

WESTERN SOMA CITIZENS PLANNING TASK FORCE

TOWN HALL 2 – WE HEAR YOU!!

TRANSCRIBED FLIP CHARTS #2

This is the second transmittal as some additional flip charts for Land Use were found later. I have incorporated them into the notes here.

At the town hall, participants went to four different groups. The primary focus of participant input was on the Suggested Solutions that the Task Force developed. The charts with the Suggested Solutions were numbered to make recording and sorting more manageable and to relate the comments back to the Solutions. (Refer to the Suggested Solutions charts to understand these flip charts. They are in PDF format and I didn't insert them into this Word file.)

At each group, participants provided their input, either in the form of verbal comments which the COP recorders wrote on flip charts, or on Post-It notes which were sorted by Solution.

The COP volunteers from each group handled their transcription a bit differently, but all in all, the material is comprehensive. The Task Force now has the citizen input.

For your ease of review, I have put the four groups' notes together in one file and made a consistent format. I did no other editing.

Any further notes provided by me, the compiler, are in italics.

Kris

PRESERVATION AND STABILIZATION

(Notes in blue by transcriptionist to clarify or question input.)

Support the establishment of South of Market Light Industrial and Historic Preservation District. (1)

- o No. The area should grow as the world changes
- o Yes

Establish Filipino and LGBTQ Cultural Heritage Districts. (2)

- o Yes
- o Yes
- o No. We should have mixed neighborhoods.
- o Special districts are (1) a bad idea; (2) constitute a withdrawal of life. Would affect non-members now living in possible districts. SF is known for diversity, not insularity.
- o Why these groups? Soma has been historically home for lots of groups.
- o Re:Culture Districts: Why just these groups? SoMa is a historical home for all groups (*Note: May be by the same person as the comment above, one on flipchart sheet, one on note paper*)
- o What are the requirements for Filipino, LGBTQ Cultural Heritage Districts?
 - Need to be more specific to protect those communities and encourage their development in WSoma.
 - Increase visibility of these communities in WSoma---how can we do so through this new planning.
 - Preserve these communities (Filipinos and LGBT!) not just building (business, social services, community space)
- o Support #2
- o Cultural districts are limiting to business growth.

Landmark significant resources. (3)

- o Yes
- o Absolutely
- o Need to be flexible about kinds of use---very expensive to adapt---can't just restrict to industrial uses---allow office use, etc (for #3 and #4).

Encourage adaptive reuse of architecturally significant commercial structures. (4)

- o Yes. Very important
- o Yes
- o Adaptive review: Must be flexible in types of use allowed (i.e., office). Costs to reuse historic building are very high, given seismic, ADA and existing life/safety codes
- o Require maintenance of old buildings.

Implement Alley Improvement Programs in the residential enclave. (5)

- o Yes!!!
- o Yes
- o Traffic flow control---speed bumps for alleys

- o More speed bump in alleyways to protect kids.

Require the mandatory replacement of affordable rental and ownership housing. (6)

- o Yes
- o Absolutely
- o Loosen the current limits on TIC conversions. Allow current tenants living in apartments to go to TIC and eventual condo. Let tenants become homeowners in SoMa.
- o Lessen restrictions on TIC conversion to increase local ownership ([Note: may be same person as comment above, this on flipchart, and on note paper](#))
- o Limit TIC.

Adopt higher standards for inclusionary housing (7)

- o Yes
- o Yes
- o Inclusionary housing requires a huge financial subsidy since there are no public dollars available. Inclusionary housing can only be built with subsidy from private market rate housing, but only up to a limit. If you limit market rate, you wont get affordable.
- o Good
- o Analyze the financial feasibility of adopting additional inclusionary housing requirements
 - Do a nexus study to see if development of housing will actually work with higher inclusionary requirements
- o Rather than increasing affordable inclusion requirements, can we require family-oriented housing---larger units
- o Need feasibility (financial) study of inclusionary requirement
- o Create requirement for family-oriented housing (instead of just low income).

Heights, where permitted, over 40 feet should require Conditional Use approval. (8)

- o Not necessarily
- o Yes and require community benefit ____
- o 40 feet is low. 60 feet would be more appropriate
- o Number 8 is bad. We should encourage height to create more residences. Street level business space (retail or manufacturing) should be mandatory
- o Disagree: Less regulation of building heights. Building up reduces land use and sprawl and promotes more efficient use of land
- o Mandatory Discretionary Review (MDR), in place of Conditional Use, is less expensive but still public (goes in front of Planning Commission). If public input/participation is the issue, MDR accomplishes the same thing as CU, but adds much less cost for the developers, keeping costs down and encouraging for developers ([Meant as general comment for all items with CU proposals, i.e. #8, #10](#))
- o Build high to have greater density.

Create incentives for enterprise housing for artists that offers living areas and encourages shared work space. (9)

- o Yes
- o Yes

Discourage displacement of arts uses by having a Conditional Use trigger. (10)

- o Yes
- o Absolutely
- o Stabilize existing businesses in addition to arts.

Prohibit demolition of existing arts space without replacement. (11)

- o Yes
- o Yes
- o Find a way to define artist space (limited furniture, plumbing, etc.) and make minimums in some places. (Note: this comment did not indicate a specific number, so may have been meant as a general comment for items 9-11).

Provide parks and open space in the western portion of the SUD. (12)

- o Yes
- o Yes
- o Agreed: More parks wherever possible
 - Relates to #8, build up---saves space---more space for parks, etc.
- o Dogs Dogs Dogs! We have more dogs than kids here!
 - Finally we get a park and now we can't have dogs. They're claiming there is no room but everything in the park is designed for kids and NOT DOGS
- o Needs of pets need to be addressed---no place for a dog run (Note: may be by the same person as the comment above---this on flipchart, that on note paper)
- o Proposed New Land Use. New Parks with accommodation for dog run
- o Special use parks a good idea.

Require publicly accessible open space on large private development sites. (13)

- o Yes!!
- o Yes
- o Number 13 is bad. Public spaces provided by private developers are almost always underutilized. The neighborhood needs less empty space, not more.

Initiate mandatory neighborhood notification for major alterations and changes of use (accomplished). (14)

- o Yes
- o Absolutely

Require Conditional Use approval for chain stores (accomplished). (15)

- o Yes
- o Yes, Make law that chain stores give back to the community by hiring within community

- o Is there a law to require chain stores to hire within the community? Include this requirement in plan (Note: may be by the same person as the comment above---this on flipchart, that on note paper).

General and Miscellaneous Comments:

- o Business loop 700 for preservation (may be meant for #1 or #2)
- o Re: mitigate impact of new development---why not add an impact fee to help pay for district community amenities?
- o Limit social services to within reasonable range of average, citywide
- o Condemn vacant properties!
 - Veterans Cab lot
 - Church on 10th and Howard
- o Maintain small lot sizes. Prevent development on multiple adjacent lots. Require large industrial lots be split when rezoning/rebuilding for residential
- o Solutions 1-15 do not quite reflect the June '07 Town Hall meeting
- o Not sure the solutions align to the input
- o Require maintenance of existing old buildings
- o Plant trees to increase overall greening, not just isolated green spaces
- o Decrease loitering
- o Infrastructure for homeless people so they don't have to poop on the street
- o With increased residential building, parking is of utmost concern (for all 4 corners (topic areas) of this meeting)
- o Sidewalk maintenance and rehabilitation:
 - Widen sidewalks where appropriate. Extend sidewalks at intersections (eliminating last parking place on the block) for pedestrian safety.
 - Tree care, planting and replacement. Protect existing old trees in planning code
- o Public bathrooms
- o Have a requirement that Starbucks include a Jamba Juice next door to each location
- o Better tracking of child offenders (in shelters) because of closeness to children in neighborhood.

SAFETY AND PUBLIC WELFARE

Lighting (solution #2): Limit effect on residential interiors

Natural surveillance (solution #3): Who to call if something to report?

Video cameras for new properties

Public master list of all neighborhood groups and contacts

Trees and sightlines (#4): Danger of ground-level alcoves

Mid-block crossings (#6): Specify traffic lights

Clear signage (#8): Should include

Services at transit nodes (#10): Goal of mixed-use will promote this. Increase mixed-use by bringing back small businesses that left during dot-com era.

Lower-intensity entertainment: How to attract?

Also has preservation value (giving entertainment license to existing venue)

Specify zoning regulations (porn? dance club?)

Housing close to highways (#13): Not a concern for all

#11 Need sidewalks, especially on Townsend from 4th to 7th Streets

ALLEYS -- visible cameras for surveillance

ENFORCEMENT of laws (burglary)

Mechanism for cleaner streets -- tax? business owners work together to clean?

More lighting (e.g., Howard Street)

Graffiti removal: post visible phone number?

Better bike lanes

2-lane streets -- more dangerous for bikes? (e.g. Mission Street is 2-way, less room for bikes)

Homeless presence: more services for (public bathrooms)

- Problem with sleeping in alcoves

#1 More lighting from ground

Mitigation fees from new development used for new bathrooms?

Maintenance as safety issue -- especially in alleys

Maintain roads and sidewalks: #1 environmental design relates to this. Developer's responsibility for ongoing maintenance?

Keep semi trucks near freeway ramps (not in other areas) (new, good suggestions in keeping with the principles)

Government vehicles should be held accountable to follow laws (emissions, etc.)

(#5) There should be safe places for families (indoor and outdoor). Places like a recreation center that is completely open to the public was not considered safe for families.

There needs to be education on toxic materials.

(#2) Better lighting

(#5) More eyes on the street especially at night

More retail services for people who live in the neighborhood.

(#12) Agree that low intensity night life would be useful

Believe **#14 and #15** would discourage development.

Seniors and children need more safety.

Streets should not be like freeways (new, good suggestions in keeping with the principles)

Want speed bumps on alleys that have become thoroughfares. (new, good suggestions in keeping with the principles)

There should be parking permits.

Safety and Public Welfare

Sticky Notes

1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes, but how will you do this? Yes, too vague.• <u>Absolutely!</u>• Yes, but how? Too vague.• Yes• Yes• ABSOLUTELY! With stop lighting• Yes• Yes• Absolutely• Yes• Yes• Yes• Yes• Yes• Yes• Yes
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1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike improvements including separate bike paths between parking and sidewalk. • Lane reconfiguration where many cars turn right. 10 & Folsom, 8 & Folsom, 5 & Howard. • Bike lane re-configuration painted on asphalt when long projects start that obstruct bike lane, i.e. Intercontinental Hotel on 5th & Howard.
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freeway off ramp and on ramps are bad for pedestrians. • More transit. Bus-only lanes • Better lighting and environment under freeways. • #5 is good. • 14 and 15 are superfluous. We don't need more hurdles to building.
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People need uninterrupted sidewalks to walk. There are no cross walks near many freeway entrances. • Many streets such as Townsend do not have sidewalks. This is dangerous and unpleasant.
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPEED BUMPS on smaller streets/alley ways that are now being used to cut across.
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased security on FRI/SAT nights in areas near clubs – 11th and Folsom, 8th and Folsom. • Pedestrian improvements crossing Division/13th countdown signals and square sidewalk corners. • “Bulbouts” at every corner!
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For eyes on the street, just zone west SOMA “clothing optional.” • For public urination and defecation, require all new buildings to have a toilet fixture on the outside wall.
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More lighting – but not necessarily all overhead lights. Lights in ground going up or lights posted at knee height.
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need more recreation in Western SOMA.
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cameras on the less populated side streets – highly publicized to discourage criminals. • Need more supervision protection on alley streets. • Cameras on small alley streets, off numbered streets where lighting and pedestrian traffic is minimal. • More street lights!!! My alley street is victimized almost nightly. • More effective street cleaning. My street should be cleaned every Monday. Don't know if they ever clean.

1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small business and retail – keeping their doors open – later to 9 pm?
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycle at public meetings.
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14-exempt affordable housing
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City serving streets should be neighborhood serving. • Definitely need parks. • Need mid-blocks in many streets to connect enclaves. • LEED certificates? • Limit health service centers.
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The single biggest way to fight crime is to add more market-rate housing. That will increase foot traffic, shops, small businesses and deter criminal behavior. However, maybe the new housing shouldn't be fortress-style.
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Can we limit new homeless/transitional housing to keep things safer?
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Do not place low-rent or supportive housing units; new developments so close together. We are trying to diversity our community.

LAND USE

1 – Yes.

2 - Concern over Harrison and Bryant as CCC.

2 - CCC - how does this impact neighborhood? There are already streets like this, i.e., Geary and Mission. Why create another? Will this create a dead zone and will it negatively impact neighborhood?

2 - Preserve areas—spread out specific kinds of development.

2 – Yes

2 and 4 – No. We should have different kinds of business in the area than designating certain businesses in the district.

3 and 4 - Need to add environmental performance impact, not just usage.

3 – yes, but there will probably be back lash.

4 - Does “light industrial uses” take into account traffic control? Any control on trucks/trailers/traffic? Keep in mind that different types of industries will incur different types of traffic.

5 - Change “prohibit” to “discourage”.

5 - “Main streets” refer to which streets?

5 - If not residential, will it just become parking? Need to make sure no parking on first level and is not visible from the street.

5 should apply to more streets, but not at 100% of new development.

6 is good. Increase verticality!

7 - Different viewpoints expressed on entertainment venues. Some argued for allowing larger entertainment venues, whereas others were in favor of limiting numbers allowed (as expressed in current language).

7 - There are enough large-scale entertainment venues. We need to create guidelines for entertainment venues to keep under control.

7 - Should limit the number of bars.

7 & 8 – Great! More small, low occupancy entertainment venues!!! That would be great!

7 – Encourage preservation and expansion of entertainment that serves a broad range of SF residents. Preserve areas that are a buffer to new residential construction.

8 - Concern about access to restaurants. Concern about noise levels.

8 - Bar has to be sound proof.

8 – quiet enjoyment from 2 to 6 a.m.

8 - What is “environment”? Concern about escalation in noise.

8 -- Entertainment in restaurants is good as long as they don't become clubs (minimum number of tables, food served, wait staff)

8 – If entertainment is allowed, there should be restrictions on noise!

- 8 – Provide funding to help mitigate existing sound issues to “valued” venues.,
- 9 – Good non-residential uses. Entertainment other than just standard clubs and bars, example, jazz bar, live band dance venues.
- 9 – Present affordability by repurposing existing building stock.
- 9 – Preserve cultural diversity of use by tolerance to existing and expand variety of use and not homogeneity.
- 10 - Designate SALI zones together. Don't put in residential.
- 11 - What does “encourage” mean?
- 11 - What if economy tanks? Will this area become empty lots?
- 11 - Already have a lot of multimedia—want to protect.
- 12 - What is residential enclave?
- 12 - There need to be buffer zones for RED.
- 12 - RED different from “live-work” spaces—how to acknowledge people living in warehouse spaces?
- 12 – Yes! Very important.
- 13 – this seems out of balance with setback proposals, which were designed for large lots (without alleys).
- 15 - Concern if all don't have setback—instead should match existing pattern.
- 15 - “Require” should be changed to “encourage.”
- 15 - Concern that setback may lead to safety issues.
- 15 - Concern about setback even in alley ways.
- 15 - Bring in more “green” developers. There should be more trees.

The following are questions and comments not identified with a particular solution:

What proposals for parking for Western SoMa? Should this include parking for residential, i.e., 1:1 ratio?

Are there are any proposals for affordable housing? There should be 15-20% affordable.

Can we set maximum size for building lots?

Tall is OK, width is more of the issue.

None of what was talked about in first Town Hall is represented on Input List.

All new development should be required to include green space.

Should eliminate time limits for parking.

Require that parking lots be put underground, not at street level.

No new homeless and transitional housing in the neighborhood.

Require that large (box) businesses fit into the neighborhood. No suburban design.

Setbacks should match existing structures.

Encourage 24-hour activity, but discourage excessive noise.

I support all 1-15 except 2 and 4. I believe in an open market for these.

Limit the total number of bars in this area.

Given the threat of global warming, the last thing we should be doing is trying to keep density low. Greater density will save water, land, resources and reduce greenhouse gases – because we won't be pushing people into large suburban lots. We should lift height restrictions where possible.

Control maximum lot size (width) for new buildings, especially for industrial converting to residential. Propose height bonus for 25' lot (allowed extra storey automatic) for narrow developments.

Enforcement, more active and more consistent.

Community celebrations. More art, more benches, block parties.

Neighborhood watch phone numbers be accessible to all.

Better outreach.

Positive signs -- I see smiles here. Have a good day.

SALI = co-ops, non-retail warehouses

Promote more recreation facilities

Need for sidewalks

More street lights

Needs parks with community centers

Save existing recreation facilities

Well-lit intersections, crosswalks, pedestrian crossings, bike lanes.

Lit bus shelters with good signage.

Better bus service and routes (Folsom) because it encourages transit use.

More locations like "sushi Groove" and "the public" – upscale restaurant & entertainment.

Protect residential enclaves – good idea.

Don't concentrate CCC type business along certain streets (9th, 10th, for example). I live between 9th and 10th. I don't want to same types of stores all around me.

There are virtually no sidewalks on Townsend between 4th & 7th.

We need more density. Have you walked around at night? Having more neighbors is good.

Yes to N.C.

No to CCC on 9th & 10th.

Make 9th & 10th and main streets more like Upper Market & Columbus & Geary, etc.

Yes to set backs in enclaves.

Historical preservation: why these groups? Hispanics, Germans, African Americans, sailors, etc. have also been historically part of these neighborhoods.

No area is SOMA-like Chestnut in Marina, or Union or Polk in other neighborhoods.

Require more than 5 feet setback on new construction in alley ways. (Allow sun, sidewalk)

Any of the bullet points and decisions from last meeting are not marked on the boards. We talked about increasing density and now the boards are saying "keep same density." Someone is not listening to us.

Have more community celebrations like block parties.

More community outreach for this process.\

Lighting on crosswalks (10th & Harrison)

Neighborhood watch phone numbers.

Increase all transit, especially the Folsom Street line.

Have better maintained sidewalks.

Have safe sidewalks. Example, there are holes where trees were.

Better lighting inside bus shelters.

More benches with small shrubs.

Flowering vines.

NEW ZONING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Note: These beginning comments are by Paul Lord. I captured them for their basic descriptions clarifying points.

North of freeway – residential
South of freeway – commercial

Limit new housing to average of 10 years going forward

SALI & SSO – 4th and Townsend

Housing built by allocation

Vacancy rates being studied
- no housing south of Harrison Street

#4 – Limits not a good idea; seems artificial. The community should be allowed to decide this issue.

#4 – Need for more affordable housing (seconded); such as medium and lower-cost housing – described as “workforce” housing. (Facilitator note: Lower cost housing was often mentioned in connection with families, and the need for more bedrooms.)

#5 – Do not prohibit housing in SALI & SSO areas.

New item: Condemned housing – how are decisions made about the use of these buildings?

Round Two – Facilitation Sheets

Why was “north of the freeway” designated as residential, and “south of the freeway designated as commercial?”

South – no parks, no shopping (this is why it is commercial)
North – conflicts with Eastern SoMa where housing butts West SoMa area.

The “Palms’ deal” was an exception.

Eliminate off-sites going forward, and add more low-income housing. What about moderate income housing (more work force housing)? Who builds this?

Encourage market-rate housing as a percentage of overall housing: 15% low-income, 20% moderate-income; etc.

Inclusionary housing for lower income (no off-sites.)

[Facilitator's note: There were a number of discussions that occurred around "off-sites," with most people voicing a desire to see more integrated housing, instead of building low-income "off the site" of the new development.]

In order to create a subsidy for increased housing and services – tax people who are moving into the area at a higher [tax] rate. Don't increase market-rate housing; and review tearing down the lower income housing before it is done. Also, explore building housing south of the freeway.

No more parking garages and more green space.

Round Three – Facilitation Sheets

Consider "bust" controls, as well as "boom" controls.

Does "boom" proofing only apply to new development? (yes)

Prohibit use by large institutions

Proliferation of liquor stores and homeless shelters throws the balance off

Developers need to heed the rule for including affordable housing in their developments

Inclusionary housing and balance of green space; ratio of housing and green space should be examined.

#7 – No medium-box stores. They compromise the neighborhood and they should be prohibited. What about affordable housing in general? Low rent housing should not be concentrated in one area.

[Facilitator's note: More opposition to "off-site" affordable housing was voiced.]

Found Four – Facilitation Sheets

Restrictions of new homeless shelters and social services, etc. The city can't put everything here.

No new surface level parking.

#7 – Medium-box establishments must fit in with the neighborhood, and all new retail should have sidewalk access.

Options for "middle" ground between East and West zoning proposals should be considered.

#7 – What will preserve small business? Do we need restrictions?

#5 & #7 – Likes mixed use; because "no housing" creates a negative effect for the neighborhood.

There are currently 2,000 units in SALI; and between 10th and Folsom, there are 130 new SRO housing units. Housing runs up the cost of land.

#9 – Mitigation fees should cover the demand/increased need for public services.

#5 – In SALI, no institutions

#11 – Re “Boom-proof” --patterns of development should be researched, and the impacts should also be researched.

Parking meters should be eliminated on Saturday for the residential areas.

There should be a green park on any large development site.

#4 – Why limit annual housing production? Seems like an artificial limit and would limit investment in the neighborhood. (This person was opposed to #4.)

How can the residents reverse zoning decisions made by the City?

Convert some of the transportation arteries to pedestrian and park areas. The conversion of streets in San Jose to unify San Jose State University was used as the example.