



Wednesday, February 22, 2017, 6:00 PM
Central Park Library – Redwood Meeting Room

1. Attendance

The meeting was chaired by Councilmember Debi Davis. Councilmembers Teresa O'Neill and Pat Kolstad were also in attendance.

City staff present included Andrew Crabtree, Director for Community Development, Elaheh Kerachian, and Jeff Schwilk.

Approximately 30 community members were in attendance, including representatives of Santa Clara University and several persons who identified themselves as part of a group called "Reclaiming our Downtown".

2. Public Presentation

Members of "Reclaiming our Downtown" gave a presentation of features of the Downtown that they would favor, as well as examples from other comparable downtowns. The presentation focused on the potential benefits an historic theater might provide. Following the presentation, members of the Committee and the community asked questions about the presentation and how the presenters were proposing to fund the project.

3. New Business – Presentation & Workshop

Following introductory comments by Councilmember Davis, Frank Fuller and Jane Lin of Urban Field Studio, the City's consultant, gave a presentation about the Downtown that focused on two topics:

1. A summary of community comments from previous Downtown Revitalization Committee meetings; and
2. An introduction of three alternative urban design concepts for the Downtown, each representing different input provided by the community at the prior meetings.

After the presentation, meeting participants then divided into three smaller table groups to discuss their visions for the Downtown, starting with the alternatives as depicted with scaled three-dimensional models provided at the tables. Additional model pieces, which represented streets, buildings, parking, and open spaces, were available to all the participants, allowing them to modify the models during the discussions to illustrate each group's ideas.

The discussion were initiated by consideration of the following questions:

- a. Which elements and ideas illustrated in the three alternatives do you like?
- b. Which ones do you not like?
- c. What kind of street or connection should Franklin Street become?
- d. What uses and activities should Downtown Santa Clara offer?
- e. What kind of new buildings and open spaces should be in Downtown?

3. Discussion

After approximately 45 minutes of group discussion, each of the three groups selected a representative to present a summary of their group's discussion. Participants from each group had comments about the alternative concept provided by the consultants, as well new ideas and preferences identified during the group's discussion. The following is a summary of the presentation and discussion of each group's work.

Group A – The concept was named, “Focus on Infill”.

Group A's feedback on presented Alternatives:

Most participants liked Alternative C (Re-establishing the Downtown Grid) best but one participant also liked the idea of a main east-west pedestrian connection as illustrated in Alternative A (Focus on Infill).

Group A's Preferred Key Objectives and Features:

- Reestablish Franklin Street and north-south connections as feasible.
- Make Downtown a local destination.
- Preserve some uses, including Park Central Apartments.
- Provide connectivity to Santa Clara University and complement the University's arts uses.
- Introduce a main public space as well as smaller public spaces.

Group B – The concept was named, “Meandering Main Street”.

Group B's feedback on presented Alternatives:

Participants of Group B worked with the meandering layout of Franklin Street, but replaced and reconfigured some uses. They also proposed to re-establish the old north-south streets in the “Old Quad” grid through the super block of Downtown.

Preferred Key Objectives and Features:

- Re-establish the street grid with a meandering new Franklin Street as Main Street.
- Make Downtown a local destination, with a pedestrian-friendly new Franklin Street and a new theater.
- Create a central public space on Franklin Street to become the heart of Downtown.
- Place higher buildings along Lafayette Street across from the University campus.

Group C – The concept was named, “Re-establish the Downtown Grid”.

Group C’s feedback on presented Alternatives:

Participants of Group C wanted to keep the old street grid, as illustrated in Alternative C (Re-establish the Downtown Grid), and to concentrate activity along new Franklin Street as a “Main Street”. Participants felt that this option most closely resembled historic Downtown Santa Clara.

Preferred Key Objectives and Features:

- Re-establish the old street grid with a straight and walkable new Franklin Street as a Main Street.
- Make Downtown a local destination with activity and a mix of uses concentrated along the new Franklin Street.
- Create a larger central open space at the heart of Downtown and a series of smaller public spaces to encourage pedestrian activity and outdoor uses.
- Create gateways at either end of the new Franklin Street.
- Allow for an eclectic mix of buildings, including forms and heights, along the new Franklin Street.

Emerging Common Themes:

As the participants of each group reported to the larger gathering and a summary discussion ensued, some common themes emerged, including the following:

- Make downtown a local destination;
- Make Franklin Street a pedestrian-focused Main Street;
- Re-establish the old street grid from the “Old Quad”;
- Encourage a mix of uses, particularly along new Franklin Street:
- Introduce a theater as an iconic building and symbol for the Downtown;
- Include a Community Center (can be combined with a theater);
- Create a gateway at either end of the new Franklin Street;
- Establish a central public space that can be used for music and events;
- Improve walkability within Downtown and connectivity to surrounding areas;
- Honor references to history and historical buildings;
- Suggested land uses: Hotel; community center; theater; small retail; market, grocery; mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail; smaller open spaces along a new Franklin Street; a focus on residential uses along Benton Street; mixed-use office buildings, if any, to be in blocks between new Franklin Street and Homestead Road;
- Improve connectivity to Santa Clara University (SCU) campus and to the Library;
- Preserve the existing Post Office and retail/office building at Homestead and Jackson Street.
- Create a parking strategy for the Downtown area.
- Build district parking structures and share existing parking structures on SCU campus.

A more detailed summary and illustrations of the each group’s work is provided in the Meeting Notes.

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM. A date for a future meeting was to be determined and would likely include an interactive workshop format.

Prepared
by: _____

Frank Fuller
Consultant, Urban Field Studio



Approved
by: _____

Andrew Crabtree
Community Development Director



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COMMUNITY MEETING #6 – Central Park Library, 2635 Homestead Road, Redwood Meeting Room, Santa Clara, 02/22/2017, 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Downtown Revitalization Committee Members:

Councilmember Debi Davis, Chair

Councilmember Teresa O'Neill

Councilmember Kathy Watanabe

Staff:

Andrew Crabtree, Director of Community Development

Elaheh Kerachian

Jeff Schwilk

Urban Field Studio:

Frank Fuller

Jane Lin

Heidi Sokolowsky

Community Members: see sign-in sheet

The meeting started with introductions, followed by a presentation by the citizen group *Reclaiming Our Downtown* and a presentation by Urban Field Studio summarizing previous workshops and introducing three alternatives based on community input from previous workshops. Participants then worked in three different groups with scaled three-dimensional models representing the three alternatives. Additional pieces representing streets, buildings, parking, and open spaces, and participants were available to participants, which allowed them to modify the models during the discussion to illustrate the groups' ideas.

The discussion evolved around the following questions:

- a. Which elements and ideas illustrated in the three alternatives do you like?
- b. Which ones do you not like?
- c. What kind of street or connection should Franklin Street become?
- d. What uses and activities should Downtown Santa Clara offer?
- e. What kind of new buildings and open spaces should be in Downtown?

Alternative A: Focus on Infill



Alternative B: Meandering Main Street



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Alternative C: Re-establish the Downtown Grid



GROUP A: Focus on Infill

Feedback on presented Alternatives:

Most participants liked Alternative C (Re-establishing the Downtown Grid) best but one participant also liked the idea of a main east-west pedestrian connection as illustrated in Alternative A (Focus on Infill).

Preferred Key Objectives and Features:

- Reestablish Franklin Street and north-south connections as feasible.
- Make Downtown a local destination.
- Preserve some uses including Park Central Apartments.
- Provide connectivity to Santa Clara University and complement the university's arts uses.
- Introduce a main public space as well as smaller public spaces.

Streets:

- Reinstate Franklin Street as Main Street but place new street south of Park Central Apartments to keep property intact. Offset new Franklin Street on west side of Jackson Street to connect with existing Franklin Street at Monroe Street.

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- Extend Washington Street between Benton Street and new Franklin Street.
- Replace pedestrian connection at Franklin Mall with street to complete Franklin Street.
- New street connecting new Franklin Street to Homestead Road, located between Main Street and Washington Street, to create large enough blocks for development.

Valued Existing Buildings:

- Post office
- University building at 990 Benton Street (University Finance Office).
- Retail/office building at Homestead and Jackson Street.
- Park Central Apartments at Benton Street.

New Uses:

- Place a combined community center and theater at Lafayette Street (at the location of existing office building) to tie in with Santa Clara University's arts district.
- Include a public open space in front of the community center at new Franklin Street.
- Create a gateway at Lafayette Street and Franklin Street.
- New hotel replacing Santa Clara County Courthouse at Homestead Road.
- New open space to north of hotel at the interior of the block.
- Residential buildings with ground floor retail along new Franklin Street, Monroe Street, Jackson Street, and Homestead Road.
- Retail along Homestead Road and Jackson Street.
- Retail at the corner of new Franklin Street, north of the new hotel, with public space in front.
- Retail along Monroe Street, between new Franklin Street and Benton Street. Either keep existing retail buildings or replace with new.

Building Heights:

- Generally between 2-4 stories.

Parking:

- New parking structures serving the downtown district with proposed locations at:
 - on both sides of Jackson Street between new Franklin Street and Benton Street;
 - at the north-west corner of Benton Street and Lafayette Street, on the parking lot of Wells Fargo Bank.

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Group A model looking from the south-east with Homestead Road and Lafayette Street in the foreground and the university campus on the right

GROUP B: Meandering Main Street

Feedback on presented Alternatives:

Participants of Group B worked with the meandering layout of Franklin Street as illustrated in Alternative B (Meandering Main Street) but replaced or reconfigured some uses. They also proposed to re-establish the old street grid in north-south direction.

Preferred Key Objectives and Features:

- Re-establish the street grid with a meandering new Franklin Street as Main Street as Main Street.
- Make Downtown a local destination, with a pedestrian-friendly new Franklin Street and a new theater.
- Create a central public space at Franklin Street to become the heart of Downtown.
- Place higher buildings along Lafayette Street across the university campus.

Streets:

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- New Franklin Street assumes a curved path to allow for Park Central Apartments to remain and should be designed for pedestrian priority.
- Include street trees along new Franklin Street; should become destination and can be used for events and Christmas lighting (Los Gatos example).
- Extend Washington Street and Main Street to re-establish the old north-south grid.
- Main Street could connect into the Park Central Apartments property as a dead-end first; full extension of Main Street to Benton Street could get implemented later once one or more buildings get removed.
- Main Street is important as connection to library.
- Replace pedestrian connection at Franklin Mall with street to complete Franklin Street.

Valued Existing Buildings:

- Post office
- Office building at the corner of Lafayette Street and Homestead Road.
- Retail/office building at Homestead and Jackson Street.
- Park Central Apartments at Benton Street and potentially replace or add some buildings along new Franklin Street.

New Uses:

- New theater at new Franklin Street between Washington and Main Street.
- Large central open space located across the theater at the corner of new Franklin Street and Main Street. Include plants and trees, not like Broadway Plaza at Macy's in Walnut Creek.
- A new community center at the corner of Lafayette Street and Benton Street to tie in with the arts district on the university campus.
- Complement existing office building at the corner of Lafayette Street and Homestead Road with new office buildings that include ground floor retail along new Franklin Street.
- New open space to north of hotel at the interior of the block.
- Residential buildings with ground floor retail along new Franklin Street, Monroe Street, Jackson Street, and Homestead Road in the blocks between Washington Street and Monroe Street.
- Add new residential buildings with ground floor retail on the south side of the Park Central Apartments and along new Franklin Street. Include new extension of Main Street on the site that could eventually connect to Benton Street.

Building Heights:

- Higher buildings up to 5 stories are located along Lafayette Street across from the university campus to form a gateway to Downtown.
- The new theater building and residential buildings at the corner of new Franklin Street and Main Street can be higher to form a center and frame the public open space.
- Up to 4-story buildings along new Franklin Street.

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Parking:

- New shared district parking structures located in the western blocks at Monroe Street and in the block located at Benton Street and Jackson Street.



Group B model looking from the north with Benton Street and Lafayette Street in the foreground and the university campus on the left

GROUP C: Re-establish the Downtown Grid

Feedback on presented Alternatives:

Participants of Group C were in favor of keeping the old street grid as illustrated in Alternative C (Downtown Grid) and concentrating activity along new Franklin Street as a Main Street. Participants felt that this option most closely resembles historic Downtown Santa Clara.

Preferred Key Objectives and Features:

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- Re-establish the old street grid with a straight and walkable new Franklin Street as Main Street.
- Make Downtown a local destination with activity and a mix of uses concentrated along new Franklin Street.
- Create a larger central open space at the heart of Downtown and a series of smaller public spaces to encourage pedestrian activity and outdoor uses.
- Create gateways at either end of new Franklin Street.
- Allow for eclectic mix of buildings forms and heights along new Franklin Street.

Streets:

- New Franklin Street connects from existing Franklin Street at Monroe Street all the way to Lafayette Street in a straight line.
- Franklin Street should be designed for pedestrians with slow traffic speeds.
- Main Street and Washington Street are extended between Benton Street and Homestead Road.
- Main Street is important connection to library.
- Connect to Santa Clara University with a paseo along Franklin Street.
- Provide “breathable” circulation with many opportunities for connections.

Valued Existing Buildings:

- Post office.
- Office building at the corner of Lafayette Street and Homestead Road.
- Retail/office building at Homestead and Jackson Street.
- University building at 990 Benton Street (University Finance Office).

New Uses:

- New entertainment center with community center, film theater, and performing arts (dance & music) at the corner of new Franklin Street to tie in with the arts district of Santa Clara University (reference to Mill Valley and Marin Theaters).
- Alternative location for new community center and theater could be the south-eastern corner new Franklin Street and Main Street.
- Smaller, mixed use buildings with ground floor retail along new Franklin Street. Uses include residential, office, museum, retail, and community. Residential mixed-use on north side of new Franklin Street and office mixed-use and hotel on south side.
- Larger retail uses such as a grocery store could be located along Washington Street and Main Street at Homestead Road.
- New hotel (reference to The Cameron House Hotel) at the south-east corner of new Franklin Street and Jackson Street.
- New museum at the north-eastern corner of new Franklin Street and Main Street, resembling old City Hall.
- New City Hall building at the south-eastern corner of new Main Street and Benton Street.

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- A pharmacy at new Franklin Street, shown at the north-eastern corner of Jackson Street and new Franklin Street.
- Retail uses along new Franklin Street to include: high quality market, restaurants, small-scale mom & pop shops, technology shops, breakfast places and diners, bars including rooftop bars.
- Residential buildings along Benton Street. Generally smaller and separated buildings, particularly in the block between new Franklin Street and Benton Street at Lafayette Street.
- A central open space at the intersection of new Main Street and Franklin Street, framed by a community center, museum, café, and retail uses. The open space can be used for live music and events and doesn't need to be located closer to the university.
- Smaller open spaces at street corners to encourage outdoor activities connected to retail and residential.

Building Heights:

- Up to 4 stories along new Franklin Street and up to 5 stories along Monroe Street.
- 3-story residential buildings along Benton Street.
- Up to 4-story buildings along Homestead Road.

Parking:

- New shared district parking structure at the north-western corner of Homestead Road and Monroe Street.
- Shared parking structures in blocks between new Franklin Street and Homestead Road.
- Agree on the use of parking structures at Santa Clara University for Downtown visitors.

Other comments:

- Use vintage signs and references to 1940s.
- Buildings should include historical references.
- Downtown Orange near Chapman Avenue is an example.
- Gateway arches at either end of Franklin Street.
- Affordable housing.
- Diverse cultural and market mix.
- Include electrical charging stations in parking structures.

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Group C model looking from the south-west with Monroe Street and Lafayette Street in the foreground

EMERGING COMMON THEMES:

- Make downtown a local destination;
- Make Franklin Street a pedestrian-focused Main Street;
- Re-establish the old street grid;
- Encourage a mix of uses, particularly along new Franklin Street;
- Introduce a Theater as an icon and symbol for the neighborhood;
- Include a Community Center (can be combined with theater);
- Create a gateway at either end of new Franklin Street;
- Establish a central public space that can be used for music and events;
- Improve walkability within Downtown and connectivity to surrounding areas;
- Honor references to history;
- Suggested land uses: Hotel; community center; theater; small retail; market, grocery; mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail; smaller open spaces along new Franklin Street; focus on residential uses along Benton Street; mixed-use office buildings, if any, in blocks between new Franklin Street and Homestead Road;
- Improve connectivity to SCU campus and library;

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- Preserve the existing post office and retail/office building at Homestead and Jackson Street.
- Create a parking strategy
- Build district parking structures and share existing parking structures on SCU campus.