

DRAFT GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE OF EAST CLIFF VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTER SITE

The East Cliff Village Shopping Center is a six-acre site located at 21511 East Cliff Drive in the “Live Oak” unincorporated area of Santa Cruz. The Center was originally developed in the 1960s and is considered outdated. The property owner is preparing to propose some new improvements at the site, and is also contemplating more comprehensive improvements in the future. The site is also considered an “opportunity site” within the plan area of the “Transit Corridors Plan for Sustainable Communities” (TCP) being prepared by the County of Santa Cruz. In order to obtain community input regarding possible new uses and to develop a vision for a sustainable and economically vibrant site, two community workshops were held. Information presented by the property owner and the county’s economist, and the public comments made at the April 29th Community Workshop were analyzed by county staff and used to generate the following possible “Guiding Principles”.

- **Land Use Categories.** Consider a mix of land uses at the site in order to respond to a range of community needs and ensure the long-term economic viability of the center. Appropriate uses include those such as neighborhood- and community-serving retail, personal and professional services, medical and health-related uses, restaurants and coffee shops, and offices. The location near beaches and the harbor area can also serve tourists and visitors. A hotel development could be appropriate if restaurants and other neighborhood-serving uses are also included on the site. Residential uses may be appropriate at the rear of the site adjacent to existing residential areas. Residential uses may also be appropriate within new 2- or 3-story mixed use buildings over ground floor non-residential uses, however the ground floor spaces must have high ceilings to accommodate modern retail needs, and residential uses should be set or “stepped” back from the lines of the ground floor below so that the upper floor residential uses appear more subordinate to the ground floor uses. Consider the location, size, and configuration of the site when determining the most appropriate land uses.

Ideas from workshop participants:

- "Eyes on the neighborhood" desired
 - Need to activate – too overparked
 - Restaurants and coffee shop with outdoor seating
 - Community health clinic and health uses supported
 - Office space like Next Space
 - Mixed Use
 - Residential set back from street
- **Timing of Development Phases.** Given the likelihood of phased development, consider a development agreement between the County and developers that would require that

community amenities such as a coffee shop or restaurant, spaces that accommodate “public” events such as the farmer’s market, outdoor seating areas, and high-quality frontage landscaping be included with any proposal for residential development.

Ideas from workshop participants:

- Support phased development – but concern will build only residential and won’t make other improvements
- Does need to be financially feasible
- Give current businesses right of first refusal

- **Community Space.** The final site plan for the property should incorporate a significant public gathering space appropriate for the continued operation of the Live Oak Farmer’s Market and other community events. Further, uses that activate the street frontage through outdoor dining, patios, or café-style seating should be encouraged.

Ideas from workshop participants:

- Love the farmers market
- Activity or event space
- Build a sense of community
- Comfortable gathering spots and outdoor seating
- Fountain
- Green area
- Open area for public gatherings
- Dog friendly

- **Circulation Improvements.** Access to the site should be easy and safe for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users of all ages, as well as for automobiles, and be integrated into the surrounding neighborhood grid to the greatest extent possible. Circulation should ensure that users of the site have safe places to walk to, from, and around the property, and that conflicts between modes of travel are minimized.

Ideas from workshop participants:

- More pedestrian access/walking corridors
- Sidewalks & bike lanes make this kind of place work
- More accessibility to the neighborhoods
- Accessible (for a wheel chair)
- Better traffic control
- Public transportation essential to all development
- Young families need a nice destination to walk to

- **Neighborhood Character.** New development should reflect the architectural and natural aspects of the surrounding neighborhood, responding to both the scale and features of other buildings in the area. There are some remaining examples of “Live Oak”

architecture that should be considered (farmhouse, rustic, quaint). Recognition of proximity to beaches and the harbor could also be reflected in the character of development. Consider incorporating wide landscaped areas, a water feature, and “green”/recycled materials.

Ideas from workshop participants:

- Keep quaintness
- Signage, identity need to be developed for a "sense of place"
- Right landscaping/right palette color
- Use of natural materials
- Live Oak needs a visual/architectural identity along thoroughfare
- Attractive landscaping
- Fountain

- **Site Design.** The East Cliff frontage should be nicely landscaped along the streetscape and include a focal point. Structures should be located at the front of the property but further back than the usual ten-foot front yard setback; perhaps about twenty feet so that the site offers an inviting and attractive human scale at the frontage. Structures at the front of the property should be single-story, with any second or third story elements being stepped further back. Landscaping should be expanded to soften the streetscape and parking areas, and to maintain an attractive environment for users of the property. Any three story development should be located such that significant shadows are not cast on adjacent residential parcels.

Ideas from workshop participants:

- Second stories should be offset from ground floors
- A place where people can walk, with plantings
- Store fronts closer to street
- Keep scale low in front
- Make the site inviting, with active uses and visibility through the site to draw people in

- **Desirable Commercial Uses.** Community members expressed very strong support for restaurants, coffee shops and other food uses, especially with related outdoor seating opportunities to enliven the shopping center. A small drug store and “post office” such as a UPS store could be supported.

Ideas from workshop participants:

- Small Grocery Store – perhaps a New Leaf Market, or something like A.J.’s at Soquel/Park Avenue
- Coffee shop/café – like Live Oak Coffee or People’s
- Restaurant, brewery, pub, winery tasting room
- Deli/sandwich shop/café/bakery – like Kelly’s or Gayle’s or the Buttery

- Ice Cream Shop – like Penny Ice Cream who attends the Sunday Farmer’s Market
- Dry Cleaners
- Post Office – realize won’t be USPS, but perhaps like a private UPS Store
- Pharmacy/Drug Store – like the small CVS in Deer Park Center in Aptos
- Small-scale retail, artist’s shops/galleries, surf shop
- Uses that recognize the beach-going and surfer-oriented visitors and residents in the area