportunity to be successful and do everything we want it do?

3

4 Pamela Tuft: We will work very close with Mike Moore and George White to develop
5 the process, as they are the process source, to address the “how to make it happen,” and
6 the identification of priorities and policies.

7

8 Chairperson Dargie: Wants the tools to understand land-use designations. Regarding the
9 floodplain, would like to learn more about what are options are besides building. What
10 does Community Character mean?

11

12 Commissioner von Raesfeld: In anticipation of this “neighborhood character by section”
13 discussion, it appears there is a framework, but feels there needs to be a relevant
14 discussion.

15

16 Rajeev Bhatia: Suggested that at the next meeting to spend some time discussing this.

17