

BHNA General Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2014, 7:30pm

Speaker: Darcy Forsell, AICP, Planner, City of San Mateo Planning Division
Topic: Update on current and pending projects and initiatives
Number of Attendees: 31 current BHNA members, 5 nonmembers, 36 total attendees
Board Members in Attendance: Jan Prisco, Kaye Sharma, Andrea McCutchin, Ellen Wang, Monika Lee

The meeting was hosted by Kay Sharma. The meeting began with the official election of the four officers of BHNA. Once that was completed, Kay introduced Darcy Forsell.

Darcy shared her credentials and her role within the City of San Mateo Planning Department. She reviewed the four areas which she planned to discuss, shown below in bold type. Darcy stated that the goal of her team is to preserve the character of San Mateo when new building projects are approved and begun. Sustainability features are also a big goal.

Bay Meadows Phase II. Current approvals exist for a balance of office space and housing, with a total of 750,000 sq. feet of office space, 93,000 sq. feet of retail and restaurant space, and 1,066 housing units. This encompasses 83 acres of development and will probably take five to eight years to finish. In addition, Nueva High School, a private high school for 450 students, will be built with a sustainable footprint.

Construction on the five new office buildings has not begun yet due to the level of available business space currently in San Mateo. If a big tenant is found, construction will probably begin. In addition, cafes and restaurants are being encouraged in order to minimize driving by residents. Shea, one of the developers, has even given free bikes to all home buyers.

Three new public parts are also part of Phase II. Paddock Park has been completed for a year and includes picnic areas and a playground. Bay Meadows Park will be 12 acres and will include soccer and ball fields with off street parking. It will also utilize storm water storage technologies. A third park is coming too, a more passive park for adults.

Permits have been issued for about 160 townhomes, a 108 unit apartment building, and Nueva High School, with other permits under review.

1990, 2000 and 2090 S. Delaware Street (Former Police Station Site and Bofor's.
The northern most building is finished with 60 apartment units available. 111 additional apartments are under construction and the total number of new apartments planned is 231. It is hoped from a sustainability perspective that residents will utilize the Hayward Park Train Station for commuting.

Hillsdale Shopping Center Project. This project is still on hold. Target pulled out and various reasons for this were discussed including Target's previous expansions into other markets. Starbucks is moving close to Macy's with room for outdoor seating.

Hillsdale Terrace – 2700, 2728 and 2790 El Camino Real. This project involves a full city block of mixed use buildings. The proposal is for five stories, with the ground floor for commercial use and 3 stories of underground parking. This is the largest project being addressed this year in our City. It has not been approved as the design is too “boxy” among other things.

In addition to the above four large projects, numerous smaller building projects are in various stages. There is a shift toward higher interest in downtown housing, including the 5th Avenue project and 9th Avenue Project. Station Park Green (Kmart Project) is proposed with 599 units, retail and offices. Improvements to the 92 and El Camino Interchange are hoped for as well as train underpasses (which will not happen soon because of expense).

Future building activity will include smaller projects with a goal of slow, metered growth. In an average year, between 50 and 200 units are approved. There will be a Housing Workshop next week at the San Mateo Public Library and Darcy encouraged us all to attend.

Questions and comments were then requested of the attendees of the meeting. Concerns were raised over current and future traffic levels and the current Alameda de las Pulgas area where it becomes one lane. The need to protect the beauty of downtown and Central park was also discussed.

Darcy reminded all attendees that information on all building projects is available on the City website under What's New. The information includes both videos and written minutes from meetings. The meeting was then adjourned at 9:00pm.