

**APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
May 19, 2004**

ROLL CALL

Time: The meeting was called to order at 7:05 by Chair Pollack.

Location: North Berkeley Senior Center.

Commissioners Present: Perry, Pollack, Poschman, Tabb, Wiggins.

Commissioners Absent: Bronstein, Stoloff, Wengraf, Wrenn

Staff Present: Gatzke, Homrighausen, Rhoades

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no speakers.

PUBLIC HEARING: University of California Long Range Development Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (UC LRDP & DEIR)

The purpose of the hearing was clarified. The comments made will be summarized and transmitted to the City Council for consideration along with the written materials submitted to the Planning Commission concerning the LRDP. The Planning Commission hearing is not part of the University's formal review process on the LRDP DEIR. For that reason, comments made at the Planning Commission meeting will not be responded to in the University's preparation of the Final EIR. The people attending the hearing were advised that to have their comments addressed formally in the University's EIR process, they should submit their written comments to Jennifer Lawrence, Co-Director, 2020 LRDP EIR.

Kerry O'Banion, Co-Director for the University LRDP and DEIR, gave a presentation on the project.

M/S/C to open the public hearing. (Wiggins/Poschman) Ayes: Perry, Pollack, Poschman, Tabb, Wiggins, Noes: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Bronstein, Stoloff, Wengraf, Wrenn.
--

There were 17 speakers. 1) Andrea Pflaumer said the plan was flawed in that it proposes high density housing in the most dangerous wildland/urban interface in the state, and commented on the danger of fire being magnified by narrow roads. She also noted that emergency response travel is compromised during fire season due to football game traffic congestion. 2) Pamela Sihvola showed an aerial photo, pointing out that the vehicular access to the hill housing sites is very poor, with narrow twisting roadways. She indicated that narrow roads, fire danger, and proximity to the Hayward Fault make the plan very dangerous. 3) John English said the plan was flawed in that it shows the Clark Kerr campus in the housing zone, as available for housing sites between now and 2020, when in fact the University has entered into covenants restricting new housing until 2032. In addition, the Elmwood commercial district is shown as potential housing in error, and

**APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
May 19, 2004**

48 areas of the Southside Plan have proposed densities at less than the density range the
49 University indicates as necessary for inclusion in the housing zone. In addition, Mr.
50 English noted that the Tien Center site has been dedicated without any CEQA
51 determination, an apparent failure to observe the requirements of the California
52 Environmental Quality Act. 4) Martha Jones said the proposal to add more traffic
53 signals for traffic mitigation would result in speeding and more cars in an already
54 impacted area. 5) Doug Buckwald said the University should plan for the same high
55 quality of environment in the neighborhoods adjacent to the campus as the University
56 maintains on the Campus Park, with trees, open space, well-maintained walkways, and
57 exclusion of vehicular traffic. He also questioned the LRDP's concept of Fair Share
58 payment, as the community has had an excessive share, not a fair share, of detrimental
59 impact. 6) Doris Willingham said the cumulative impact of successive LRDPs has
60 seriously eroded the quality of the neighborhood south of campus. She also commented
61 that faculty housing should be in the neighborhood near campus, not up on the hill sites.
62 7) Margit Roos-Collins addressed the EIR failure to assess the combined effect of what
63 happens to the hazardous materials involved in research when an earthquake occurs. She
64 asked that UC address why they think it is sensible to increase research, and the amount
65 of hazardous materials, at the seismically-vulnerable UC campus, rather than expanding
66 such research in less seismically vulnerable UC campuses. 8) Merrilee Mitchell
67 suggested that UC could house faculty in existing houses or other buildings (example: Le
68 Chateau co-op) near campus. She spoke to discourage tall buildings downtown, as
69 seismically vulnerable. She suggested a shuttle to sites in Berkeley such as the gourmet
70 ghetto, Berkeley Bowl, and down University Ave. 9) Jim Cunningham commented that
71 there are problems with lack of open space and traffic congestion currently. These
72 problems need to be solved now, before expansion takes place. In addition, the tritium
73 facility needs to be cleaned up. 10) Steve Wollmer said the University should provide
74 transit subsidy as a mitigation for expansion and the consequent increase in traffic. 11)
75 Janice Thomas commented on the treatment of light and glare from lighted athletic
76 facilities at page 4-1.19 of the LRDP DEIR. The DEIR fails to describe the project in
77 sufficient detail to address the impacts. This is an example of piecemeal review of
78 impacts. At the LRDP stage, the University asserts there are not projects. Then at the
79 project stage, the University asserts that a given project is exempt from CEQA, leaving
80 no opportunity to examine potential impacts. 12) David Nasatir said the University needs
81 to correct factual errors at pages 4.3-17 and 4.3-18. Proposed hill housing is completely
82 at odds with the pattern of development in surrounding neighborhoods. The lack of
83 services and lack of bus service in the evening to the proposed hill housing sites will
84 mean significant adverse effects due to too many cars and too much traffic. He also said
85 the hill housing will have adverse effects on the quality of the neighborhood, which is
86 very heterogeneous, while the UC population to be housed is very homogeneous. 13)
87 Leslie Emmington Jones spoke concerning Piedmont Avenue, a State historic landmark.
88 The UC LRDP DEIR proposes traffic mitigation in the form of traffic signals, which
89 would be very incompatible with the historic qualities of Piedmont Ave. 14) Sharon
90 Hudson said the plan is good for UC but does not address serious negative effects on the
91 community and the quality of life. She urged the City to attack the DEIR and LRDP
92 legally, politically, through public relations channels, and through any means the City is
93 in a position of authority to control, such as what the City will let UC do with the City

**APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
May 19, 2004**

94 streets. 15) Daniella Thompson said the Tien Center would wreak havoc on Observatory
95 hill, and that a superior option would be to build the Tin Center on the parking lot site
96 behind Dwinelle Hall. 16) Jim Sharp said the neighborhoods are being smothered by the
97 University. He suggested the highest placed officials at the University should be required
98 to live in the neighborhoods on the perimeter of the UC campus. 17) Carl Friberg said
99 the University should go back to the California Plan for Higher Education with its 27,500
100 enrollment cap. He also urged a reduction of parking, because more parking brings in
101 more traffic, increasing hazardous conditions which are already serious.

102

103 M/S/C to close the public hearing. (Wiggins/Tabb) Ayes: Perry, Pollack, Poschman, 104 Tabb, Wiggins, Noes: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Bronstein, Stoloff, Wengraf, 105 Wrenn.

106

107 The Commission discussed and commented on the UC LRDP DEIR. In response to
108 questions, Mr. O'Banion explained that the maximum number of units proposed within
109 the Hill Campus is 100 units. In response to a question regarding the locations of the
110 planned 800,000 sq. ft. of development in the Adjacent Blocks West, Mr. O'Banion
111 indicated the 800,000 sq. ft. figure is a maximum, and specific sites are not identified.
112 Concerning the Hotel/Conference Center, Mr. O'Banion clarified that if is done as a
113 University project, where the University is the Lead Agency, the square footage of the
114 project will count within the 800,000 sq. ft. figure for the Adjacent Blocks West.

115

116 Concerning potential for adverse impacts on the larger community, staff was asked to
117 investigate opportunities to comment on adverse impacts, particularly environmental
118 justice issues. Concern was raised about the student housing demand having the effect of
119 reducing availability of housing for low income residents of South Berkeley.

120

121 Mr. O'Banion was asked why the University expects that after the proposed 4,000
122 student increase in enrollment, there will be no additional increases. He indicated the
123 enrollment is projected for the UC system based on the commitment to placing the top
124 12.5% of graduating high school students. 4,000 is UC Berkeley's share of a total 63,000
125 increase in enrollment. He indicated that analysis of demographic trends suggests the
126 demand is going to level out in the future.

127

128 The University was urged to include satellite parking as a mechanism to relieve traffic
129 congestion near campus.

130

131 The University was urged to make the LRDP DEIR document less vague. In many
132 instances the document says actions will be taken "whenever possible", or similar open-
133 ended language. The University needs to use language that says what it will do, without
134 qualifiers.

135

136 The University was urged to increase use of their successful shuttle system to get people
137 out of their cars and allow them to avoid the problems of driving in Berkeley.

138

APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
May 19, 2004

139 In response to questions about parking availability, UC LRDP co-project manager
140 Jennifer Lawrence told the Commission that dormitory residents can't bring a car to
141 campus (except for special need situations) and students who live within two miles of
142 campus can't buy a parking permit.

143
144 The Commission urged all who are concerned about the UC LRDP and DEIR to make
145 comments on the document, and in particular comment on proposed mitigations.

146

147 **ADJOURNMENT**

148

149 Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.