

Planner's Institute
Monterey, CA
March 24 – 26, 2010

1) Type of Sessions Attended

- a) Cutting Edge Issues
- b) Items for Next Planning Commission and City Council to consider

2) CEQA Update

- a) Gave short basic CEQA overview
- b) New Legislation
 - i) Very little in last Legislature session
 - ii) CEQA exemption for Commerce football stadium
 - iii) AB 1805 and SB 1010 would exempt up to 125 projects/year from CEQA => Not expected to pass
- c) Litigation
 - i) 20 - 25 significant cases per year => makes EIR's bigger
 - ii) Tara v. Hollywood – City can't fund project if don't comply with CEQA
 - iii) S kyranch v. Sacramento – denial of CUP renewal not a CEQA project
 - iv) Citizen's for Better Environment. v. South Coast AQMD – CEQA baseline based on normal instead of hypothetical conditions
 - v) Shellinger v. Sebastapol – one year deadline for preparing EIR doesn't apply if applicant changes project
- d) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Guidelines for CEQA Analysis
 - i) Effective March 18, 2010
 - ii) Lead agency identifies project 's GHG emissions
 - iii) Compare to AQMD thresholds (not yet finalized) to determine significance of impact or need for mitigation
 - iv) No mitigation necessary if GHG emissions already covered within another plan (such as General Plan)
 - v) Appendix F (Energy Conservation) in CEQA guidelines revised, results in new questions for Initial Study

3) Creating Culture of Sustainability

- a) Canada requiring sustainability plans => Winter Olympics
- b) South Lake Tahoe and Windsor, CA incorporating sustainability into their operations
- c) Vancouver, B.C. and Portland, OR establishing “eco-districts”
 - i) Districts with green buildings, transportation corridors, walkable areas, dense development
 - ii) Density controversial in our City
- d) How Planning Commission can influence
 - i) General plan updates
 - ii) Capital improvement plans
 - iii) Interactions with Council members
- e) American Institute of Architects conducts sustainability evaluations every year to 10 cities at no cost to each city.

4) Day 2 Breakfast Keynote – Harry Perdue on facial looks and expressions as key to understanding personalities.

5) Ensuring Mobility in Changing Era

- a) 65+ population to double in next 10 years, have different needs for
 - i) transportation
 - ii) recreation
 - iii) mobility (walking)
- b) Need to rethink LOS A – F system,
 - i) does not reflect walkability
 - ii) focused on moving cars, not on bicycle and pedestrian safety
- c) Potential solutions
 - i) Roundabouts – shown to improve traffic flow
 - ii) Complete Streets with full pedestrian access, bicycle lane, shade trees, unobstructed sidewalks
 - iii) Bus Rapid Transit with dedicated lanes and synchronized signals for buses

6) Fort Ord Tour

- a) Massive Base – 28,000 acres
- b) 20,000 acres former ranges, will be permanent open space
- c) The Dunes Project
 - i) Mixed uses of residential, commercial, business park
 - ii) Only retail at present
- d) Local airport where former helicopter base was
- e) Toured LEED certified platinum charter school for dyslexic children (where officer club was).
- f) CSU Monterey Bay growing
- g) Toured area of new Veterans Cemetery
- h) Still have small Army installation, privatized military housing for Naval Postgraduate School and Defense Language Institute
- i) Privatized cleanup allows Local Reuse Authority to remediate military contamination quicker than Army
- j) 2000 old barracks must be removed due to lead paint and asbestos

7) Climate Proofing Your Community

- a) Coastal sea level rise could impact up to 480,000 in California
- b) General Plan Updates should include walkable communities, conservation, transfer of development rights, energy efficiency, performance based vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
 - i) Attorney General settled several of its CEQA challenges
 - ii) AG has several examples of General Plans on-line that meet climate change requirements
- c) SB 375
 - i) Local governments to develop sustainability plans to achieve GHG reduction
 - ii) Metropolitan planning organizations (SCAG) develops plan for all cities to follow based on ARB GHG reduction targets
- d) City of Irvine Climate Action Plan – Chandra Krout
 - i) Baseline inventory of GHG in city, estimated 2020 GHG emissions based on General Plan build out, reduce GHG 15% by 2020
 - ii) Climate action implementation plan subject to CEQA

- iii) Transportation accounts for 69% of GHG, much of it from vehicles traversing I-405, I-5, and SR-55 and do not stop in City
- iv) Communication with stakeholders critical => changed name of Climate Action Plan to “Energy Efficiency and Conservation Plan.”
- v) Review of capital improvement plans for General Plan consistency an opportunity to review GHG emissions, energy use for reduction opportunities.

8) Observations and Recommendations

- a) General Plan update in middle of decade that addresses
 - i) Needs of seniors
 - ii) Sustainability approaches
 - iii) SB 375 requirements
 - iv) Alternative approaches to traffic reduction, transit, moving people throughout the city
- b) Rethinking transportation/circulation
 - i) Complete streets
 - ii) Bus Rapid Transit instead of light rail
 - iii) Use of Roundabouts on secondary and feeder streets
- c) Need for Planning Commissioners to become familiar with CEQA guidance on addressing GHG reductions
- d) Explore ways to have capital improvement projects better address GHG reduction, energy efficiency
- e) Dialogue with City’s stakeholders
 - i) The benefits of density
 - ii) Need to reduce GHG