

Oakland City Planning Commission

Design Review Committee

STAFF REPORT

Case File Number PLN15-378; ER15-004

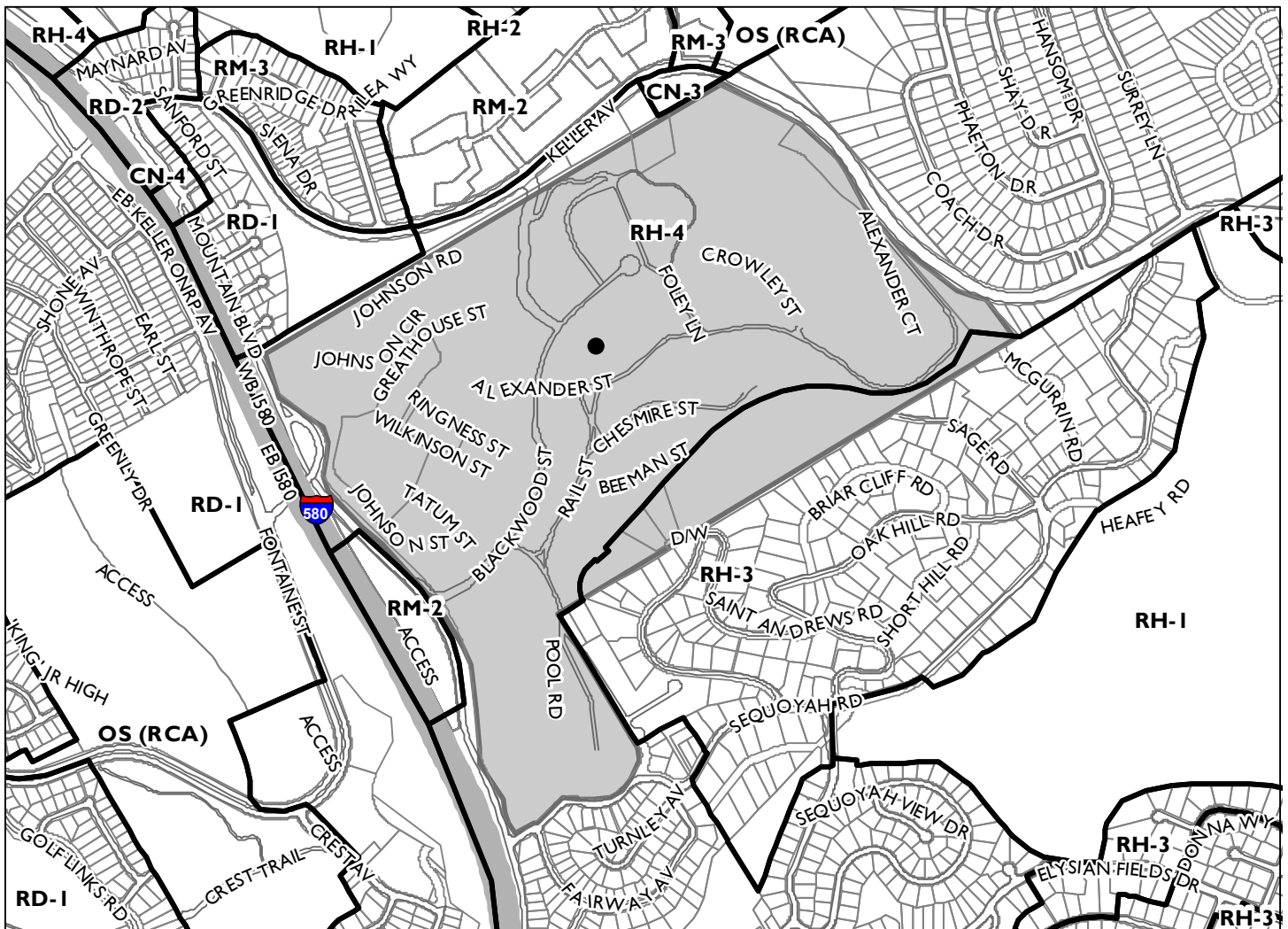
July 27, 2016

Project Name and Location:	Oak Knoll Mixed Use Community Plan Project , located on the former Oak Knoll Naval Medical Center Property at 8750 Mountain Boulevard, bounded by Keller Avenue and Mountain Boulevard. APNs: 043A-4675-003-21, 043A-4712-001 (portion), 043A-4675-003-19, 043A-4675-003-16, 043A4678-003-17 {roadway easement), 043A-4675-003- 30 (roadway easement) 048-6865-002-01, and 043A-4675-74-01.
Proposal:	Master Planned community on approximately 188 acres consisting of 935 residences, 72,000 square feet of neighborhood commercial, 14,000 square feet of civic use (relocated historic Club Knoll building as a community center), open space, creek restoration and trails.
Applicant/Owner:	Oak Knoll Venture Acquisitions LLC, c/o Suncal, Sam Veltri (949) 777-4000
Planning Permits Required:	Rezoning, Planned Unit Development permit (Preliminary and Final Development Plans), Tentative Tract Map, and other permits and/or approvals
General Plan:	Hillside Residential, Community Commercial, Institutional, Urban Open Space and Resource Conservation Area
Zoning:	RH-3 Hillside Residential Zone -3 and RH-4 Hillside Residential Zone -4
Environmental Determination:	A Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) is being prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), but is not yet out for public review.
Historic Status:	The existing Club Knoll building on the Project site is an historic resource under CEQA, listed on the Local Register, Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey rating of B+3, eligible for Landmark status with an A rating, and placed on the Preservation Study List as a Designated Historic Property.
Service Delivery Dist.:	District 4
City Council District:	District 7 - Reid
Action to be Taken:	Conduct preliminary Design Review
Finality of Action:	NA
For Further Information:	Contact case planner Scott Gregory , Contract Planner at (510) 535-6671 or by e-mail at sgregory@lamphier-gregory.com

SUMMARY

The Oak Knoll Project site consists of approximately 165 acres of the 183-acre former U.S. Navy medical facility (Oak Knoll Medical Center Oakland – or NMCO), approximately 15 acres of adjacent and undeveloped property, and approximately 8 acres of City-owned property, for a total of 188 acres (see *PUD/PDP page 5*). The former NMCO was decommissioned in 1996 and, with the exception of two separate private parcels now occupied by the Sea West Credit Union and Seneca School, is now owned by Suncal (dba Oak Knoll Venture Acquisitions LLC – or the Applicant). All structures within the former NMCO site have been demolished with the exception of the Sea West and Seneca facilities and Club Knoll, a locally-designated historic resource constructed in 1924 as a clubhouse for the Oak Knoll Golf and Country Club.

CITY OF OAKLAND PLANNING COMMISSION



0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet



Case File: PLN15378, PLN15378-PUDF01, ERI5004

Applicant: Oak Knoll Venture Acquisitions, LLC and the City of Oakland

Address: 8750 Mountain Boulevard (bounded by Mountain Blvd and Keller Avenue)

Zone: RH-3, RH-4

The Oak Knoll Project site is located in a largely residential setting in the southeast Oakland hills immediately east of I-580. The site is bounded by Mountain Boulevard and I-580 to the west, Keller Avenue to the north and east, and Sequoya Road and existing neighborhoods to the south (see *PUD/PDP page 1*). The neighborhoods to the south are larger lot, single family 1- and 2-story homes in a wooded setting. The neighborhoods immediately north and east of Keller Avenue are upland hillside housing of both multi-family and single family homes up to 2-stories in height. Other immediate neighbors to the north include the Sequoya Community Church and the small commercial center of Ridgemont Plaza (both located between the Project site and Keller Avenue), and the Leona Regional Open Space to the northeast.

Suncal is seeking City approval for a number of land use entitlements including rezoning, a Planned Unit Development permit (including both a Preliminary Development Plan for the overall Project, and a Final Development Plan for Project site infrastructure, streets, landscaping, and site monuments), a Vesting Tentative Tract Map, and other permits and/or approvals. These approvals, if granted, would enable development of 935 residential units, 72,000 square feet of primarily neighborhood-serving commercial uses and a combination of commercial (10,000 square feet) and civic (4,000 square feet) uses within a relocated Club Knoll building (further discussion below), with the remainder of the site consisting of parks, open space and streets.

The purpose of this informational briefing is to provide the Design Review Committee with certain preliminary information about Oak Knoll's draft Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) and draft Final Development Plans (FDPs); to brief the Design Review Committee on Planning staff's thoughts regarding these design-related materials; and solicit recommendations, suggestions and opinions of the Committee on design-related issues. Generally, staff is supportive of the current Oak Knoll Project as proposed, and continues to work with the applicant to refine and finalize their application materials and to process the required environmental review.

BACKGROUND

Planning for the development of the Oak Knoll site began in the 1990s pursuant to federal military base reuse procedures, when the former NMCO was declared a surplus military property. A Reuse Plan for the NMCO was prepared in 1996, inclusive of community planning efforts for redevelopment of the closed medical facility. These planning efforts were conducted by a joint committee of Oakland and regional representatives for the purpose of evaluating closure and reuse of obsolete military facilities. The 1996 Reuse Plan presented five land use alternatives for the reuse of the NMCO property.

In 1998, U.S. Department of the Navy and the City of Oakland prepared an Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for the Disposal and Reuse of the Oak Knoll Naval Medical Center Oakland (1998 EIS/EIR). That document analyzed the potential environmental impacts that could result from the U.S. Navy's disposal of the NMCO property and implementation of conceptual land use alternatives for reuse, rather than any specific development proposal. The Maximum Capacity Alternative as defined in that EIS/EIR was chosen by the City as the preferred alternative. The Maximum Capacity Alternative included 584 residential units of varying densities, 400,000 square feet of commercial, office and civic space, 32 acres of open space and recreation (including reuse of Club Knoll for recreational purposes), and a 54-acre golf course. The City of Oakland certified the 1998

EIS/EIR and adopted the Reuse Plan in July 1998. The Navy used the certified document in its preparation of a Final Finding of Suitability to Transfer (FOST) in 1999.

In 2006, Suncal proposed an Oak Knoll Mixed Use Community Plan, which was analyzed in a 2008 published Draft Supplemental EIR (SEIR). However, the SEIR was not finalized or certified, and the prior Oak Knoll Community Plan was not considered for adoption. The City is now preparing a new SEIR for the current Oak Knoll Project, supplementing the 1998 EIS/EIR with analysis specific to the current Project. The Draft SEIR is not yet available for public review and comment, but is expected to be published soon. Opportunities for public comment on that Draft EIR will be scheduled before the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the Planning Commission. Comments on the Draft EIR will be responded to in writing in a Final SEIR, and that Final SEIR will be considered by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, other advisory boards and commissions, the Planning Commission and the City Council before making any decisions on the Oak Knoll Project.

Existing General Plan

The City of Oakland General Plan Land Use Diagram applies five different land use designations to the Project site including Hillside Residential, Community Commercial, Urban Open Space, Institutional and Resource Conservation. In May of 2007, the City reviewed the Oak Knoll Plan as was then proposed, and issued a written determination concluding that the 2006 proposed Oak Knoll Plan was in substantial compliance with the General Plan, that the land uses and facility types conformed to the LUTE land use plan and diagram, and that the 960 residential units were within the maximum density limits set forth in the General Plan.¹

The current Project differs slightly from the 2006 Oak Knoll Plan but remains substantially similar, therefore also meeting the same criteria for General Plan consistency. The current Project includes elements of all five of the land use types as indicated on the LUTE Land Use Diagram, and the currently proposed 935 residential units is less than the 960 units previously found to be within the maximum limits set forth in the General Plan. Although the current Project is not in perfect conformity with each and every policy of the General Plan, it remains in substantial compliance with the whole of various policies found in the LUTE, the OSCAR, the Housing Element, Safety Element and Historic Preservation Element. Given the Project's substantial compliance with the existing General Plan, including the LUTE Land Use Diagram, no General Plan amendments are proposed or necessary for the Project.

Existing Zoning

The City of Oakland's currently effective zoning for the majority of the 188 acre Project site is Hillside Residential-4 (RH-4). The intent of the RH-4 Zone is to create, maintain and enhance areas for single-family dwellings on lots of 6,500 to 8,000 square feet. For subdivisions of 5 or more lots, the minimum lot size is 8,000 square feet. A small portion of the Project site (approximately 5 acres and owned by the City of Oakland) is currently zoned Hillside Residential-3 (RH-3), which is generally intended for areas with single-family dwellings on lots of at least 12,000 square feet.

The RH-4 and RH-3 zoning is inconsistent with the five different land use designations on the Project site. The RH-4 and RH-3 zoning does not enable a mix of different types of land uses within the

¹ City of Oakland, 2007

Project site, and does not permit the types of commercial activities, townhomes and smaller-lot single family residences that are proposed. However, when the RH-4 zoning was applied to the site in 2011, the accompanying Planning Department's staff report acknowledged that the RH-4 zoning was an interim measure, and that the City anticipated a subsequent rezoning when a specific development proposal came forward.

SETTING

The area surrounding the Project site is mostly characterized by residential development, regional open spaces, and the I-580 corridor. The East Bay Hills create a backdrop, and ridges, knolls and steep hillsides border the eastern and southeastern edges of the site at elevations generally higher than the proposed development. Most of the existing off-site prominent hillsides and ridges located to the east and upslope of the Project site are developed with residential neighborhoods. To the south and southeast of the Project site are the Sequoyah Hills and Oak Knoll single family neighborhoods and the Sequoyah Country Club. To the east of the Project site is Sequoyah Hills, including the first ridge of residential development east of Keller Avenue. To the north is the Ridgemont Skyline area that includes a mix of single family homes (Ridgemont/Skyline) with small multi-family and condominium developments (such as Shadow Woods) as well as a small commercial development. The Leona Regional Open Space Preserve is a major ridgeline of the East Bay Hills and lies immediately northeast of the site, across Keller Avenue. The west-facing slope of this major ridge is developed, and the east-facing slope within the public open space is also partially developed. Immediately west of the Project site are residential apartments and commercial development between Mountain Boulevard and I-580, and open hillsides, churches, schools and the Gold Links, Eastmont Hills and Oak Knoll/King Estate neighborhoods west of I-580.

Much of the Project site itself consists of hilly terrain with oak, eucalyptus, pine and annual grassland habitat. Three ridge and hillside areas distinguish the site: a broad ridge along Mountain Boulevard, a narrow ridge along the southerly property boundary, and a prominent ridge near the site's eastern property line which tops off at a promontory known as "Oak Knoll" or "the Knoll". At the base of these ridgelines, running from north to south is Rifle Range Creek and two secondary drainages - Powerhouse Creek and Hospital Creek (see *PUD/PDP page 3*).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Planned Unit Development

Sections 17.140 and 17.142 of the City of Oakland Planning Code include regulations that govern Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). The purposes of these regulations are to encourage comprehensive planning of larger tracts of land; to provide flexibility in the application of certain regulations in a manner consistent with the general purposes of the zoning regulations; and to promote a "harmonious variety of uses, the economy of shared services and facilities, compatibility with surrounding areas, and the creation of attractive, healthful, efficient and stable environments for living, shopping or working." These PUD regulations are applicable and appropriate for master planning the development of this large site. Suncal intends to serve as Master Developer for the Oak Knoll Project, and intends to pursue a PUD permit that establishes a comprehensive plan for the entire site. They also intend to conduct site preparation activities necessary to ready the site for development, to construct the major "backbone" improvements necessary to serve future development, and to create individual

parcels that they will then sell to future home and commercial builders, who will in turn build the residential and commercial uses of the Project.

Preliminary Development Plan

Pursuant to Section 17.140.020 of the Planning Code, all applications for a PUD shall include a Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) of the entire development showing relevant information to clearly establish the scale, character and relationship of buildings, streets, and open spaces. Suncal has submitted a Planned Unit Development Permit Application and Preliminary Development Plan (see **Attachment A**) for the City's review. The following provides a brief overview of that application.

Land Use Program

The Oak Knoll PDP provides for development of 935 residential units, 72,000 square feet of primarily neighborhood-serving commercial uses, and approximately 14,000 square feet of a combination of commercial and civic uses within the relocated Club Knoll building (further discussed below). The remainder of the site will consist of parks, open space and streets serving these internal land uses (see *PUD/PDP page 14-17*).

Table 1: Land Use Program

Land Use	Density	Acres (Net)	% of Total Acres	Units / SF	Net Density
Residential					
Single Family Detached Residential	Low	22.9	12%	188	8.2
Small Lot Single Family Detached	Medium-Low	13.5	7%	175	13.0
Townhomes	Medium	<u>34.0</u>	<u>18%</u>	<u>572</u>	<u>16.8</u>
Subtotal		70.4	37%	935	13.3
Commercial					
Village Center		6.6	4%	72,000	
Community Center (commercial)				10,000	
Open Space					
Parks / Community Center (civic)		5.6	3%	<u>4,000</u>	
Undeveloped Open Space		43.5	23%		
Revegetated Slopes		18.5	10%		
Restored Creek Corridor		17.6	9%		
Streets					
		<u>25.7</u>	<u>14%</u>		
Subtotal		117.6	63%	86,000 sf	
Total		188		935 units and 86,000 sf	

Open Space and Trails

Approximately 85 acres of permanent open space is planned within the community. Open space areas include the more sensitive areas of the site such as the Rifle Range Creek corridor, visible high points (i.e., the Knoll), and the wooded Hardenstine property (see *PUD/PDP page 17*). Also included are areas for active and passive parks, creek habitat, and visual buffers providing separation between neighborhoods. Trails, paths and streets provide connections between open space and neighborhoods. Smaller neighborhood parks are anticipated in the public realm, and group open space is planned within in-tract townhome parcels.

Circulation and Complete Streets

In February of 2013 the City adopted a “Complete Streets Policy”, expressing the commitment to create and maintain “complete streets” that provide safe, comfortable, and convenient travel along and across streets through a comprehensive, integrated transportation network. That network is to serve all categories of users including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, users and operators of public transportation, emergency responders, seniors, children, youth and families.

Complete Streets are integral components of the proposed PDP. The Project’s system of complete streets (see *PUD/PDP page 35*) provides easy access for transit, bicycling and walking, and allows motorists to move safely within the site. The complete street network also includes trees and landscape for shade, aesthetics and stormwater treatment. Strategies proposed under the Project’s complete street system include:

- Emergency and fire access is paramount in the street design;
- Travel lanes are narrow to control traffic speeds, conserve land and free space for other uses within the street corridor. Most of the streets within the Project will have a travel lane width of 11 feet, which provides adequate width for vehicular design speeds and provides traffic calming for the safety of pedestrian and bicyclists. Minor streets such as neighborhood streets and alleys may have a 10-foot travel lane width with no street parking;
- All streets have pedestrian accommodations (sidewalks or trails) that connect to the internal open space and trails system, and to off -site trails and transit connections;
- Streets within the commercial village are urban in character, providing direct access to shops and plazas, accommodating short term parking, and landscaped to provide comfortable and inviting space for pedestrians;
- A major Class I bikeway connects between the main site entries at Mountain Boulevard and Keller Avenue along Creekside Parkway (see *PUD/PDP page 40*);
- Street trees are a major component of all streetscapes, and systems for stormwater detention within landscaped infiltration basins located within the right-of-way are proposed.

The specific street design typology is discussed later in this staff report under the Final Development Plan.

Conceptual Architectural Design

The style of proposed residential architecture at the Project (see *Design Guidelines, pages 22-48*) is intended to draw from examples of architectural styles typical in the area. The Project's new homes are not intended to replicate existing architecture, but rather are derived from similar design principles that are applied to current designs accounting for current day materials, construction practices and lifestyle considerations. The architectural styles proposed for the Oak Knoll Project include Arts and Crafts (e.g., Craftsman bungalow, Shingle, Tudor and Arts and Crafts); Mediterranean (e.g., Spanish Colonial, Mission and Tuscan) and Californian (e.g., Farmhouse, California Modern/mid-century modern, and California Contemporary). These styles are intended to be articulated through massing, roof forms, windows and doors, and porches and balconies, and details of materials and color. The proposed Design Guidelines presented in the PDP (see **Attachment B**) are intended to provide the design principles that future builders must adhere to. Final Development Plans as submitted by the future builders must demonstrate substantial consistency with the design principles as indicated in the PDP and Design Guidelines.

The design concept for the Retail Village area (see *Design Guidelines, beginning page 18*) is intended as a modestly-sized gathering spot to provide basic retail support for the community (such as groceries, restaurants, and banking). It is envisioned as a cluster of buildings at varying scales, fronting onto a Main Street and plaza, with an urban character similar to other local neighborhood commercial corridors such as sections of Park Boulevard or Lakeshore Boulevard, featuring retail facades on the street. Proposed design guidelines intended to apply to the Retail Village include building placement which reinforces the concept of the 'Main Street', glazing requirements for all facades facing primary streets and public areas, awnings to provide outdoor gathering areas and shade, sidewalk widths at primary retail facades sufficient to provide tree planting, signage, furnishings, lighting and outdoor seating areas, and hardscape and planting which reinforces the outdoor pedestrian realm. The final design for the Retail Village will be submitted by a retail developer pursuant to a separate Final Development Plan, together with a Sign Master Plan that must demonstrate substantial consistency with these design concepts.

Park Design

Larger and more active community parks include the park areas at the community center (i.e., relocated and rehabilitated Club Knoll), and the neighborhood parks near the Project's northern boundary along Keller and southern boundary near Mountain. Smaller and more passive neighborhood parks are planned within the townhome in-tract parcels. The plaza at the retail Village Center will serve as a social gathering and event space for the community, with decorative hardscape, benches, informal seating and canopy shade trees. Landscape guidelines for parks and plazas include (see *PUD/PDP page 24*):

- The parks should emphasize use of native trees, shrubs, and groundcovers in both organic and formal settings.
- Parks should incorporate community-wide furnishings and signage consistent with other design elements in the community.
- Parks should provide shaded seating areas, picnic tables, and trash receptacles.

- Hardscape areas should avoid asphalt and large expanses of concrete. Natural stone, pavers, high quality stamped concrete, and decomposed granite should be utilized in the appropriate settings.
- A tot lot with play structures and picnic benches and lawn areas will be located at two locations and will include play equipment that is durable, safe, appropriately scaled, shaded and maintainable.
- Recreation areas such as playfields and multi-use courts should employ high quality turf and/or hardscape surfaces. Site drainage shall be extensively utilized on playfields and other higher impact natural areas.
- All fencing should be natural in character and follow the proposed design guidelines.
- Parks should provide connections and wayfinding to the Project-wide trail and bikeway system.
- Where public art is included in park settings, designers should coordinate with artists prior to park design to ensure art elements are well integrated, accessible and compliment other elements of the park design.

Club Knoll

Club Knoll is a historic two-story building with a three-story bell tower designed in the Spanish Revival style of architecture, with stucco walls, Spanish tile roofing and a walled courtyard entry. Club Knoll was built in 1924 as the Oak Knoll Country Club and golf course clubhouse, and later used as a restaurant and Officer's Club by the US Navy until it was decommissioned in 1996. Club Knoll is rated under the 1994 Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey as being of major importance and eligible for listing as a local landmark, has been placed on the City of Oakland's Preservation Study List, and is also listed on the City's Local Register of Historic Resources. As such, it is a historic resource pursuant to the City's CEQA criteria. The building is currently unoccupied, abandoned and has been subject to vandalism. Most damage is limited to graffiti, broken panes of glazing and trash, and water damage.

Although the applicants had previously proposed to demolish this historic building, they have since reconsidered and now wish to relocate and rehabilitate the Club Knoll building so it can be used as a community center and commercial space for the Project (see *PUD/PDP page 19-20*). Suncal has commissioned the firm Architectural Dimensions to assess the feasibility of salvaging and relocating the Club Knoll building and to develop a Relocation and Rehabilitation Plan to implement that strategy. Pursuant to the preliminary Relocation and Rehabilitation Plan:

- Those portions of the Club Knoll building to be relocated include the main hall, dining hall, lobby/mezzanine areas, building wings, courtyard and the bell tower.
- The components of the building that would not be relocated and instead are proposed for demolition include the basement and the third (or north) wing of the building, and the associated garage.
- The building will be taken apart in a manner that saves intact the largest components of the building possible.

- Those saved component will be replaced onto a new, code-compliant steel frame to be constructed as a skeleton to receive the relocated components. Individual parts of the building will be salvaged, restored and reassembled, and parts that are missing will be replaced.
- After reassembly, the entire building will be repainted with colors to match the original color scheme.

The proposed relocation site is at the center of the Oak Knoll Project, and the building will be oriented such that it fronts onto Rifle Range Creek. The new site will allow large and un-interrupted views of the building from all sides. Access to the front of the building will be for pedestrians that use a newly constructed path to the main entry's staircase, similar to the existing condition. The rear of the building (the courtyard) will face a new parking lot, as it does today. All work is proposed to be conducted in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, and consistent with specific recommendations of the Project's architectural historians (Carey & Co.).

Rezoning

Staff anticipates that the Oak Knoll site will be re-zoned with unique, Oak Knoll-specific zoning districts consistent with the Project's proposed land use plan. These unique zoning districts will provide an accurate reflection of the Oak Knoll PDP and will codify the specific development standards for new development under the Oak Knoll PUD permit. The intent of these new zoning districts and regulations will be to create, maintain, and enhance residential areas characterized by single family homes and townhouses at a mix of densities; allow for different types and characters of development where appropriate on the site; provide for appropriately scaled retail and commercial uses in a village center setting; allow neighborhood and community-serving assembly uses in the relocated and rehabilitated Club Knoll building; and identify areas best suited for conservation or restoration and permanently protect these areas as open space.

Final Development Plans

Suncal has submitted a Final Development Plan (FDP) that depicts the Master Developer's proposed improvements for the Oak Knoll Project. This set of FDP materials (**see Attachment C**) provides schematic designs for site-wide grading and retaining walls, installation of backbone streets and major utilities (water, sewer, and storm drainage), entry monuments, design of streets and parks (including landscape planting, street lighting, street furniture, and play structures), and the Rifle Range Creek restoration. Consistent with the City's FDP requirements, these schematic designs have largely been prepared at a sufficient level of detail to demonstrate the intended final appearance for each of the Master Developer improvements, and will guide the even greater detailed plans pursuant to the Oak Knoll Vesting Tentative Tract Map, as well as the subsequent Master Grading Permit; the streets and utility designs pursuant to subsequent City P-Job Permits; stormwater treatment plans subject to subsequent NPDES permit consistency; Tree Removal and Preservation Permits; and Creek Protection Permits. Many of these detailed permit applications have been submitted and are being processed concurrently with the PDP and FDP, inclusive of their environmental review.

As Master Developer of the Project, Suncal also intends sell large parcels of entitled properties within the Project site to future home and commercial builders, who will then build the residential and commercial uses of the Project. These future home and commercial builders will need to submit Final

Development Plans (FDPs) for their individual commercial and residential projects, and for phase-specific streets and utilities. The subsequent FDPs must demonstrate consistency with the overall PDP.

Comprehensive Site Grading

The proposed FDP for comprehensive site grading contains schematic designs for corrective grading due to soil conditions, slope stabilization, creek corridor restoration, and creation of building pads and associated embankments and retaining walls. The extent of Master Developer grading addressed in this FDP covers a large majority of the site. Grading is needed to appropriately address the design and slope of backbone streets, to create usable open space and park areas, and to implement the Creek Restoration plan. Retaining walls that are required for these graded areas are also included in the site grading FDP, together with final landscape treatment and tree mitigation. The Master Developer intends to develop “rough grade” lots for all of the single-family and multi-family pads, as well as a building pad area for the Community Center building. For those areas to be rough graded but not completed by the Master Developer in a finished condition, erosion control measures and retaining walls are indicated.

The FDP indicates that site grading is intended to be conducted in three separate phases, corresponding to three phases of subsequent development (*see FDP, Sheet C001*). For all rough graded areas, the Master Developer will provide erosion control and/or finish landscape treatment (including the planting of new trees to replace trees lost to grading activities).

- Phase I is generally described as the grading necessary to construct the main roadway spines of Creekside Parkway and Creekside Loop, to provide for the restoration and reconstruction of Rifle Range Creek, and to establish new residential lots, townhomes and the Village retail center adjacent to these major roads. Due to corrective grading and slope stabilization requirements, Phase I also includes advance grading for a portion of Phase II development along the southerly portion of the site.
- Phase II is generally intended to provide for the rough grading for single-family lots in the Uplands neighborhoods of the site, with embankments and retaining walls as required as part of lot grading.
- Phase II grading is intended to occur on the westerly side of Rifle Range Creek and between Mountain Boulevard, with large pad grading within the areas defined for future new townhome development.

In all, approximately 135 acres of the 188-acre site is proposed to be graded, with as much as 1.49 million cubic yards of earth to be cut and filled across the site. Proposed cut and fill is balanced such that no import or export of fill is necessary.

Streets and Bridge Design

The proposed FDP for streets and bridge design contains schematic designs for streets, sidewalks, street lighting, and streetscape planting for the following streets:

- Creekside Parkway (*see FDP, Sheets L002-3 and 007*): Creekside Parkway is the Project’s main street connecting Mountain Boulevard at the south to Keller Avenue at the north. The parkway is within a 68-foot right-of-way with a 36-foot pavement containing two 11-foot travel lanes – one in each direction, and parking or infiltration bulb-outs on each side. The right-of-way also includes tree planter strips, a 6-foot sidewalk on the westerly side and a 10-foot multi-use trail along the

upper banks of Rifle Range Creek. Street trees, primarily London Planes, will be planted approximately 40 feet on center.

- Creekside Loop (*see FDP, Sheets L004-5 and 008*): Creekside Loop is the Project's secondary street providing a second connection at Mountain Boulevard to the south, and looping across Creekside Parkway and Rifle Range Creek to provide primary access to the Seneca and Credit Union outparcels. The southerly portion of this roadway (which generally fronts onto development on the westerly side) is within a 58-foot right-of-way, with a 36-foot pavement including two (10-foot travel lanes – one in each direction, and 8-foot parking or infiltration bulb-outs on each side. The right-of-way also includes 6-foot tree planter strips and 5-foot sidewalks on both sides of the street. Street trees, primarily London Planes, will be planted approximately 40 feet on center.
- Creekside Village Primary (*see FDP, Sheets L005 and 009*). Creekside Village Primary is the northerly portion of Creekside Loop (which provides development frontage along both sides of the street in the more central portion of the site). It is within a 49-foot right-of-way with a 28-foot pavement for 2 travel lanes (one 11-foot lane and one 10-foot lane with a 7-foot parking lane). The right-of-way also includes 5-to-6-foot tree planter strips and 5-foot sidewalks on both sides of the street. Street trees, primarily London Planes, will be planted approximately 40 feet on center.
- Uplands Primary (*see FDP, Sheet L006 and 010*): The Uplands Primary street connects from the Creekside Loop to the Uplands neighborhoods in the easterly portion of the site. The roadway is within a 56-foot right-of-way with a 30-foot pavement for 2 travel lanes (one 12-foot lane and one 10-foot lanes with an 8-foot parking lane). The right-of-way also includes 6-foot tree planter strips and 6-foot sidewalks on both sides of the street. Street trees, primarily Coast Live oak, will be planted approximately 40 feet on center.
- The FDP also provides final schematic design for two bridges planned for the site that will cross Rifle Range Creek (*see FDP, Sheets L012-13*). One bridge is vehicular (multi-modal) and the other is pedestrian only. The bridges are proposed as painted steel trusses and railings, with stone clad piers and abutments along the banks of the Creek.

These are the “backbone streets” necessary to provide connections for future home builders to access individual subsequent development parcels. The future home builders will then be responsible for preparing FDPs and construction of the extensions of these streets, consistent with the FDP street designs, into their respective neighborhoods or commercial sites. The street designs have been specifically planned to implement the City's Complete Street program to ensure that new streets accommodate and facilitate use of public right-of-way for pedestrians, bicycles and transit, in addition to carrying anticipated traffic volumes. To the extent possible within the pavement width requirements of the Oakland Fire Department, roadway lane widths are narrowed, street-side rain gardens are located for bio-swale treatment of stormwater runoff, generous space is provided for planter strips and sidewalks, bicycle lanes are included, and street side parking matches the adjacent land use needs.

Monumentation and Signage

The proposed FDP for monumentation and signage includes schematic design for entry monumentation at the Project's major and secondary entries at Mountain and Keller, as well as designs for entries into each local neighborhood (*see FDP, Sheets L019-23*). Monuments along Mountain and Keller include 7-foot tall stone pillars in landscaped settings, and local neighborhood monuments

include shorter, 5 ½-foot stone pillars. All traffic control and directional signage, as well as street lights and other signage within the public right-of-way is designed consistent with City of Oakland standards and guidelines.

A wall is proposed located along a short segment of Mountain Boulevard between Sequoya Road and the Creekside Loop entry. It is intended to protect the privacy of future residential development adjacent to Mountain Boulevard. The remainder of the Project's frontage along Mountain Boulevard is either included within the Village retail center, or will be retained as an open space buffer

Parks, Open Space and Trails

The proposed FDP for parks, open space and trails contains schematic design plans for four (4) publically accessible parks, for open space areas where new trees are to be planted, for an internal trail network, and for restoration of Rifle Range Creek, comprising over 85 acres of the site. Three of the four proposed parks are located adjacent to Rifle Range Creek, and include the South Creekside Entry Park (1.2 acres) at the Project's entry at Mountain, the North Creekside Park (1.4 acres) at the Project's entry at Keller, and the Creekside Village Pocket Park (a portion of the 2.8-acre site centrally located within the site and inclusive of the Community Center). The designs for each of these three parks (*see FDP, Sheets L025-37*) include hardscape, park furniture and play equipment, and the type and location of landscape materials. The fourth public park is located at the highest point of the site at the top of the Knoll, the Oak Knoll Memorial Park. This park is a more passive park design with benches for viewing out across the site, but no active use program.

The parks, as well as open space areas between individual neighborhoods, streetscape areas and the Creek are all proposed to be planted with new trees, providing for mitigation of the loss of trees during site grading (*see FDP, Sheets L037-45*).

- Overall, the Project will require removal of 4,191 trees within the Project limits of disturbance of which 3,511 trees are protected under the Oakland Tree Ordinance, and 2,539 of which are native species.
- The proposed tree replanting program provides for 5,378 new trees including 4,795 new trees within the restored Rifle Range Creek corridor and in open space, woodlands and sloped areas, 350 trees within the streetscape of new major streets, 53 new trees at the Community Center, and 180 trees within in-tract parcels within the Project development area.

New tree plantings consist primarily of oaks of a variety of individual sub-species, as well as toyon, California buckeye, silktassle and madrone. The final spacing of replacement trees will be determined in consultation with the City Arborist, who will ensure that the available space, slope and soil conditions are adequate to support the replacement trees.

Paths, trails and walkways provide for internal connectivity within the site, as well as extensions of and connections to other off-site trail systems. Along the westerly upland banks of Rifle Range Creek, between the Creek and Creekside parkway, is a proposed asphalt multi-use trail connecting the site north-to-south. Hiking trails will be provided within open space areas on the easterly side of Rifle Range Creek, to the upper Knoll, and within open space areas along the southerly and northwesterly portions of the site. These trails will connect with other off-site open space areas. Sidewalks will be provided along all internal streets.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Staff has reviewed the proposed Oak Knoll PDP and FDP and has the following specific design-related comments for the DRC's consideration.

General Plan Consistency

The PUD approach and its design enables the Project to include a variety of land use types that are reflective of the mix of land use types suggested under the General Plan designations for the site, inclusive of lower density single-family residential lots; smaller lot and "courtyard"-type single family lots; townhomes; neighborhood-serving commercial uses; community assembly use (i.e., the proposed club house facility); and open space. Staff views this proposed mix of land uses as consistent with the objectives of the City's PUD ordinance, providing a variety of uses and an economy of shared services and facilities, and the creation of new sites for living and shopping.

Hillside Residential Setting

Overall, the Project would develop a new, primarily residential neighborhood within a hillside setting that is well related to and integrated into the surrounding hillside residential neighborhoods. The Project's scale and size is generally consistent and compatible with the residential and commercial development in the surrounding area. The Project's overall layout and neighborhood characteristics are similar to its surrounding setting and other well-designed residential neighborhoods, developed within and sensitive to its natural setting of hillsides and open spaces. The Project will result in new residential neighborhoods that are tailored to their physical setting and interspersed with parks, open spaces and inter-connected trails that link beyond the Project site.

Preserving Natural Features

The design of the Plan (see *PUD/PDP page 17*) is generally organized to preserve the upper portions of the three ridgelines as open space, with the mid slopes planned for hillside single family residential lots. The commercial center is designed near the Project's entry along Mountain Boulevard, in the flatter southerly portion of the site. Higher density townhomes and small lot single family development is proposed in areas previously developed by the Navy in the central, lower elevations of the site where the ridges drop to their base along Rifle Range Creek. The Creek itself is to be restored as an important open space spine through the site, flanked by trails, open space and the community center/clubhouse. Staff believes that this overall design is well integrated into its setting and responds well to overall topography and natural features of the site.

Mix of Uses and Clustering

Pursuant to section 17.142.100(d) of the Oakland Planning Code, this PUD may be granted a land use type "bonus" enabling a greater mix of land uses than those otherwise permitted per zoning. A PUD bonus may be necessary to enable the Project to include a variety of land use types that are better reflective of the mix of land use types as suggested under the General Plan land use designations for the site, inclusive of single family residential lots, smaller lot and courtyard-type single family lots, townhomes, neighborhood-serving commercial uses, community assembly use and open space. However, to provide greater consistency between the proposed PUD land use mix and City zoning, a set of unique, Oak Knoll-specific zoning districts is being prepared to provide an accurate reflection of the Oak Knoll PDP's proposed Land Use Plan. These new zoning districts will include land use regulations and development standards that are consistent with the Oak Knoll PUD permit.

Consistent with the objectives of the City's PUD ordinance, Staff believes this proposed mix of land uses provides a variety of uses, an economy of shared services and facilities, and compatibility with surrounding areas. The proposed PUD design also accommodates a land use pattern that is more environmentally sensitive than could otherwise be achieved under the currently applicable zoning regulations. By increasing the development density on those portions of the site that are less sensitive (i.e., those portions previously developed by the Navy), new development is effectively clustered within those portions of the site that are most suitable for new development, while commensurately removing all development potential (with a conservation easement, deed restriction or other similar mechanism) and preserving substantial portions of the more biologically significant and prominent portions of the site as open space.

Grading

Much of the site has been graded in the past, and the Project will result in substantial re-grading of the site to accommodate the proposed new development. In total, nearly 1.5 million cubic yards of cut and fill grading activity is proposed within the site. However, Staff does not consider this grading activity to be "excessive" nor visually obtrusive, based on the following considerations:

- Corrective grading is necessary for most of the proposed development areas to address currently unconsolidated and poorly compacted soil conditions and landslide areas. This corrective grading will involve over-excavation and re-compaction with engineered fill to comply with current building code and seismic requirements.
- To support safe street design, areas underlying many of the Project's roadways will need to be re-graded to comply with current City street design guidelines, to comply with ADA access requirements, and to satisfy the Fire Department's access requirements. The roadway leading up to the Uplands neighborhoods needs to be lowered by as much as 50 to 60 feet, and roadways within the Uplands neighborhoods need to be filled at similar amounts. The area along Creekside Parkway also needs to be raised in order to maintain acceptable slopes. These cut and fill areas are specifically designed so that the resulting grade will "feather" or meet existing grade at the grading limits such that potentially visually obtrusive slope cuts do not result.
- Those areas of the site that are graded because they are adjacent to roadway grading or corrective grading, but which will not be developed (i.e., areas between neighborhoods that address grade changes) will be revegetated with erosion control measures and with substantial new tree planting as mitigation for tree removal.

Rifle Range Creek Restoration

The restoration of Rifle Range Creek is a major aesthetic and environmental benefit associated with the Project. The majority of Rifle Range Creek is geologically unstable with heavily incised banks along both sides of the Creek resulting in slides and substantial sedimentation of the creek, and has been overgrown in many locations with non-native and non-riparian vegetation. Substantial re-grading of the Creek is proposed to reduce channel side-slopes and to establish suitable conditions for stabilization and re-planting. The restoration approach involves daylighting all four of the existing culverts; removing non-native vegetation and replanting with native plants; removing obsolete infrastructure, trash and debris; stabilizing deeply incised reaches of the creek; and using a combination of grading and biotechnical methods to stabilize actively eroding bank areas that are too

steep to support riparian vegetation. Once restored, Rifle Range Creek will provide a natural, continuous corridor through the site.

The Project applicant is concurrently processing a City of Oakland Creek Permit for the Rifle Range Creek Restoration Plan with permits and approvals needed from several other resource agencies (the US Army Corps, SFRWQCB, CDF&W, etc.). The City's Creek Permit staff and each of these other responsible agencies are expected review, comment on and provide detailed conditions for any approvals of this Restoration Plan.

Other Open Space Areas

There are four important areas of the Project site that will not be graded and will instead be left in their existing condition, potentially supplemented with additional tree planting. These areas include:

- The upper "Knoll" area along the top of Keller Avenue is the highest point in the site, and will be left as undisturbed open space. Staff believes that this marks a substantial improvement over the prior 2006 proposal, wherein this area was previously proposed for residential development. The only improvements proposed for this area include a passive park setting for scenic overlooks of the Bay and pedestrian trails to access the knoll top.
- The Project site now includes a 16-acre parcel (the Hardenstine property) that is heavily wooded and contains a smaller drainage known as Powderhouse Creek. This property is located between the Project's development area and the adjacent neighborhoods to the south along Sequoyah Road. This property (which was not part of the prior 2006 proposal) has been acquired for the Project principally to serve as an open space buffer, and the majority of this parcel will not be graded or disturbed.
- Hospital Creek is a small tributary to Rifle Range Creek that is only approximately 300 linear feet long, extending from a confluence that is approximately mid-way along Rifle Range Creek within the site. Although the banks of Hospital Creek are overgrown with non-native species, the upland hillslopes to the south of the channel are stable and well vegetated with mature oak woodlands. These oak woodlands along the banks of Hospital Creek and the adjacent uplands will not be graded, and are to be included within the undeveloped Creek alignment.

Views

The majority of the Project site is visually self-contained within its ridgeline and hillside boundaries, and not readily visible from immediately adjacent areas or from most distant locations. The overall topography of the site is down-sloping toward Mountain Boulevard and I-580, and forms an overall bowl shape that has varying topography. Overall, areas of change on most of the Project site would not be visible from off-site locations due to intervening development; significant elevation changes at the edges of the site compared to adjacent and surrounding areas; the low-lying bowl-shaped property; and dense vegetation along the site perimeter. Future development that would be most visible within scenic vistas and from public locations would occur in the eastern area of the site. The design avoids the most visible area at the top of the Knoll, but the Project's proposed Uplands East Neighborhood includes new single family development along the ridge that would be prominent from the west and north. Substantial grading and associated tree removal would occur on the lower hillsides of the eastern ridge and the lower portions of the Knoll to provide for new development. As discussed below in greater

detail, Staff recommends that this one portion of the site be developed with custom home sites that involve less flat-pad grading and provide a more sloped topography, that future lot designs and massing of future homes be designed to relate to the grade of the hill, and that substantial additional vegetation be planted along the front and back sides of the lots to visually shield these lower ridgeline homes.

Buffers

The layout of proposed land uses within the Project provides for substantial buffer areas on nearly all sides of the site. These buffer areas include:

- The upper “Knoll” area at the top of Keller Avenue at the northeast of the site will be left as a relatively undisturbed open space buffer.
- The additional 16-acre parcel (known as the Hardenstine property) that is heavily wooded and along the sites southerly boundary provides a substantial buffer between the Project’s development area and the adjacent neighborhoods along Sequoyah Road.
- The northwest corner of the Project site’s frontage along Mountain Boulevard will be retained as a natural and undeveloped open space buffer along the northerly Mountain View edge of the site.
- Relocation of the historic Club Knoll building to the center of the site and redevelopment of the Club Knoll site with residential uses in the southwest portion of the site will replace this potentially more active use facility with a residential “buffer” of land use that is of a similar character as the adjacent residential neighborhood.

There are exceptions where little or no buffering would occur, such as along the southerly and central portions of the Mountain Boulevard frontage where the site is less visually sensitive, and with the extension of residential uses adjacent to the existing residential neighborhood along St. Andrews Road. Overall, Staff feels the Project is well buffered from other existing development in the area, and that the range of residential home sizes and the relatively small neighborhood-serving retail center will harmonize with surrounding areas and facilities.

Architectural Guidelines

Staff’s believes that the proposed architectural guidelines for new residences, derived from design principles found in Arts and Crafts, Mediterranean and Californian styles of residential architecture found throughout Oakland, are appropriate for the Project. Staff is generally supportive of the proposed architecture, provided that future builders adhere to the design principles as indicated in the PDP and Design Guidelines.

While the design concepts for the Retail Village do include many important guidelines that can create an appropriate and unique center for the Project, Staff also believes the current retail design guidelines do not address a number of important topics that should be included, such as loading areas; buffering of parking; the Main Street roadway section, frontage onto Creekside Loop; allowable uses along the sidewalk; requirements that buildings should front the plaza and that the plaza should front Main Street; and the potential for a tall architectural feature to draw people to the Village. Staff will continue to work with the applicant to finalize and augment these details.

Small Lot Development

The Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) of the General Plan contains land use policies that address issues related to aesthetics, were adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, and are particularly relevant to the Oak Knoll Project. Policy N7.3 of the LUTE (Subdividing Hill Area Properties) provides that, “at least 8,000 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit should be required when land in the hills area is subdivided. Lots that are smaller than 8,000 square feet may be created to cluster development, provided that this ratio is maintained for the parcel being divided.” The minimum lot size permitted in the currently effective RH-4 zone is also 8,000 square feet (net lot size, not including publicly dedicated streets, alleys or paths).

Under the proposed PUD clustering, the Project’s design includes a variety of single-family residential lot sizes, all of which are substantially smaller and with smaller setback requirements than the currently applicable zoning regulations would allow. Generally, the Project’s design includes three types of single-family lot types (see *PUD/PDP page 21-23*):

- Small Lots, which are generally located within the central portion of the site in Creekside Village 1. These types of lots have a minimum lot size of only 2,000 square feet, lot widths of 40 feet, maximum lot coverage of 55%, and maximum building heights of 35 feet. Front setbacks are only 8 feet from the street, but with front-facing garage setbacks of 18 feet from the front property line, or side-facing garage setbacks of 5 feet from the front property line. Side setbacks are 3 feet, but may include zero lot line development on one side if the opposite side yard is at least 5 feet. Rear setbacks are 12 feet, which may be reduced to 5 feet over a maximum of 50% of the lot width minus side setbacks.
- Courtyard Lots, which are generally located within the central portion of the site in Creekside Village 1, and along the easterly side of Rifle Range Creek in the Creekside South neighborhood. These types of lots have a minimum lot size of only 2,500 square feet, lot widths of 45 feet, maximum lot coverage of 55%, and maximum building heights of 35 feet. Front setbacks are only 8 feet from the edge of a shared driveway, but with garage setbacks of 18 feet. Side setbacks are 3 feet, and rear setbacks of 12 feet (which may be reduced to 5 feet over a maximum of 50% of the lot width, minus side setbacks). The minimum setback from the top of slope of Rifle Range Creek is 15 feet.
- Upland Lots, which are generally, located within the easterly and southerly hillside portions of the site in the Uplands East and Uplands South neighborhoods. These types of lots have a minimum lot size of 4,000 square feet, minimum lot widths of 42 feet, maximum lot coverage of 55%, and maximum building heights of 30 feet. Front setbacks are 10 feet from the front property line, but with front-facing garage setbacks of 18 feet from the front property line, or side-facing garage setbacks of 5 feet from the front property line. Side setbacks are 3 to 4 feet depending on lot width, and rear setbacks are 15 feet (may be reduced to 12 feet on lots less than 90 feet deep).

Staff believes that these smaller lot patterns provide a more diverse range of housing opportunities than is generally found throughout the Oakland hills, and that their organization by individual neighborhoods provides for an attractive and efficient development pattern. Oak Knoll-specific zoning is being prepared to provide an accurate reflection of the Oak Knoll PDP’s proposed lot sizes and other development standards that are consistent with the Oak Knoll PUD permit.

Hillside Residential Lot Grading and Design

Specifically at the Oak Knoll site, the natural character of much of these hillsides is not actually “natural” in that the Eastern Ridge, the northerly edge, and the central area of the site have all been previously graded to a different extent and at different times by previous uses. Over time, these previously graded slopes have become revegetated and do present a natural character. Substantial additional grading is proposed as part of the Project, particularly for the Uplands residential neighborhoods. The Project proposes substantial grading in the Upland neighborhoods for corrective grading to eliminate unstable slopes, and grading necessary to meet acceptable roadway grades, but also proposes grading that will provide individual flat pad lots for the proposed home sites.

The City’s Open Space, Conservation and Recreation (OSCAR) Element of the General Plan includes policies pertaining hillside grading for development of privately-owned land:

- Policy OS-1.3 of the OSCAR (Development of Hillside Sites) provides that; “On large sites with subdivision potential, generally conserve ridges, knolls, and other visually prominent features as open space. Where hillside development does occur, encourage creative architecture and site planning which minimizes grading and protects the natural character of the hills.”
- Policy CO-2.4 of the OSCAR (Hillside Cuts and Fills) states that: “Minimize hillside cuts and fills and the removal of desirable vegetation. Limit large-scale grading to those areas where it is essential to development. Where hillside grading does occur, reshape the terrain in smooth, naturally appearing contours rather than flat, terraced benches. Immediately replant and reseed graded areas to reduce soil loss.

The Oakland Design Review Manual² complements zoning regulations for residential design review, and includes “guidelines” for hillside development intended to facilitate rebuilding of the Oakland Hills after the 1991 Oakland/ Berkeley Hills Firestorm. These hillside guidelines address aesthetics considerations such as scenic views, quality construction and design, and integration with natural characteristics of a Project site and its context, including the following:

- On hillsides, use courtyards and other spaces to organize building volumes and create transitions from house to land. (Guideline 4.5)
- On hillsides, avoid large retaining walls and excessive grading. (Guideline 4.6)
- On hillside sites, major shifts in siting from the neighborhood pattern may be warranted to help break-up continuous walls of downslope facades and minimize their collective bulk. (Guideline 5.11 B)
- Step building massing with terrain. (Guideline 7.1)
- Break the building into multiple volumes with staggered setbacks to reflect the irregularity of hillside terrain. (Guideline 7.2)
- Place floor levels close to and/or partially inset into grade to avoid or minimize tall skirt walls and other tall support structures. (Guideline 7.3)

² City of Oakland, Interim Design Review Manual for One- and Two-Unit Residences

- Position the building on the site to minimize height on the downslope side. (Guideline 7.4)
- Avoided long and high building walls close to side lot lines. Provide sufficient side yard setbacks, especially at the front and rear elevations, to allow plantings between the structures to help the perceived mass. (Guideline 7.5)
- Step or slope rooflines with the terrain and avoid large gables on downslope lots. (Guideline 7.6)
- In hill areas, maintain natural topography or use a series of stepped terrace/retaining walls to create grade transition between the street and the houses. (Guideline 10.9)
- In high visibility hillside and canyon areas, fully landscape all graded surfaces and buffer the structure using quantities of vegetation beyond the basic landscaping requirements of the Zoning regulations. Aim for a natural appearance on graded slopes. (Guideline 10.11)

Collectively these policies, criteria and guidelines seek to encourage creative architecture and site planning that minimizes grading and protects the natural character of the hills.

It is the Project applicant's position that their proposed design does employ the various techniques indicated in the City's Design Review Manual, and results in a hillside development design that is aesthetically pleasing and appropriate for the site. Specifically, the Project's proposed hillside design does: 1) avoid large retaining walls by instead using multiple, smaller retaining walls and side slopes between each home site; 2) uses a series of stepped terraces, side slopes and retaining walls to create grade transition between the street and the houses; 3) uses courtyards and terraces to organize building volumes and create transitions from house to land; 4) avoids long and high building walls close to side lot lines by instead using graded flat-pad lots; 5) steps the building mass of individual homes with the (future) terrain with a stepped terrace wall pattern; and 6) positions future homes on the site in a manner that minimizes the building height on the downslope side, and places the floor level at (future) grade to avoid or minimize tall skirt walls and other tall support structures (see *PUD/PDP page 23*).

While Staff acknowledges that that the proposed grading scheme may be the best way to develop the smaller lot pattern and provide adequate slopes that meet City standards, Staff is also concerned that the Project does not meet many of the design guidelines that discourage grading and terracing and encourage buildings on hillside lots to "step" with the terrain. Furthermore, those home sites proposed at the upper Eastern ridgeline near Keller Avenue are visibly sensitive, and Staff recommends that development of these home sites provide custom home designs that seek to minimize grading along the length of the ridge, and better relate to the existing grade of the hill and Knoll, and to minimize loss of mature native trees (specifically at the northern end of the ridge where it transitions to the preserved Knoll Open Space and memorial park). Additionally, the landscaping for this area should visually buffer new homes using quantities of vegetation beyond the basic landscaping requirements of the zoning regulations.

Club Knoll Relocation

The PDP shows the applicant's intent to relocate the approximately 14,000 square foot Club Knoll structure from its current location, and to rehabilitate this historic building for reuse as a 4,000 square foot new community center/club house with additional retail or other revenue-generating activity in the remainder of the building. The Club Knoll is proposed to be relocated to a park-like setting in the

central portion of the site near Rifle Range Creek. Staff is very much in support of this relocation and rehabilitation proposal, in that it;

- Preserves and rehabilitates the historic building in accordance with Secretary of Interior Standards;
- Provides for a distinctive landmark building as a centerpiece for the new community;
- Relocates the building and its potential use for future community gatherings to the center of the site and well removed from the neighborhoods adjacent to its existing location; and
- Provides for the greatest probable consistency with historic resources policies of the General Plan and Historic Preservation Element.

The new site is substantially more sensitive to concerns expressed by neighbors that the building's use could generate noise, light and other nuisances if left and adaptively re-used as a clubhouse in its current location, and is far superior to simply retaining this historic building in place but leaving it in its currently blighted condition.

Staff is also aware of certain neighbor's preferences that the Club Knoll building be demolished, with construction of a new 4,000 to 5,000 square foot clubhouse with no retail or other uses within the same park setting in the central portion of the site. This preference is due primarily to expressed concerns that use of this building beyond a clubhouse (only) will increase destination traffic that could adversely affect their neighborhoods. Staff will continue to work with the community through the EIR and entitlement process to address these concerns.

Traffic and Circulation

Oak Knoll is a significantly large project that will generate upwards of 11,000 new daily trips and approximately 1,000 PM peak hour trips at buildout. The congestion implications of these new trips will be fully studied in the Project's upcoming EIR, and mitigation measures to address the impacts of these new trips will be identified if necessary. From a design point of view, the Project does address traffic concerns in several ways. Based on the roadway layout:

- About 75% of the total Project trips are expected to access the site via three access points along Mountain Boulevard (Mountain/Creekside Parkway, Mountain/Creekside Loop and Mountain/Village Center). The majority of this traffic will use the Mountain Boulevard/Creekside Parkway intersection, which would be signalized and have a left-turn lane on southbound Mountain Boulevard. Two additional access points along Mountain Boulevard (at Creekside Loop and at the Village Center) would provide side-street stop controls at the approach to Mountain Boulevard and would limit access to right-in/right-out only.
- About 25% percent of the total Project trips are expected to access the site via the two access points along Keller Avenue. The vast majority of the Keller traffic would access the site at the new intersection for Creekside Parkway (the primary spine road) across from Williams Street. At this location the existing side-street stop controls will be converted to an all-way stop controlled intersection, which will slow/stop Keller Avenue traffic and increase safety for vehicles exiting either northbound Creekside Parkway or southbound Williams Street.

- A small component of traffic would access the Uplands neighborhood at a new 3-way intersection on Keller, which would have right-in/right-out access only.
- No publicly accessible vehicle access to or from the Project onto any other surrounding neighborhood roads, including Sequoyah Road, is proposed. No Project-related traffic would be expected to traverse surrounding local streets as no alternative cut-through routes are provided.

The Project's mixed-use characteristics will reduce many of the otherwise external vehicle trips on the surrounding roadway by capturing trips between proposed residential and retail land uses on-site. Additionally, the Village Center retail area will provide an opportunity to capture many local trips from others that are now traveling further distances to retail and convenience services, thereby reducing vehicle miles travelled and increasing convenience. The Project's internal street system has been designed to comply with the City's Complete Street design guides, which are specifically designed to facilitate ease of use and safety for transit, bicycle and pedestrian use within the public right-of-way.

Internal Access to the Seneca and Credit Union Parcels

The Seneca School and Sea West Credit Union parcels are not a part of the Project, but are out-parcels completely surrounded by the Project. Both of these out-parcels are currently accessed via existing pavement and roadways that remain from prior Navy use, and that connect to the main entry gate on Mountain Boulevard. Both Seneca and the Credit Union have legal agreements with Suncal that provide private access easements guaranteeing on-going access for these parcels. Staff is aware that Suncal and Seneca disagree over the details of these easement agreements.

Staff's interest and involvement in this issue is limited to our planning role to ensure that the Oak Knoll Project's design and public roadway system provides two means of continuous and adequate access to the larger School parcel, and adequate access to the Credit Union parcel, both of which could otherwise become landlocked.

The Project's currently proposed design (see *PUD/PDP page 35*) provides a new Master Developer-installed public road (Creekside Loop) that directly connects to the south side of the Seneca and Credit Union parcels via a short cul-de-sac branching off of the Project's main road (Creekside Parkway). A second public road is proposed that will connect at the northerly portion of Creekside Parkway, run roughly parallel with Keller Avenue across the northerly perimeter of the Project site, and loop back to connect with the Seneca School parcel. If these two roads were to ultimately connect through the Seneca parcel, they would then form a continuous loop through the northerly portion of the overall site, connecting at two locations to Creekside Parkway and providing direct access to both Mountain Boulevard and Keller Avenue. However, this northerly road is not proposed to be constructed until Phase III of the Oak Knoll Project, commensurate with development of new townhomes in this area. Until this second public road is constructed, the Seneca School and Credit Union can continue to use existing paved roadways that traverse through the Phase III portion of the site, which Suncal proposes to connect to the northerly portion of Creekside Parkway at an intersection constructed as part of the Master Developer's initial improvements. This internal pavement route may ultimately be removed and abandoned upon construction of the northerly second public.

Seneca School currently operates community outreach efforts and administrative office functions from their existing on-site facilities, but has a separate application on file with the City for expansion of their

facilities to include three distinct new programs at separate locations on their parcel. Seneca has expressed concern regarding the proposed access points.

Staff has no position regarding the details of the easement agreements between the parties. However, Staff does believe that the Project's proposed roadway system provides two means of continuous and adequate access to the Seneca parcel as long as both access points are public roads that meet the City standards, and adequate access to the Credit Union parcel. If agreements between Seneca and Suncal cannot be reached and the matter of these access easements becomes subject to legal proceedings, the outcome of such proceedings may affect the final design and alignments of these roadways.

CONCLUSIONS

As this is an informational briefing only, Staff is not requesting any formal recommendations from the DRC at this time. However, Staff is processing the Project's requested entitlements and Draft EIR concurrently, moving toward public review of the requested Project Planning entitlements in the near future. Staff is very much interested in the Committee's thoughts and opinions of the Project's proposed design, and specifically any thoughts, opinions or recommendations the Committee may have regarding the following particular issues:

1. Although the City is not a party to the private access easement agreements between Seneca and Suncal, and Staff is not asking the Committee to weigh-in on these private matters, does the Committee have specific comments or thoughts on the adequacy of the Project's internal circulation system and its ability to provide adequate access to all future uses, including the Seneca and Credit Union out-parcels?
2. Staff recently presented the Club Knoll relocation proposal to the LPAB and received a qualified endorsement of this proposal, subject to greater detail on the proposed relocation and rehabilitation methodology. Does the Committee have specific comments or thoughts on the appropriateness of this relocation and re-use proposal, and its potential effects on adjacent neighborhoods?
3. Does the DRC find the proposed hillside grading, with its retaining walls and terraced flat-pad design, aesthetically appealing? Do you find the proposed design to be consistent or inconsistent with General Plan policies and specifically those that encourage building massing to step down with the grade of the hillside?
4. Planning Staff wants to be sure that the DRC is fully aware that the Rifle Range Creek Restoration Plan is not a sensitive, carefully designed plan for selective creek protection and preservation, but is instead a full reconstruction and restoration of the Creek with substantial re-grading proposed. Does the Committee have design-related concerns related to this Creek Restoration Plan?
5. Does the DRC have any thoughts on the layout of the retail center and commercial design guidelines?

- 6. Are there any other thoughts, opinions or concerns the Committee may have regarding the appropriateness of the Project's design and/or its conformity with the City's PUD permit criteria as included in Section 17.140.080 of the Planning Code?

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ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A: Oak Knoll Venture Acquisitions, LLC and Hart-Howerton, *Oak Knoll Planned Unit Development Permit Application and Preliminary Development Plan*, May 2016
- Attachment B: Oak Knoll Venture Acquisitions, LLC and Hart-Howerton, *Oak Knoll Design Guidelines*, May 2016
- Attachment C: Oak Knoll Venture Acquisitions, LLC and Hart-Howerton, *Final Development Plan: Master Developer Site Improvements*, May 2016