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Subject: 530 Ocean Street - Community Meeting Debrief Summary
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Hello Lisa and Chris,

Thank you for meeting with us last week to debrief the community meeting. I wanted to send a follow up with a summary of the items discussed and what the City feels strongly will be beneficial for the project overall, as well as the neighborhood and greater community of Santa Cruz. While we recognize that some of the below cannot be required, City staff highly encourage that the following comments be addressed through the formal submittal.

1. Path Continuation

The Branciforte Creek multi-use path runs adject to Branciforte Creek. Many portions of the trail are paved, facilitating active transportation through the Ocean Street area of Santa Cruz. The General Plan, Climate Action Plan, Municipal Code, the Ocean Street Area Plan, and the Active Transportation Plan all include policies supporting the improvement/continuation of the Branciforte Creek Trail:

- General Plan Policy CD3.1: Develop and maintain physical and visual linkages between key areas in the city.
- General Plan Policy M1.1.2: Connect activity centers with bicycle and pedestrian paths.
- General Plan Policy M1.1.3: Implement pedestrian and bicycle improvements that support transit ridership.
- General Plan Policy M3.3.5: Require new development to be designed to discourage through traffic in adjacent neighborhoods and to encourage bicycle or pedestrian connections.
- General Plan Policy PR4.1.1: Provide trails for a range of uses.
- Ocean Street Area Plan Goal CD-O3: An attractive streetscape that encourages pedestrian activity.
- Ocean Street Area Plan Goal CD-O3.1: Encourage development that provides wider sidewalks, outdoor seating or displays, and other features that improve the pedestrian environment on Ocean Street.
- Ocean Street Area Plan Goal M-O1.2: Promote a safe and well-connected bicycle network between Ocean Street and other parts of the city.
- Climate Action Plan Measure T1.5 Equitable Active Transportation Access: Build new infrastructure that provides equitable access to safe bicycle and pedestrian pathways throughout the City, prioritizing frontline neighborhoods.
- Active Transportation Plan Project 38 (Branciforte Creek Bike Path – May Avenue to Ocean Avenue): Pave and connect to Ocean St.

Currently, the paved portion of the trail terminates at May Ave, North of the project site. Development of this site provides an opportunity to improve the bike path to connect Ocean Street. This improvement would further several important policies of the City and provide a valuable benefit to the community, as well as residents who commute by bike. The path is located within the Riparian Corridor of Branciforte Creek, so additional considerations from the Creeks and Wetlands Plan may apply (such as pervious paving and minimal tree planting). Planning and Public Works staff would like to continue to meet with the applicant to discuss opportunities to incorporate continuation of the bike path to Ocean Street as part of this project.

2. Enlarge the commercial space

There are many policies in the General Plan and Ocean Street Area Plan that encourage commercial and mixed-use developments. The vision for the Ocean Street Corridor is to create a pedestrian-friendly shopping district where local residents can fulfill many of their daily shopping needs without having to drive. The community envisions that new buildings along Ocean Street will provide space for a variety of local and franchise businesses. The General Plan land use designation of MXVC (Mixed-Use Visitor Commercial) is also intended to encourage high-quality visitor-serving commercial development along Ocean Street. The C-C zone district is intended to provide locations throughout the community for a variety of commercial and service uses for residents of the city and the region, and to encourage a harmonious mixture of a wide variety of commercial and residential activities. New development, including residential units or residential uses are encouraged to incorporate uses for active frontage along the site frontage. Please see below list of General Plan policies encouraging commercial development, particularly along Ocean Street:

- CD2.1.9 Ensure that new commercial development and lodging contributes positively to the overall aesthetic character of Ocean Street and communicates the unique qualities and character of the city
- LU3.3 Development, maintain, and encourage economically viable neighborhood-serving commercial districts. Cf. LU4.2.4 and ED5.2
- LU4.1.1 Support compact mixed-use development Downtown, along primary transportation corridors, and in employment centers. Cf. LU3.3.1, M1, ED5.3, ED5.3.1.
- LU4.1.3 On major corridors, encourage mixed-use development, especially projects with priority for commercial uses that can provide services to the adjacent community.
- ED5.2 Provide for residents' daily shopping needs in local-serving neighborhood commercial centers. Cf. LU3.3 and 4.2.4.
- ED5.2.1 Encourage neighborhood shopping in nodes of commercial development that serve residential areas and have adequate transit, pedestrian, and bicycle access.
- ED5.2.2 Support the development of neighborhood gathering places in conjunction with local-serving neighborhood commercial.
- ED5.3 Support neighborhood commercial and mixed-use development along the city's transportation corridors. Cf. LU3.3.1 and 4.1.1.
- ED5.3.1 Provide for attractive commercial development (including more intensive and higher quality ground floor retail) along commercial corridors, provided the uses are compatible with

or transition easily to adjacent residential areas. Cf. LU3.3.1, LU4.1.1.

The City's Objective Design Standards were also developed to support regulations to ensure new development is pedestrian-oriented and provides ground floor uses that activate the public realm, including specific requirements for uses for active frontages, and the size of the active frontage spaces.

Providing a smaller commercial space is not meeting the intent of the General Plan, Ocean Street Area Plan or the Objective Design Standards. It appears feasible to the City that additional commercial spaces can be provided on the ground floor by shifting around the current floor plan. Parking can be reduced or eliminated to provide additional commercial spaces on the ground floor as parking is not required for the subject properties due to being within a ½ mile of a major transit stop. One of the reasons why the Local Ordinance was updated to eliminate and reduce parking requirements, in accordance with State Law, is to provide for space for other uses on the ground floor, such as commercial uses. Staff would also recommend moving the bike parking/storage to the rear of the building/back of the parking garage. Bike storage is not an appropriate use for the frontage and shifting it to the rear of the building will free up area for more commercial space. If the bike parking were to remain in the front of the building, staff would require that windows be added along the entire frontage of the building, including the bike parking area, because at least 70% of the ground floor frontage shall be transparent along the Ocean Street frontage (24.12.185.14 (a)(i)). Facades without openings for changes in wall planes shall be avoided (OSAP B.5.1.5) and facade detailing should not rely entirely on "false" detailing such as non-functional window shutters (OSAP B.5.1.6). The lounge space could also be decreased to accommodate for more commercial space as providing a large lounge is not required.

The Economic Development Team recommends switching the location of the commercial space with the lounge as an option to create a more viable commercial space. By putting the commercial space at the corner next to the creek, it's a space that's more upfront and noticeable rather than tucked away at the other corner. Making sure that true storefront windows are included in the commercial space would help make the commercial space more attractive as well.

There are also options that we've seen other applicants do which is propose multiple tenant spaces to meet the commercial requirements. Another option is to propose a larger commercial shell space, and then apply later on to divide up the space into smaller tenant spaces through tenant improvements. This would allow for a large commercial space to be provided upfront, with the potential to change up the interior to suit the needs of potential business.

Staff want to clarify that the commercial spaces do not have to be specifically retail spaces, they can be any of the uses permitted as active frontage uses under the C-C zone district, copied below.

24.10.710 PRINCIPAL PERMITTED USES.

The following uses are allowed outright, subject to other requirements of the municipal code including the approval of a design permit for new structures when required by Section [24.08.410](#) (numerical references at the end of these categories reflect the general use

classifications listed in the city's land use codes. Subcategories of uses within these categories can be found in the land use codes, but they are not intended to be an exhaustive list of potential uses):

Uses for Active Frontage.

- a. Acting/art/music/dance schools and studios (610);
- b. Apparel and accessory stores (250);
- c. Auto supply stores (260C);
- d. Eating and drinking establishments (except bars, fast-food) subject to live entertainment and alcohol regulations of Chapter [24.12](#) (280);
- e. Financial, insurance, real estate offices (420);
- f. Financial services (320);
- g. Food and beverage stores (except liquor and convenience stores) (240);
- h. General retail merchandise (drug and department stores) (230);
- i. Home furnishing stores (270);
- j. Medical/health offices (except veterinarians and ambulance services) (410);
- k. Museums and art galleries (600);
- l. Professional/personal service (except contractors' yards and mortuaries) (310);
- m. Repairs, alterations and maintenance services for household items (except boat repair) (340);
- n. Small preschool/childcare (twelve or fewer) (510A);
- o. Specialty retail supply stores (290); except thrift stores (290m);
- p. Theaters (620);
- q. Video rental (650).

The C-C zone district also allows for the following principally permitted residential uses, copied below. The options are either ground floor commercial space with residential units above, or multiple dwellings or condos when ground-floor units are designed as live-work units, further emphasizing the importance of having commercial space on the first floor. The proposed building, with the small commercial space on the ground floor, seems like it is primarily residential rather than truly mixed-use.

- s. Mixed residential and commercial/office developments involving allowed commercial uses, on the ground floor and multiple dwellings or condominiums either above the first floor or on the same lot;
- t. Multiple dwellings or condominiums when ground-floor units are designed as live-work units consistent with Section [24.12.185](#)(13) and subject to the minimum (net) land area per dwelling unit of the R-M District (830);

3. Rear of the building

Thank you for being open with reviewing potential changes in massing to make the rear of the building less impactful to the single-family neighborhood and/or to improve the rear building facade in response to the neighborhood's comments. As the project is refined, staff strongly encourages the applicant team to explore opportunities to reduce the impact of the building on the adjacent neighbors (setbacks, step backs, landscaping, and building modulation could all help to reduce the

building's impact). Additionally, it is great to see that the applicant team is proactively engaging in neighborhood outreach efforts. There are several policies related to neighborhood compatibility to highlight the importance of designing the rear of the building to be less impactful:

- CD3.3 Encourage assembly of small parcels along transit corridors to achieve pedestrian-oriented development compatible with neighborhood characteristics.
- CD2.1.9 Ensure that new commercial development and lodging contributes positively to the overall aesthetic character of Ocean Street and communicates the unique qualities and character of the city.
- Ocean Street Area Plan provides policies regarding neighborhood context: The Ocean Street corridor has the potential to accommodate new land uses and more intensive development, transforming an automobile-oriented thoroughfare into a more attractive and functional urban environment where residents can work, live and shop. Santa Cruz also values the existing built form of its finely-scaled residential neighborhoods, several of which are adjacent to the Ocean Street corridor. With careful planning and design, high-quality development along the corridors can further enhance the city's built form while respecting the scale of surrounding residential neighborhoods. To address neighborhood compatibility, new development in the Plan Area will incorporate the following, as shown in Figure 3-2:
 - ◆ 365-Degree Building Design. All sides of buildings, including the rear of buildings adjacent to residential homes, will be well designed with high quality materials and attention to detail.
 - ◆ Height Transitions. The height and bulk of new buildings will be reduced adjacent to residential neighborhoods to create a transition in scale.
 - ◆ Upper Floor Setbacks. Buildings will be designed to incorporate setbacks on upper floors facing the street, so as to avoid an overly tall appearance
 - ◆ Rear Setbacks. Where the rear of a multi-story building faces a residential neighborhood, rear setbacks will create a buffer between taller buildings on the corridor and homes in the adjacent neighborhood. These setbacks will be facilitated by new requirements to place building frontages at the back of the adjacent sidewalk.
 - ◆ Screening. Fences and landscaping at rear property lines will provide visual screening between new development and adjacent homes.
 - ◆ Parking and Loading. Surface parking and loading areas will be located behind buildings, improving the appearance of the corridor.

Some other comments to note from the Community Meeting include:

- Delivery trucks and trash are concern in new projects on corridors, what is the flow in and out of the building for delivery and pick-up trucks?
- Improving the building facades as there have been a number of emails regarding improving the look of the building.
- Parking-related questions, including comments regarding stackers.
- Safety of the pathway area

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best regards,
Rina



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