



Downtown Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan Subcommittee

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MINUTES

Downtown Streets & Open Space Improvement Plan Subcommittee – Meeting #4 Monday, May 10, 2010, from 7 to 10 pm

North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley, California

Subcommittee Member Attendance. Seven (7) City members were present: Teresa Clarke, Patricia Dacey, Kate Harrison, Meghan Lang, Jim Novosel, Carole Schemmerling,, and Ann Smulka. Two City members were absent without Leave: Keith Alward, and Margo Schueler. UC members present: Emily Marthinsen and Harrison Fraker.

Staff Attendance. Matt Taecker (Planning Department & Secretary to Subcommittee), Josh Bradt (Public Works Watershed Coordinator), and Kara Vuicich (Transportation Division).

Public Attendance. Approximately 10 members of the public attended some part of the meeting.

Order of the Agenda. No changes were made. Chair Novosel welcomed Harrison Fraker, Professor of Architecture at UC Berkeley.

Public Comments. Five (5) members of the public commented.

Tanya Roth, owner of Downtown’s Tapioca Express, said that Downtown should be more welcoming, and that the following things are needed: more lighting, available on-street parking, and better ways to handle loading and refuse pick-up -- which is made more difficult because many businesses do not have rear service entrances.

John Caner, Executive Director of the Downtown Business Association, said that he supported the use of “historic boulevard lamps” but also asked that LED and other innovative lighting techniques be explored. He urged the Subcommittee to identify ways to make improvements quickly to create a stronger “sense of arrival,” such as through the use of art, appropriate seating, wayfinding signage, and public restrooms.

Steve Finacom said that Shattuck is an important crosstown route and that diverting traffic is problematic. He also said that Downtown would be more prominent with more traffic on Shattuck. He also questioned whether public improvements will deliver positive change, and that maintenance should be prioritized.

Merrilie Mitchell said that having refuse picked up in the evening creates a large public nuisance, whereas morning pickup would have manageable impacts. She also said that existing parking should be maintained, and that new parking facilities “have not delivered.”

Jurgen Aust said that his inability to speak at the previous SOSIP meeting was “disrespectful.” He would like the Subcommittee to reschedule his “Town Square” proposal with adequate time for discussion.

47 **Adoption of Minutes.** No draft minutes had been prepared. Subcommittee members asked
48 staff to make meeting minutes a higher priority.
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50 **Low-Impact Design (LID) & Watershed Management.** After a presentation by staff, the
51 Subcommittee provided input on draft recommendations for Low-Impact Design & Watershed
52 Management. No formal motions were made. Comments included:

- 53 • Call “low-impact design” something more descriptive, such as “ecological design” or
54 “watershed features.”
- 55 • Make Downtown a model.
- 56 • Identify a demonstration project.
- 57 • Provide a sense of what LIDs cost.
- 58 • Work with other departments and agencies to spell out standards ahead of time, and
59 to get them to support and use proposed innovations.
- 60 • Prioritize improvements in locations where improvements would reduce flooding
61 impacts.
- 62 • Emphasize educational co-benefits.
- 63 • Note that the severity of storms and flooding will increase with global climate change.
- 64 • Emphasize maintenance.
- 65 • Storing rainwater would make most sense near where landscaping requires irrigation.
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67 **Street Elements: Lighting, Furnishings & Other Amenities, and Signage & Wayfinding.**
68 After a short presentation by staff, the Subcommittee provided input on draft
69 recommendations for Downtown “street elements.” No formal motions were made.
70 Comments included:

- 71 • Consider lighting for bicycles.
- 72 • Maintain traditional lighting where historic resources are concentrated, but consider
73 modern expressions in other locations.
- 74 • Consider ways that the architecture of buildings could be lighted.
- 75 • Consider ways to make immediate improvements to improve the character of
76 Downtown.
77

78 **SOSIP Outline & Schedule.** Subcommittee members expressed interest in having a walking
79 tour of Downtown as part of the June SOSIP meeting.
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81 **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 10:00pm.
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