



August 21, 2023 Minutes

In Person Meeting Location:
Tifereth Israel Synagogue, 6660 Cowles Mountain Blvd
San Diego, CA 92119
navajoplanners@gmail.com
6:30 p.m.

Call to Order: August 21, 2023 @ 6:33 p.m.
By the Chair David Smith presiding: Welcome

Roll Call of Board Members:

	<u>Term Ends:</u>
VACANT	March 2023
Danny Fitzgerald (San Carlos)	March 2024
VACANT	March 2024
Tamar Caspi (San Carlos)	March 2023
Cory Lashell (Grantville)	March 2024
David Smith (Grantville)	March 2023
VACANT	March 2023
Tommas Golia (Grantville)	March 2024
Chris Galuppo (Allied Gardens)	March 2024
Marilyn Reed (Allied Gardens)	March 2024
Shain Haug (Allied Gardens)	March 2023
VACANT	March 2023
Abel Santana (Del Cerro)	March 2023
Brian Gile (Del Cerro)	March 2023
John Hoy (Del Cerro)	March 2024
Lance Grucela (Del Cerro)	March 2024

0 -Absent

5 -Excused

7 in attendance of 12 members

Modifications to Agenda and Approval of the Agenda as Modified:

Elected and Public Officials' Reports:

Cory Funk, Community Planner, City of San Diego

- Explanation of planning group process changes that reflect inclusivity of the Community Planning Groups

Anthony Hackett, Councilmember Raul Campillo, Council District 7.

- Here to answer questions the community has

Public Comment on non-agenda items:

- Question from unknown: With regard to changes in bylaws, what is timeline for submission of evidence of inclusion?
- A: January 1, 2024 community planning groups will need to submit documents. Bylaws will be updated on the website.
- Dan Smith: This is a land use board. Would welcome volunteers from the community to participate. Acknowledged that NCPI is advisory board made up of volunteers. Please be respectful.
- Jeffrey: Murry Ridge Drive – lots of speeding. Can someone look at traffic control measures and a crosswalk? Do something now before something bad happens.
- Unknown speaker: inaudible
- Gary Blume – Total Altruism Project- Mesa College has a done a bio study and Allied Gardens reduced the litter by 50%, reduced workload of park maintenance by 50%. Crowd goes wild.

Action Item: Presentation from All People’s Church Motion to approve/deny the site development permit for All People’s Church. Project No. 636444

- Chairperson David Smith:
 - Housekeeping items on the meeting procedure.
 - Three separate items on the action: amendment to Navajo Community Plan to allow a use in RS17 zone, planned development permit, site development permit.
- Pastor Robert Herbert
 - Publishing Environmental Impact Report.
- Marcela Escobara
 - The Light Project presentation
 - Community plan amendment - Currently entitled for 24 single family homes
 - Planned Dev Permit - like a Conditional Use Permit
 - Site Dev Permit – covers environmental issues
- Paul Geese – Architect
 - Description of the design of the site
 - Spanish colonial style
 - 356 parking spaces – more than required
 - More trees for screening than required
 - Seeking deviation from 30’ height limit
 - Tower is 45-48’, top of cross is 53’
 - Deviation request from setback requirements 84’
- Summary: Guido, a civil engineer on the project, presented updates on the College Avenue improvement project during the community meeting. The project's decisions were based on

a local mobility analysis conducted by the project's traffic engineer, utilizing the City's Transportation Study Manual as a reference.

- Key Points Discussed:
 - Signalized Intersection:
 - The primary focus of the project is the installation of a new signalized intersection, located approximately halfway along College Avenue.
 - The location of this intersection was determined based on several factors, including:
 - Its northernmost feasible position while maintaining a consistent one and a half percent cross-flow of traffic.
 - Consideration of the grade changes on College Avenue, as intersections further north would encounter greater grade changes.
 - Maximizing queuing capacity from the freeway off-ramp.
 - Traffic Lights:
 - The traffic lights at the new intersection will remain green unless one of the detector loops is activated by vehicles leaving the church or a car.
 - Dedicated Turn Lanes:
 - In addition to the signalized intersection, there will be dedicated turn lanes:
 - A dedicated left turn lane for vehicles entering the site.
 - A dedicated right turn lane for vehicles entering the site from the north.
 - A dedicated left turn lane for vehicles entering the site from the southbound direction.
 - Guido emphasized that these improvements were carefully considered to enhance traffic flow and safety along College Avenue, with specific attention to the new signalized intersection's strategic placement.
 - Secondary Access Driveway:
 - A secondary access driveway will be constructed at the donor end of the site.
 - This driveway will be "ride in, right out" only, meaning vehicles can enter but can only exit by making a right turn onto College Avenue.
 - A gate will be installed, and it will remain closed most of the time, except for Sunday services and major religious holidays.
 - Parkway Design:
 - Collaborative meetings were held with city transportation staff to develop the parkway design both north and south of the proposed signalized intersection.
 - North of the intersection:
 - A new painted bike path will be incorporated into the road.
 - Instead of the current continuous sidewalk connected to the curb, a four and a half foot landscape strip will be installed, featuring street trees.
 - Behind the landscape strip, there will be a five-foot sidewalk, and street trees will be planted behind the sidewalk.
 - This configuration is a requirement of the city transportation department and will involve some dedication of right-of-way to the city.
 - South of the proposed intersection:
 - A new twelve-foot shared bike and pedestrian path will be constructed.

- Guido emphasized the project's commitment to addressing transportation needs, ensuring safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and complying with city regulations.
- Parkway Design (South of Proposed Intersection):
 - The city of San Diego Transportation Department required a specific design for this area.
 - South of the proposed intersection, a twelve-foot shared path for both bicycles and pedestrians will be constructed behind the curb.
 - Street trees will be planted behind the shared path to enhance the aesthetic and environmental quality of the area.
- Accessibility Improvements:
 - Stairs and an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) ramp will be installed from College Avenue down to the first floor level of the church.
 - This is necessary due to the considerable height difference between the street level and the church's first floor.
- Intersection Layout:
 - A visual representation of the new intersection's layout was provided.
 - The intersection was strategically positioned as far north as possible to accommodate grading requirements.
 - Features of the intersection include:
 - A one and a half percent crosswalk gradient for ease of use.
 - A dedicated left turn lane for southbound traffic on College Avenue, resulting in a narrower median.
 - A dedicated right turn lane for northbound traffic on College Avenue.
 - The removal of three trees due to the intersection's placement.
- Tree Removal and Replacement:
 - Coordination with the city arborist will ensure that the trees being removed will be replaced in a different location.
 - Collaboration with the Friends of Del Sero Front Porch Committee aims to align the project with their future median plans.
- Intersection Design:
 - A cross-sectional view of the proposed intersection was presented, highlighting its relatively flat design, which is standard for public streets.
 - Extensive site distance studies were conducted in collaboration with the City of San Diego Transportation Department to ensure compliance with ASHTO standards.
- A short video presentation was shown to provide a visual perspective of the proposed changes along College Avenue.
 - Highlights from the video:
 - The location of the church and its proximity to College Avenue and residential areas.
 - The subgrade parking structure, situated below College Avenue.
 - The additional right-turn lane and twelve-foot combined pathway for bikes and pedestrians.
 - The flat layout of the new signalized intersection.
 - The non-contiguous sidewalk with a buffer.

- The second right-in, right-out driveway, which will be gated except for services on Sundays.
 - A separate left-turn lane for vehicles heading south on College Avenue to enter the project.
 - Details about the signal operation, which will primarily remain green unless a vehicle is leaving the church.
- Speaker (Environmental Consultant):
 - Mentioned that the draft EIR was released for public review a year ago, with a 45-day review period.
 - Shared that the project received a total of 155 comment letters, including two from state agencies, three from local organizations, and 150 from community members.
 - Emphasized that responses to these comments and corresponding clarifications were incorporated into the final EIR.
 - Informed attendees that the final EIR was posted on the City's website on July 31.
 - Encouraged attendees to explore the final EIR on the City's website for more detailed information and offered to address any questions or concerns.
 - Addressed the question of whether revisions to the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) triggered a need for recirculation, clarifying that the revisions were minor and did not necessitate recirculation.
 - Noted that all changes made to the EIR were transparently presented on the City's website, with modifications clearly indicated using strikeout and underline formatting.
 - Reiterated that there are no significant unmitigated impacts, as all impacts identified in the document have been mitigated to levels below significance per City of San Diego standards.
 - Mentioned the areas for which mitigation measures are identified, including biological resources, historic (archeological) resources, Native American resources, noise, and tribal cultural resources (sacred lands).
 - Emphasized that there are no new or significant impacts related to vehicle miles traveled (VMT) or greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Pastor Herbert- Expressing a strong connection to the community, Pastor Herbert, shared personal experiences of living in Del Cerro with their family and engaging in community activities.
 - Stated their deep love for the community and their aspiration to establish a community church on the piece of land.
 - Highlighted that churches like the proposed one serve communities by providing opportunities for worship, fostering community connections, and offering various services.
 - Mentioned the proximity of the church to Temple Emmanuel and expressed a desire to build a positive relationship with them.
 - Noted the presence of other churches in the area, such as St. Teresa (Catholic Church) and Del Sero Baptist Church, with similar land use proportions to the proposed community church.
 - Highlighted the benefits of having a church in the community, including:
 - Serving children and youth through activities like youth sports.
 - Investing in local schools by providing mentoring and tutoring.
 - Offering free counseling services for marriage, family, and youth crises.
 - Hosting community events and public forums.

- Contributing to the patronage of local businesses, benefiting the general area.
- Emphasized the church's commitment to being good stewards of the property and addressing challenges like fire danger and homelessness.
- Expressed the intention to be great neighbors and emphasized the willingness to listen to and collaborate with the community.

Chairperson David Smith opens the floor for public comments, allowing community members to express their views on the proposed project. Requested attendees to keep their comments within a three-minute limit and to avoid asking questions since this was a public comment session.

- Daniel Smith:
 - Stated his support for the project and thanked the board for their efforts.
 - Noted that he had been participating in community meetings for over 30 years.
 - Emphasized that the project would benefit the community by providing valuable services and facilities.
- Steve Polykoff (Yielded time to Michael Livingston):
 - Acknowledged that he would not speak and yielded his time to Michael Livingston.
- Michael Livingston:
 - Thanked the board for their work.
 - Mentioned that he was part of Save Del Sero.
 - Expressly opposed the project and presented arguments against it, highlighting concerns about zoning and land use.
 - Mentioned that the project hinged on the approval of housing on the site.
 - Raised questions about the accuracy of the project's architectural renderings.
 - Expressed concerns about potential impacts on the community.
- Betty McCarry:
 - Voiced her opposition to the project.
 - Critiqued the architectural renderings, suggesting they misrepresented the scale of the project.
 - Highlighted the need to maintain the residential character of the community.
- Geraldine Luna:
 - Briefly stated her opposition to the project, emphasizing the importance of community input.
- Barbara Blakely:
 - Mentioned that she was a resident of Del Sero for 36 years.
 - Expressed her opposition to the project, arguing that it was not the right fit for the community plan.
 - Addressed the architectural renderings and questioned the accuracy of the project's representation.
 - Highlighted the importance of maintaining the residential character of the neighborhood.
- Chris Ward:
 - Mentioned his connection to the Del Sero and Allied Gardens community.
 - Voiced his support for the project, citing the potential benefits it would bring to the community.

- Emphasized the project's role as a gathering place and a positive influence on children.
 - Expressed his belief that the project could strengthen the community.
- Dr. Leslie Caspi:
 - Introduced herself as a long-term resident of Del Cerro.
 - Expressed her opposition to the project and raised concerns about the illuminated cross, suggesting it would alter the neighborhood's character.
 - Mentioned the presence of Jewish residents in the area and how the project might affect the community's diversity.
 - Touched upon a recorded sermon by the church pastor, implying it was relevant to the discussion.
- Patricia Mooney:
 - Expressed her opposition to the megachurch proposal for Del Sero and Highway Eight. She mentioned that John Wilkie, who couldn't attend due to a disability, also opposed the project.
- Mark Schultz:
 - Voiced their opposition to the project, citing concerns about its fit within the community, traffic impacts, and the potential for excessive lighting.
- Warren Connor and Jamie Connor:
 - Expressed their support for the All People's Church project, highlighting the church's positive impact on the community.
- Greg Hammond:
 - Spoke in favor of the project, drawing parallels to how another church project benefited his previous community.
- Summer Edelberg:
 - Voiced opposition to the project, emphasizing the housing shortage in San Diego and concerns about violating the Navajo Community Plan.
- Stephanie Mateka:
 - expressed opposition to the project, emphasizing the importance of trust in the community plan and concerns about misleading representations.
- Dick Burson:
 - raised concerns about traffic congestion, queueing, and potential financial implications of the project.
- Doug Livingston:
 - Highlighted the historical context of the six-acre open space in the area.
 - Mentioned that while he used to serve on the board, the project should ideally keep the area as open space.
 - Expressed concerns about the project's impact and potential development of housing.
 - The community meeting continued with additional speakers expressing their views both for and against the project.
 - Argued against the project's location, expressing concerns about traffic congestion.
 - Suggested that the church's lighting should prioritize the nearby intersections during rush hours.
 - Proposed a "right-turn only" exit from the church that wouldn't trigger the traffic light.
 - Stated that the board should consider these stipulations in their decision-making process.

- Kurt Aiken:
 - Expressed support for the project, emphasizing the positive impact it could have on the community.
 - Believed that welcoming youth and college students to the area is beneficial.
 - Highlighted the diversity of spiritual opportunities the church could offer.
 - Mentioned reading all 155 letters submitted in opposition to the project.
 - Discussed the value of the project beyond just revenue or tax considerations.
- Samuel Cattrell:
 - Voiced concerns about the traffic impact, particularly related to the proposed traffic signal on College Avenue.
 - Believed that adding a signal would lead to traffic backups and gridlock.
 - Suggested that housing might be a better alternative than a church for 900 people.
 - Criticized the traffic study presented by the developer, calling it inadequate.
- Patrick Sipping:
 - Shared his experiences and concerns about traffic safety in the area.
 - Mentioned the difficulty of merging onto College Avenue from the freeway.
 - Worried about the potential gridlock caused by the proposed traffic signals.
 - Expressed doubts about the project's feasibility and impact on the neighborhood.

Chairperson David Smith concludes the public comment period for speakers regarding the All People's Church permit application. They express gratitude for the comments received. The chairperson opens the floor for discussion and questions from the board members.

- Shain Haug:
 - Emphasizes that the issue at hand must be decided based on the Land Development Code. Makes the following motion:
 - **As representative, the residents of the Navajo Communities, makes its recommendation on the application of All People's Church as follows the Navajo Community Planner, Inc. Concludes that the applicant has not established the factual findings required by Municipal Code section 126.505 A. In that one, the development will adversely affect the Navajo community plan because of the development will be detrimental to public health safety and welfare. And two, the development will not result in a more desirable project than would be achieved if designed in strict accordance with the developmental regulations of the applicable code. Three the development is not consistent with the community plan. The Navajo Community Planners Inc. recommends denial of the permit.**
- Brian Gile seconds the motion.
- Tamar Caspi:
 - Raises questions about traffic issues, including concerns about merging onto College Avenue from the freeway and the adequacy of turn lanes. Inquires about the timing between the merge and the dedicated turn lane and the capacity of the turn lanes. Discusses the church's potential impact on traffic during weekdays due to various activities and the church's congregation, which primarily consists of non-residents. Expresses skepticism about the church's need for such a large parking lot during weekdays and suggest that the church may have more programming than currently indicated. Mentions concerns about the outdated traffic study and the changing

demographics of the community. Addresses the issue of building a lit cross and its compatibility with the community plan's architectural requirements. They argue that the church's use does not align with the established zoning and community plan.

- Brian Gile:
 - Inquires about number of church members. Answer: 800 people a week. Doesn't believe that the EIR is representative of current conditions.
- Lance Grucella:
 - The next project on this location could be more impactful to the community than the church. Expressed concern that they bought a house on his street and this could eventually connect to the church. Believes a wall should be built to separate from the community.
 - Response: the house was bought by the contractor. They are fine with the wall being part of the conditional approval.
 - Concern about the height deviations.
- Shain Haug:
 - Suggests that the discussion focus on the motion on the table and whether the proposed amendments can be made to the permit application
- Lance acknowledges Shane's point but insists on discussing and highlighting concerns even if changes might not be feasible at this stage.
- Danny Fitzgerald
 - When this was brought four years ago, Danny was sole dissenting vote against. Prefers housing. Interesting to see such strong support for housing now. Danny's position on housing has not changed.
- Chairperson David Smith:
 - The chairperson talks about their role as a steward to the Navajo community and mentions their past vote in favor of reopening the community plan. Emphasize the importance of smart planning, zoning, and following the community plan's guidelines. The chairperson discusses concerns about traffic, signalized intersections, and the potential future development of the site. Expresses their support for the motion and single-family homes in the community. The chairperson states their belief in smart planning and adherence to the community plan. Concludes by commending the applicant for their efforts and dedication to working with the community.

Vote: The board members vote on the motion, resulting in a unanimous decision to recommend denial of the permit application. (7 Yes- 0-No)

Adjournment. At 8:55pm. The next meeting will be on September 13th, 2023 at Tifereth Israel Synagogue 6660 Cowles Mountain Blvd San Diego, CA 92119.

Meeting Calendar 2023:

January 12th, February 8th, March 8th, April 12th, May 10th, June 14th, July 12th, (August silent subject to the requirement for call for a meeting), September 13th, October 12th, November 8th, (December dark subject to the requirement for call for a meeting)