



HAUSER ARCHITECTS

March 12, 2007, 7:30-8:30 PM

5132 Telegraph Meeting

LOCATION

Rockridge Library, 5366 College Avenue, Oakland, California

ATTENDEES

Gloria Bruce, Interim Chair, RCPC
Sam, Thomas Dolan
Joan, Co-housing
Will Mollard, Hauser Architects
Will Rohrer, Hauser Architects
John Braun, Hauser Architects

DISCUSSION

Introduction:

Will Mollard of Hauser Architects gave a presentation on the proposed project for 5132 Telegraph Avenue to the Rockridge Community Planning Council. The presentation outlined Hauser Architects' 16 goals of the proposed project.

The Goals were as follows:

- Goal 1- Replace underutilized building with active mixed-use urban infill project.
- Goal 2- Provide an appropriate residential density.
- Goal 3- Provide a range of unit sizes.
- Goal 4- Include affordability.
- Goal 5- Apply Green Building Technology.
- Goal 6- Provide an appropriate building scale along Telegraph and Claremont.
- Goal 7- Provide an appropriate transition between Civiq IV and 5160 Claremont on Clarke Street.
- Goal 8- Minimize the project's impact on existing parking resources.
- Goal 9- Provide an active commercial experience along Telegraph and Claremont Avenues.
- Goal 10- Compliment neighborhood proposed sidewalk improvements at Telegraph and Claremont.
- Goal 11- Compliment the proposed FROG Park extension along the site's eastern boundary.
- Goal 12- Commemorate Temescal Creek.
- Goal 13- Maintain a pedestrian link between Temescal Commercial district and FROG Park.
- Goal 14- Incorporate the work of local artists.
- Goal 15- Provide quality open space for the resident of the project.
- Goal 16- Obtain neighborhood input.

After completing the presentation, Will Mollard of Hauser Architects fielded questions and comments from the attendees.

Feedback and Concerns:

- What are the affordability prices for the different types of units?
 - o **Hauser Architects:** I don't have the numbers right in front of me.
- Is there any inclusionary housing in this project?
 - o **HA:** No.
- Are you asking for a variance under the current zoning?
 - o **HA:** There isn't current zoning. There is a conflict between the current zoning and the General Plan. The General Plan has a new vision and new goals. This should have terminated with new zoning. However, the resources were insufficient to complete the new vision.
- Does this project have split density, or is the density in accordance with the General Plan?
 - o **HA:** This project falls within two portions of the General Plan. The front portion of the property is zoned for neighborhood center mixed use. The rear portion of the property is zoned for mixed housing type residential.

The density is different for each zone. We arrived at our density number by looking at a range of one zoning over the other zoning. We took the high and the low density from each and averaged them.

- What is the impact of this project on the houses that are one the back side of the property on Clarke Street? How does this building relate to those little houses?
 - o **HA:** When looking South on Clarke Street we are between Clairmont Towers and Civiq IV. There is a separation between the buildings. The buildings descend in height from 50 feet. to 40 feet to 37 feet.
- Is the proposed building 60 feet?
 - o **HA:** No, the height of the front side of the building is 65 feet. The height of the backside of the building is 40 feet, so that the building is brought into prospective with Clarke Street.
- Are there any other houses on the opposite side?
 - o **HA:** There is one house that is kitty-cornered; it is a typical one story house.
- The heights that you quoted earlier, are those heights from the top of the building or where the top floor begins?
 - o **HA:** The heights are from the top of the existing buildings.
- What is on the roof of the proposed building?
 - o **HA:** There is no proposal to put anything on the roof right now. Right now there are only elevator penthouses to house and service the elevators.
- I think that this is a very progressive design. However, are all of the cars going to be coming in and off of Clarke Street?
 - o **HA:** Yes, that is the current proposal.
- All of those cars are going to be coming off of Clarke Street?
 - o **HA:** Yes. I work and manage projects that have alleys that are smaller than Clarke Street, and rarely do I experience 2 cars coming and going at the same time. Never have I seen 3 cars coming and going at the same time. The current proposal will not create a huge backup.
- Did you look at a scheme like on Claremont Street?
 - o **HA:** Yes, we did. Our goal with this project is to promote more pedestrian traffic. We felt that to have a curbcut like on Claremont would deter pedestrian traffic.
- Under the current zoning, aren't you only allowed 1 parking space per unit?
 - o **HA:** Yes, that's why we're asking for a variance for it.
- What are you going to do about commercial parking?
 - o **HA:** Right now we're looking at a managed parking scheme. When the parking is less in demand, such as in the normal work hours of the day, we can provide commercial parking on the upper levels during those hours. Our idea is that a parking garage is so expensive to build and that most of the day it is empty, so it should be used?
- If the garage is empty during the day, then doesn't that mean that most people who live there are using their cars?
 - o **HA:** We are looking at unbundling parking: what if I want a unit but I don't want to pay for a parking space? We are trying hard to promote this. This does not mean that people will stop using their cars, but if they do not want a parking space they do not have to get one.

Chair Limits Questions

- I'm glad to see that you have extended the Greenbelt; I want it as wide as possible.
 - o I am concerned about the impact of this and other projects because of the requests for variances.
 - o I am concerned that this project is for profit, not for the benefit of the community.
 - o We already have the city park with a little more than 100 parking spots and also the driveway (?). This project represents another 106 parking spots on a tiny, curvy little street with lots of pedestrians.
 - o This is a safety and egress issue that needs to be addressed.
 - **HA:** There is no doubt that it needs to be addressed, and we have spent a lot of time dealing with this issue. At the same time, you must look at the current conditions: there are no gates in the parking lot, there are no garage doors; people are speeding in and out of the parking lot at all hours of the day. There have been a number of incidents in that parking lot. What we propose is a controlled access point: a garage door with no one speeding in and out and only a small wait for the door.
- Is Hauser Architects the owner of the site?
 - o **HA:** No, but we do have site control.
- Will there be lighting along the Greenway?
 - o **HA:** Yes.
- I'm concerned about the scale of the setbacks; they should be further back. If the setbacks are further back it will reduce the number of units and makes the unit-to-parking ratio more in balance. You aren't going to sell many units to people who do not want to buy a parking space.

- **HA:** This is the way of the future. We may be stuck with a lot of empty units, but we are willing to take that risk.
 - Aren't the majority of Hauser Architects' projects industrial?
 - **HA:** So why are we doing away with parking in industrial projects? Under the Market/Octavia Plan you cannot get a parking place per unit. That ratio is reduced by 25%.
 - For the record, the MTC considers San Francisco and separate parking and transit entity. How many total variances are you seeking?
 - **HA:** We need a conditional use permit because the zoning is not updated. Any project along a transit corridor is going to need a conditional use permit for the density bonus, which is our vision. We are asking for a parking variance. We may also need a variance for the rear set back and maybe one for the rear open space. The big permit we are seeking is the conditional use permit, but that is necessary for any project along a transit corridor.
 - Is this a major conditional use permit?
 - **HA:** This is actually called an interim conditional use permit.
 - You mentioned subsidizing commercial space. Are you going with the General Plan? How much are you providing?
 - **HA:** I am not sure what the General Plan wants. I know that we are providing 8,500 sq. ft, which is a lot for this frontage. There is probably another 2-3,000 sq. ft. for space that could be another building but for the Greenway. We are trying to promote a pedestrian-friendly feel for that public space. I want to clarify subsidizing: it costs a lot per sq. ft. When I say subsidizing I mean that for years to come we will not get that money back. Our intent is to lease the commercial spaces to neighborhood-serving businesses.
 - I think there is serious denial going on about the parking; there's no underground parking.
 - **HA:** Yes, there is underground parking.
 - What about when the residents have guests, such as around the holidays? Where are they going to park?
 - **HA:** We will encourage our tenants to encourage guests to take public transportation.
 - What about people who want to buy a unit but do not want to purchase a parking space? What if they want to park on the street instead of purchasing a parking space?
 - **HA:** There is nothing we can do to stop them from making that choice.
 - Are these actual parking spaces, or are they parking lifts?
 - **HA:** They are all individual parking spaces; there are no current plans to put in hydraulic lifts.
- Wald, Assistant to City of Oakland Councilmember, District One, Jane Brunner