

GPAC Meeting Summary

February 16, 2022, 6:30-9:00 PM

Introduction

Meeting Access

All GPAC Meetings are public and are accessible via Zoom and television (PCA channel). Meeting information, meeting recordings, presentation slides, and other materials are posted on the City's Meetings site: www.cityofpetaluma.org/meetings/.

Agenda

- Welcome
- General Public Comment
- GPAC Member Introductions
- Project and Staff Updates
- Housing Element Revisions Presentation, Discussion & Public Comment
- Final GPAC Comments

Attendance

There were 18 total members of the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) members in attendance, as well as members of the public. The following GPAC members were present:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Dave Alden | 9. Roger Leventhal |
| 2. Phil Boyle | 10. Iliana Inzunza Madrigal |
| 3. Mary Dooley | 11. Roberto Rosila Mares |
| 4. Jessie Feller | 12. Brent Newell |
| 5. Ali Gaylord | 13. Kris Rebillot |
| 6. Yensi Jacobo | 14. Bill Rinehart |
| 7. Kevin Kelly | 15. Joshua Riley Simmons |
| 8. Sharon Kirk | 16. Bill Wolpert |

The following GPAC members were absent:

1. Stephanie Blake
2. Erin Chmielewski
3. Sierra Downey

The following City and consultant staff were present at the meeting:

City of Petaluma:

Heather Hines – Special Projects Manager, *City of Petaluma*

Daniel Harrison – Planner, *City of Petaluma*

Eugene Lau – Planner, *City of Petaluma*

Maria Galvez and Monica Aparicio – *Spanish Interpreters*

Consultant Team:

Ron Whitmore - *Raimi + Associates*

Michelle Hernandez - *Raimi + Associates*

Meeting Summary

The focus of the 21st GPAC meeting was to discuss the Housing Element revisions being considered before adoption based on comments from the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on the draft Housing Element.

Opening

The Spanish interpreter, Monica Aparicio, explained how to use the simultaneous interpretation tool on Zoom for attendees who wanted to listen in Spanish. Ron Whitmore followed by taking roll call attendance for GPAC members.

General Public Comment

No public comments were presented at the beginning of the meeting.

GPAC Introductions

Five new GPAC members have been appointed by the City Council on February 6. New and existing members introduced themselves and what brought them to the GPAC.

Project and Staff Updates

Ron Whitmore presented the project and staff updates.

City staff is working with the Raimi team to revise the draft greenhouse gas reduction actions and timelines. The next steps for the Climate Action Plan include engagement with City staff and the release of the Public Draft GHG Action Plans.

Additionally, staff are continuing to work with West Consulting and Sherwood Engineers on draft flood and sea level rise modeling and hope to discuss the updated mapping results with the community soon.

The Administrative Draft General Plan Policy Frameworks, which lay the groundwork for the Administrative Draft General Plan, are continuing to be reviewed by City departments.

The City Council will have a Goal Setting Workshop on March 13th at 6 pm to discuss City priorities for the upcoming year.

City staff will be asking for GPAC input on the possible transition to in-person meetings and what is the most effective way for the GPAC to meet, involve the community, and advise the City.

Please see the presentation slides, the project website (<https://www.planpetaluma.org/>), and the meeting recording for more information about the project and staff updates.

Housing Element Revisions

The Housing Element of the General Plan was a major focus of the GPAC in 2022. In March, the GPU Team provided an overview of Housing Elements, some related preliminary analysis, and housing-related community input already received, and the GPAC discussed housing goals, sites, policies, and programs. In April, the GPAC reviewed community input from the Housing Element Workshop, which focused on

heights and housing programs. During the summer, while the Administrative and Public Drafts of the Housing Element were being prepared, the GPAC reviewed and provided feedback on the sites inventory and proposed programs. And in September, the GPAC provided input in the Public Draft Housing Element. Throughout the year, members of the GPAC's Housing Working Group also met several times with the GPU Team to help refine policies and programs.

GPAC and community input played a significant role in shaping the draft of the Housing Element that the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) reviewed between November 2022 and January 2023. On January 27, the City received its formal comment letter from HCD. The February 14 feedback from Planning Commission, along with the feedback from the GPAC, will be forwarded to the City Council, which will provide policy guidance for the final Housing Element. The Planning Commission and City Council will conder the final Housing Element for adoption in March, which will be followed by a 60-day HCD review for certification.

Please see the presentation slides for a summary of the HCD comments and staff's recommended responses. Please see the Appendix for the rough, unedited discussion notes taken during this discussion and the related public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM.

Appendix

Housing Element Revisions

GPAC Clarifying Questions

- Does our current housing element allow for SROs to be developed on parcels zoned for institutional or religious uses?
 - Currently, multifamily parcels allow SROs, could look at expanding that when the zoning code is updated.
- There is support for the staff and PC recommendations, especially in allowing single-family houses to be converted into duplexes and triplexes and allowing these building types in areas zoned for single-family housing. The changes in Attachment F will greatly help vulnerable communities, and definitely want to see the open spaces recommendations from HCD carried forward.
- Mentioned that HCD was stringent on parking and open space requirements, curious what the process would be like if we wanted to keep this requirement. What is the margin of open space reduction that we could allow?
 - If it is kept, it is likely HCD won't accept it and would get the same comment back and have to address it before getting the Housing Element certified. We don't need to commit to a reduction in the HE but just commit to analyzing what the reduction should be compared to other jurisdictions.
- What's the rationale for removing the parking space limit per unit for small-unit residential projects?
- How are the 1.5 spaces per unit a constraint? Is it to the developer over the cost of providing parking or that housing units demand more parking than that? Would some developers like to provide less parking?
 - It can be read as a constraint to develop housing, as a constraint on land. It can limit the number of units you can build based on how much parking land you have to provide. With affordable housing projects, they want to have less parking because usually the developments have access to transit, have limited budgets, and need the project to be cheaper to build (less land devoted to parking that could be devoted to units or amenities).
- Is HCD concerned that the minimum 30 sq ft private open space requirement is too high? In buildings where the design has a higher density, why does it matter?
 - HCD likely had more of an issue with the minimum 400 sq ft per unit requirement for certain zones, this minimum amount is seen as a barrier to the higher density projects.

Discussion Notes

- Support the idea of SROs as a strategy for creating more affordable units, and want to think of them as an old-fashioned boarding houses meant for everyone, not just for supportive housing. Wondering why we limit SROs to just certain zoned areas? They should be allowed within walking distance of transit. If looking at a repurposed building, can see how that differs from a large home that is rented by the room. Co-living arrangements offer lots of flexibility as short-term rentals but stop short of having onsite management and the units are not completely affordable.

When discussing them further, could imagine SROs as something in between this higher-end co-living and supportive housing.

- Concerned that the quest for density will override the ability to provide human-centric spaces. The open space requirement can sometimes be too much but it also depends on how you design it. When looking at certain housing unit precedents, some designs may look sparser but there is more usable open space. Want to encourage open space that is meaningful and gives people some private access to nature, however small it is. If you look at the need for light, it is very important for the circadian rhythm. Would hate to see the quest for density triumph over humans' access to nature.
- The open space requirement, currently only requires 100 sq ft for ADUs so there is precedent for lowering open space reqs for multifamily developments. For the parking requirements, we must act aggressively to eliminate parking minimums and have parking maximums instead, could look at incentives for having more bike parking on site. Could also look at lifting minimum parking reqs for existing single-family homes, especially when people want to lift their home and add another unit but can't because adding more density requires them to add parking spots.
- SROs should be conditionally permitted in all zones; no zone should prohibit them. Usable open space - the R4 and R5 zones - the open space is pretty minimal but depends on the housing type. The side yard requirements shouldn't be lowered, but the open space should correspond with the housing type, maybe by reducing sq ft and increasing the max/min dimensions. The 30 ft standard in MU zone, should be calibrated to unit size, having 30 as the min for a studio/SRO unit, and a 3 bed should have more. Could allow encroachments on upper floors of multifamily buildings to allow for more private open space. These are all minimum livability reqs, should have more.
- Residential care facilities shouldn't be in retail/commercial zones as storefronts. They can be located on the upper floors of a building and have sidewalk entrances, but not take up space as inactive storefronts.
- As the parking discussion moves along, want to advocate for parking maximums and for allowing SROs in more zones than what is considered now, especially in mixed-use areas. It seems like we are limiting the scope of where they are allowed. Residential care facilities should be allowed in mixed-use developments with those restrictions removed. We can find a way to thoughtfully square those trade-offs.
- For open space reqs - would want more clarification on the open space parameters if we are meeting the density reqs? If we need to pull out the private open space, can that in turn be added to the shared open space?
- Can we reduce parking reqs if bike and ped options are increased, is that a tied connection? Or is it more like we are taking steps in reducing parking now and hoping that there will be more bike lanes added in the future?
- Support for the comments on expanding the zones where SROs are permitted, and support for the staff recommendations for the rest of the comments, would love to see documentation of where the city would convene working groups and implement many of these goals/policies/strategies.
- Maybe we want to increase the minimum density instead of lowering min open space. When looking at our town and evidence of what has been successful - not clear why we would look backward but should instead be aspirational about where we want land uses to change. Overall, densities will need to shift and focus along key corridors downtown. And agree with SROs and micro units and tiny homes in more places as each serve a different housing demand. Residential

care facilities - agree with previous statements since we've spent so much time trying to have activation of the ground floor and street level. So, if the residential care facility is lively, it could operate on the street level. If it is quieter, maybe should go to the upper level.

- Support for the previous comment, especially the aspirational! Balconies as private open spaces are great but depend on how they are incorporated and the way they are designed. So, with a low open space minimum req, all that you can do is the balcony.
- In attachment F, table 2 - says we have the capacity and the RHNA number is certain, why are we overshooting our RHNA number by 20% in Program 1? What happens if they haven't all been developed by the next time of the HE cycle?
 - A: The state holds cities accountable for the RHNA number but also wants to see a bit more capacity, showing that it has the capacity to exceed the requirement. HCD does not expect that 3200 units will be built.
- The tone of the programs and policies having to do with higher density units is coming off with an alarm in the sense that these strategies are calling for less parking and more density, but can we push back certain things, like density, with the perspective of uncertain resource availabilities and resource management?
- Climate change is not being considered, putting density in areas that are most vulnerable to flooding and other effects. Need to be looking at these other environmental concerns and elements along with housing density.
- If we didn't have the government-allocated RHNA, what would be our main driver, what are we valuing more from the planning aspect? Is it resources in the future? What would be limiting us in what we can do? If the driver would be to analyze infrastructure and utilities and transportation – what are the strains we might cause to the systems with more population density? What would the systems experience with limited resources and more people?
 - A: The team will be analyzing different land use patterns against water and resource availabilities. Also, the guiding principles and vision were created to be the lens through which to evaluate those future land use patterns and other related decisions.
- There are many great programs and policies included in the Housing Element, such as agricultural worker housing and housing for service employees, language about exploring partnerships with religious/institutional housing, and more! It calls out exploring intergenerational housing and many nuances are really great, great work staff!

Public Comment

- It can be a positive thing to be adding so many housing units to the city but there is a concern about mobility and how to address the recommendations of the Housing Element, it is essential to have a mobility strategy that helps accommodate this growth. There are many opportunities to improve bike and pedestrian mobility, such as adding frontage paths along the 101. Interested in seeing these types of projects go through, especially as we talk about addressing climate change impacts and having more equitable and connected mobility options. There is some concern that development might miss opportunities to be connected to the great bike and pedestrian network.

Final GPAC Comments

No final comments were provided.