

**MINUTES OF AN ADJOURNED REGULAR MEETING OF THE TORRANCE  
PLANNING COMMISSION GENERAL PLAN WORKSHOP #1  
INTRODUCING THE GENERAL PLAN PROGRAM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Planning Commission General Plan Workshop convened in an adjourned regular at 7:08 p.m. on February 23, 2005, in Council Chambers.

**2. FLAG SALUTE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Drevno.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Botello, Drevno, Fauk, Horwich, La Bouff, Uchima and Chairman Muratsuchi.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Planning Manager Isomoto, Deputy City Attorney Whitham, Senior Planning Associate Chun, Environmental Administrator Cessna, Fire Marshall Carter, Planning Associate Joe, Transportation Manager Semaan and others.

**4. INTRODUCTIONS**

Chairman Muratsuchi explained policies and procedures for the meeting noting that the focus would be on the procedures for updating the General Plan, not the substance of the Plan itself.

Planning Manager Isomoto introduced the staff and consultants assisting the city with the update of the General Plan

**5. GENERAL PLAN PROCESS**

Senior Planning Associate Chun explained that the purpose of the workshop is to provide the Planning Commission and the public an overview of the General Plan Update process. She explained that the General Plan provides a framework that guides the fiscal development of the city and outlines land use, circulation, environmental, economic and social goals of the community. The majority of the General Plan was updated in 1992 and a certification of the Housing Element occurred in 2001.

Senior Planning Associate Chun reported that a contract was awarded to Cotton Bridges Associates (CBA) on October 4, 2004 to update the General Plan under the direction of the Community Development Department. She noted that the city was in the process of collecting information and community input that will be used to formulate

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goals and policies of the General Plan. Over the next 18 months the City Council and Planning Commission will be scheduling community workshops and public hearings about land use, public services, safety, conservation and historic preservation with the update anticipated to be complete by fall 2006.

Senior Planning Associate Chun explained that input would be taken about how to proceed, with specific input about various issues taken at the subcommittee level.

## **6. CITYWIDE TRAFFIC STUDY UPDATE**

Transportation Manager Semaan provided background on the citywide traffic study noting that the Community Development Department as directed by Council, executed an agreement with RBF consulting to do a citywide traffic study in the last quarter of 2004 with data collection beginning in November 2004.

With the aid of slides, Transportation Manager Semaan presented maps of intersections to be studied with traffic counts taken during the a.m. peak period between 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. and the p.m. peak between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., and he noted that midday was also critical to the City of Torrance. He indicated that the consultant would conduct a level of service analysis for each period of the day at the 170 intersections studied, with each intersection rated on a letter designation system and ways to improve service considered

Transportation Manager Semaan presented a map of 24-hour volume data representing mid-span sections of roadways collected over a 24 hour period noting that two full days of data would be collected at 170 locations to be used in the future analysis of circulation. He noted that the Del Amo Fashion Center is a traffic generator and an attraction for residents of Torrance and the South Bay, so traffic data was collected during holiday periods with intersection traffic counts collected at 43 locations around the mall and at other traffic generating areas like Torrance Plaza and Rolling Hills Plaza.

Transportation Manager Semaan presented 24 hour volume data collected during the holiday period that was more specific to the mall itself noting that the information would be used with non-holiday traffic counts to determine where improvements can be made. The data will provide critical information and will be used while working closely with the General Plan consultant to project future volume on the streets. He estimated that the process would be concluded by November 2006.

## **7. PRESENTATION: GENERAL PLAN BACKGROUND**

Jeff Henderson, CBA, reviewed meeting objectives: review the overall General Plan process over the next 18 months, document Planning Commission expectations, reflect and document the community's internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and constraints, define the concept of a stable neighborhood, and receive community input.

Mr. Henderson explained that the General Plan is a snapshot of what Torrance is today reflecting today's values with the objective to project out 20 years and define where they would like to see growth and development proceed. He indicated that the Plan should be a vision for Torrance tomorrow and he noted that the work program

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outlines the steps to get from today to tomorrow, consisting of goals, policies and objectives as well as implementation items to help achieve the vision set forth.

The State of California requires General Plans from all cities and counties and identifies a number of the objectives that the General Plan should establish:

- Identify goals and policies as they relate to land use and development particularly in the areas of circulation, environmental concerns, economic development and growth as well as social policies.
- Provide a basis for local government decision making including decisions on development approval.
- Provide a legacy for future commissions and councils so it is clear what values were expressed and how the community wanted to grow.
- Provide citizens with opportunities to participate in the process.
- To inform citizens, developers, decision makers and other cities of objectives of the plans that guide development in the City of Torrance.

In addition to the guidance provided by the state, the city has identified a number of key objectives to be pursued in the General Plan: to identify future uses for vacant land in the City; ensuring fiscal stability through a diversified tax base; maintaining a high level of public services and quality public facilities; funding community improvements; defining highest and best uses for aging commercial properties; identify suitable housing sites, ensuring that available housing is found in Torrance for persons of all income levels; and responding creatively to increased traffic volumes.

Under state law, several General Plan elements are required including: land use, circulation, housing, open space, conservation, noise and safety. Torrance updated that housing element in 2002 so it will not be included in this process. Optional elements are also allowed, but not required, by state law and a key element found in many plans is a historic preservation element.

Mr. Henderson indicated that a series of 15 workshops are planned either with the full commission or commission subcommittees and the public is invited and encouraged to participate.

Sam Gennawey, CBA, indicated that the process would be based on collaborative planning which assumes that the real experts of any community are those who live, work and play there. Their responsibility as consultants is to ensure they have clearly understood issues, opportunities hopes and fears of the community by asking the right questions; to provide education, options and tools so the community can make informed decisions to resolve issues; and to work through the unintended consequences of their choices. The General Plan takes the long view on the community as a whole and how it will evolve and works to be proactive instead of reactive and to be optimistic and progressive in going from perception to reality.

Mr. Gennaway explained that the commission would be broken in to three subcommittees to examine industrial, residential and commercial areas of the city with three meetings for each to identify issues, look at alternatives and establish goals and policies.

## **8. DISCUSSION: EXPECTATIONS**

Mr. Gennaway emphasized the importance of clearly understanding goals and expectations for the process and he noted that the work program outlined the steps to achieve the goals. He asserted that strengths and weaknesses should be identified while looking externally for opportunities to improve or enhance the quality of life, and constraints like the state budget should be identified and accommodated into the decision making process.

The commission discussed expectations for the project and agreed that they would like to see the General Plan: restore trust in the planning process, involve the Torrance Unified School District, be reflective of the positive elements of the community and allow residents to see positive change, be used by all city departments, allow for long term feedback, prioritize capital improvements, ensure that a core group reflective of the community supports the plan, present actual solutions not just problems and provide a system that demonstrates and communicates plan accomplishments to the public.

Commissioner Horwich observed that all the elements are interrelated and until they get more basic information it is hard to make judgments and wise decisions.

Mr. Gennaway asserted that the 360 degree view needed to be taken into consideration with five things influencing the future: sociological, technical, environmental, economic, and political. He clarified that the political aspect referred to policy making and administration of the community.

Mr. Gennaway noted that the process provided a chance to put facts on the table and recognize perceptions which could override facts.

## **9. DISCUSSION: A SNAPSHOT OF THE COMMUNITY**

The Commission discussed the strengths of the area including: safe neighborhoods; good schools; libraries; arts programs; parks and recreation; hospitals and emergency services; a healthy commercial base; excellent fire and police; excellent support staff in the city; great public services; a good quality of life due to well maintained open space, recreational opportunities, parks and other safe places; a good history of planning which created a balanced community with places to live work and shop that has stood the test of time; a small town flavor that makes getting involved easy; and reciprocity between the city and schools for use of facilities.

The Commission discussed weaknesses which included: deferred maintenance on infrastructure; lack of mass transit; lack of affordable housing; deteriorating streets; increasing traffic due to the pass through nature of Torrance; aging school facilities and possible decline in quality of education; deterioration of Del Amo Mall and lack of

historical preservation. Deterioration of the mall was cited although it was noted that is being addressed.

Responding to an inquiry from Commissioner Fauk, Mr. Gennawey felt it was too soon for him to clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses of the city, but he noted that one thing he has heard clearly is that the police, fire and schools are high quality and those three things are something you don't find everywhere, especially in this size of a city. He also noted that the city appeared to be well balanced and has a small town feel and look that is different from surrounding communities. He perceived the biggest weakness to be the biggest strength noting that issues have brought the community together in the past couple of years which has made everyone focused and passionate.

Mr. Gennawey observed that everyone has to pass through Torrance on the way to somewhere else which can be a great benefit if they stop at retail stores. He added that Torrance was surrounded by wealthy and poor communities which both impact the city and he commented on Torrance's strong retail base noting that those were generally not high paying jobs.

The commission discussed opportunities and constraints noting that some items fell into both categories:

Constraints: El Camino College  
Courthouse  
Proximity to LAX  
Lack of comprehensive public transit  
Limited freeway access – on/off ramps  
Increased traffic due to port growth  
Lack of available land – built out city  
Lack of control over Caltrans roadways: Pacific Coast Highway, Western and Hawthorne

Opportunities: El Camino College  
Courthouse  
Proximity to LAX  
Enhance existing transit system  
Provide connection to regional bike network  
Outstanding medical facilities  
Strategic location  
Beaches  
Diverse employment base  
Historic preservation

Mr. Gennawey asserted that regional leadership was a big constraint because of the state budget. He noted that one can live and work in the same community because Torrance has everything you need. It has good services and is a family friendly city but there are some things on the horizon that need to be addressed such as traffic which is a big issue that is going to get worse.

Mr. Gennawey explained that through the process they would try to pull together all these things and define what the city is noting that Torrance had residential neighborhoods and all best aspects of small town with the amenities of a big city.

## **10. ACTIVITY**

Mr. Gennawey indicated that unless specifically directed, they would not do much with most of Torrance's 21.5 square miles, most will remain the same with some small changes. The commission discussed the concept of stable neighborhoods noting that they have uniformity of zoning, continuity as far as uses and no need or interest of changing land use, little or no transiency, the majority are home owners with few renters and the area has community memory and deep roots.

Mr. Gennawey observed that stable neighborhoods could be commercial, industrial or residential and there are parts of the city where the zoning works well and there are not a lot of variances.

Commissioner Faulk suggested that the area surrounding the Torrance Airport from Lomita south to Hawthorne including Pacific Coast Highway is a stable neighborhood.

Mr. Gennawey commented that the area of 230<sup>th</sup> Street between Crenshaw and Hickory Park seemed to be a stable single family neighborhood that has not changed much except around the edges.

Commissioner Drevno felt much of West Torrance was stable and Commissioner Uchima added the Riviera

Chairman Muratsuchi suggested marking off all the R-1 zones and Mr. Gennawey clarified that improvements on the property made within the constraints defined by the city within the codes do not destabilize a neighborhood.

Commissioner Faulk pointed out residential areas of North Torrance that he did not consider stable by Redondo Beach and Hawthorne Boulevard.

Mr. Gennawey observed that much of the map had been marked up with most of the R-1 areas stable and some pockets of North Torrance had been identified as having opportunities for change. He noted that most of Torrance would be taken off the table and then a small number of select areas would be explored for opportunities.

Mr. Gennawey suggested that commissioners take the time to drive through the areas of the city considered by the subcommittee they are serving on and take another look with a fresh set of eyes and narrow their focus to try to figure out solutions

Commissioner Botello questioned how mixed use would be handled noting that most development is along the corridors in the commercial centers with residential behind it.

Mr. Gennaway explained the differences between vertical and horizontal mixed use and he suggested that in the subcommittee process that only those areas where there is a high degree of confidence that they are stable should be pulled off. If there is any doubt the area should be left on the table and can be taken off later during a series of meetings in which to do that.

Commissioner Horwich expressed concern that unintended consequences were the result of uninformed decisions and Mr. Gennaway pointed out that the interstate freeway system had been originally developed to transport weapons and not move people to the suburbs but that is what happened. He indicated that there were always unintended consequences but planning makes a difference. He asserted that projecting into the future, asking questions and looking at the long view created informed decisions.

Mr. Gennaway noted that looking back to get a sense of the pace and the kinds of changes can be helpful and although no one can know what the future brings we can prepare for how it unfolds. He reminded commissioners that someone had raised the issue of what would happen if oil changes as there is much oil related business here and although they can not know what those impacts are, it is important to ask the question and think about it. He added that there was a pretty fair chance of an earthquake in the next 20 years and the city needs to be prepared on how to deal with that issue.

Laura Stetson, CBA, explained that the process looks at possible outcomes for each choice using hard facts and data. She acknowledged that it was tough in the beginning until everyone is on the same page but more information will be forthcoming through the process.

Mr. Henderson commented that the consultant team and staff are good conduits for the committees and if they hear suggestions for mixed use in the residential committee they will integrate that into the commercial committee as well. He explained that land use alternatives would be discussed in the second series of meetings with the subcommittees and at that point factual information regarding trip generation and fiscal impacts to the tax base will allow them to make informed choices for different scenarios. At this point the goal is to hone in on various areas of the city that will be analyzed at that level of detail.

Commissioner Botello reported that in the prior General Plan traffic study the peak hours studied were from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. and he questioned what that had changed. Transportation Manager Semaan explained that current and past data indicates that the heaviest traffic volumes are from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. and from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. He added that they also look at 24-hour volume figures for most of the corridors and if there are changes the peak hours can be altered.

Commissioner Botello questioned whether the traffic study would take left turn lanes into consideration and Transportation Manager Semaan indicated that storage capacity and the number of vehicles that make those turns are a consideration and as part of improvements, space can be extended and double left turn lanes can be incorporated if necessary.

Responding to Commissioner Botello, Transportation Manager Semaan explained that emergency vehicles create special conditions that are not part of the normal traffic flow. He noted that Opticom's are emergency preemptors on traffic signals that change signal phasing to give green time to the fire engines to minimize response time, but that has not been implemented with police as their cruisers are faster and beat the Opticom. He added that accidents and traffic stops are special conditions and not part of the study, and he noted that they would consider locations without parking lanes or turnouts, like Crenshaw between Del Amo and 190<sup>th</sup> Street.

Commissioner Botello questioned the average number of emergency trips the fire department takes and Transportation Manager Semaan stated that the impact on traffic flow is not predictable and change will happen on an as needed basis.

Commissioner Botello questioned whether traffic congestion affects response time and quality of service and Transportation Manager Semaan reiterated that the Opticom is an emergency preemptor on traffic signals which change signal phasing to give a green light and move traffic through.

Fire Chief Carter reported that they had response run data for each zone in the city which can be provided to the consultants to determine the impacts on response time.

Chairman Muratsuchi pointed out, and Planning Manager Isomoto concurred that the focus was on an overview of the process with details to be considered at the subcommittee level.

Commissioner Botello indicated he wanted to ensure that data would be incorporated into the process.

Chairman Muratsuchi called a brief recess from 8:44 p.m. to 9:01 p.m.

## **11. COMMUNITY INPUT**

Chairman Muratsuchi indicated that a schedule of future meetings with topics listed was available he reminded the public that comments should be focused on the procedure and not be about what should be in the plan.

Judy Weber, Border Avenue, was pleased to hear the definition of stable community as having no zoning changes and homeowners rather than renters, noted that the consultant had indicated that single family homes give a homey flavor to the community and she expressed concern about the apathetic majority.

Robert Thompson, President of Madrona Homeowners Association, observed that that main reason for revising the current General Plan is that it has not been followed by the politicians and he felt a firm and specific General Plan was needed that would protect from residents from politicians and lobbyists.

Janet Payne, Engracia, was pleased that historic preservation was mentioned and that the public was being involved in the process. She suggested additional training

for Community Development Department staff as historical preservation is a new area for them and she felt they were overworked and understaffed.

Responding to an inquiry from Chairman Muratsuchi, Planning Manager Isomoto noted that those who are primarily concerned with historic preservation and the Olmstead District would focus on residential committees but there could be resources in the commercial and industrial committees as well.

Tom Rische, President of the Seaside Homeowners Association, applauded the current process and referenced a 50 year old study which projected that Torrance might have as many as 50,000 people some day. He noted the failure to realize what could happen but acknowledged that balanced intelligent growth had succeeded so far although certain elements have been let to run down in the rush of growth in other areas. He found it strange that one of the most prosperous malls in the country, the Del Amo Mall had deteriorated, and noted that the Plan needed to make allowances for cyclical changes.

John Mirassou, Susannah Avenue, Anastasi Development Company, suggested things to be added to the list of positives for the city including location, weather and an involved, well educated upper middle class citizenry who care about the community. He felt that a weakness of the city was the fact that there was very little walkability and he suggested areas of the city that need beautification, particularly Hawthorne Boulevard and Torrance looking North. He proposed a field trip to cities that like Brea, Fullerton, Pasadena, and San Diego that have wonderful mixed use areas with high density that supports the commercial element there adding that although many residents oppose density, it can be attractive and good. He expressed concern with meeting state requirements noting that a bill to put granny flats in every R-1 neighborhood in the state was defeated by one vote and he cited the jobs housing imbalance with 55% of the people who work in Torrance living outside of the city.

Carmen Gonzales, Emerald Street, a proud and stable renter, reported that parking is a major issue and she encouraged the commission to extend its findings to all of the other Torrance commissioners and civic groups so they can serve as ambassadors in the community.

Chairman Muratsuchi received clarification from Planning Manager Isomoto that certain elements would go to the applicable commissions for a hearing or workshop session to receive their input, for example: circulation would go to the Traffic Commission, conservation elements would go to the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission, etc.

Dick Perkins, Christine Avenue, requested a special hearing for circulation noting that he did not see where it would fit within the process or the established sub-committees for residential, commercial and industrial.

Planning Manager Isomoto acknowledged that they were searching for input and felt that was an excellent question that they would discuss with the consultants.

Mr. Perkins reported that some of Torrance's infrastructure is 85 years old and asserted that new growth makes existing infrastructure obsolete. He proposed that the

impacts of infrastructure be built into the process for all three elements and observed that land use overlaps industrial and commercial. He pointed out that El Camino impacts another land use and while it is an asset to the city, it has caused overflow parking problems which have negatively impacted the neighborhood. Auto dealers have impacts in other land uses and gated communities also create an impact by eliminating access to their area while they still access all areas of the city.

Bonnie Mae Barnard, Gramercy, co-founder of Save Historic Old Torrance (SHOT), acknowledged the huge need to rebuild the community trust noting that the public had been alarmed by the CUPs, and zone changes and inappropriate building. She cited a need to take into account the cumulative effects of what has been approved but not yet built noting that there is a huge project of 600-800 units not yet built near where she lives. She thanked Councilmember McIntyre and the Council for adding historic preservation to the agenda and she encouraged the commission and consultants to consider grants and funds available to historic districts, including Main Street funds with benefits and rebates to businesses that choose to renovate.

Ms. Barnard suggested bringing qualified speakers such as historic architects who have planned historic districts to speak at the workshops noting that since Torrance has never considered preservation before it would be foolish to try to do it with our own expertise as staff has not been trained in that. She reported that Jay Platt from the Los Angeles Conservancy had volunteered the Conservancy's assistance and noted that state requirements include conservation and open space. Ms. Barnard asked that the conservation of historic resources be part of that conservation plan adding that Torrance has second largest collection of Irving Gill designed buildings in the world.

Chairman Muratsuchi questioned whether it would be appropriate to bring in guest speakers as part of testimony and Planning Manager Isomoto indicated that would be answered at next workshop.

Chairman Muratsuchi indicated that he was looking forward to information summarizing the number of new housing units and the cumulative effects and Planning Manager Isomoto explained that information on any projects approved whether or not built would automatically be included. She added that traffic information would be based on those projects and noted that there had been misunderstanding in the past as the League report did not consider that had been included when it had.

Commissioner Botello requested that CBA include information in the report on what other cities have done not only with infrastructure, but also with historic preservation.

Commissioner Muratsuchi pointed out that the issue of compliance with SKAG housing targets in city housing elements has been used as a justification for the need to build more housing units and he noted that SKAG requirements are broken down on income levels of low to moderate income housing. He asked to see information providing the total number of housing units built during relevant periods as well as the income breakdowns of the housing units and noted that he suspected they would all fall into middle to upper middle income but he wanted to see some kind of breakdown to correspond to the SKAG requirements.

Debbie Hayes, Post Avenue, President of The Torrance Historical Society, stated for the record that they were available to assist with researching or anything the city might want.

Liz Fobes, Andreo Avenue, asked for clarification about consideration of the historic preservation element without the housing element in terms of historic resources. If the General Plan recognizes that there are historic resources that would put them under the protection of the California Environmental Quality Act but if they are not updating the housing element, would it be provided CEQA protection?

Planning Manager Isomoto indicated that could not be answered tonight but would be brought back to the next meeting.

Ms. Fobes spoke of political decisions vandalizing historic neighborhoods and indicated that she was looking forward to protection. She questioned whether pass through information would be collected in the traffic study and Transportation Manager Semaan indicated that traffic counts would be taken at key entrance and exit points of the city during certain hours to try to make some determination and calculate the amount of pass through traffic.

Ms. Fobes asserted that long term planning was valuable as evidenced by the fact that much of original town has remained and she observed that Old Torrance from Crenshaw to Western, Dominquez Street to Plaza Del Amo involves all three elements by design: commercial, residential and industrial so residents interested in historic preservation will have to attend all three workshops. She suggested consolidating some of the workshops for historic preservation purposes.

Ms. Fobes pointed out a factual error in a comment made by Commissioner Muratsuchi noting that for 18 months California has had no R-1 at all. She reported that AB1866 went into effect in July 2003 and it allows ministerial review only of second unit housing meaning that those projects will not go through public notice or neighbor comment. She noted that Torrance already had that damage in the name of affordable housing which has a negative effect on stable housing and she asserted that there were no stable R-1 neighborhoods today.

Ms. Fobes acknowledged that historically Torrance has been reluctant to enter into Federal grants for public transport because there are strings attached, but for the long term vision, consideration of the financial resources required to have a pedestrian oriented walk to light rail with interconnections to bus systems of other cities must be considered. She noted that transportation should be multi-modal with all forms of transportation considered and the aging population must be accommodated with mobility devices and a safe crossing of Hawthorne Boulevard provided.

Chairman Muratsuchi also expressed confusion as to how residential issues would be addressed when the housing element is not going to be updated.

Planning Manager Isomoto explained that residential areas would be examined in terms of development and they would fit into the other elements like conservation. The intent in not changing the housing element is that it was recently updated and has been certified by the state and designed for the future. Other parts of the General Plan

are much older and more in need of updating. She clarified that the housing element is good until 2007, the current updating process continues through 2006 and the housing element can be updated at that time.

Maryann Reis, Engracia Avenue, observed that her neighborhood had been fairly stable for the past 5-10 years except for the 1200 block of Engracia where condos are currently being built. She supported improvements and additions in line with existing styles and expressed concerns regarding traffic on Arlington, Engracia and El Dorado, and with proposed building at the mall. Chairman Muratsuchi indicated that those details would be covered at the residential workshop and the commercial workshop respectively.

Charles Deemer, Talisman, observed that much of the approved housing is along the central corridor and around Torrance High, and that grade schools were far above capacity. He questioned where a provision for increasing the size of schools would fit in the General Plan update and whether there would be any changing of territory in the review.

Planning Manager Isomoto explained that was not to be discussed at this time but she indicated that they would be looking at what the consensus of the community is for what will need to be there. She added that the school population would need to be considered in the update in relation to existing or proposed development but the numbers were not currently available.

Mr. Deemer pointed out that the aging infrastructure would have to be updated to accommodate the higher capacity and Planning Manager Isomoto explained that when a development comes forward they are often required to do a study of the parts of the infrastructure that will be serving them to determine whether they have to be enhanced and if they do, it is the responsibility of the developer to provide for that need. She noted that it was not clear in her mind where that topic fits as it is more all encompassing than any of the three current subcommittees put in place, but that will be discussed with the consultants and there may be a special workshop for that.

Mr. Deemer suggested that zoning be more specific noting that different types of commercial development have differing impacts and Planning Manager Isomoto explained the various designations within the different zones noting that there were no plans to change zoning designations.

Mr. Deemer asked for further clarification and Planning Manager Isomoto suggested that those questions would be answered at the residential workshops.

Chairman Muratsuchi asked about having a representative from the Torrance Unified School District appear in front of the commission and Planning Manager Isomoto indicated that she would investigate that further.

Commissioner Drevno questioned which subcommittee that would fall under and Chairman Muratsuchi suggested that would be appropriate for the residential subcommittee.

Planning Manager Isomoto stated that information would be solicited from the school district to address specific related issues although she was not sure whether they would be willing to participate in the workshops.

Charles Reis, Engracia, expressed concerns regarding signal synchronization and he suggested allocating funds for radio controlled signals.

Commissioner Botello requested that CBA provide a list indicating whether the goals of the 1992 General Plan had been accomplished.

Ms. Stetson agreed to furnish that information and noted that had been a useful exercise in the past.

Commissioner Botello reported that the city had conducted a local historic resource survey in 1978 which inventoried over 1,000 structures built before 1945 with 120 selected as particularly significant and he asked that the list be brought back to the commission.

## **12. SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS**

Mr. Gennaway provided a brief overview of scheduled meetings noting that over the next six months they would work to craft a clear vision for the city. He indicated that the next meeting would be held on March 9 at the Toyota Meeting Hall where they would start to figure out stable areas and look more closely at those areas that have potential for change.

Mr. Gennaway thanked everyone for their input adding that it would help formulate a refined plan as far as which subcommittees should take on which responsibilities and he reiterated that public participation is always encouraged. He reported that an e-summary of each meeting would be available online.

Commissioner Botello questioned whether areas that have been deemed stable and taken off the map would therefore be excluded from the discussion of circulation, infrastructure sewer, light, power and water issues and Mr. Gennaway clarified that they would be included because they are integrated systems for the whole city.

Responding to Commissioner Botello, Mr. Gennaway did not think a fourth committee would be necessary to consider infrastructure and circulation as those issues would be examined as each neighborhood is considered.

Ms. Stetson acknowledged that infrastructure is a big concern and indicated that they would talk with staff and reformulate the approach to agenda items to make sure concerns are addressed.

Commissioner Botello suggested that Mr. Perkins might be a good consultant.

Janet Payne questioned whether one residential workshop for historic preservation element could possibly be enough and whether historic preservation concerning industrial and commercial might be a separate workshop.

Planning Manager Isomoto agreed that many issues had been raised that have caused them all to rethink how to proceed and she noted that the General Plan document changes as it moves forward and public input is received.

Commissioner Botello questioned whether other General Plans they had seen have been written with tighter language that limits discretion and Ms. Stetson indicated that she had seen some that are more specific and some that are less.

Commissioner Botello suggested that a tightly written Plan would help the public feel confident with a document they could use to challenge actions that they felt were political and against the Plan.

Ms. Stetson noted that a General Plan serves as the basis for decision making and when a development application comes forward the governing body needs to make the determination that the action is consistent with the General Plan and use it for justification.

Deputy City Attorney Whitham agreed adding that as a charter city, Torrance has more leniency with the approach of the General Plan.

**13. NEXT WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT MARCH 9, 2005**

Commissioner Uchima indicated that those who did not wish to speak could submit written comments.

**14. PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS RESOLUTION NOS. 05-07 AND 05-08**

**PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 05-007**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA DENYING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AS PROVIDED FOR IN DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 5, ARTICLE 1 OF THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A HOME IMPROVEMENT RETAIL CENTER WITH A SEASONAL SALES LOT ON PROPERTY LOCATED IN THE M-2 ZONE AT 2700 SKYPARK DRIVE.**

**CUP04-00026: KEITH PALMER  
BRYANT PALMER SOTO INC.  
/LOWE'S SOUTH TORRANCE**

**PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 05-008**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, DENYING A DIVISION OF  
LOT TO ALLOW THE DIVISION OF ONE LEASEHOLD PARCEL  
INTO TWO LEASEHOLD PARCELS ON PROPERTY LOCATED  
IN THE M-2 ZONE AT 2700 SKYPARK DRIVE.**

**DIV-04-00021: KEITH PALMER  
BRYANT PALMER SOTO, INC.  
LOWE'S SOUTH TORRANCE**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Uchima moved for the approval of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 05-007 and 05-008. Commissioner Faulk seconded the motion and a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

Commissioner Botello commented on the politeness of fellow commissioners and thanked Commissioner Horwich for his consideration.

Commissioner Horwich said it was a pleasure to see Mr. Perkins.

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:19 p.m.

Approved as Written September 14, 2005 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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