

Attachment H Advisory Boards and Commissions Meeting Notes

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Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC)

Meeting Notes

March 7, 2016

Protected bike lanes create conflict points (when cyclists have to re-enter roadway)

When talking about development, people are talking about expanding, attracting development, bringing in money. Developers will do what you want if they can make money, but they come and go. Cities in general, and Oakland in particular, are pretty bad at taking care of the assets they have – artwork that's rotting that no one even knows about: (Michael Heiser, near the estuary), John Yeager Dandelion, Green Monster on Lake Merritt. Ask the same question every twenty years about how to make the city better: no one likes to fund cleaning things, fixing things, operations, but that's what makes cities good.

Public art: getting the sense it's district-centric. There isn't an art plan for the city or for Downtown in general – almost too myopic, losing the vision for the city. There should be an arts specific plan as part of the plan (?) – for example, Treasure Island has art at the very beginning and the existing artists are integrated from the beginning. Sending a call out to preserve the cultural assets, but not a call for new assets – a beautifying and placemaking; not making room for what we could have, and what a vision could be. Call out the development of an art plan for the city as a whole, and specifically for Downtown.

Recommendations are piecemeal throughout the neighborhood, but how do these all get woven together (like the cultural districts? Are they linked or standalone entities?).

Would like to have a more focused discussion around an art plan for the Downtown before the specific plan is adopted.

Who's going to take care of these improvements? Take responsibility for them down the road when people move on to the next thing? Anything commissioned through the public art program is more intentional, but that doesn't mean that the city has funds for maintenance. Anything in private development, they are required to maintain – that would be referenced in this plan. Need to build this out in an intentional way that sustains the work.

Not just visual art, what about performing arts? The living arts? (Not statues that are a memorial of the dead.) What do we have here already in the community; we need to stitch them all together in a more intentional way rather than neighborhood by neighborhood.

Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC)

Missing link in the food chain in Oakland – art business. The galleries are not doing that well; the leases are affordable enough now, but will be ending soon, and they will be forced out of the community. Artists drawn here for diverse reasons will probably leave, or their art will still outflow into other places (collected by people in New York, LA... money's not staying here in Oakland). Advisory committee for galleries and gallery owners to discuss what they need.

Oakland have exciting exhibition spaces, parties, arts, but not enough business transactions to keep them and the artists operational and fed and continue making work. Encourage the housing and maker space issues, but artists are doing it without that, but the art business is a department where the City can help. (Kristin – working on that, had meeting today)

We have to have buyers!

We also have to have a way to sell our work – galleries are hanging out in dark alleys. Maybe the beautification of the streets can apply to galleries, not just coffee shops.

Noticed that some of the feedback is for creative sidewalk amenities, rotating art, etc., but advocating for permanent public art and what it can do for the street space, as opposed to these temporary things. We can do big art, important art, significant art. Example: Millennium Park, Chicago. San Francisco. Need an Arts Council/Commission.

City supporting the arts; London World Cities Culture Forum – London was losing its historic music venues (32% in 3 years) because of gentrification, people moving into areas and complaining; the city said too bad, enacted a code saying you can't displace, sign off on "You know what you're getting into." Small venues. City took a really strong stance on this. We can have mindful development.

This is important at the Malonga Center. They do drumming there! What happened around the lake with drumming circles.

Oakland isn't like Chicago that has a history of being grand and monumental, but we do have innovation and diversity. If the city can showcase the character of the art culture here, have innovative/technology/artists display/business park. (Like Alameda, with people out there making it...). We do not need Statue of Liberty. Could have a "technology park".

Want an overarching plan, but also want to cultivate what's happening already in the districts.

What can government do? You can put up a sign that says "Black Arts District," but the fact is that if you put your money in something like the African-American museum, it'll generate interest and draw people from around. Black art museum – money to enter things into... competitions? We already have the asset.

Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC)

Given that the City's cultural plan isn't going to happen within the specific plan timeline, valuable to have a follow-up meeting to create an art plan that's a sub-plan to the specific plan? Do it here in this forum? What's the best way to communicate with artists? Social media (says Nick Dong).

Keep track of actions virtually until we get the equity strategy up and running, which will focus a lot on arts.

Has there been discussion of taxation that could go through cultural funding? No, recommendation for a housing bond. We're in a supportive political environment to think about those kinds of options. Would be a bargaining chip..... To get affordable housing and arts funding from developers? Tax for performing arts need to provide funding for performing arts.

Need to develop the arts citywide, even though everyone comes together downtown.

1% only goes to visual arts, so the discussion of equity seems contradictory. We have a new equity department, and it's an art form that's going to only one art form and not the rest. Push affordable housing for artists (just for artists, not just "affordable") but artists don't make money even though they do great work and bring in people and develop the economy (use restaurants, galleries, hotels). Local residents aren't actually buying the art pieces. Pet peeves: artists – we are losing a lot of parking. If we're going to bring in these clients, they will not take public transportation – they're driving from Seattle, LA, Arizona and transporting major pieces of art. When they can't find parking at the Malonga Center – already having trouble finding parking. We are worried – what does that do to our events? Performing arts bring in people who spend money.

Artists have certain specific needs for parking and transportation (musical instruments, canvases, performance clothing, etc.) – need yellow zones, etc.

Vibrant art communities are places where people want to go, but performance space is harder – have to deal with moving stuff, dealing with the neighbors, etc.

Share Facebook things on the Oakland Arts Facebook page

Facebook update, ask people to share

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC)

Meeting Notes

March 9, 2016

Plan Alternatives Report

Show proposed San Pablo plaza before and after for context

Maintenance of parks is challenge

What to do about homeless people if we add new parks? Homelessness – provide a space, and there will be tent cities (example: Jefferson Square Park). Activate the spaces with programming and build housing

Immediacy of equity and what's happening now

Aligned with future vision

Non-profits being displaced; small retail businesses too

Affordable for who? Language about public and low-income housing – separate from “affordable” housing

Need to push for right to housing, especially for people who have been here for a long time (generations)

Oakland cut off by freeways – commissioner likes the boulevard idea for I-980

Kurt Lewandowski – loves the vision, idealistic – hadn't seen the presentation before

- challenges facing parks: maintenance, homeless
 - hopefully PRAC will push for impact fees to help
- EBRPD bond – but has the same problem
 - Lots of land, invasive species, vandalism, unmaintained trails

Commissioner Rosenbloom – provided written comments (Barry Martin also)

Vision

Peterson

- Renewed concern – open space is magnet for homeless people
 - What are we going to do about our homeless problem?
 - Need a plan – don't just move them somewhere else
- Need to address it all

Wu

- Appreciate the equitable development focus, but:
 - We are in crisis now – we're losing African American residents now, nonprofits being displaced
 - Need to keep public land public, not privatize
 - Will need to bring displaced people back or you are going to be building
- Parks: we need to plan for dog parks from the beginning

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC)

- 10k homes
- People are using small green spaces
- Preservation Park closed to dogs
- Dog-friendly areas
- Dedicate locations
- Dog parks and dog friendly areas – patches of open space for unleashed dogs and dog walkers
- PRAC issued dog park report – identified location, told not viable
 - Dogs downtown – converting rooftops of garages and parking lots

Dubois

- Vision reads high income (gentrified – cafes, etc.).
- Vision is touchy feely, feels gentrified
- What do parks and open space mean to low income?
- What do parks mean for civic engagement, i.e., areas for protest?

Gordon

- Parks with children – need amenities for disabled kids
- Environmental – reduce storm water runoff, water plants
- Environment – cut down watering “curb cutting”
- Living walls – green space buildings accommodate vegetation for purpose of green space/walkability
- Incorporate orchards in the parks for food production
- Rooftop gardens (pollinators). Use roofs for hives, etc. and at non-active parks
- Bring compost so don’t have to fertilize
- Likes separation of bikes and cars

Redmond

- Plan is moving ahead of the people here who are being displaced
- Agreements with developers – if places to eat, put chess boards on top
 - Places for kids to play
 - Succulents
- Likes arts district
 - encourage musicians to play and collect tips legally
 - licenses
- permanent piano, lighting for nighttime safety
- merchants association to program the spaces
- history, icon
- car free street areas – can encourage cars not to drive there
- ball park
- equity – encourage small businesses
 - beer gardens

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC)

- public restrooms, drinking fountains for filling water bottles

Need a comprehensive park vision graphic with data and analysis, open spaces

Emphasis on park maintenance and trees: recreation programming

Open space as responsibility of developers with signs that say people are welcome; child play area, encourage musicians to play outdoors and collect tips. Display, sell handcrafts, lighting so nighttime is safe (merchants as governance). Shared space: beer gardens as open

Public restrooms and restrooms that have water for filling up water bottles

Manning

- Feels like a neighborhood plan; people already resent Downtown for getting all resources.
- Focus on Downtown as resource for rest of city
 - Lake Merritt is the only destination now for people outside Downtown
 - Belongs to the whole city
- Outreach to outlying neighborhoods – Downtown affects all neighborhoods.
 - Impressed with outreach so far
- Destination: neighborhood open space
- San Francisco: every new building has to have public space – apply to Oakland. Privately maintained.
- Parks in Chinatown are some of the most vibrant, successful parks in Oakland. How do parks play into vision for Black Arts District?
- Parks in Chinatown are some of Oakland's most vibrant, successful, vibrant parks
 - Use as model; analogous in African-American district

Improve pedestrian access to Cathedral open space

Rosenbloom –

- Alternatives Report is inspiring, well designed draft
- no comprehensive park graphic or clear case for parks ; have to hunt for parks info
- parks at end of goals – should follow built environment
- more emphasis on maintenance & programming

Barry Miller

- Charrette was one of best community processes to come out of planning in long time
- Park feels like an afterthought, not an organizing principle.
- Need a Webster green in all four quadrants; (close streets?) in every neighborhood
- 4 acres per 1,000, or 112 new acres of parks space needed to meet needs of new population
- What if the stadium doesn't happen?
- More detail on Howard Terminal alternatives without Ball Park.
- How much of each developer site can we carve out for parks? All new building roofs should be green.
- I-980 – not a fan of plan:

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC)

- Would be environmental injustice to streets of Oakland
 - Displace airport traffic to E. 98th Ave.
 - Traffic near residential neighborhoods
- Cover it with lid and linear park/central open space
- Take down I-880 instead – it's a wall that blocks the waterfront
- 14th St. Post Office lot would be great park site
- Roofs- top of any building or garage should be green / open space

Peterson

- Ideas won't get traction
- Port would be problem

Wu

- Dedicated bus lane = yes
- Fixed rail = too expensive

Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB)

Meeting Notes

March 14, 2016

Joiner

Small business – City is already doing a great job with technical assistance (small business), but should leverage the programs by making sure everyone knows about all the resources in their brochures. One thing that can be really helpful would be loans, but her business has experienced economic process discrimination because she's an adult store, and has had trouble receiving loans because Economic Development won't look at certain businesses. Would love to see a loan program that supports all businesses 100%, including cannabis businesses and tattoo parlors; it's very difficult for a new business that's struggling already to go to a system that's supposed to support you, and instead they discriminate against you.

Construction – it's important for businesses to know about construction, City should think about who's bearing the financial brunt, and if possible, do work at night to keep from disrupting traffic; need better rerouting.

Signage – There needs to be official signage, with grant money for external signage because it all adds back to the community.

Cultural heritage – A plaque put out for BAMABD district doesn't do much for financial assistance and investment – if the businesses can't survive, are you going to rename it if it's no longer a black business district? City interventions aren't just symbolic in other places like Jack London. We need to bring in business, foot traffic, and let people know that these are businesses in general (not just black-owned) to generate revenue for those people so they can stay in there as business owners.

Buckley

West Oakland plan – I-980 is kind of a dividing line. Would be great if the freeway went away, but who knows where. The plan seems to reinforce the dividing line by putting multistory along Castro – even at a concept stage that reinforces the traditional division there. Would rather see more effort put into knitting those two districts together, even if there is no conversion of I-980 to a boulevard.

Flores

Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB)

Press Building isn't noted as a landmark building (right behind the Tribune) – definitely a national landmark. (Staff note: the map is only City landmarks, which isn't one-to-one with national register.)

Andrews

Looking at graphics (like 15th St. shared space, building typologies) and likeability studies, notices that traditional buildings or pseudo-traditional styles are referenced. Is this something that's conscious? Is it part of the idea of new buildings incorporating historic elements? Or just something the consultant liked?

Naomi Schiff

Cultural assets map is a weird list, and should be removed if it's not going to be complete. It's not complete. What's the criterion? You haven't listed any of the galleries. There are some small businesses. DeLauers isn't one, nor is the Oakland Symphony, Oaklandish. There are way more than 47 cultural assets. Some statues are listed, but not others.

Oakland Heritage Alliance feels pretty good about many things in the report (though has some errors and suggestions), but appreciates talk of transfer of development rights program, and would like to understand the mechanism by which that will work. Grateful that we're considering historic structures, and have constructive criticism:

- New infill is shown on s side of 8th street on a site that has historic bldgs.
- 8th & Broadway incorrect – shows vacancy
- Some of the new bldgs. are taller than the existing buildings. New buildings adjacent to ASI and API should not be taller than the buildings in those or dominate them.
- Don't put more stories on top of the historic garages – respect their historic character. Historic powerplant building is shown with new development – this seems unlikely and unwise.
- Please look at lower Broadway. There's no mention of lower Broadway, where there are small but significant buildings that are cultural assets: Everett & Jones, Souley Vegan (oldest commercial building in Oakland), around corner from old railroad station (3rd & Broadway). Went to some pains to show these to the consultant, but they're not shown here.
- Schilling Gardens – by mentioning Snow Park, we'd like to remind people that the Emerald Views EIR (too close to the lake and close to a historic district) draft EIR has been out for five years and hasn't returned as final. If that doesn't get built, it's an opportunity to expand open space and Snow Park and spend money on that instead of on things that aren't going to happen. It shouldn't be considered in the same category as other entitled projects. Substantial opposition to it. Also, the owner name is incorrect.
- Need to check with owners and possible developers about examples of visionary scenes (such as 15th Street), since last week someone was talking about building a 20-story

Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB)

building on the corner. Doesn't understand what we'll do about ongoing developments that don't comport with the plans in the report.

- Hopes that orientation to historic preservation will continue.

Flores

There are a number of historic sites/bldgs. that are forgotten on exhibits in report. Please look at lower Broadway. Significant buildings need to be pointed out even if they're not Oakland landmarks. Cultural assets map – thought, “That’s a cultural asset?” There seems to be a lot missing. Nothing below 12th Street. Report is well on its way to being a good readable, usable document.

Andrews

Very impressive report (given omissions already addressed, it's just a matter of completeness), especially the attention being paid to cultural resources, equity and preservation. Page 2.19 shows projects in process or proposed – what strikes him about those, is contrasting them with the consultant's images of projects to come in the future, there's a bit of a disconnect. Projects proposed to date have very broad massing; consultant renderings look like Kirk Peterson buildings, (i.e., classic style of architecture). We're facing the reality that buildings in the second part of the century may not look like the ones in the previous century. We don't want to portray such a monolithic view of design unless that's really intentional in the plan. This needs to be addressed in the report explicitly – even though “anticipated” buildings are contemporary and modern, they don't have the level of detail or character that we see in the older buildings. Maybe through the use of character-defining features, definitions and outlines we could get there. It feels like the report is saying that without actually saying it (due to watercolor renderings and “building types” (page 5.52). Excited that it sets up a dialogue about how we might do it.

Example: Portland has modern buildings that have some level of detail that's more than what we see proposed in Oakland and not quite what we see in the consultant's renderings; somewhere in between. More than 21st century, but not quite 15th century again. Very impressed with this and the previous plans – challenge of concentration of cultural and historic resources, it's absolutely that we address that question.

Bicyclist & Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC)

Meeting Notes

March 17, 2016

Internal comment

- Why are the cars so tiny in the 15th Street graphic (between MLK & Castro)?

How does the Plan interface with Downtown Circulation Study? – setting up detailed/specific typologies. Need to clarify that it has been rolled into the Downtown Specific Plan.

Commissioner likes the I-980 proposal.

A lot in the plan addresses transfer of development rights, but there's only one area identified for higher buildings, so if you're going to sell development rights, where are you going to transfer them to?

Concerned about “complete streets” as they were depicted – Grand, 24th, etc. mentioned as slow streets, but didn't see any transit-specific infrastructure, there were also streets depicting shared streets – but finds that the cycling speed is about the speed of a fast AC transit, and therefore often impede or are impeded by buses – need bus/bicycle separation; where are dedicated transit lanes?

Soon there will be buses along the Broadway BRT

Streetcar study

With high amount of transit vehicles, plus bikes, then with Telegraph improvements, there should be more street amenities (benches, etc.).

Have Broadway be the spine for highlighting alternative modes. Prioritize them. Parking should be the lowest use on Broadway (loading and unloading only).

Streetcars – ACE Riders for Transit Justice – have been to some of the events where people had input on streetcar – East Oakland members are opposed to streetcar Downtown. Issues are: expense, streetcar is less flexible, doesn't serve the greater Oakland – issue of equity – is it going to be built in other parts of the city? Other neighborhoods feel like all the focus and money is coming down here. Community at large should have a larger say in it, not just Downtown.

Is signal timing being looked at? It's currently pretty dysfunctional in many parts of Downtown. Bike routes should have bike-preferential signal timing.

Bicyclist & Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC)

Commissioner likes the focus on increased pedestrian space – what about expanding minimum sidewalk requirements? Particularly as it relates to sidewalk cafes. Easier and cheaper to get a sidewalk café than a parklet, so people end up taking over pedestrian spaces. SF has a really great sidewalk café ordinance.

Lots of freight and loading issues (particularly in Chinatown) – address with both management and enforcement.

Kiss and ride concept at transit hubs (Downtown BART stations) – even more important where there are more senior areas where there has to be door-to-door dropoff. Plan for increased seniors.

I-980 Boulevard with park feature in median – looks appealing, but for users in the middle, it's not so nice. Becomes an isolated island. Keep vehicle traveling together and allow for a more contiguous park space. (multiple people agreed). Examples: Mandela Parkway doesn't work, SF's Panhandle does work.