

**North Fair Oaks Rezoning Community Meeting: Commercial Mixed Use Area**  
**November 13, 2018, 6:30 - 8:30pm**  
**Meeting Notes**

**Agenda**

- Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review
- Presentation on Rezoning in the Commercial Mixed Use, Questions and Answers
- Information Exchange at stations
- Next Steps, Evaluation and Close

**Questions on the Presentation**

- Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors at County level?
  - Yes, the County of San Mateo's Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will both be required to review and approve the proposed rezoning before it takes effect. These hearings will be public, and the Board of Supervisors can also choose to modify the proposed zoning.
- What is the role of the North Fair Oaks Community Council?
  - The NFOCC reviews proposed regulations and makes a recommendation on them to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.
- What is a setback?
  - A setback is a portion of a building that is set further back than the lower portions of the building. For example, if the first floor of a building is built to the street, but the second story is set back 10 feet back, the building has a "10 foot second story setback."
- Why are Phase 2B and 3 on a different track?
  - The two phases are on the same track, but the public outreach and input are being conducted separately, to provide more opportunities for detailed discussion of the proposals for each area, which are different sets of regulations. It also allows the community to only attend those meetings that are of interest to them.
- Was the presence of Hetch-Hetchy considered when looking at heights?
  - The presence of Hetch-Hetchy was taken into account when crafting the proposed regulations, as well as in the creation of the NFO Community Plan.
- Will parking requirements along Middlefield be less strict than Edison?
  - The parking requirements for each area have not yet been determined.
- What is the purpose/motivation for rezoning?
  - The overarching purpose of the rezoning is to implement the NFO Community Plan. The goals of the Plan, broadly, are to allow and incentivize a greater mix of community-serving uses, including more variety of commercial uses, fewer community-impacting heavier industrial uses, and an increase in the amount and type of housing.
- Are there traffic plans?
  - Impact of Stanford project
  - Concern about bikeability.
    - The NFO Community Plan studied the potential traffic impacts of the

proposed changes, and included assessment of the planned Stanford in Redwood City project, as well as other planned or projected future development. Some improvements to traffic infrastructure have been completed, some are planned, and some will be required in the future to accommodate larger projects, if such projects are proposed.

- Some bicycle improvements have recently been completed, and some are planned. Bike parking facilities will be required in larger projects; the Middlefield Road redesign will include bike lanes on Middlefield Road; new bike lanes and bike sensitive traffic lights have been installed on Semicircular Road; and the NFO Plan has identified other bike routes to be prioritized in the future.
- Idea of a shuttle
  - There have been discussions between Stanford, Redwood City, the County, and other stakeholders on the potential for various types of shuttle service that might serve portions of North Fair Oaks.
- What will be done for businesses that will be displaced?
  - No businesses will be required to close or relocate due to rezoning. Existing businesses will be allowed to continue to operate in perpetuity, even if they are a type of business that would not be allowed to open under the new regulations.
- Will existing businesses need a use permit?
  - Only if they are already required to have a use permit. Existing businesses will not be required to obtain new permits under the rezoning.
- Explain potential transit hub
  - The transit hub is the area identified in the North Fair Oaks Community Plan as the most appropriate location for significant intensification of transit service, which could be in the form of a bus transit interconnection, and/or a shuttle or rail stop, should rail service on the Dumbarton Rail line be restored.

### **Site Analysis**

- Will grade separations be needed at existing RR?
  - The County intends to pursue grade separations crossing the Caltrain tracks, but these plans are in the early evaluation stages, and will require studies, environmental evaluation, additional funding, and approvals from multiple regional and state authorities.
- Will we hear RR if it becomes a commuter line?
  - If the Dumbarton rail line is revived as a commuter line, there would likely be some noise impacts on surrounding properties, although they are likely to be less frequent and less intense than the impacts of Caltrain. The possibility of a Dumbarton commuter line is still in the evaluation stages, and the potential for the line is uncertain.
- Prefer bus line (concern about noise from RR)
- When will new plans for properties be able to be proposed?
  - As soon as the Board of Supervisors adopts the new zoning regulations, new projects can be proposed.
- What is the height limit? 70 feet? 60 feet?

- The height limits will vary by area, and will be 50 feet in some areas, 60 feet in some areas, and 70 feet in some areas (see the Height [graphic](#)).
- When does the Middlefield process start?
  - The Middlefield Road redesign is separate from the rezoning, and is anticipated to begin in Spring of 2019. More information is available here: <https://publicworks.smcgov.org/projects/middlefield-road-improvement-project>.
- Will I be/can I be forced to move?
  - No. No one will be displaced, no businesses will be forced to close or relocate, no homes will be removed, and no residents will be forced to move because of the rezoning.
- Will there be new parks? spaces for kids? Greenway from Hetch Hetchy?
  - The proposed rezoning does not directly create parks, although new developments will be encouraged to provide public amenities. The County has created several parks on Hetch Hetchy Right of Way areas (Friendship Park, North Fair Oaks Community Playground), and continues to evaluate Hetch Hetchy areas and other areas that might be appropriate for park and recreational space.
- Is there a plan for breaks between tall buildings (privately owned public spaces)
  - Buildings will be required to have setbacks and stepbacks to alleviate the bulk and shadow impacts of building masses.
- More walkable areas?
- Want to see grade separation at proposed transit hub.
  - The County intends to pursue the possibility of grade separated crossings of the Caltrain tracks (see above).

### **Proposed Height Limits**

Q1. What do you like?

- Height limitations
- Won't affect light exposure.
- I don't mind the height.

Q2. What are your concerns?

- Number, density and height in a particular area, how many units? There is limited space.
- Lack of parking
- Will we see more spill over parking with the current plan in terms of density?
  - Stanford
  - Charge for parking space
  - Cost and manpower for enforcement is a concern
    - The proposed zoning regulations are intended to require each new project to have sufficient parking to meet the parking need generated by that project. Since many existing businesses were built prior to current parking regulations, and have less parking than needed, new developments in some cases can result in less spillover parking, rather than more.

- There may be metered and/or time-limited parking installed on Middlefield Road, as part of the road redesign (<https://publicworks.smcgov.org/projects/middlefield-road-improvement-project>.) The County has community service officers who enforce parking regulation in North Fair Oaks, but new parking regulations could result in demand for more officers.
- There should be a step back at 2nd Ave
- Traffic is a concern along 2nd Ave; consider speed bump at Main street along 2nd Ave
- As long as people don't see large buildings along Middlefield
- There's a concern for housing and more units can help address the issue
- Would like to see less step back—not be the 5<sup>th</sup> floor—impact values of surrounding properties

#### Questions about height limits:

- Is underground parking an option?
  - Yes, but the feasibility of underground parking depends on the location and nature of a proposed development.
- What will happen with people who can't afford rent in new developments?
  - Any new project will have at least 20% affordable housing
- When would permits be issued?
  - New permits under the revised regulations cannot be issued prior to the adoption of the new regulations, which is anticipated to be in June/July 2019.
- How will you address traffic along Marsh Rd?
- When will Middlefield Project start?
  - This project anticipated to begin in Spring of 2019. More information is available here: <https://publicworks.smcgov.org/projects/middlefield-road-improvement-project>.
- Is planting part of the plans? Green space
  - New projects will be required and/or encouraged to incorporate green elements into project design.
- How did you settle on 70 feet?
  - The North Fair Oaks Community Plan evaluated the need for housing, the heights required for successful multifamily and mixed use projects, the potential impacts of density and height on adjacent areas, the types of projects that can be accommodated by existing and future infrastructure, and a range of other factors in determining the appropriate heights in various areas.
- How does the step back work or apply? How far away from the street?
  - Typically, required upper story stepbacks range from 5 to 12 feet in width.
- It is possible to consider having parking garage on the first floor?
  - Yes, parking on the first floor is an option for some projects.

#### **Design Standards**

- What are design standards?
  - Design standards are regulations regarding how a building looks, including in some cases shape, color, materials, orientation, and a variety of other design

elements

- Are buildings going to be on the front of Middlefield?
  - Some buildings may be built along Middlefield. The rezoning changes the regulations for what may be built in various areas, but will not in itself create any new development; developers and property owners will make decisions on how to develop individual properties.
- Will there be changes to single family homes?
  - No regulations for single family home areas are being modified.
- Is this plan making changes right away? Or is it for new development?
  - The new zoning is intended to guide future development over the next 25 to 30 years. It will not change the regulations for any existing buildings or businesses, but does change what is allowed when new buildings are created.
- Is the County involved with the Facebook/SamTrans project?
  - The County is following the Facebook/SamTrans exploration of the Dumbarton rail corridor, and has been commenting on the process.
- Noise from TE Connectivity is dangerous to walk around and is unlivable. What is the County doing about it? Concern that it is being pushed under the rug
  - While noise regulations are not a part of zoning or rezoning, the County does have a set of noise limits that apply to businesses. County Environmental Health and/or County Code Enforcement monitors and addresses noise issues and complaints. Noise complaints can be reported <https://en.seeclickfix.com/san-mateo-county>
- What is light industrial vs industrial?
  - Light industrial includes less intensive, smaller scale industrial uses such as R&D, industrial office, smaller-scale production, and other uses that are less noisy, less polluting, and require less space. Heavier industrial uses include more traditional factory uses, heavy manufacturing and fabricating, and other similar uses which are typically housed in large facilities and have more significant impacts.
- I live in a commercial area that is being rezoned. What's going to happen to my house?
  - No residences in commercial areas will be required to relocate. These residences are already what is considered a "legal nonconforming" uses under the current zoning, and will continue to be legal nonconforming under the new regulations.
- Policies for partnerships in shared parking: are those policies already in place?
  - In some areas these policies are in place; in some areas, they will be newly applied.
- How are stormwater management facilities chosen? (Where are they being put?)
  - Within North Fair Oaks, County Public Works assesses and identifies the need for stormwater facilities, based on stormwater impacts. More broadly, Public Works works with surrounding jurisdictions (Redwood City, Menlo Park, Atherton) who are also affected by the same stormwater impacts to determine the best locations for shared facilities.
- On Middlefield is the minimum height 5 stories? Is that set?
  - The precise minimum height on Middlefield has not been determined, but will

probably be something closer to 3 stories.

- Is the 5th story stepback set in stone? Stepbacks can raise property value
  - The 5<sup>th</sup> story stepback is a proposal and has not been established. It may be modified in the future, but the intention is to require a stepback at some height in order to create a transition to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- Will the proposed policies be available to the public before they are finalized?
  - Yes. The policies will be presented to the public at subsequent public workshops, and published online prior to the North Fair Oaks Community Council hearings, the Planning Commission hearings, and Board of Supervisors hearings.
- What will happen to existing uses?
  - Existing uses will be allowed to continue in perpetuity.
- Is this the only public meeting? How many more this year?
  - This meeting was the second community-wide workshop on the proposed rezoning, and was also preceded by two smaller-scale stakeholder forums. There will be at least one and possibly two more workshops on the CMU zoning, although those will happen early in 2019, followed by multiple public hearings at the NFOCC, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors.
- Can someone who has had a business for many years stay?
  - Yes. Businesses in the area can continue to operate in perpetuity.
- I'm worried about my view being full of buildings like San Francisco
  - While the heights and locations of allowed new development under the proposed rezoning take into account potential shadow and view impacts, if new buildings are created, they will alter the views from some residences.
- Will there be more parks?
  - The County continues to evaluate possible locations for new parks.
- I'm worried that new people who are coming to the area will change our community
  - The proposed rezoning intends to achieve a mix of existing and new development that benefits and serves existing residents, as well as helping alleviate the tremendous housing and other development pressures of new workers and residents already coming to the peninsula to work in the tech industry and other expanding industries.
- Many streets (i.e., 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave.) are very dark and unsafe to walk down. Can that be fixed?
  - County Public Works addresses improvements to street lighting and other street facilities, and take the desires of residents into account in planning these improvements. Information on the Roads Division is here <https://publicworks.smcgov.org/roads>.
- Are the schools considered in these plans? (Fair Oaks)
  - The potential impacts on area schools were evaluated during the creation of the North Fair Oaks Community Plan.
- Are there any financial benefits?
  - There are no direct financial benefits from the rezoning, although higher intensity development can generate more tax revenue in certain circumstances, providing more revenue for infrastructure improvements and other needs. However, this depends on the type and scale of the development.

- Do current properties have to change in order to comply?
  - No. Existing properties can continue as they are in perpetuity; the regulations relate only to new developments.
- I am worried about more trash on the sidewalks.
  - County Public Works addresses street cleaning and trash pickup in some areas. More information is available here <https://publicworks.smcgov.org/street-sweeping>.

### **Land Use**

- What was the density suggested?
- Existing buildings can stay
  - Existing buildings can remain in perpetuity.
- What will happen with residents that live in the rezoning area? How will it affect residents?
  - None of the existing residential areas are being rezoned, and residences within the rezoning areas are allowed to remain in perpetuity.
- Will residential and businesses be separated?
  - In some cases, mixed-use projects, with residential and other uses in the same building, will be allowed. In some cases, these uses will be in separate structures.
- It can't happen anytime soon
  - The rezoning is intended to guide development over the next 25 to 30 years.
- How long will this project be?
  - The adoption of the zoning, which changes regulations regarding what may be built, is intended to be completed in the first half of 2019. However, any actual new development is entirely dependent on property owners and developers; the new zoning does not cause any new development.
- Does commercial include retail businesses?
  - It will include a range of allowed retail businesses.
- Like the idea of having apartments with parking above.
  - This will be allowed, but the nature of properties in North Fair Oaks may make it infeasible in most cases.
- Concerns about industrial zoning next to residential areas and schools
  - The area being rezoned already allows industrial uses. The CMU rezoning will reduce the number of allowed industrial uses, while allow less intensive and less impactful uses.
- Next meeting will focus on Phase 3 in December 2018
- Will property taxes increase?
  - Not for existing residences, businesses, and other properties. All existing properties remain subject to California's Proposition 13, which limits the allowable tax increases.
- Will affordable housing be affordable?
  - The affordable housing required as part of all new residential projects will provide a mix of affordability, with some targeted to very low and extremely low income residents.

- Some money from property taxes go to schools—there needs to be focused on schools too
- Will Latino culture mural on Middlefield and 2<sup>nd</sup> be removed?
  - No. The rezoning does not change this mural.
- Is rezoning happening because of the influence of Facebook, etc.?
  - The rezoning is the required implementation of the North Fair Oaks Community Plan, which was begun in 2009 and adopted in 2011, prior to the move of Facebook to Menlo Park, and mainly prior to the recent employment boom on the peninsula. The rezoning has been planned for a number of years, and is not due to the influence of any large employers.
- Are playgrounds are included in this project?
  - While the County continues to evaluate locations for park and playground expansion, the rezoning will not directly create these facilities.
- Would like to see parks and schools