

6/26/18

PUBLIC
COMMENT

Tuyen Ngo

From: Jennifer Yamaguma
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2018 9:47 AM
To: Tuyen Ngo
Subject: FW: Public comments from June 26, 2018 - Vartan

From: Jennifer Yamaguma
Sent: Tuesday, June 26, 2018 10:28 PM
To: kirk vartan
Cc: Mayor and Council
Subject: RE: Public comments from June 26, 2018 - Vartan

Good evening, Kirk,

Thank you for the written comments, which I will include in the official record. We had many technical difficulties with the speaker timer this evening, which resulted in having to utilize our former timer system. I do apologize for the inconvenience and share your frustration. As we speak, we are working with the vendor to address the issue.

Thank you,

J. Yamaguma

From: kirk vartan [mailto:kirk@kvartan.com]
Sent: Tuesday, June 26, 2018 10:17 PM
To: Mayor and Council
Cc: Jennifer Yamaguma
Subject: Public comments from June 26, 2018 - Vartan

Hello,

Due to the lack of visuals on the counter, I could not get through my comments. I cam both copying them in this email and attaching them. I am a bit frustrated I could not finish correctly. I didn't know the counter wasn't working as the person directly before me it (AND EVERY OTHER ONE) worked just fine.

Anyway, here are my comments. I didn't get to summarize:

So, a plan created in 2 months over 3 years ago with many now non-existent conditions is still pretty much the same. Input has been given. And the next "public" discussion with the City (not a presentation of the project application) is Aug when you are set to approve the project. And at that time, bringing any of this up is not only too late, it is a waste of time. And in the meantime, all the legal stuff is getting worked out, making any changes even more challenging.

So, at the end of the day, is there opportunity for you to improve this?

BEGIN NOTES:

In August, you will be making a permanent decision on these 6-acres, and the future of the area.

I like to focus on positive, unfortunately some of what I am sharing is not. To be clear, this image is not the proposed agrihood.

Feb 2015 – A poorly written RFP was released

Developers has an 8 week turnaround – CONDITIONS: timelines, clauses, partners – Core took some risk and stepped up!

Sept 2015 - Core selected – not a specific project

Nov 2015 – Multiple community meetings on exact project became plan for community meetings

Many asked for grander vision discussion – never happened

Veterans site, Speno Center – not visualized (still)

The council made it clear to staff not to “plan” for this project when they directed staff to remove the project description from the Wieckowski Senate Bill.

PPS came to Santa Clara last year.

PPS’s message was clear: Activate the ground floor. Creates “places” for people...enhance the public realm.

The City Staff heard PPS, Council, and community: Do an EIR with larger and bold options:

- 25,000sqft of commercial
- 584 housing units
- 1.5 acres open space

With a new 12-plex cinema, a multibillion shopping center, and a 2,500 stall parking lot across the street, people are around.

Yet, the City Staff used the developer’s original project information from almost two years earlier.

When I asked why, I was told:

- City staff asked the developer and the developer was not interested in changing their original project
- The City Council was not giving input or not interested

There is only 2,500 sqft of commercial space on this site. That’s it.

PPS speaks about activating the ground floor and the building edges as a way to create a place. All ground level portions of this project should be activated, yet, most are not. Why isn’t the entire ground floor neighborhood retail, live/work, activated, and a public asset/amenity?

Earlier this month, an email went out from SV@Home, SVLG, and Housing Trust SV to support the agrihood using this image. This was the inspirational image that brought Win6 together. It is not what is being proposed, an unfortunate miscommunication.

But it reminded me what brought us all together. It was for a piece of public property to give back in the greatest way possible. How can this land give the most?

It is clear: Public spaces that engage people. Active ground floor spaces, not residential doors, apartments, a private gym, or blank walls. Public land should serve the maximum public benefit.

So, a plan created in 2 months over 3 years ago with many now non-existent conditions is still pretty much the same. Input has been given. And the next “public” discussion with the City (not a presentation of the project application) is Aug when you are set to approve the project. And at that time, bringing any of this up is not only too late, it is a waste of time. And in the meantime, all the legal stuff is getting worked out, making any changes even more challenging.

So, at the end of the day, is there opportunity for you to improve this?

QUESTIONS:

How were the PPS guidelines followed and embraced in this current project?

How are we holding the developer to now known goals for public space?

How is the ground floor contributing to the public realm?

Why was the EIR Scoping criteria not followed?

Note: No one is suggesting Valley Fair retail here. Think about wellness centers, maker spaces, bakery, green incubator space, live/work studios, NGO space, etc.