

Tam Design Review Board

c/o April Post, Chair 314 Marin Drive, Mill Valley

November 19, 2014

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Post

Board members present: April Post, Jim Bramell, Patrick LePelch, John McCormick, Alan Jones

Meeting held at Tam Community Center (approximately 100 attendees)

Minutes for November 5th, 2014 were approved as submitted: 5-0 yes

The following matters were discussed not concerned with projects under review:

No items were brought up regarding additional matters.

-Board members introduced themselves to the meeting attendees.

-Good Earth project members introduced themselves to the attendees and the Board, and made their presentation of the project: the reuse of a vacant building owned by the Parish Trust to create a food market. The building has been vacant for 4 years.

-John Frey project manager, Steve Crocker Owner and Steven Mitchel Gen. Manager, of C/D/M, and Shelby Lamont landscape architect. Sheila McNolte, Good Earth marketing director and Mark Squire, one of the Good Earth owners, all spoke to the attendees and explained the project, both inside and out, the philosophy of the company and how long they have been serving Fairfax. They have been in Fairfax since 1969 and this will be the second and likely last location. They've been in the current location in Fairfax since 2012 and the new location will provide 150 new jobs for the Tam Junction location. Print advertising is smallest portion of the marketing budget. They support health and nutrition education programs and have their own labeling key system. Good Earth uses sustainable practices, reducing waste; uses renewable energy and sells organic food, reducing the use of pesticides. A community room will be used for cooking demonstrations. Good Earth has always felt supported in Fairfax. There is a commitment to a lot of training, taking care of the staff – intertwined relationship. There are currently outreach school lunch programs and they plan the same for the Tam Junction location.

Design features are inspired by a nautical theme and will include:

- Existing Barrel roof will be clean on the exterior- no vents
- HVAC equipment is hidden out of sight
- Landscape design will soften the parking lot paved landscape
- Edges will be softened by native plants

- Lemon trees and
- Connection and the landscape-
- Traffic calming role for the parking layout (one way traffic) and a green island in the middle of the south parking area
- Shade sails will complement the building architecture
- Outdoor seating area
- Trellis structures and seat walls will be in the green island in the parking lot
- A Windspeed reader and other visual accents are proposed for the small landscaped park area

The cupola is inspired by Mt. Tamalpais, widows walk or light house.

Board and batten siding- the native design that occurred in Marin from earlier Tam Valley history

Western Red Cedar will be on the Cupola- smooth 1x4 with mitered corners- showcasing craftsmanship and a nautical feel. The cupola roof will be weathered Corten steel roof standing seam- layer of rust on top- “rustic sophistication”. The canvas will be akin to sails, supporting the nautical theme, and will incorporate the movement of the wind to the architecture...The sails will be up-lit and will be luminous and the cupola will be seen on the interior as it is two story space. 2/3 of the current mezzanine (2nd story) will be removed to create the higher volume in the interior. The Leave barrel trusses will be fully exposed and they will be made beautiful.

The interior layout was previewed. There will be 40 dining area spaces on the inside and 50 on the outside.

The Board opened with questions and comments:

Bramell: After reviewing the plans Bramell found very few problems, but was concerned about truck deliveries off of Shoreline Hwy, and having to make the turn across on-coming traffic. He was concerned that the trucks trying to turn would back up traffic behind them to the intersection. He thought that if they came before 7:00 a.m. they would probably make it through. **A**t later times there would be issues and lanes would need to be kept cleared by signage and street markings to make way for trucks. Otherwise they will need to go up to the light to make a left turn and take the regular car route into the parking lot rather than the alleyway where they were intended to go. Frey agreed with Bramell, that this is a challenging condition and that they looked at that and that a “quiet zone” would be part of the answer and that most deliveries would be early in the morning. That entrance would be for trucks only and there would be a swing gate to close that down during non-delivery hours (after 2:00 p.m.). So there would be no cars or trucks going in and out of there after 2:00 p.m.

Post asked if Good Earth would be in contact with Caltrans to negotiate a quiet zone as proposed. Frey indicated that they would discuss this with the County agencies when they finished their review.

LePelch: Asked a question regarding the parking count vs. the potential for more landscaped areas and to explain the parking count as arrived (Grandfathered vs. Good Earth requirements vs. County requirements. Frey responded that it was a complex question and went over the 3 ways parking count could be arrived at (Grandfathered, 112, Good Earth Requirements [uses] 122 and County requirements 146). What they currently have per current layout of existing parking from previous tenants is 139. If the building were new it would be short 6 spaces. Frey thinks that the current parking count and the amount of landscaping is the best balance for everyone.

LePelch followed up with a question regarding the entrance that faces West, it appears that there are two or three parking spots that are directly in front of the gable which delineates the main entrance to the build and asked if there was a way to relocate those parking spaces so that the sense of entry is unencumbered for those who have parked in the parking lot. Frey indicated that there are two handicapped parking spaces that need to be right near the entrance and that the county public works would likely have additional input on the entrance configuration. He indicated that they would take the comments in advisement.

Jones: Had a concern about how the internal parking pattern was designed. He thought that the layout was somewhat circuitous in that they would have to go though and circle all the way back based on how the parking spaces are angled. For the parking spaces on the opposite side of the entrance on the West side it would be frustrating if you saw a space on the left that you would not be able to turn into it but that you would have to circulate all the way through the parking lot following the arrows and circle around and back to that spot. Frey indicated that it would be human nature to be frustrated but the design was laid out to discourage cars from turning left against oncoming lot traffic and to keep the lot safer for families with children walking across the lot to get to the entrance. Raised “tables” are used to provide a pedestrian crossing and also to slow traffic down in the parking lot.

Jones followed up with another parking related question and suggestion: that the egress at the corner near the light (at Flamingo and Shoreline) be further from the intersection. Frey indicated that they would take a look at that.

Post mentioned that the Tam Plan states that that particular exit should be a t least 50’ back from the intersection and that the entrance should be landscaped as nicely as possible to improve Tam Valley’s appearance, especially at that corner. The details were left to the landscape architect as to how that landscape would look, but she also thought that the area was a little small. She suggested that the moving of the exit to the 50’ from the corner, would make a more generous planting area, without losing parking. The Tam Plan also discusses having 1 tree for every 5

parking spaces. She suggested that by adding three trees along the south side, where the parking is facing other parking, and a few more trees along the Shoreline strip of planting, making the trees closer together, that the tree count would be satisfied.

McCormick: The typical traffic pattern has cars turning off Shoreline past the Walgreens and onto the alleyway on the north side of Walgreens. Have you given some thought as to how this pattern will dovetail into your proposal? Frey discussed why they put the “roundabout” and one-way traffic into the design, to calm down the traffic, slow it down, make it safer and take it in one direction. It also is a good way for delivery trucks to exit the commercial area.

McCormick: Do you plan to put solar eventually on the roof? They are making accommodations for that on the flat roof. They did do it at the Fairfax store but they are not planning on doing it initially. Good Earth definitely wants to do it.

LePelch asked if they have discussed or had given consideration to providing natural light for employees in the mezzanine area. Frey indicated that yes they had considered it and the structural engineer didn't like the idea (due to the need for shear capacity across the building) but that they will provide skylights . There will be 9 skylights in the store and 6 in the mezzanine for the employee areas.

Jones: liked that the south side of the building was being livened up by the addition of tenant spaces but wondered whether the 10 foot wide sidewalk was sufficient for it to be inviting and was concerned that the utility areas at the end of the walkway would block access to the Starbucks and other amenities in the other mall areas of Tam Junction. Frey thought that 10 feet was sufficient to create an inviting and useful area in front of the tenant spaces based on their prior experience. The other suggestion of relocating the utility area is a good one and they would look at relocating that to the back alley side.

LePelch noted that there is an existing pedestrian easement from Cardinal Court which comes into the south end of the site and there is no provision in the plan to accommodate that existing pattern. Lamont thought this was a great idea and that they would take a look at that.

Before opening for public questions and comments, Post explained that the traffic problem at and around Tam Junction, was not a part of this application, and that since this was a reopening of an existing, previously approved commercial use, there was no additional traffic study planned, to her knowledge. Also that Hwy 1 is owned and operated by Cal Trans, and all improvements had to come through them, not the county or the applicant.

Public comments and questions were taken for consideration, and responded to by the applicant's team:

- 1) What is the timeline for completion? Asbestos removal January 2015, demolition and construction to begin in March 2015 and then completion and open to the public by early November 2015.
- 2) A question was raised regarding signage locations- Site and building signage were described using site plan and elevations of the application.
- 3) Comment was made regarding bicycle access: where can bikes be parked and how bikes circulate through the site. Frey: Bicycles are recommended to be walked through the site for safety and bike parking will be available near store entrances. A suggestion was made to use permeable paving although questions were raised about its effectiveness based on the proximity to the water table and rising tides.
- 4) A comment was made that storm water would need to be filtered prior to discharge into the sewer system. Planner Tejrjian was asked how the public works department would be viewing this site in regards to drainage and filtration requirements. He indicated that he did not know how the county public works department would be viewing this site at this point in the approval process.
- 5) A suggestion was made regarding rephrasing the theme of the building to more of an agricultural aesthetic rather than a maritime aesthetic. The applicants had no comment on this.
- 6) A comment was made that references to Widows Walk or cupolas were not appropriate for this community. Another comment was made regarding parking spaces: use full size parking spaces, not just compact spaces in order to meet the county requirements. A clear delineation of pedestrian walkways through the site should be provided. The applicant indicated that all of the spaces provided are to be full size (not compact) spaces.
- 7) Concerns were raised about how cars will navigate to get to this store from points along Rt. 1. Applicant described how cars will navigate around the Tam Junction area and access the site. Applicants indicated that they've given these concerns much review and design consideration.
- 8) A comment was made that the lot is currently used as a commuter lot and that it can overflow into neighborhood. Is there space across the street for commuter parking? Applicant indicated that they do not have a lease to use this land and that it is not part of the plans for this facility. Commuters will no longer be able to park on this site, starting as soon as construction begins.
- 9) Many comments were made thanking Good Earth for taking this project on and bringing this amenity to the community.
- 10) Another attendee was excited to have Good Earth come to the neighborhood.
- 11) A question was asked regarding how many new jobs were to be created? 150 new jobs per the applicant.
- 12) A request was made to adequately address the safety of the truck intersection at Rt. 1 where delivery trucks will be entering the site. The applicant indicated that the Oleander

plants will be removed providing much improved sight lines and referred to earlier comments made regarding truck deliveries.

- 13) A comment was made requesting outdoor heaters in outdoor eating areas. Applicant indicated that they want the patrons to be comfortable while they eat and that this would be given consideration.
- 14) One attendee requested a laundry mat. Post indicated that there were currently no plans for a laundry mat and questioned whether the current design would support a tenant of this type due to lack of infrastructure.
- 15) A question was raised regarding time limits for deliveries and trucks. Frey indicated from early morning until 2:00 p.m.
- 16) Postal annex would be nice addition as a sub-tenant. There was general agreement that it would be a nice and needed amenity for the community.
- 17) There was another comment regarding how happy they were to have Good Earth come to the neighborhood.- She requested clarification on the number of checkout stands. At least 9 check out stands will be designed into the new store.
- 18) A comment was made that Middle schooler's who use bikes daily frequent Tam Junction. There should be an accommodation for bike parking and an area for teenagers to meet and congregate. Frey indicated that there would be bike parking and outdoor and indoor seating areas will be available for meeting places. Cyclists, however will be encouraged to walk their bikes through the site for safety reasons.
- 19) A suggestion was made that since there are areas of the asphalt that are sinking that permeable pavers should be used. There were concerns raised about the water table and how high level rain fall and rising tides would potentially create a difficult situation. In principal it was agreed that permeable paving is generally a good idea but perhaps not for this particular site.
- 20) Another question was asked regarding timeline and was answered per earlier comments.
- 21) Demolition permit will be available to get rid of 50-60 commuter cars they will need to relocate.
- 22) Cycling through Walgreens...larger look through the properties- A neighbor indicated that they cycle through the site and through Walgreens a lot and further considerations should be given to overall traffic flow and pedestrian and cycling cross traffic.
- 23) A comment was made proposing that the aesthetic of the building should be more in keeping with the barrel vault, i.e. more contemporary. The applicant had no comment on this suggestion.
- 24) One neighbor asked if the project could be put on the fast track for approvals and permits.
- 25) There was another suggestion for a postal sub-station as a possible sub-tenant.
- 26) There was a concern about the sails- that the site was too windy. Also a Southern Magnolia is a "dirty tree"- and that a flowering fruit tree might be more appropriate. She suggested providing solar as soon as possible and that there should be a good drainage system for the parking lot.

- 27) Another comment asked for clarification on how to exit the parking lot and this was explained by the applicant.
- 28) Two attendees provided a graphic poster indicated their observations of current pedestrian walking patterns in and through and around Tam Junction. They suggested that the current applicants consider the current patterns and provide design features which consolidate and support the existing patterns and provide a safe and workable solution to the community patterns. They will forward their information to the applicants for their consideration. A suggestion was made to add a pedestrian sidewalk along the north side of the property. Applicant indicated that they would lose up to 22 spaces if they did because of how constrained the parking is from the building to the property line.
- 29) Two tenants using the other smaller building on this property wanted some assurance that there would be at least one loading zone area in front of their building. They also wanted to know if any changes were proposed to their building as part of this application. Frey indicated that they have provided a loading area in the parking layout and that they have no plans to alter anything on their building.
- 30) One attendee loved the atmosphere in Fairfax and that Good Earth will be sensitive to the neighborhood needs. He suggested the use stickers for the cars who are parking in the neighborhood as residents. Those without the stickers should get towed for parking illegally in the Good Earth lot and points inside the neighborhood. they should get towed and fined and should be a first high priority. A request was made to Maureen to request the Kate Sears implement this plan.
- 31) A suggestion was made to put up glass as a windbreak for the outdoor seating areas. Frey indicated that they would take that under advisement.
- 32) What will the interior floor material be? Frey: concrete floor
- 33) Will there be provisions for electric cars in the future? Yes per Frey.

This concluded the public comment.

There was a Motion for completeness. Jones/ 2nd Bramell.

Vote 5-0 aye

Merit Comments:

- 1) The Board found the project to be attractive and a suitable use of the site and the existing building.
- 2) The Board commended the applicant for completeness and for including many of the suggestions made by the community.
- 3) The traffic exit nearest Shoreline should be 50 feet or more from the intersection.
- 4) Provide more landscaping to conform to the requirement of one tree for each 5 parking spaces.
- 5) More planting pockets adjacent to the building are recommended to soften the edges.

- 6) Provide a community bulletin board on the inside and return the exterior board to the groups who donated it.
- 7) Provide improved pedestrian access through the site and connections towards Walgreen's and toward Starbucks/ Dance Studio where feasible. Consider accommodating bicycle access from the new Coyote Creek bridge direction.
- 8) Confer with the County and Cal Trans about accommodating truck crossover traffic on Shoreline.

Motion to approve the Comments and Accept the Project: McCormick/ second by Bramell

Vote 5-0 to approve application

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25