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January 26, 2011

Pleasanton Planning Commission Members
c/o Janice Stern
Planning Manager
City of Pleasanton
200 Old Bernal Avenue
Pleasanton, CA 94566



Re: Hacienda TOD Standards and Design Guidelines, dated January 21, 2100 (Draft # 6)

Dear Members of the Pleasanton Planning Commission:

BRE has reviewed the latest draft design guidelines that will be reviewed by the Pleasanton Planning Commission tonight and would like to address some significant issues relative to standards that would inhibit our ability to develop economically viable projects at a minimum density of 30 du/ac on the BRE and W.P. Carey sites. At this time, the current draft guidelines still contain a number of proposed standards we view as economically infeasible or unnecessary.

Major Points:

1. BRE can work with 5000 sf. of retail on Owens, and live/work for the remainder of that frontage.
2. The retail and the live/work on Gibraltar are infeasible and will never succeed. They could be allowed permissively, should the owner of Site 3 come to a different conclusion at a later date. Conversion to retail should be a permitted use on this corner.
3. Live/work units on Owens Drive must be allowed to function as exclusive residential units until retail or other non-residential uses become feasible. This requires:
 - a. A streetscape design which narrows the sidewalk to allow a landscape buffer at the residential unit
 - b. A unit design that initially looks residential from the street but with sufficient height that it could later be converted to retail.
 - c. The same parking ratio as other residential units
4. The only Owens Drive reconfiguration that will work in conjunction with the needed land area to achieve the required 30 units per acre is depicted at the bottom of p. 18 of the Guidelines, i.e. angled parking along the former acceleration lane from Willow and parallel parking easterly from there to the property line with Kaiser, near the entry point of the Iron Horse Trail.

5. To accommodate the 10 foot trail, and the required minimum density of 30 units per acre with economically feasible product types (garden and tuck under designs), the unusually deep street setbacks must be narrowed to the following:
 - Willow Drive: 20 feet not 22 feet.
 - Hacienda: 25 feet not 35 feet.
 - Gibraltar: 20 feet not 25 feet.
6. Provide in the TOD Guidelines for elimination of the trail if the additional 10 feet of width cannot be obtained from Kaiser and Shaklee by the time development plan approval is received which should be by the fourth quarter of 2011.

Due to current market conditions and building costs, our analysis has concluded that the higher-density (40 du/ac or more) building types that include structured parking facilities (i.e. Wrap and Podium style buildings) are not economically feasible for the foreseeable future. The only building types that could be built on the BRE and W.P. Carey sites that would provide for economically feasible projects that achieve 30 du/ac are the Garden and Tuck-Under building types identified in the draft guidelines.

The Garden/Tuck-Under building types and their associated surface parking, access drives and open space areas consume significantly more site area than do the similar features of Wrap or Podium style buildings. Due to these physical requirements, it is critical for the projects' economic feasibility that the design standards identified on the attached list be drafted in such a way that they accommodate the space requirements of the lower-density building types. The preferred building types are consistent with the density and height of buildings that Pleasanton residents have found acceptable in the past. In particular, the residential neighbors in the business park have expressed their concerns about the denser products that are described in the Design Guidelines.

We have focused here on critical issues which would make the project infeasible. There are other details for clarification that we will continue to work on with your Staff.

Thank you for your consideration to the above mentioned issues. We look forward to working with the Planning Commission on a mutually acceptable set of design guidelines that allows for BRE to provide new housing opportunities in the Hacienda Business Park.

Sincerely,



On behalf of
John Wayland
Vice President

Attachment

cc: Brian Dolan
Nelson Fialho