

## Downtown Operations Team (DOT)

2007 minutes

**12/14/07**

Meeting started at 8:35, called by Ventura County Supervisor Steve Bennett at the VCMC campus. In attendance were members of the County Health departments executive teams including, but not limited to, Mike Powers, Kirk Watson, Linda Henderson, Martha Ramirez, Melanie Roy, Stacey Durr, Patrick Zarate, Sonia Croft, Christy Madden, Ted Meyers, Karol Schulkin, Cindy Cantle, soon-to-be County CAO Marty Robinson, Carolyn Briggs and Lori Flack. Representatives of the community were also in attendance, including Sandy Smith, Debora Schreiber, Jerry Breiner, Jill Martinez, Sherry Cash, Isabel Blagborn, Nick Deitch, Jeannette Duncan, Rob Edwards, Peter Brown, Rick Cole, Christy Weir, Neal Andrews, Mark Stadler, representatives of the press and others.

### HISTORY

Steve gave a brief introduction about how he believed the group came to be here today, a result of a less-than-enthusiastic DVO board meeting held earlier in the year. To recap, Steve came to an August DVO board meeting on short notice and was asked numerous questions by members of the board and the community present that day in regards social service programs, vagrancy, program housing and the like. He did not have all the answers, the questions kept coming, and his office contacted DVO thru board member Christy Weir and DOT chair Jerry Breiner in regards to setting up a meeting to hear our questions. The suggestion to meet at the end of September was discussed, though Jill and Jerry decided that, for the community's sake as well as Mr. Bennett's, that we postpone the meeting until DOT was ready to ask the correct and informed questions. DOT's community involvement in the process of formulating those questions was detailed to say the least, and after numerous meetings formulated a list of questions, attached here, that the community wanted answered.

*The questions were finalized the morning of the day before our meeting, and DOT representative Jill Martinez delivered them to Mr. Bennett's office. DOT had no anticipation of all the questions being answered or discussed this morning, as this was only the first of a series of summit meetings on this range of topics.)*

### PRESENTATIONS

Mike Powers gave a brief but effective PowerPoint presentation on the County Health Care Agency, describing it as an "integrated system", focused on preventive care, linking customers to providers. Under his department are public health, behavioral health, mental health, drug and alcohol dependency, and dual-diagnosis care. Noting there are 2 primary care clinics in Ventura with extended hours at its west Ventura location, he spoke of their Chronic Disease Prevention Program among others. No questions at this time.

Melanie Roy spoke on Mental Health issues, noting their Turning Point Foundation as one of their contract providers, who received money from the State of CA for operational expenses under the MHSA. She was very encouraging to work WITH partners in the community, as her board is community-based. Permanent supportive housing is high on their agenda. Question from the audience about if the case managers help identify and manage the mentally ill. Answer: yes to the best of their ability. However, more work is needed in "handing off" clients to other related programs.

Ted Meyers, Social Services agency, next spoke. Ted noted that his office, formerly known as the "welfare" office, has undergone many changes over the years. They service those in need who may suffer from elder-abuse, child-abuse, and poverty. He said his office is "committed to working with partners" and they have a large community presence in all the cities of the County. Their highest level of service is in Oxnard with Ventura in 2nd place. Their main campus on Telephone has a job and career center as well as the headquarters of Family Services. Ted says they "help people invest in themselves and to help them get back on their own feet." His office also handles veteran services, homeless services (under Karol Schulkin) as well as the RAIN project, which coordinated transitional living, adoption, children's services, business employment, general relief, transitional assistance, emergency care, foster care, financial

assistance, supportive living, transitional emancipated youth, rapid response health and low-cost healthcare issues for the county. He stated that the "County cannot do this alone" and Federal funding accounts for a great deal of their budget. He noted of late that the agency participated in partnering with those farmers who lost crops in early 2007's frost freeze.

Steve Bennett returned to the front of the room, noting late-comers Neal Andrews, Christy Weir and Peter Brown of the City of Ventura. He said the County "wants to coordinate" with the community and offered to meet at the Topping Room to make it easier (?) for all to be there but DVO chose this location. This was a misinterpretation on his office's part, as Ms Cattle chose the location, due to the number of County personnel that needed to attend and its proximity to the same group. He stated "we welcome healthy and improved dialogue with more conversation and communication." He stated that the County "has a mandate to provide services, there are complex funding formulas that cause problems, must provide services where people are, and..", he ended with, "the people causing problems in the downtown are those not in service programs." Steve said "the more we know, the faster we can move forward." He reminded the group that downtown's nickname of years ago, as Hobo Junction, was due to the fact that the train went thru downtown and with the nearly perfect weather we have, it continues to be a prime attraction to the homeless - and we must deal with this fact.

#### DOWNTOWN OPERATIONS TEAM

Jill thanked everyone for showing up, such a large and well-connected group of people with the same goal: to solve the situation and open up our lines of communication between the parties. She thanked Steve for dealing with the barrage of questions in August and the prior day's list of prepared questions. She introduced a number of people in the crowd, estimated at 80. We sought out data that would help DOT and the community be able to ask well-thought out questions to the myriad points that our (DOT) task force has raised. The list presented was honed many times, the original list being far too weighty to address today. Jill noted that our conception of handling the problems downtown with compassion but determination was key: that the community is very intent on investing and developing a system that works and is efficient, a change from the scenario currently in place. Jill said that, due to the short time period today, we wanted to present some practical scenarios that would best demonstrate some of the issues we face with dealing with the homeless, indigent and panhandlers downtown. She indicated that there were "gaps" in the system that we (DVO) wanted to help resolve in partnership with the County. She summarized by saying our purpose is threefold today. 1. to open lines of communication between the City of Ventura, the County and the downtown business and community members; 2. To be intentional about developing a partnership among the stakeholders, to: 3. clean up Ventura's downtown with compassion. To get the ball rolling, she introduced Sherry Cash (resident, homeless advocate) who gave an all-too-brief but pointed remark about personal encounters she has had. Following Sherry was Mark Stadler (Ventura Police Department) who stated the VPD is willing to go the extra mile to do whatever is necessary to work with the community on these issues. As a side note, Jill said VPD has met with the DOT every single meeting since June, sometimes twice a week, to help us map out possible avenues to address.

#### QUESTIONS - and some answers...

- Mike Merewether noted that it's a huge learning opportunity we have here, but with severe financial restraints where can we get the most bang for the buck in terms of our return on investment in the system? Marty Robinson said the need for a sober/detox center is crucial: to define it and place it is key. Jill noted that respite care, perhaps up to 6 months or more, should be included in that model. David Deutsch from Turning Point noted that a detox center must also address the medical needs of the patient/customer if at all possible, in that it is all linked together. The early stages are a very dangerous time, and it was his opinion that if discussions go that way, that the medical issues get addressed as well. Jeanette Duncan of People's Self-Help Housing in Santa Barbara gave some testimonial on the SB sobering center.

- Sherry asked how the County handles the intoxicated? Who pays the bill? What is the source of funds? Mike Powers responded, saying that if the patient is not covered, there may be a small co pay if any co pay at all. The State of CA gives block grant monies to Counties for this, but the County "preventative model should lessen this use." The County monies come from the General Fund. Sherry then asked would the County consider a medical detox location? Mike responded saying they would "be willing to discuss

any suggestion to help." Patrick Zarate said the "sober station concept is not a panacea. Yes, it should be a key part of the discussion, though the hospitals may have to be involved on a sub-acute level with follow thru." Isabel Blagborn gave a brief intro to how Casa De Esperanza works and how Santa Barbara addresses the problem.

Jill then suggested the concept of creating a system of 4-6 sobering/detox stations throughout the county. Discussion followed. Isabel noted that our situation is not unique: it's happening all over the US. It's certainly not Ventura County's' fault. She quoted articles on the LA Police's SOS program which has dislodged a lot of people, including the chronically homeless. Unfortunately, the migration from one sector to another doesn't remove the problem - it must move the problem. The suggested that the model for such a station be a hybrid medical-and-social model, with a 2-week to 6-month period of recovery.

- Jill asked what process is used to determine where social service programs/providers are placed? Ted Meyers stood up to answer that the "mandate is to serve where the customers are." Regardless of whether it's a small "field" site or a brick-and-mortar building, the county looks at where the closest place to the population is and what kind of space is available. Discussion followed about the fact that it seems that the County doesn't engage the public on any level when choosing the locations. More discussion.

- Karol Schulkin answered Jill's question on whether all county agencies cooperatively use the HMIS tracking system. She said it is an unfunded mandate which unfortunately rests on the shoulders of already-funded programs. All agencies do not have access to the system, though it probably could be expanded with enough financial backing. Christy Madden said that if we wanted to encourage the use and cooperative communication with HMIS that CDBG funding would be the key. HMIS is in a ramp-up phase from what she said, and the clients are carried funding cycle-to-funding cycle. The monies are geared to an annual progress report to the Federal Govt. Having it work on a continual basis is the only way to track anyone in the system. Currently that is NOT the way it works.

- Neal Andrews spoke regarding the great need for a discharge planning AND re-patriation system that allows clients back in to the community in a productive way, as opposed to the current seemingly opposite.

- Peter Brown noted that the siting of Pacific Clinics in our downtown was one of the main reasons we were all here today. When new services are being added, the community (including stakeholders, business people, City reps and County reps) need to have an open communication about what's going on. It would greatly help reduce and/or eliminate mistrust. Discussion. Deborah Schreiber asked what organized methods exist currently between the City and the County to site services. In other words, as Jill asked, is there a standing "Good Neighbor policy" in place between the County and the City of Ventura? Mike didn't know the definition of the phrase and stated that there is no standing policy in regards placement other than where unmet needs exist. Ted Meyers said basically the same thing, though his office participates in the Social Services Task Force meetings. Lori Flack of the Human Services Agency said that she is also involved with the Westside Community Council and their recommendation was to use a checklist as a "guide" to determined when/where and why a new program might be cited. It is incumbent on the County to engage with the community with prior criteria being addressed and met, when such programs and services are being considered, WELL before they are placed (if placed at all). Peter noted from a City perspective, it is not the County's criteria to ask permission, and currently the county can place any provider anywhere with no oversight nor need for public input in the process.

#### WRAP-UP

Steve returned to the front and noted he appreciated our questions, as far as we got this short morning. He said "if it happens in Ventura, I (he) want to know about it." (ed note: the community feels the exact same way). He cited frustration on many levels, including the CEOs department. He said that CEO Johnny Johnson placed services "where the County wanted to without notice, and that is certainly NOT the plan he (Steve) envisions - and sees is necessary." He stated that "he welcomes the idea of creating notification" and though the first couple of projects WERE notified his "staff blew it." He made mention of the fact that there is "quite a bit of healthy communication" in this meeting and he is "open to the idea of communicating with Rick on a regular basis on the subject." Rick noted that the DVO (and DOT) are the first private organization in the County to step up to the plate, more out of frustration than anything, to

help open these lines of communication to solve this dilemma. The committee will be a key point of entry as we go forward. Nick Deitch added that "non-profits, like Turning Point, also have a lot of responsibility in this as well to the County and the community. They need to held accountable."

Steve closed by stating this is a "watershed change" and guaranteed to work with the community in an atmosphere of trust.

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### **11/29/07 vagrancy subcommittee**

Meeting started at 1:40 with Barbara Evans, Clyde Reynolds, Jason Collis, Jerry Breiner, Debora Schreiber, Peter Brown, Rob Edwards, Ed Warren, Mike Merewether and Sherry Cash in attendance. Jill Martinez showed up a little later due to traffic congestion.

Peter gave a brief update on the anti-panhandling/misguided-charitable-giving printout. The concept to be made clear to the reader is that "an intelligent giver" will theoretically want to give to a charity that will help the most people in the most efficient way. There will be a few versions of the flyer: an 11 x 17, an 8.5 x 11 for windows and storefronts. These can be resized to fit specific needs, and this need will be addressed in face to face discussions Peter and staff will be having with the merchants downtown as we go forward. The educational component of this strategy is key, and DVO and the City will continue to work hand in hand on the subject. Peter's office will also be working at designing a business-card-sized version of this flyer for handing out to customers, putting in restaurant tabs and the like, so there will be numerous ways to get out the message. Hopefully we will have these starting to be distributed by mid January latest. Discussion.

Ken Beldon will be starting early January in the position of City Community Outreach Coordinator. He will be interfacing between those needing service and the service providers. His job fulfills recommendation #8 from the 10-year-plan to end homelessness. Funding will come from the City's endorsement of said plan. He will be creating his own caseload by being in the community he services and meeting those individuals and services he will be interacting with. Connecting him with case management providers will be key to his success, and all in attendance were enthused by this new concept. DVO will participate in whatever way it has to keep his connections strong and his focus on target downtown. One of his primary goals will be to "sort" the population by need and type. Discussion.

Funding for his work can be extended by Council, if they feel his work is worthy and making headway in this situation. His main focuses will be to help the chronically homeless get the services they need and thus reducing the number of chronically homeless on the streets.

Q: Will there be benchmarks?

A: His performance measures will be linked to the many service providers and their efficacy, but input on his success will come from everyone in the pipeline, including the customers, the service providers, the community (DVO), the city, etc.

The newly acquired HMIS (Homeless Management Information Software) will help him do this, and both Glendale and Pasadena, who has similar situations as ours, use this along with their multi-service agencies. His work will not be aligned with VPD, as that connection will most probably have a negative impact on his success on the customer level. Discussion.

Sherry noted that the City of Ventura, accounts payable, pays for shopping cart removal from downtown. Theoretically they return the carts to the stores, bills the stores for carts received. She will be checking to make sure this is on the up-and-up before our next meeting.

Finally, we discussed our letter of introduction to the County for the big meeting on the 14th of December. Discussion.

Meeting ended at 3:15.

NOTE: NEXT MEETING IS DECEMBER 13, 9am. MOST PROBABLY SAME LOCATION, JERRY TO UPDATE ALL.

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**11/29/07**

Meeting started 8:40 with Jerry Breiner, Rob Edwards, Zoe Taylor, Quinn Fenwick, Mike Merewether, Greg Smith, Barbara Evans, Dave Armstrong, Jim Dearthland, Tom Mericle and Mike Kodama in attendance.

Tom gave an update on the parking study, currently seeking estimated square footage of upper and lower floors in the commercial buildings downtown. Some of the data we are able to pull off the GIS system at the City, however we need more data. Currently Mike said they are adding in the building-by-building square footage, by parcel number, as estimates. There is a need to know: (1) if that square footage is realistic as an approximation of available space and (2) is the CURRENT vacancy rate accurate. Included in the updating is restaurant, commercial, office, industrial, auto and hotel space, by parcel. They will separate out the subsets of same to end up with a "gross" commercial number, hopefully by end of January for our perusal.

To go the next level, they will need a general commercial vacancy rate. We discussed contacts within the group and peripheral to the group, asking for access to vacancy rates of those buildings we still don't have accurate info on. The property owner and manager list to get this info on includes:

Jimmy Mesa, Jeff Becker, Tom Wood, Jim Gloyd, Mike Hernandez, Westridge Partners, Epstein and Associates and Mark Hartley. The group divided up the names and between the DOT and Mike/Tom, these people will be contacted to fill in the gaps of our knowledge base. Meeting ended at 9:30am.

PLEASE NOTE NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 10, 9am at the new HQ, 101 S California (across the street in the Mason's building)

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**11/15/07 - vagrancy subcommittee**

Present were Rob Edwards, Dan Frederickson, Clyde Reynolds, Jason Collis, Harv Champlin, Sherry Cash, Barbara Asbell, Michael O'Daniel, Les Goldberg, Irene Henry, Karen and Barry Rothstein, Debora Schreiber, Peter Brown, Christy Weir, Lori and Bethany from Savory, Jim Rice and Jerry Breiner. (As a participant, if your organization has a web address, please provide it to me - thanks!)

CITY: LOBBYING COUNCIL AND THE COUNTY

We discussed the obvious means-to-an-end of asking council, when finally ready to show our DOT/DVO "hand", to join us in a collaborative public-private partnership. Same goes for the County: their system is broken and the "organization" has to become more efficient. We need to share our resources to do the best and greatest amount of good for those in our community, in and out of service.

UPDATES FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

~ Anti-panhandling/misguided charitable giving campaign: Peter showed us a preliminary idea of some anti-panhandling signs from other municipalities. He should have a draft ready for us to see by next meeting. Peter spoke of the idea of "branding" our campaign to make it an easier thing to describe and "sell" to the community at large. Education is the key component, and the more the public knows about it the better. To that end, he will be going on local radio next week as well as visiting local churches and church groups to educate them on the concept of misguided charity. There are PSA (public service announcements) being broadcast already on the subject, and he is referring people to the Oxnard Rescue Mission. We discussed the idea of using billboards on Thompson to get the word out.

~ City ordinances/accountability/resources: Dave said VPD has heard a lot of good press from the

community regarding the upsurge in police presence over the past few weeks. They have accomplished a lot of good, and VPD will continue to work on the concept of getting more officers available downtown. They have given multiple notices to "move along" to the people sitting on the sidewalk and panhandling. VPD is working diligently with the city Attorney to update ordinances and train officers to handle and be aware of the new clarifications of said ordinances. As far as resources, that is a longer task but they are working on it and have addressed it just in the last week. We discussed the concept of outdoor dining and how close a panhandler can legally be to an outdoor dining establishment. Dave brought up the subject of the chronic offender program: over a certain number of citations and chronic offender gets taken to jail. The calls about the offender CAN be brought up by a citizen, even after the fact, and as long as that citizen is willing to testify as to what they saw action can be taken. Dispatch has been directed to be more complete and direct on their addressing of vagrant calls from the downtown. It is illegal to walk up to cars in the downtown and ask for money, though some have tried. We also discussed the concept of renting a VPD officer for downtown and what it would cost. Dave said that it MIGHT be possible, thru an organization LIKE DVO, that a VPD officer could be hired at time-and-a-half pay (approx \$70/hour), but more talks and discussion/negotiation would have to take place between DVO and VPD to get that moving forward. During the holidays the downtown is part of the enhanced holiday district, added to the Mall. Dave suggested reporting on things we SEE as opposed to things we HEAR about.

Dan asked what the reporting district costs: can we find out what the fees are and how we may be able to enhance what is already being done by VPD? In other words, what does Ventura spend now and what do we get for it. He mentioned that Malls have a CAM charge (or common area maintenance) that covers security, among other things. What is to prevent DVO from spearheading the concept of a CAM charge, thru a PBID or other device, to set up our own security, like the mall for example. We would need a dedicated resource, one VPD could look to for permanent funding and reallocation of resources. Dave noted that the \$300K we have ascertained as the price for a downtown storefront with two full time officers would have to be justified to council, if brought in as a public-private partnership. Discussion.

~ cameras: Camera sites are being researched by VPD and a number of concerned property and business owners. Figueroa Plaza, California at Main, Chestnut at Main and others are being considered. Changes in the cable/internet company that handles downtown (used to be WaveCable, is now Charter Cable) will require new negotiations. Jim gave camera information to VPD for specs necessary to create a downtown "feed." We discussed the concept that no one can watch the cameras 24/7. Perhaps cadets or VIPs? The idea of being able to log in to a UPR or a web app to view, anytime, the shots from one or more of the downtown cameras is essential. Discussion. A local vendor to RFP for the task of viewing, monitoring, upkeep and updating the cameras was suggested. Harv asked if Homeland Security might be available for funding such an idea. Discussion. Dave said the mall qualifies for a HS funding: why not downtown? Mall was designated as a potential target as a regional gathering place. Dave will be sending out an RFP from VPD for the system and upkeep. Once VPD has the funding to create the system, DVO and the public may be able to hook up to it. Discussion about seeing if DOT/DVO can issue the RFP to install with VPD being the benefactors of the live feed.

~ Community outreach: The idea of integrating our social service agencies to get the best bang for the buck was discussed. Clyde noted that Turning Point sets boundaries, behavior levels and determines what is acceptable/unacceptable at its facility on Thompson. Actually, Dave said more people complain about the post office panhandlers than anyone in downtown. Clyde noted that his counter people have CIT training - and that he and Rick spoke about social service providers willingness to work around those certain individuals who simply are resistant to service on any level. Christy noted that the City will be hiring a "facilitator" or "middle-man/woman" to provide the link between the VPD, social services and those who need them. The next step would obviously be to redirect these individuals to a more assertive and conscious desire to get out of the situation they're in and consciously strive to come back to society. Regardless of their individual situation, to live in the community you must obey the laws of that community. Suggestion was brought up to have someone from behavioral health (county) at the table with us. All agreed. Clyde suggested that he might be able to procure for us the budgets of each program in downtown and the westside to see how their funds are allocated.

DVO needs to know what kinds of activities and tasks we can take on to help solve this dilemma and PROACTIVELY manage it for the betterment of downtown. Suggestions were posed, to be, answered by the county:

What is the recidivism rate (sp?)?

What is working? HOW is it working? IS it working?

Are we just enabling and "managing to manage", rather than proactively working to END the situation?

Based on the programs you are providing, what is the success rate?

Do we KNOW what success looks like for this scenario?

What is the outcome goal, based on national outcome goals?

Is there a quantifiable success?

Harv ended the meeting by stating that he was personally very encouraged by the fact that we are all, in this committee, at the same table and working together on a solution. Consensus around the table concurred: we are all here for the same reasons.

NEXT MEETING: 11/29 1:30-4:00. Please set enough time aside.

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## **11/15/07 - housing**

Meeting started at 9:10 with Jill Martinez, Quinn Fenwick, Barbara Evans, Debora Schreiber, Jerry Breiner, Sid White, Dave Wilson, Cheryl Heitmann, Sherry Cash and Dan Frederickson in attendance.

Jill began by stating that, really, two things need to be addressed by the county, with us: (1) the members of the housing programs who are getting serviced (perhaps the utilization of ID cards to help track the service use) and (2) the organizations success rate and care/lack-of-care of service. Without both parts of the formula, no one including the county, can keep tabs on the efficiency (or inefficiency) of their services countwide, though specifically downtown and on the Westside for our purposes. Dan said we need a budget from these organizations to ascertain proof of validity of service.

Quinn said that, in terms of the vagrancy issue, the perception that he has heard is that downtown is not safe but it is, in actuality, probably more safe than the general populace may think it so. Jill said Carol Schulkin had told her in last night's meeting that if we tell her what info we need she will get it for us. This will be very important going forward. The thought process is to coordinate the services being provided downtown, as they are all competing for the same pile of money, and perhaps through a much better managed system of diversification get more bang for the buck. Management doesn't seem to have any knowledge of nor relationship to the other providers in the area, hence the incredible lack of coordination. Downtown and the WestSide are going to have the great need to REQUIRE these services to be coordinated, even if we have to figure out how to do it. It is clearly not their fault that the system is as messed up and confusing as it is, as that is the way it is currently set up. This current set up does not work. It needs to be changed for the betterment of all involved, including those USING the services, those PROVIDING the services, and those whose lives and businesses and stores are impacted by lack of quality service and coordination of same.

It is our thought that with coordination much less money could probably be spent to accomplish the same goals. Occasionally there is an over-burdening of services and/or programs that may lead to those seeking help to move to another location. Occasionally some of us have 2nd-hand knowledge of incompetent intake personnel. This is not acceptable. The idea of having a "clearing house" is vital in the downtown: a place where those in need can come FIRST to get assessed as to what will help them the most, get them what they need faster, and get them on the track to returning to society. The pool of volunteers to help is large, as we have found out. Jill had a strategy meeting of late with some of the department chairs: there is a need to know what issues are, who is doing what, where are they doing it, and how efficient are they in doing it. Dan asked Loretta McCarty the question:

What would it take to get from a 3-year waiting period to one month? Clearly the answer to that depends on the revenue source (define and determine what it is and how much it is), the total # of vouchers

used/to-be-used, who/how is it managed. We have more resources, we just don't adequately distribute them. Each of these organizations bites off little bits here and there to fund themselves. The ultimate goal and the long-range plan should definitely include regular communication, shared with DVO and the WCC, between the Ventura City Manager and the head of County Health as an agenda item, as part of a monthly report to Council.

Dan suggested as part of Jill's presentation to the County that we ask for slides that ask?

- how much is being paid for services?
- current organizational chart for the county, including connection to the City (if there is any)
- organizational chart with the proposed services

It is important to make the point in our presentation that our point is to re-align to serve the people better, and if we ALL communicate we can make this happen efficiently and the timely manner that it needs. Our end goal, our aim, is to open the lines of communication now and permanently with a viable and workable scenario that will allow input and manipulation of the current status-quo, enabling us to better serve the community of providers, those who seek help and the community that we all live in.

The attendees for the 12/14 meeting should include:

United Way

All program directors for the county

DVO board members (at least 4)

Rescue Mission

Rick Cole

Peter Brown

Cheryl Heitmann

Jim Luttjohann

V C Library services

Robin Calote, Ventura College

Zoe Taylor

Cabrillo Economic Development

Mission San Buenaventura

CMH

VCMC

St Johns Hospital

School district

We need to articulate at the beginning what we want at the end: our objective is to bring us all together, in open and free communication, and set the stage for a new paradigm downtown. We have sufficient resources: how can we re-allocate them to better serve our community, ALL of our community? We also need/require a case manager downtown (apparently this is already being worked on thru Peters office).

AND we will need an RSVP from the attendees/invitees.

PLEASE, if you have email contact information for ANY on the above list who is NOT on the mailing list, let me know asap. They need the invite as soon as possible.

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### **11/07/07 - vagrancy**

In attendance were Jerry Breiner, Harv Champlin, Mike Merewether, Jim Rice, Dave Wilson, Ken Corney, Barry and Karen Rothstein, Nick Deitch, Rick Pearson, Peter Brown, Clyde Reynolds, Christy Weir, Sherry Cash and Lori Moll.

We discussed the concept of lobbying Council on the issues we will be bringing forward as a group. Jim noted that our solution should not be relegated just to a business improvement district alone, but that the City needs to take part in the solution on some level, preferably equal partner. Council will begin the Public Nuisance Abatement program with the VPD soon, more info to come from Ken and Dave. Peter noted that buy-in from property and business owners downtown is necessary for this to work, specifically signage. The committee unanimously agreed that Peter and City graphics should continue working on drafts of the graphic to be used so we can sign off on it, Peter to send to Jerry for distribution. He also noted he has had discussion with Dave Comden of the VCReporter, new downtown business location, and the Reporter will be working hand in hand with DVO and the City to help get the word out. PSA (public service announcements) will begin on Gold Coast stations very soon in regards, probably this weekend. We discussed multiple ways to move forward, both passive and aggressive, and all agreed that a splitting up of tasks is necessary to do so.

Ken brought up a number of issues, and we discussed the "ordinance" side of the issues for quite awhile. Currently it is illegal to panhandle within 50' of an ATM (Jerry asked why 50'? Why not 250'). As VPD works with the new city attorney, the whole of ordinances downtown is being investigated. Ken said that after a warning is issued to someone about an ordinance infraction, and that person does not comply, it is an enforceable arrest. He reiterated the need for a coordinated group to participate in this task and suggested 7 bullet points, which we discussed at length, to accomplish the end task:

1. City ordinances and accountability - Ken Corney, Dave Wilson

Includes current and potential/requested new ordinances, enforcement of same, City Attorney/District Attorney questions, municipal judgeship

2. Anti-panhandling campaign - Peter Brown, Jim Rice, Rob Edwards
3. Dedicated police resources - Barry Rothstein, Mike Merewether, Jerry Breiner
4. Community outreach - Sherry Cash, Clyde Reynolds, Nick Deitch, Peter Brown
5. Camera systems - Jim Rice, Dave Wilson, Harv Champlin
6. Sobering/detox center - Dan Frederickson, Jill Martinez
7. Visual blight - Sherry Cash, Christy Weir

We talked about what defines "visual blight", and suggested things such as shopping carts (illegal to have in downtown), sitting on sidewalks against buildings (illegal to do in downtown) among others. Sherry will get hold of the shopping cart "wranglers" that work downtown to coordinate with them about where and when and how to round 'em up. Question to Ken about what kind of stuff can be in these carts came up. Storage of "camping regalia" is illegal, camping is also illegal.

We discussed time frames with all of the above, and as they all have different formats and different levels of input from various sources, we agreed that to set a time frame for all of them would be fruitless - HOWEVER, we also agreed that the faster we can move the faster we can accomplish the task. Each individual group will be responsible for carrying out their task and reporting back to the group. Jim noted

that he and his partners are purchasing 13+ cameras for use in and around their properties downtown with a direct feed to VPD. With other business owners buying in, a system of cameras would be a viable tool for VPD to keep an eye out for trouble in downtown, possibly reviewed by police cadets or VIPs. We also discussed the concept that, when lobbying council for support, the public/private partnership be utilized as the obvious "means-to-an-end". Ken noted that the dominant theme that seems to follow meetings such as these is that the public is looking to the City to solve the problem: no self-help is usually discussed. Self-help, said Harv, is exactly what he has done at his place on the Avenue. He has hired a private security firm, with imposing presence, has kept vandalism at bay along his property. He said they are non-aggressive, though confrontational when faced with an intruder or someone trespassing and are very good at 'moving people along.' Jim also said that a private security force, less expensive than hiring actual police officers, may also work. His group will be addressing this issue over the week.

NEXT MEETING THURSDAY NOVEMBER 15th 1:30 HQ.

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## **11/01/07 - parking**

(PLEASE NOTE: Those property owners who can lend any assistance to Tom and Mike in regards to commercial a/or office vacancy rates, please contact Tom at tmericle@ci.ventura.ca.us as soon as possible)

Meeting started at 9:30am with Tom Mericle and Michael Kodama giving us the latest updates and draft of the current presentation, going to Council 11/6. They are currently working on the current demand and future demand, based on land uses. Updates will be forthcoming, hopefully within the next 8 weeks. Tom stated that estimation of vacancy rates is a big help, and a few of the downtown property owners in attendance offered their help and data. He mentioned that commercial usage rates for upper floors is difficult to ascertain, due to commercial-vs-storage factors. Still, he and Mike can use property information from the downtown stakeholders, and a few of the crowd agreed to help in any way they can. (Mike Merewether and Greg Smith will be providing info asap)

Ultimate buildout numbers need to come in, perhaps via the EIR for the DTSP, but regardless DVO needs those numbers to sign on to the recommendations. Tom says he is hoping to have a general number for Council 11/6 (ed note: no future potential numbers were given Monday 11/6). He also mentioned, not to anyone's surprise, that to efficiently address the situation will require some form of a public-private partnership between the City and either the DVO, a parking district or enterprise fund, or a combination of all three. Mike said downtown Pasadena, was a parking disaster until the parking district was formed and the monies then brought in improved the downtown district. He suggested that on-street parking systems can only be looked at as a backup to effectively manage a well-run district, and the off-street locations are the ones the parking management district needs to focus on.

Tom said we are currently at the "implementation strategies" stage, and as the next few months go by he will be coming to DVO for support of those ideas. The entire concept is to create business revitalization and "customers first." Jerry suggested that in all PR and Council discussions that phrase be utilized as much as possible. Buy-in from the public, especially the merchants, will be key to the success of the effort. Currently there is approximately \$40,000/month in fines that come in to the General fund. Additional revenues from fines, based on meters and enforced time limits, could dramatically increase this number. Other cities more-or-less similar to Ventura in terms of parking needs and assessment of needs (such as Redwood City and Walnut Creek) have parking meter revenues that get split between the City and the Parking fund. Meter rates run .25-1.00/hour depending on time of day. Maintenance and enforcement fees are included in the return on investment, and these revenues could be split, theoretically, between the DVO and the parking district management.

## PROPOSED LOCATIONS

West of California at (1) the American Legion building Santa Clara @ Palm NW and (2) the Farmers

Market lot at Santa Clara @ Palm NE. Discussion followed on logistical setups with sewer and water alterations downtown. Jerry will be emailing Vicki Musgrove, City of Ventura, to find out if they are planning on paving after the work is complete.

Tom noted that the actual choice of types of metering systems would be run by DVO prior to going to Council for approval which should happen mid- to late-spring 2008.

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### **10/25/07 - vagrancy/housing**

Meeting Started at 8:45. 3 meetings on the subject of program housing and vagrancy in the downtown and WestSide. She gave a brief synopsis of how previous organizations and civic groups, including the Downtown Ventura Community Council (DVCC) had attempted to address the social issue of program housing for a few years, hoping to forge some sort of forward motion and communication between the County and the City. The DVCC was not able to get the appropriate parties together, and the task was tabled before DVCC disbanded in 2005. DOT, in its position as the interim/connecting group between the DVCC and DVO took up the issue, and Jerry Breiner solicited Jill's help and contacts to move the concept forward.

Jill noted that our all-volunteer committee has been working since June on the issue, putting the information together necessary to create our PowerPoint presentation slides, none of which has ever been available previous to this meeting. The information contained herein, though provided by the County of Ventura in regards its social service programs, has never – to our knowledge – been collected in one place. She also mentioned that the PowerPoint presentation is available on CD – and today's meeting is the BEGINNING point for our community discussion in an attempt to solve the situation downtown.

Q: Is it the County's services they have placed downtown? Is it just the homeless?

A: Convolutated, but no – neither by themselves.

Downtown has changed over the last 5-7 years, and the revitalization efforts are beginning to change the face of downtown. As those changes take place, it is vital that downtown put its best foot forward, and the consensus in the room was that enforcement of ordinances and a general clean-up of downtown is now necessary. Jill said that there are approximately 200 units of substandard/deteriorated housing in downtown alone, even more adding WestSide in to the mix. Vagrants are using downtowns streets, yards and parks as their stomping grounds in their attempts to intimidate passers by. We cannot afford to continue to allow that to happen.

To that end, we needed to identify the contributing factors to downtowns dilemma, including:

- Lack of effective enforcement
- Deteriorating housing units
- Loitering/panhandling/vagrancy
- Youth programs
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Mental illness
- Homelessness

Jill presented the maps, created by our anonymous cartographer, showing concentrations of programs and persons using same throughout the county. Beyond the numbers listed on the PPT presentation, there are also additional people not reflected in the numbers gathered, including but not limited to the following:

- 200+ parolees (State of California, County of Ventura)
- 588 homelessness (as of January count)
- 200+ inhabitants of deteriorated buildings (residential hotels)
- shelter beds (number undetermined)

This shows, in addition to the concentration shown on the maps, another 1000 people not accounted for.

Q: Is there any other type of County or State-issued voucher system other than Sec8?

A: to our knowledge and understanding, no. There was approx \$500K of Federal funds previously used for hotel/motel vouchers, but these are no longer issued. The only subsidies are for Sec8. Interface issued vouchers to parolees and probation individuals. In follow-up discussion, our deteriorated buildings (referred to by many, including a number of participants this morning, as flop-houses) and ripe for just such renters. Thousand Oaks actually purchased a hotel years ago and put their homeless there and off the street, giving them a leg-up. Karl suggested that we take care in our description of those in need on downtown's streets: lumping everyone together downtown is not a fair assumption or even an intelligent one. Our problem is not necessarily the homeless nor those in need of mental health, alcohol or drug treatment programs. It is absolutely clear that our problem is with those that break the law.

Patrick Zarate, Director of the Alcohol and Drug Treatment Program for the County of Ventura, gave a brief description of what his office handles. He stated that his office receives approx 99% of their funds from the State of California block grant program. Their main charge is education, prevention and treatment. One of the things they have managed to put together over the last year is the Social Host Ordinance, to help curb adult and juvenile enabling of alcohol consumption. He noted that there are approx 300 new admissions to their new treatment center at 24 E Main. They contract with their 2 service providers who handle residential treatment. The program for men requires attendees to secure employment as the female program does not. He also said their detox project that covers the county has determined that 37% of their program users use methamphetamine as their drug of choice, 31% heroin, 11% marijuana, 9.8% alcohol plus others. There are no state regulations requiring clean-and-sober regulations in private homes – and this is a problem for enforcement. They do NOT endorse these facilities, private homes renting to up to 6 unrelated adults. He said there is no detox center in Ventura County, as all the program users must go to Tarzana for program use. Patrick also added that since Proposition 36 there has been a proliferation of these "6-beds-or-under" private facilities. When asked if the County supervises any of these homes, he said the County does not monitor these homes, the State does not monitor these homes and the City does not monitor them either.

Carolyn Briggs, Director of Housing for the County of Ventura, next came up to give a brief report. Her office works with low and very-low income housing, dealing with the various housing authorities in the various cities around the county. Her office currently has 13 participants in the City of Ventura. She said that there are instances where her office places clients in motels/hotels outside Ventura. There are also 4 comfort-and-care licensed facilities, that serve the mentally ill though none of them are in the downtown. There is one facility off the avenue that services seniors. Her adult services clinics moved to East Ventura, services including psychiatry, case workers, medication and medical management. In answer to a question as to why the county behavioral health department stopped using Ventura motels 3 years ago, Carolyn says it was out of convenience. And in answer to the question of how many people in the entire county use motel vouchers currently, her answer was 8. Assembly bill AB2034, for integrated services for the mentally ill, was just vetoed by the governor. This would have provided \$55M in funds for programs such as here. She said processes have begun to fill the void with an alternate program.

Loretta McCarty, CEO Ventura City Housing Authority, Affordable Housing and Development, gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on her offices' workings. Her office deals in low-rent public housing, though it takes anywhere from 2-5 years for placement. Currently there are about 600 people in "Line" for one of these houses. They do give preference to people who live in Ventura.

Clyde Reynolds, Executive Director of Turning Point Foundation, then took a few minutes to describe what his program does. It started in the mid 1990s as a homeless shelter at California and Thompson with HUD

funding. There are now 10 beds and a 24-hour multi-service center on premises for basic needs such as showers, laundry and food. The majority of the residents are mentally ill and generally untreated. Getting the untreated in to care is critical to solving their individual needs. Although resources are being provided, not all of the residents take advantage of them. Turn their itinerant clients in to a transitional or permanent housing situation is Turning Points goal. Building a sense of community WITHIN their community is the driving force. Clyde mentioned that deteriorating motels and hotels around the city are actually an opportunity for the City, as they are setup as SROs. Public education and code enforcement are the only ways to put the issue to bed. It is a complex problem that will require a multi-faceted solution approach.

The question came up regarding River Haven: what %-age of the people there CHOOSE to stay homeless? Clyde said a small group, perhaps a handful, choose to stay homeless. There is a waiting list for services and/or additional financial support. Affordability is the key factor. Dan asked: to what extent is the park's adjacency managed, in regards their tenants? Clyde said it is not managed per se. Discussion followed on the visibility issue of having TP's tenants sitting out front, on Thompson. Suggestion was made to have Clyde come to a DVO board meeting to discuss his facility and to field questions.

We took a small break at this point, Jerry thanking Savory Café and Vic Georgino for their help in providing the facility and the wonderful food and coffee this morning. Networking for about 15 minutes.

We resumed with a report from Pat Miller and Ken Corney on the Ventura Police (VPD) Department's take on the situation downtown. Pat noted that our vagrancy issue is not just a VPD problem, that there is a bigger more global problem at operation here. He noted that Council approved the addition of 6 new officers who are in training and should be on the beat in the spring. He used an analogy using gang offenses: you can't solve the problem by throwing them in jail – that it's not just an enforcement problem. The visible police presence downtown is the most effective tool, as we have found out for the last few years; that even the presence of the patrol car alone makes a significant change in the amount of crime. He said that downtown is a priority with the 4 new officers. VPD has tried to keep this a safe community and in a survey this year 93% of the respondents were satisfied with their police department. Ray suggested VPD try a police task force downtown for a month to see if it works, stating that it is so painfully obvious that we need a presence downtown immediately. Jim asked what is realistic timeline for these new officers to be on the block? 4 months was the answer.

Discussion on this went on for approx 20 minutes. Mike noted that the state fairgrounds, none of whose sales tax comes to Ventura, has a constant impact on the City's downtown. Jerry suggested that it may be a good idea to consider the fact that the management of the state fairgrounds, choosing to host everything from concerts to fairs, has a considerable negative impact on downtown's environment. He suggested the possibility that a CEQA analysis of the fairground may find that the State of California negatively impacts the downtown. Might there be mitigation necessary in terms of programming future events? Discussion.

Seana noted that tourists, when faced with a vagrant issue and deciding whether to call VPD or leave, will leave. This is a non-negotiable issue: we cannot allow this to continue. Peter spoke about the problem we have, as we go forward, identifying what the real problem is. It may involve chronic offenders, chronic offenders who may or may not be homeless. The root of a problem, specifically the panhandling problem, is people handing other people money. He suggested Ventura have a type of ombudsman to work as a liaison between the City, the County and the VPD. Ken Corney agreed that being a victim of a crime should indeed NOT be the reason VPD is called on a situation and being a witness alone should be ample reason. (JERRY TO FOLLOW UP).

Q: can the public inform those breaking the law, such as sidewalk sitting, that what they're doing is illegal and can result in citations:

A: Ken will get back to us on the answer, the legal answer.

Ken also noted that VPD is meeting with the City Attorney to address current existing ordinances and how to get more "teeth" into the enforcement of same. His feeling that the arrogance is evident when interfacing with the troublemakers downtown currently. He stated that ordinances are only as effective as their enforcement and the court system follow up. He said VPD has asked county animal control to use

their free patrol time and spend it downtown.

We then focused on solutions. The list, as prepared on the agenda, was amplified as follows:

- Improved lighting
- Code enforcement of existing ordinances
- Require all program housing management to minimum standards set by City
- Require all residential hotel housing to meet standards set by City, verified monthly or yearly
- Reallocation of funds for additional officers for permanent full-time downtown
- Cameras
- Municipal judge
- Private security (Security Enhancement District)
- Cadets
- Monthly reporting City to County, including parolees
- Discharge planning, including probation and section 8
- CEQA and State fairgrounds
- Non-charitable donation regulation and education for the downtown
- No Panhandling signs for all businesses – create a “no panhandling” zone
- Handouts for all businesses to include in bags or meal tabs with above info
- New ordinances (shopping carts, loitering)
- More eyes on the street
- Private/public sidewalk ownership
- Restriction, thru ABC, on single sales of alcohol thru the CUP process
- Activation of key corners
- Focusing of VIPs downtown

All in attendance agreed: WE NEED A ONE-YEAR STRATEGY TO END THESE NUISANCE CRIMES DOWNTOWN

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**10/04/07**

Meeting started approx 9:00am with standing room only. Introductions were made around the room (entire membership list of the housing/vagrancy subcommittee is in the header of this email), and Jill and Jerry opened with a brief overview of how we got here, today, for this - the first of at least three - meeting(s) on the subject(s) of the crime problem downtown and it's connection or lack thereof to social

services and program housing issues in the downtown and westside. The meeting, as all DOT committee meetings, was an open forum, and questions were encouraged. Input from the public is vital to the growth of our downtown, and both Jerry and Jill appreciate the time devoted to meeting with the group and your ideas, concerns and criticisms.

(please note that all minutes from all DOT meetings, archived back to November 2003, are always available online at [www.downtownventura.org/committee\\_dot.html](http://www.downtownventura.org/committee_dot.html))

Jill first spoke about Social service issues in the downtown, beginning with showcasing some of our map data we have been compiling since June. The drafts of our data, still being collected, do not immediately show downtown Ventura as being overburdened in comparison to other municipalities, based on population over the entire zip code. However, it was noted - and discussed at length - that the information is not complete at this time and does not show a number of other factors that weigh quite heavily in our determination as to how much the downtown is being impacted by these services - and their users - and others on the street who are NOT users. The day users of downtown and west side programs are the most visible on the streets. And the maps so far do not show those individuals whose actions on the street may be a result of alcohol, drug or other substance abuse, or mental incapacities that are NOT being treated by any social service program. In other words, the data we are collecting does not show those deemed as "vagrant" under certain municipal codes.

Discussion followed on the current state of ordinances, or lack of same, in our downtown. Asst Chief Corney and officers David Wilson and Quinn Fenwick were on hand to give a detailed report on what VPD sees as some of downtown's issues regarding the impact of problems make on our downtown. The handout included such items as panhandling, public drinking, intoxication, loitering, visual blight, etc. We talked for awhile about possible solutions, and Quinn noted that he will be meeting with Bill Haney from the DAS office, along with the City Attorney, to see how VPD may be able to better utilize resources in the downtown in the near and far terms.

Jill and Jerry took a moment to explain that our purpose today, as it will be for next two meetings, will be to prepare for the eventual meetings with City and County personnel. The County meeting will take place mid December between the task force steering committee and the County board's behavioral health service department heads, Steve Bennett and others. The City meeting will hopefully take place early December between the steering committee members and City management, notably Rick Cole, the new City Attorney and others.

We talked about the maps. Since these are drafts, and we are not ready to finalize the information in any way, we discussed the fact that - at least as far as those in attendance seemed to feel - that the over-concentration was not evident. Jill explained the numbers, how they were derived from factual data, and that they were based on population by City, then census tract, then by region. Discussion centered around the question of whether the county is aware of the other downtown services they do NOT manage - and how the great number of services they already do manage effect what is already an overburdened small section of Ventura (roughly 12 blocks by 3 blocks, Downtown and WestSide). Jill noted the only city with a higher density was Oxnard, and this was higher density PER CAPITA. Jim noted that there is a disconnect and an invalidation, as the maps are now: Westlake and Ventura have each 2 shelters. He lived in Westlake and never saw a homeless person panhandling, or anyone panhandling.

Why not? What is the difference? Why does Westlake theoretically have the same number of programs and zero panhandling while downtown and the WestSide's streets are slowly being overtaken by vagrants. Discussion followed, some of it heated. Dan asked: If there are shelters, and we seemingly only have two, can the actual bed numbers also be calculated? Can we get data per block? Moreover, what is the density (number of beds) in the downtown? This number would necessarily want to also include those that seek/use programs on a daily basis, those who live in the downtown but not necessarily managed by a program. Just the residents in four of the "residential hotels" number almost 200, and this number also does not include street vagrants.

There was consensus in the room that it's a crime issue we are addressing. The problem is not necessarily

program housing, but those programs that are poorly run do not help downtowns burden and in fact can have a big impact on exacerbating it.

Q: Is east Ventura doing their share of harboring some of these programs/issues/citizens?

A: No, though the answer is more related to density than anything else.

Michael Faulconer suggested that panhandlers will go where the density is - in our case, Downtown is the densest area of Ventura. Specifically, the density of "people"; particularly those walking, shopping or visiting downtown in the public realm (sidewalks, parks, the street & alleys, etc.). The more people visiting our downtown; the more opportunities (or prey) for the panhandlers. They will do better (collecting money and loitering) on busy streets than they'll do on the quieter streets with less people. It is appropriate for the downtown, or urban core, to have this intensity and vibrancy. In downtown Oxnard, they don't have the same number of transients/vagrants because they have less density. Looking at the entire list of services and problems, sharing the burden is the only way to equitably take care of the problem. Will it happen? Discussion followed. Dan noted that mall doesn't seem to have a panhandling problem, and it even has a police storefront. Dave Wilson noted that there IS a storefront there, but it is unmanned. Asst Chief Corney stated that the criminal justice system, prosecution and judgments are helpful but not the be-all, end-all panacea to end the problem as we see it. Beginning with the City's ordinances, the problem really boils down to what is enforceable and what isn't. What is against the law and what isn't. He noted that he will be meeting with the City Attorney next week to review the current ordinances to see how we may better be able to serve our downtown better. Loitering is a tough issue, he said, in that it is pretty well dismissed that you can't stand in one place for long periods of time. It is not constitutionally validated, Ken said. Panhandling IS illegal but unconstitutional. Discussion followed, to no one's surprise. Suggestion was to use our committee as part of the City's efforts to address these two inter-related issues. Consensus was that it was a great idea - how was the next question. Discussion.

The issue downtown may boil down to the "appearance of safety" whether it is safe or not. Enforcement is key to this, and with limited resources there is just so much VPD can do alone. Ken noted that the chronic offenders don't use the services, they are outside the data, and they are also THE most visible detriments to the downtown. Police presence does accomplish a lot, though in many instances moving the vagrants around doesn't really solve anything. The rest of the City suffered when Beat 5 was in operation because the police cleaned up downtown and the vagrants moved to other areas. We spoke of the use of cameras on private property and using cadets to monitor them. In a discussion just yesterday, the westside community members tend to blame Family-to-Family for a lot of their ills in regards these issues.

Q: is it our understanding there are over 200 parolees downtown? Who placed them here? Discussion.

Karl noted that is a complicated issue moving homeless around, in that it turns in to someone else's problem and really doesn't fix the situation - only moves it. Section 8, for many, is a life-saver and perhaps the only way they can survive. He cautioned: (1) don't assume panhandlers are not homeless necessarily; and (2) from the count, 585 homeless were counted in Ventura and only about 100 of those were the ones making problems downtown. It's THOSE 100 or so we need to target. As Karl said, the "real" homeless are not our problem - that is a poverty problem, and it is across the continent and across the globe. The problem we see on the streets is coming from those who have substance abuse situations or simply vagrant people breaking the law. We can only handle what we can handle - 15 years ago we weren't discussing this situation, and the question is now: how do we deal with it?

IDEA: Something has to happen sooner rather than later, and with the number of agenda floating around the room, we have to decide where we want to go? If we can get the community what it needs, what is it going to cost? From VOD:

\$160,000/year/officer

\$120,000/year/camera system and monitors

or

\$300,000/year/storefront+two officers

Ed asked why don't the individual property owners buy enforcement? Would it possible/prudent? Discussion. Quinn noted that panhandling is a function of a one-to-one meeting. Peter Brown said the city is considering an educational component to work with the merchants and their employees regarding "mismanaged charitable giving." Apparently, mismanaged charitable giving is one of our biggest problems. We discussed the fact that these problems create quite a loss of economic engine movement in the downtown, and that fact should be part of the larger discussion with the City. How do we manage the housing programs? Should we? Peter noted we need housing units desperately across the county, approx 1200 new beds.

The meeting was getting very long, and Jill noted at the end that she and Dan Frederickson will be meeting with Pedro Nava next week to discuss many of our concerns, including the concept of finding out who - if anyone - is overseeing the state's parolees in Ventura. Jim Luttjohann also came up with a financial scenario, as part of our ongoing discussion on "purchasing" police officer:

1. cost of downtown storefront, per VPD \$300,000/year. That amount to approx \$822/day
2. If even 75 retailers are losing \$10.95/day due to the situation downtown, they are losing approx \$300,000/year in revenue
3. Would 75 retailers be willing to pay \$11/day (or 150 retailers pay \$5.50/day) to fund a downtown storefront ONLY for downtown.

It would improve everyone's shopping and dining experience, spending will increase, and funding from the sales tax could easily fund the storefront.

MIke Merewether suggested to Jill and Dan to discuss with Pedro Nava in their meeting, the impact that punk concerts at the State Fairgrounds have, by a number of young people deciding to hang around after the concert and whether there was any tax that could be imposed on such events to help us deal with residual remnants.

Ideas to consider.

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**9/20/07**

Meeting started in the City Hall atrium at 9:10. Michael Kodama and Tom Mericle chaired the meeting after a brief intro by chair Jerry Breiner. The open forum was used as an update to the status of the survey as well as a question-and-answer opportunity.

Tom recapped some of the info from last meeting, noting the data samples were gathered in 12-hour segments on the two days in July (one weekday and one weekend day). This is a special study in that privates spaces/lots are also being gathered as part of the data, an unusual step but one that will give us much more detail about the total of "available" parking spaces. Some of these "hidden parking assets" are the little known lots scattered about the downtown. During the peak periods, including Saturday, there are a lot of private spaces unused, almost completely, and these spaces represent a significant potential possibility to help mitigate our current lack of spaces, prior to new structures being built. For example, the North Civic area is nearly completely unused on Saturdays, and it is two blocks from the downtown center and situated behind the City Hall building.

Demand, when greater than supply, is showing need for meters' target areas.

~ Q: What is the revenue source for the meters purchase, maintenance and their enforcement?

~ A: City is looking at a number of possible revenue sources, including parking benefit districts. Ex: Portland, OR and Pasadena, CA

~ Q: Should Fir/Ash be included in the meter zone? 8 out of 11 hours are full, and the consultants believe this is a clear indication of a reason to meter that area. Most of the people park in the central downtown zone for 1 hour 50 minutes.

~ Q: Is the parking area, including Thompson, subject to Coastal Commission rules?

~ A: (City) not that we are aware of

~ Q: Is there plans in the recommendation to look at meters at the post office? The parking lot behind the post office?

~ A: possibly, with a shorter term parking-for-free setup (5-10 minutes) for drop off. Suggestion to make the drop off bin left-window accessible.

~ Q: Is the concept of removing parking from certain blocks of Main being considered?

~ A: Not at this point, as the consultants are following the Downtown Specific Plan guidelines. Given the limited amount of land, there may not be the ability of fit the removal of spaces in while simultaneously adding more.

~ Q: Is there the consideration of a shuttle-trolley for off-site parking, both at the upper City Hall lot and the Harbor structure?

~ A: Though part of the overall plan, the management of such an enterprise would be further down the road.

~ Q: Is delivery times for commercial vehicles part of the discussion?

~ A: Yes, in fact UPS is having serious talks with the City about same, as they want to work with Ventura to set up a better more cohesive plan. Some cities have set up alternating delivery/loading zone areas. Discussion.

~ Q: Any experience working with the Federal Government (post office)?

~ A: To date the local postmaster has not cooperated as well as could be expected with the City. Yes and no...

~ Q: There seems to be a lot of confusing signage downtown, in regards parking. Is this being addressed as well?

~ A: As part of the proposal, new signs would be created to better direct parking utilization. The current signs were place at the time of the initiation of the parking districts. Discussion followed.

~ Q: Is angled parking in the 700 block being considered?

~ A: To put angled parking in that block a new signal will have to be installed at Fir and Main, and that has not crossed the drawing board at this time. It is a consideration but not a major one, and it will be addressed in the long range parking plan.

Suggestion: If we increase the number of angled parking spaces up and down Main, it might be possible to finally utilize the concrete parking spaces in the core area on Main for restaurants to put tables out front. Angled parking along Thompson does not make sense in Phase 1 of the report but perhaps later on during the buildout it might make sense to do so.

~ Q: Last time you spoke of the having the demand expectation data for us - ready yet?

~ A: Those future expectations and demand will be available at the next parking DOT meeting.

Discussion followed on possible garage locations, and Tom noted they will be hiring a professional garage designer to come up with an efficient use of the public/private sites.

~ Q: The lot behind the Knights of Columbus building: is it part of the discussion?

~ A: Yes, and the City will be speaking with the owners of that lot as well as the property owners downtown who have what might be termed as "available" locations for a garage.

~ Q: Is the discussion about changing some downtown streets to One-Way being considered?

~ A: Yes, no door is closed to ideas at this time.

Discussion followed about enforcement. Currently VPD hands out 45 - 50 tickets/day. We spoke of the cost of the current tickets and the wisdom of raising the amount. Currently they are \$20-30 each, with enforcement 6 days/week. The lot behind the Senior Center at Oak and Santa Clara is the 2nd most used lot downtown, and the city is working with VCTC on regional and local ride share programs to come up with other places to possibly utilize.

~ Q: Will the structure be maxed out, in terms of available spaces, when Dan Frederickson's building is completed and occupied?

~ A: the 5th floor will be closed off during the construction period, but as to the "maxing out" of the spaces only time will tell.

~ Q: Any thought to new development's requirements for on/off-site location of parking?

~ A: Yes, the DTSP addresses this issue, and the City will be working with private owners negotiation.

~ Q: Where do the in-lieu fees go?

~ A: these fees can only be used to go back in to the supply and the maintenance of same

Christy noted we have had 2 individuals who have expressed interest in doing a pedicab program downtown. Discussion followed.

As to the proposed first installations of meters, the proposal will call for 60 meters total, and Council/DVO and the consultants will weigh in on the exact mechanism to raise funds, locations, method of disbursement, etc. Surveys have shown that the public is willing to pay up to \$1.00/hour for prime parking locations. Time range to start will be 9am - 6pm, but hours can be changed almost at will as well as the rate, all the while data mining to determine the best combination of each. Pay can be in the form of change, credit card and notification can possibly be sent via text message to cell phones.

Meeting adjourned 10:35am.

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### **8/23/07**

Meeting took place in the Community Meeting room at City Hall. The meeting was chaired by Tom Mericle, Michael Kodama and Rick Williams. In attendance this day were Jerry Breiner, Rob Edwards, Doug Halter, Kevin Clerici, Mike Merewether, Dave Armstrong, Chris Velasco, Jack Carter, Quinn Fenwick, Gerald Bosch, Greg Smith, Jeff Smith, Dan Frederickson, Barbara Evans, Ron Calkins, Michael Faulconer, Sandy Smith, Sherry Cash and Christy Weir.

Preliminary results from the parking study are just being pulled together, but already we have a lot of data and some we can share today. On September 20, our next meeting, there will be more to share and we urge everyone here today to let anyone they know who may be a stakeholder downtown, or who may be interested in what happens with downtown parking, to attend this informative meeting. The next meeting's data will have more in-depth block-by-block analysis, but today's focus is on the downtown core, a comprehensive look at the total of public and private parking. The 2003 data was very helpful as the analysis was done, and the updating of some that data is part of the scope of this consult.

Over the 2 study days of July 12 and 14, the group recorded license plate numbers to determine turnover and usage in 12-hour samples, A total of 7070 total stall were sampled during that period, with 6035 stalls off-street and 1035 on street. This is the largest sampling done to date by the organization, and in Ventura this is the first time the private lots and parking were included in the data. A question came up regarding our reason for using July dates to check: the original survey was done in April of 2003, and the idea was to find the nearest peak season to help determine the max need and usage.

The PowerPoint slides corresponded with the discussion, as questions were answered from the floor during the meeting. A few of the key facts that seemed worth noting, early on, was the average length of stay in a stall was 1 hour, 52 min. Regardless of the day, and with 420+ stalls available at any peak hour, the

average length of a downtown parker is just under 2 hours. Our spaces are comprised of 2 hour or no-limit spaces, and in the consultant's eyes our number of no-limit spaces is high for a "retail/visitor" activity. A comment from the crowd stated that he felt one of the biggest problems is the unlimited parking in the 300- block, and the users of the Santa Barbara busses who park all day in the surface lot at Santa Clara and Palm. Shared-use is a viable option, prior to the building of a new structure. Rick noted there is a very consistent supply of users for downtown parking, timewise. However, as our system can be generally efficient on the whole, it gets much more frustrating to visitors if only one or two stalls are available at all times. Our current violation rate is approx 11-12% which is too high and should be more like 7%. This was discussed as a possible goal or benchmark to achieve.

As to off-street parking, their peak occupancy is on Thursdays, the peak hours being between 2-3pm. Rick noted there is abundant availability of off-street parking during the peak hours but it is not used efficiently: people don't seem to want to use it. He noted our high-occupancy "node" is our problem: that 93.1% of Saturday parking is 8-11 hours of over 85% occupancy on Main Street. Though the turnover is consistent every 2 hours or so, 2/3 of our total parked hours are right there. Discussion followed on the inefficiencies of our loading zones and possible solutions to altering the time of day they might be used. Tom noted that there may be way to increase our supply of spaces by angling parking on some blocks where it isn't currently and doing away with some loading zones that don't serve a real purpose at this point.

We spoke of the rule of thumb: if downtown grows at a nominal rate of 3%/year, the parking will be considered maxed out: it is nearly there now, and programs need to be implemented and begun to get people off the street to park. What is the appropriate time a customer wants to stay downtown? 3 hours perhaps, perhaps a little less depending on the day. The fact that the customer wants to stay a little longer than the anticipated and current two hour limit at many places is not helping the problem, only adding to it.

There are two good things, Michael noted: 1. We have available supply off-street and 2. we have a small node, though with problems. Paid parking will help since our high occupancy node number is above 85% occupancy. Discussion on policy regarding who might be responsible for public parking followed. The DVO retail strategy, spring 2007, showed employees are much more likely to park closer than farther from their shop. This is backward thinking, and until we can get employers and employees to follow one simple rule in regards, the problem will not get better. Doug noted from past surveys, that we know that people are not willing to walk very far due to perceptions of compromised safety, security and lighting. The Nelson-Nygaards consultation will give the team some help in numbers regarding the public, and the impact of this data will be shown at the next meeting Sept 20.

Question from the floor: how do we take what is the current status and project it to the future? One thing the consultants are missing is land-use data that shows square footages, to help determine the true demand based on size. Jerry will forward the numbers he has from the PBID Steering committee of 2003-4. Discussion on who might be responsible for the maintenance and management of the parking followed. Doug noted that the height restriction downtown to 4 stories may be too restrictive in retrospect, now that the Downtown Specific Plan has embraced that notion.

Rick gave everyone his email address: parking@cityofventura.net for comments. Our next meeting will follow up on this one and it is scheduled for SEPTEMBER 20, same time and location. The following after that will be another month on OCTOBER 18th.

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**8/9/07**

Meeting started at 9:00am with Jerry, Rob Edwards, Jeff and Greg Smith, Ed Warren, Jill Hernandez, Mike Merewether, Dave Armstrong, Deborah Schreiber and City Staff/consultants Michael Kodama, Tom Mericle, Mike Montoya and Nathan Slack in attendance.

Discussion opened on the subject of business restrictions: the concept of limiting an area's maximum number of "like" or similar businesses. Other downtowns, including Camarillo, have restricted certain

business entities from opening with a certain distance from others of the same type. Liquor stores, adult shops, bars have all been restricted at various times in various cities. Our discussion centered around the concept of limiting, within the DTSP, the number and location of program housing and social service places. Rob spoke of the Washington, DC drunkenness problem where their council approved a "no single" sales restriction on alcohol. Deborah noted that the convenience store in the 300-block was offensive to her in that they are seeming to advertise the fact they sell liquor in our downtown, so close to residents. Ed noted that it's a free enterprise system, and they should be able to sell what they want within the law. ABC typically will restrict alcohol sales if the location or owner becomes problematic. Suggestion came from the discussion to have Quinn Fenwick speak to us on the subject, possibly with the new downtown enforcement officer for ABC. On the housing issue in relation, Jill noted that other towns also have social service provider issues, throughout the county. Her information and research will be unveiled and discussed at the first DOT meeting in September, location TBA.

Tom Mericle and Michael Kodama next gave an update on the parking survey. They are now done with the majority of the data entry, with approximately 8-10,000 points of information to be analyzed. They have looked into occupancy, turnover and hot spots per parking space and location downtown, wayfinding signage and general signage as part of the scope of work. A meeting with Quinn (VPD) regarding enforcement and data associated took place as part of the agenda. Coupled with what they have picked up from VPD, the info will be quite valuable in their analyses to be presented on AUGUST 23, 9:00am at the COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM, City Hall. This will be a working session, so input is requested. We will also plan for the follow up meeting for SEPTEMBER 20, same time and place. Public input will be vital for both meetings, and all attending were encouraged to invite anyone they feel may want to give input to the City and DVO in regards.

Tom plans on going to Council late November with his results and recommendations, having run them by DVO a few times for input, suggestions and clarifications. A follow up visit to Council in the winter will address funding mechanisms and some of the basics to set up the districts. Michael mentioned that there are good opportunities to utilize currently-unused or under-used spaces. Jill mentioned the spaces at the new People's Self-Help location are empty, as a lot of their residents do not have cars. They may be leasable to the City, and this topic is on Tom/Mike's agenda. The City will be setting up and mailing notices to the property owners whose spaces may be worthy of inclusion in the "public inventory". The entire Downtown Specific Plan area was covered, including the east neighborhood by the Laurel and Kalorama. The planning department at the City has mailing addresses for the stakeholders downtown, and the City plans to provide the mailing of notices to them regarding the parking study as we go forward.

The management of existing supply and demand, as well as parallel path regarding private funding of new structures, will be undertaken. Tom is looking at the leased parking areas and figuring out where the high and low priority areas are and will be. The City might want to pull out of some leases: it is possible. Vital timing issues, such as delivery truck timing and location of loading zones will be addressed. One of our problems, in discussion, is that a lot of the stores have no back entrance, so deliveries must be made at the front. Large trucks cannot park in the loading zones, as they impede traffic. We discussed the great need for controlled access for delivery and how other cities accomplish this. Bottom line: our current loading zones generally do not work efficiently or effectively and in some ways are quite dangerous to pedestrians and other drivers. Tom is meeting with the UPS logistics department in regards, to see if there might be a way to alter schedules to help alleviate this problem.

Tom and Mike are also looking in to the concept of universal valet parking, a concept used in other dense cities. Rob noted that in West Palm Beach and Ft Lauderdale it works quite efficiently, and you can actually go to a restaurant, give your keys to the valet, eat and shop and pick up your car from another location. Same valet service, universal pickup. Great idea, we thought. Perhaps a private entity, such as DVO, could be the organization to handle this. Perhaps a parking district could be. Perhaps both in conjunction. Insurance and liability will be important factors to consider in such an enterprise. We discussed what motivates a patron to use valet parking. In Santa Barbara and San Diego, restaurants pay for sidewalk space to maximize their space and profit. A situation that Tom mentioned is taking place now in Ventura is that people are "swiping" taxi calls at Dargan's. With a lack of designated taxi stands, it can become a problem, and VPD is aware. We discussed bicycle rickshaws as a possible alternative, at least thru downtown. Rob said he would speak with the Santa Barbara pedicab company owner who has

expressed interest in doing something downtown Ventura.

The question was raised about whether there has been any fruitful discussion with the Fair Board about utilizing their acres of parking lot, sitting dormant a great deal of the time. Apparently they won't discuss the concept at all, though in the past discussions have started they have gotten nowhere. The state apparently wants full control, and if we were able to figure out a way to build a structure the State would want to control it. Every time the Fair Board changes a new board "disappears" the discussion and plans.

Mike Montoya from City Parks Department gave an in-depth and fact-filled report on trees and latest on Grant Park. Noting that trees increase in value as they age, he noted that Ventura is a tree-rich town. The Grant Park Master Plan, tabled a few years ago, is now back in full swing and the Park/Recs department has appropriations to actually move forward to improve the park - the job, as it always has been, is to figure out how best to manage it, use it, improve it. What needs does the City have that the Park could fill? With additional new residents moving in, there will be a much greater need for parks downtown. Jason is currently on the steering committee for the park, and discussion followed about asking Mike if Rob could take part in those discussions. The Public Park Spaces Task Force includes the DVO, the Native Plant Society, the Public Art Commission and the Westside Community Council. David Volz design came up with a conceptual drawing of what the park might be able to be used as which we all shared. Budget could possibly come from Quimby fees of new construction, though the lot of us were shocked to hear that the Olson Company, who are building the largest residential complex that's ever been built downtown, have been exempted from paying these fees via closed door meetings with City EMT. DVO will investigate.

Just recently the park expanded with the 7 acres of above City Hall coming in to the City's possession. The firing range is now open only to the VPD. Mike Montoya and Chandra will be approaching Council soon on the Quimby Fee situation and will report back to us with the results. It is possible that via the Public Information Act we may be able to get the details of the closed door meeting. Discussion followed on beaches, including the concept of sand vs cobble. Mike said education of the public is vital to understand what a "clean" beach is. He noted that many people don't understand that seeing sticks on the sand is actually a good thing, a natural habitat that helps preserve the coastline. He said there may be a small budget for interpretive signage for the beach paths and Grant Park, and we will know more about this in the coming months.

Mike next spoke on the subject of the Ventura Tree Ranger Program with Nathan Slack, staff member. The tree program includes everything situated in the "urban forest" of Ventura, approximately 35,000 trees. The object of the program is to preserve, maintain and expand our current inventory upwards. Ventura, designated a TREE CITY, USA for 17 years, has many types of native plants and trees who love this climate. Nathan noted the Moreton Bay fig tree downtown is "stressed" on one side of it, and his department is working to add mulch to the root systems below the canopy to help it out. It is possible that it is stressed from neglect, but regardless of the reason we need to take care of it. He is working with a local arborist to "spruce it up." Possibilities include fencing a/o interpretive signage, acting as a barricade. The City plans to add bollards at the SE corner of Santa Clara and Chestnut for further protection. Mike Merewether has donated the funds for the signs (thanks MIKE!). We talked a bit about Ventura's other large Moreton Bay, at the Foster House on the Avenue, and how it really needs serious attention.

Finally, Mike talked about the current watering program downtown, specifically for the trees. There is not enough manpower to do this as often as it should be done, and Jerry and Rob spoke of the possibility of enhancing the City's manpower with hired guns via DVO to help in this regard. We already have someone we pay to water the plants: it might not be that much more money to add trees to his list.

A long meeting, but very informative. Adjourned 11:15

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**7/26/07**

Jerry called the meeting to order at 9:05 with Rob Edwards, Mike Merewether, Debora Schreiber, Ed

Warren, David Schwartz, Zoe Taylor, Dan Frederickson, Nick Deitch, Maria Fiore Dave Armstrong, Barbara Evans, Jim DeArkland, and from the City of Ventura Chris Palmieri, Vicki Musgrove, Kevin Collin, Sue Taylor, Sid White, Tom Mericle, Michael Kodama, and Quinn Fenwick.

#### TRASH

Jerry thanked everyone for coming today, a very large group, and the first to meet in our newest meeting room. Rob Edwards, DVO Executive Director, welcomed everyone. Jerry opened the floor to Vicki Musgrove and Chris Palmieri, who gave an update on the trash enclosures and the current trash management plan downtown. Vicki noted that she doesn't believe there is anything mandatory for new businesses other than restaurants in regards an actual trash plan, and Jerry reminded everyone that merchants in general don't have trash bins that they are responsible - or available - for. Many businesses cart their trash home with them, a preposterous situation at best. Vicki noted that the new receptacles in the north Oak Street area as well as behind the 500 block south are being worked hard. Discussion followed on ways to possibly mitigate the smell and stain. The pilot program the City initiated, paid through Economic Development (thank you Sid) is working well, but she noted that DVO could help out by interfacing with the merchants in regards their use, needs, etc. There is nothing the City can do at this point in regards to the stain, though they are looking in to various ways to clean, seal and possibly over-stain darker the areas near the enclosures. It is time to start revisiting the subject, so our timing is good. Dan appreciates the time taken to get this right, and he noted it is working on a base level. Jerry asked if there was a way we may be able to get a list of the individual contractors who are doing the jobs of cleaning to possibly interface directly, but Vicki said to make it easier just to pass everything on to her and Chris.

Vicki noted there are environmental issues when it comes to cleaning the bins (runoff, etc), and she reminded us that the City had offered to the restaurants downtown wheeled receptacles to make the job easier. The City is looking in to alternatives to the current situation and Vicki will let us know as soon as possible what might be coming in the near future to help this situation. She noted that the City had offered a voluntary retrofit to the owners for installing drainage lines, and she said perhaps at our next public meeting - or through Rob's regular contacts with the merchants - DVO figure a way to bring the merchants to the table to discuss ways to clean this up. New developments are required to provide a complete trash solution, but unfortunately (fortunately?) there are many older businesses who never had/have a trash plan. Dan and Deborah agreed to act as the Trash Subcommittee and perhaps begin by setting up quarterly meetings with the restaurants and bars who bring the most calls for service from VPD.

Vicki also noted that there was a major cleanup of the Mission Park/Figueroa Plaza area around the 4th of July, due in large part to DVO's continued insistence that somebody take a closer look at things down there. The tile on the north side of the fountain was cleaned up, not normally part of the sidewalk/street cleaning regimen. Within the next few months her shop expects to get DVO an actual schedule we can put on line and in print so people can plan on when/where the cleaning will take place. They are currently rebidding some contracts, and just finished rebidding the entire City janitorial bid. She noted that her office actually deleted/cut-back some of the City employee's maintenance away to give some additional time to the downtown - we all thanked her for that. The public restrooms are now cleaned 2x a day and the whole of downtown's streets are cleaned once/week. The structure is pressure-washed only 1 time a year however, and we discussed that is certainly not enough.

#### PARKING

Tom and Michael gave an update on the status of the parking survey. The inventory and occupancy part of the study is now complete, data is being compiled, including on- and off-street parking. Misuse of parking spaces (for boats, etc) is also included in the data entries, and though they took some of the 2003 data their new inventory and survey will be much more complete. The target first follow up date with DOT is early September at which time we should have the initial data in hand. Mike asked Tom if he had any final words from Bob Boehm in regards the parking districts, and he said yes but they are inconclusive. The job of piecing the parking district info is daunting, and the current assistant City Attorney says he doesn't have enough time to do it currently. Tom may ask Mike Dougherty to come back to finish the research, and then face to face meetings with the former district members is in line. Mr Boehm said there was no legal hurdle, in his eyes, to abandoning the existing districts unless the existing district's payees

have qualms about it.

Michael has spoken with Jessica Cusick about the parking situation, as she is putting the finishing touches on her cultural arts village survey. Jim asked if there was an extra emphasis placed on the 200-blocks needs, as that block is the most heavily and first impacted by the development coming on line. Downtown's strategy, Michael and Tom said, will probably about 6 months down the road.

#### CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS

Kevin and Sue gave us a short rundown of use permits and how they work. Kevin noted that the Planning Commission defines the permits and sends on to Council for approval. Sue said that if a CUP holder seems to be in violation, Planning notifies the holder with a Notice to Repair. If not solved, civil remedies are possible as well as administrative fines. A CUP can be revoked legally but it doesn't happen on anything but a very rare basis. Additionally, the CUP conditions can be amended, and either the City or the CUP holder can apply to the Planning Commission for alterations.

Kevin was asked about CUPs for group homes or Group Care facilities, and how those CUPs (if they are needed) are applied for, approved and instigated. He said there is a discretionary use review with public input, and notification to property owners within 300' of the proposed facility gets sent. He noted that County facilities on COUNTY-OWNED properties are not subject to downtown's zoning rules, but any privately-held property is subject to City regulation. Discussion followed as to what DVO could possibly do to help lessen these group homes' impact on our development, redevelopment and general lifestyle downtown. Kevin said DVO could request for notification on any CUP application in the downtown, but currently there is only notification within 300' of a proposed location. Perhaps a Planning liaison to DVO would help streamline the process, so DVO can get their info from one source. Suggestions came to the table. The question was asked: Can a private entity, like DVO, get an ordinance created to limit the number of Group Care houses within a certain distance from other like facilities? Kevin noted the current Downtown Specific Plan addresses this in a way but not nearly as pointed as the group was asking. Suggestion was to inform the County, asking for notification of such new facilities' application and intention to move downtown - and to appear at a County Supervisors meeting asking same.

Kevin noted that the 300' rule may be rebuttable. Discussion followed. Sue spoke of how her office, code enforcement, is able (or not able) to address a lot of the issues being brought up this morning. Dan said he had visited the Hamilton Hotel, saw some rooms in deplorable condition, some with 2-3 people per room. He spoke with the owner who apparently, from the discussion, had/has no interest in improving the lot of his tenants or doing much beyond the minimum necessary to keep it rentable. Sue said she has been there many times, and noted that substandard housing is simply not okay, it is injurious to the renters, the neighbors, downtown in general. She suggested that Ventura could benefit with a Rental Housing Inspection Program, perhaps funded by a bond. This would allow the city, without being invited, to check on the conditions of a suspect unit before and during its rental period, to confirm that standards are being met. The landlord will be responsible to pay for the tenants stay if the tenants have to move out during repair periods. Discussion followed as to whether some of these tenants may want to or not want to "blow the whistle" on their landlords. An ombudsman could possibly help, though the person handling this would have to source funding or do it gratis, naturally. Sue said other cities such as Moorpark have instituted such a program, and it could be one way to make SURE our downtown tenants are being housed in buildings and rooms that meet the City's strict guidelines, not the landlords sometimes-less-than-stellar ones. Excessive calls for police can possibly get a facility declared a public nuisance, and she suggested a few words to Google as a jumping off point:

Rental housing inspection program

<http://www.google.com/search?sourceid=navclient&ie=UTF-8&rls=GGLR,GGLR:2006-08,GGLR:en&q=rental+housing+inspection+program>

Crime-free Multi-housing

<http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&rls=GGLR%2CGGLR%3A2006-08%2CGGLR%3Aen&q=crime-free+multi-housing>

League of California Cities

<http://www.cacities.org/index.jsp>

California tenant law

<http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&rls=GGLR%2CGGLR%3A2006-08%2CGGLR%3Aen&q=california+tenant+law>

Final discussion centered on who actually gets notified about substandard housing found at a facility - Sue said the facility owner/operator is, and Jerry suggested adding the property owner as well. This would give the renter (the operator) a much more intense reason to correct mistakes.

Jerry received some additional notes from Gerhard Mayer, advisory board member and architect in Santa Barbara. He mentioned the concept of a "Community Facilities District" paid for through a Mello-Roos bond. It gives a private developer the bond financing to build a public parking facility as part of a development

The meeting adjourned at 10:35.

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**6/28/07**

Jerry called the DOT committee meeting to order at 9:10 with himself, Dave Armstrong, Tom Mericle, Jeff and Greg Smith, Barbara Evans, Christy Weir, Sandy Smith, Dan Frederickson, Karl Keller, Quinn Fenwick, Mike Merewether, Ed Warren, Jason Collis, Glenda Lewis, Ann Rohlin, Jill Martinez, Jeanette Duncan, Michael Kodama and Jim Dearkland present.

Ann gave an overview of what her organization does in terms of building, financing and structuring major capital improvements, both publicly and privately held. They act as bond attorneys for the most part, as there is some amount of politics involved in any new development. She noted that easiest way to proceed with the concept of building new additional parking structure is to first find out and gauge if the City is interested and on board to issue bonds? Bonds are tax-exempt usually, and they can pay for the creation of structures while taking the immediate burden off the developer's or city's hands. One of her company's criteria is available space for a garage, and we have a number of locations in the downtown suitable for such an endeavor, whether parking only (not advised) or mixed use (consensus of the group leans towards this). The interest rate the City would pay in such a partnership would be roughly 4-6%, depending on the length of the bond.

Bond ratings are set by national standard raters, such as Moody's. The rating is tied to the financial issuer of the bond, whether public, private or a combo of both. Sometimes cities set up separate entities, such a parking management companies or districts or both, for collateral reasons. Dave mentioned that if we were to go forward it is quite possible the parking management entity might fall under the Redevelopment District of downtown. In response to a question from Mike, Ann noted that her firm gets paid thru the costs of issuing the bond.

Question came up: are garages sometimes funded thru ticket revenues? In discussion, the concept of ticket revenues from the existing garage could help pay for the 2nd+ garages, if enforced. Discussion. Currently parking is priced somewhere around \$200-250/space/month, as per Michael Kodama and Dave Armstrong. Cash on hand built the existing structure with monies previously having been put aside for a convention center, and there is no debt service on it, just maintenance (as uneven as it is). Question: what defines a "public" parking lot? A: if 90% of the spaces are available - at that number, it can be tax exempt, as per Ann. Dan suggested the possibility of private developers building structures and leasing them or selling them to the City. Discussion. Tom mentioned that Council has formally stated that their goal is to have some sort of paid parking beginning March 2008, less than a year away. Included in this discussion is meters a/o paid parking in the structure after a free period (a la Santa Barbara). The utilization study Michael and Tom Mericle are working on will be able to show how much space is needed and when. In Santa Barbara, the merchants fund the first 75 minutes of parking thru a parking district, (ed.note: perhaps tied to their BID?)

Discussion followed on whether DVO is looking to parking funds to help allay our costs, and the subject of meters antagonizing merchants at first came up. Jill and Jeanette both noted that a lengthy and persistent PR push was made in Santa Barbara as they went thru the process to complete their structure. Tom noted the plan adopted by Council is general, and before its implementation must be completely vetted in the press and the public for buy-in. The plan is slated to cover, initially, 10 years of parking planning. He noted that currently most residential development is looking to put parking on-site, but from the City's standpoint there is a better chance of utilization of inventory in a shared environment, lessening the load on the developer to require on-site parking and allowing the City to provide much needed public parking at the same time. Parking is not a good use of land, and anything that can be done to maximize the land's effectiveness (mixed use, multi-stories, underground) will add to its utility.

Dan suggested DOT take a position on the parking management plan. Christy and Jerry noted we have already embraced the plan to council, but as we go forward with the study its important we regularly let them know we are behind it - of course, assuming we agree with the findings. Dan asked what percentage of growth is expected over the length of the plan? Tom and Michael responded with a few answers, notably that the assumptions are made to coarsely calendarize buildout, but the level of detail can't be there as downtown is a constantly moving grid with properties behind bought and sold constantly. Part of the exercise, as it were, is to address the solutions block by block for current and FUTURE needs. As an example, overlaying various growth factors of 3, 4, 8, 10% over each block can help us figure out triggers that will move the future determination levels up. It is quite conceivable that an enterprise fund might be set up to handle maintenance, perhaps managed by the parking district itself or City Maintenance.

Michael said we should have the data by October, but he will be reporting on a regular basis to us as he gets it in hand. The first study of the summer will be July 12 then July 14, both day and night. Mike noted that it is highly unlikely we will get the promised recommendation and letter from attorney Bob Boehm about the parking districts before he leaves the City for good. Discussion followed.

As we were leaving, the subject of housing came up for a short discussion as Jerry and Jill are not yet ready to speak to the subject, waiting on data and some personal interviews that are lined up. Jerry noted that the large group of stakeholders in the downtown, including the VCB, the Chamber, the various community councils and other organizations will need to be and should be included in the process. He reiterated that DVO is only spearheading this study, as the subject needs to be addressed on a much greater level of involvement from the community and as early as possible in the process. Christy suggested contacting Pacific Care to have one of their representatives at our next meeting. Jill will follow up.

Meeting adjourned 10:00am.

Next meeting JULY 12 - subjects: Housing and restrooms.

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## **6/14/07**

Meeting was called to order at 9:05 by Jerry. In attendance were Karl Keller, Jill Martinez, Barbara Evans, Jeanette Duncan, Dan Frederickson, Jerry Breiner, Dave Armstrong, Sid White, Christy Weir, Neal Andrews, Greg and Jeff Smith, Mike Merewether, Quinn Fenwick and Ed Warren.

Jerry opened up the floor to the group, as today's meeting was a round table discussion on housing and parking and their inter-relations. He asked for anyone who had been able to go up to see People's Self Help Housing's setup in Santa Barbara what their impressions were. Greg Smith stated that he was well-impressed by the seamless integration of the bathrooms in the parking lot and the use of liner buildings, the bike center program. The fact that it was paid for through bonds and redevelopment dollars spelled a great possible outcome as we go forward in Ventura, seeking to create the same kind of thing. The integration of the parking structure with the City offices and merchants he thought was very impressive. We talked about the desperate need to educate the public, especially the merchants, on the positive aspects of paid parking, and Jill noted that the PR started before almost anything else did. The

press can create problems where they don't exist at times, and usually that is simply a matter of educating them as to what is REALLY going on. Jill said they had monthly meetings with the merchants and weekly meetings with the City planning folks. The "WE'RE STILL OPEN" mantra helped propel the development forward, for sure. Greg also thought that the concept of redoing the Granada historic theatre at the same time worked quite well, animating a previous "dead spot" in that part of the downtown.

Dan spoke about the fact that the parking structure monies as a "pay-to-play" facility really works: the restrooms are actually cleaned and inspected by the cleaning crew 6x a day. The fact there is a live cashier there 24 hours a day is a testament to real and perceived security, something we have been sorely missing downtown. He said if there were SRO locations downtown done with the expertise and management that People's Self Help showed us all in Santa Barbara, that would be a great help to us. The problem, as always, is paying for it. The facilities, whoever manages them or purchases them, MUST be managed correctly and need to be an enhancement to our downtown, not a detriment. Jill mentioned that in terms of educating the public, it's important to note that PSH is NOT a homeless center but rather an affordable-living location for workforce housing in the downtown. Dan noted that we have more than a few "slumlords" and certainly need no more. Discussion followed on the subject of code enforcement.

Jeff said that his views on the facilities in Santa Barbara are very similar to his brother Greg's and he thought the hotel location and its relation to State Street was great. He felt that discussion should take place with neighboring stake holders as early in the process as possible, so educating them about what PSH does, as opposed what they THINK it does, can be made complete and accurate. Mike noted that developers are a big part of the solution in Santa Barbara, and that it may be the key here to getting things done. Jeff said he went primarily to see the parking lot but was really impressed by the hotel and what they have done there. It is exactly what we need.

Jill noted a few things about the facilities in Santa Barbara:

- they are manned 24 hours a day, so there is always a "body" to go to
- the parking structure has full time maintenance who meet once daily for trouble spots, things to keep an eye on
- graffiti problems are addressed almost immediately and the floors are monitored regularly
- fee structure is currently 75 minutes free, formerly 90 minutes free. It may go down to one hour free as parking gets more precious
- Merchants fund the free portion of the stay
- each space has sensor to help indicate availability to the central computer so consumers can decide where to park

It cost approx \$7M of enterprise funding to build the structure, \$6M of it from parking fees and another approx \$900K+ from the parking benefit district. Quinn asked if the revenue from police citations was used. Jill said that 100% of the funds gathered stay in the district, covering maintenance and operations but not capital improvements.

Discussion followed on the subject of housing, specifically the county's apparent attitude that "diversion" of program housing end up in downtown Ventura, without input from downtown Ventura. There appears to be an attitude of: "Ventura can deal with it" Dan asked how did PSH deal with the City and County of Santa Barbara as they designed the facility? Jeanette said the City realized residential hotels added value to housing downtown workers. It became a way to help a part of the downtown population that seemed to have no champions for their cause. There were more facilities/homes for the transient population. As an example, the Ventura Inn has 25 rooms with Pullman Kitchens installed, can be rented as studio apartments. They rent month to month. The Santa Barbara model is one where these "transient" type motel/hotels are converted to work force housing. These are long term, permanent or semi-permanent hotels. In relation to the El Patio, they have gone through the hotel in depth. There are some nice rooms there, for sure. Jerry asked if the PSH had plans to offer or work with the City to allow shared parking of some of the space at the El Patio, since most of the residents do not drive. Jill and Jeanette both said the concept is not one they have pursued but anything is up for discussion as they approach Council here in town for funding assistance.

Jeanette said that In Santa Barbara, when the City realized that residential hotels added value in the

downtown to house downtown workers, and it became a way to help a part of the downtown population which was being squeezed out of the housing market. In comparison, the Ventura Inn owner presently has converted 25 of the rooms with Pullman kitchens, a one-piece "drop-in" kitchen that allows him to define those rooms as a studio, allowing him to get higher voucher dollars from the State via his tenants. The rooms can be rented month-to-month. PSH decided that the best way to utilize this type of building and environment was to create work force housing instead, with no short term tenants but all long-term, permanent or semi-permanent.

Neal said there is distinction to be made between those managed by competent social service agencies ON site that handle regulations, care and enforcement and those OFF site who have a "hands off" approach. Code enforcement, he said, is usually handled by the Health and Safety department of the City (a/o County), and the nuisances by the Police.

Part of the Santa Barbara parking strategy uses parking waivers, and some of the new building has no parking requirements, due to the nature of the resident (low income tends to either not have or want a car). Dave noted that, with all of the discussion regarding parking, housing, need for office space, it seems Ventura tends to make a lot of "one-off" decisions, handling one problem at a time. Seems that it would much more prudent, and a considerable time and energy saver, to combine our needs in to one or two cohesive locations contacting the elements we need. We need a comprehensive plan. Ventura tends to look at these issues on an emotional level, but good decisions cannot be made in a vacuum. To reiterate what Jerry had said earlier, Dave noted that we need data, and it seems the major source of that data are the various offices of the county. To that end, Jill and Jerry are working diligently to get it one place, as each of the county agencies has their own data, and from we have been told on more than one occasion, one hand does not necessarily know what the other is doing.

Partnerships really DO need to be created and utilized, modeled on existing and working scenarios. A comprehensive plan, utilizing not only the DVO but other like-minded organizations possibly including the Chamber of Commerce, the other community councils, the VCB, even the service clubs perhaps needs to be created as a wholly new groups of concerned citizenry. The economic benefits and the upgrading of public safety is of paramount concern. Greg noted that Downtown has taken a disproportionate share of the burden over the years, and we are impacted more heavily than other communities, regardless of the numbers at any given time. All you need to do is walk the streets to see how. Neal mentioned that housing vouchers are "market" vouchers, not necessarily geared towards being used in just one place, and the issue, our issue, is the provider. THAT person or entity is who must be approved, and the issue - perhaps the REAL issue, here - is WHO is the provider of services and are they viewed by either the voucher holder or the County as a "dump" location. MANAGEMENT IS THE ISSUE. Section 8 is not the issue either, though the perception is such. The renovation plans for the El Patio are to secure the location for low income and work force housing, not homeless feeding and services. The rooms will stay the same, and their recommendation to Council in just over a week will be that only Ventura workers get to live there. Another plus, said Jerry. Jerry also asked if they had considered offering their unused parking spaces to the City, and Jeanette said they had a conversation with Nelson Hernandez about just such a thing.

Jill mentioned the Council meeting at 7 on the 25th is when PSH request will come before Council, and she urged anyone who feels they might like to speak in their behalf to attend. Their mission is "to deliver affordable housing to downtown Ventura." Neal ended by letting us know, as an adjunct to this morning's conversation, that the Ventura County Council of Governments recently met to discuss request for social services requirements to be amended to include that, at discharge from one of their facilities, the patient get discharged at their original place of location. This, in effect, would deter many of them from being "dumped" downtown, unless that's actually where they are from. A great idea.

NEXT MEETING: JUNE 28, 9am  
SUBJECT: Parking and Conditional Use Permit discussion

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**5/31/07**

The meeting began at 9:10am, and in attendance were Tim Schiffer, Michael Kodama, Tom Mericle, Jeannette Duncan, Quinn Fenwick, Mike Merewether, Ed Warren, Jill Martinez, Dan Frederickson, Greg Smith, Jerry Breiner and Christina

Discussion began on the railroad trestle and what might be able to be done about addressing its sorry state of condition. Tom is in touch with city officials who are working with both Union Pacific and CalTrans to perhaps paint it and secure it for vandalism sake. It may have the Public Art Commission involvement, and Tom will keep us informed on that as it progresses. We all agreed that something needs to be done there, the trestle being one of the few to be driven under near/at the coast and a sorry, graffiti-covered example of our downtown. Not the best foot forward.

Jerry asked who, if any in attendance, had already spoken with Jessica Cusick. Jim Dearkland, Mike Merewether and Tom Mericle had. Ed had an appointment a few weeks ago. Jerry asked if it would be possible to have her come on the 14th, and Tom suggested contacting Elena Brokaw in regards. Jerry to follow up. We discussed the fact that nearly everyone we are aware of who she has talked with has brought up parking, and though it is not in her scope of work it is becoming apparent that the two subjects cannot be separated from each other. Her assessment as a "feasibility study" seems less suited to her real task of providing a "needs assessment" for the SBFA (San Buenaventura Foundation for the Arts). Tom mentioned that Peter Lemon, ex-City of Ventura attorney, is working with the Knights of Columbus in regards the SBFA's desire to locate next to their structure. There are access issues already being threatened apparently. We will watch this closely.

Next issue was the scheduled/proposed trip to Santa Barbara's downtown, hosted by People's Self Help Housing (Jill Martinez and Jeannette Duncan) and the City of Santa Barbara. The main reason to get property owners, merchants and business owners up there is to see how downtown Santa Barbara - not that dissimilar to downtown Ventura - has accomplished the task of integrating a number of needed services all in one place and seemingly effortlessly. Tom mentioned that the next structure to be built downtown will have commercial space in it. As an example, Santa Barbara brought their environmental department, a bike station as well as their downtown parking management offices in to their new structure. Dan said downtown's main problems are cleanliness and safety, followed by vagrancy, and our subsequent discussion centered on how to vastly improve the first two and eradicate the second. No doubt about it, the two issues - parking and housing - are intertwined. The primary purpose of the tour is to see how the integration can be accomplished.

We followed up the basic conversation with a short discussion on the concept of renting a bus (\$700) or using the Vista bus or carpooling. Discussion followed on public involvement and participation, both merchant and property owner, and all agreed it would best serve our needs for everyone to get there via carpooling or using the Vista bus due to scheduling, pricing, etc.

Tom reminded us that beginning either July 12 or 19, the downtown survey will take place. Meanwhile, Michael Kodama's office will be putting together the parking inventory list of public and private spaces. Tom suggested DVO create a joint letter with the City (his office) as an introductory note to property owners regarding the need to provide access to City Staff for this purpose. Jerry will send the logo and stationery to Tom.

Following Tom's report, we began preliminary discussions on housing, the homeless issue, vagrancy and program housing downtown. During the discussion, it was agreed that Jill and Jerry would get together and map out the beginning of a strategy for DOT to follow as we address this most volatile of issues.

Quinn Fenwick offered to put together, with Jerry, a public workshop put on by the City and the author who wrote the book on the HIGH PRICE OF FREE PARKING. It would require a lot of press to get as many people involved as possible from the public, as this would be the first of our outreach programs to address the paid parking strategy.

NEXT MEETING: JUNE 14

SUBJECT: HOUSING (Tom Mericle will not be available)

[GO TO TOP](#)**5/24/07**

Present were Jill Martinez, Clarey Rudd, Tom Mericle, Michael Kodama, Jim Dearthland, Christy Weir, Jason Collis, Sandy Smith, Daniel Brady, Mike Merewether, Greg Smith, Jeff Smith, Quinn Fenwick, Robert Edwards, Tim Schiffer, Dave Armstrong, Sid White, and Jerry Breiner.

Tom reported we are literally days away from a signed contract with Michael Kodama, and data will be gathered beginning possibly next week. The timing of the survey is now being considered, as well as input from other consultants who have done like-styled work in other similar cities. Rick Williams, who consulted to the city of Portland on this same issue, will be someone we have talk with us at some point. At this point, it looks like there will be studies in the summer and the fall of this year to gather what is "peak" and what is "typical", as we need a good cross section of data. The industry standard months to gather the "typical" data is usually collected in March and April and mid-September. As we go forward, the City may need access to private property owners and information from economic development. There are several gated lots that will need to be included in the study, but Tom and Michael will let the public and DVO know in advance so the word can get out to who it needs to get out to.

Tom noted that enforcement is one of the subjects that will be looked at in length, using data correlated with VPD. It will help determine demand and turnover/utilization of spaces and structure(s). In particular, time limits and how much "overstaying" occurs and at what time periods are necessary to have in the data, as it may show areas that have needed or are needing additional enforcement. Part of the study will be to determine if the 2 hour or 4 hour time limits make sense, are applicable, or should change or go away.

There will be night-time and day-time studies as well, in that downtown Ventura has two different faces, and each face uses parking in a different manner. Discussion will occur on meters, zones, whether to include meters off main or just on Main - or IF to have them on Main. Loading zone discussions will take place early on, and Tom mentioned that some times it is hard to ascertain the needs of the downtown merchants to determine the locations, times, etc. Michael noted that Ventura's downtown has some unique properties, one of which is the fact that north side of 2 of the blocks (300- and 400) have no rear access.

Currently, the plan is to do the summer data gathering either July 12-14 or July 19-21. The consultant will need to know what our typical "needs" are during that time period, and perhaps one thing that may come up is the use of a shuttle downtown. Discussion followed on the concept of using a shuttle to and from the beach parking structure, as well as using the shuttle around downtown. Who would pay is a big question.

How do we adjust for future growth? There is a formula, based on land use determinations and the needs of cars and spaces. Does the DTSP provide a max buildout envelope? Yes, there is a 5-year plan which is relatively easy to consider, but the 10-15 year plans are obviously more difficult. For now, the plan is move forward on all parameters, and anyone wanting to contact Michael at [parking@cityofventura.net](mailto:parking@cityofventura.net).

The bigger picture is part of the Mobility Plan which covers the entire city. Route 12 works great downtown, but it doesn't hit the Mall. Should it? Transit is a big piece of the available funding. As an example, Santa Barbara uses its separate transit district monies to work its parking plan downtown, separate from the property taxes. Some of the Santa Barbara service is paid thru the downtown BID.

Will the study show how much of our parking is used by employees/employers? Possibly, though typically in any town like ours it is between 25-30%. That is roughly 1/4 - 1/3 of all our parking downtown is being used by all-day parking by people who work in the stores that wonder where their customers can park.

Jerry asked Tom where the discussion regarding the existing (?) parking districts is, in terms of legalities, etc. Tom said there is still a bit of work to be done, but he believes we will have an opinion from the City

Attorney's office by the end of June. Jim noted that we have a number of projects coming online in the next 8 months, including the museum expansion, the WAV project, the cultural arts village, the 300-block projects, the 400-block projects. To what extent will the new work address? Apparently, Jessica Cusick's scope of work does NOT include addressing the parking issue, though from what we have heard it is just about the ONLY thing she has been told she WILL be hearing from a number of the people already interviewed. Her work, ostensibly to assist Council on how to go forward on the Cultural Arts Center, was not set up to address the parking issue but rather a usage analysis WITHOUT parking as a subset of her questions. After a very brief discussion by the group, it is the consensus of the group that:

IT IS INCUMBENT ON DVO TO MAKE A VERY SUCCINCT AND POINTED RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL REGARDING THE PARKING SITUATION NECESSARILY TO BE INCLUDED IN THE STUDY.

Dave mentioned that there really is no need to do a study, as there is empirical data already available out there, with basic fundamentals easily digestible. Facts such as cost-per-space (\$33,000), cost to build a structure, MUST be part of the equation that goes to Council in regards the cultural arts village. A one-page letter, noting the loss of parking from just the plans currently under consideration (for example: The Top Hat project(s), the cultural arts village, the museum expansion). We need project-by-project data to put this together. We discussed the idea of hiring from the private sector a consultant to put this together, but we discussed the fact that we have most of this data already - we just need to put it together. Additionally, the idea of DVO enhancing the City's contract with Michael by paying Michael above and beyond what he will be making with the City to put together this data for us was discussed.

Just looking at the existing parking doesn't make sense with all the new projects coming on line and the property about to change hands downtown. ANY analysis needs to be done on a block-by-block basis. We discussed the fact that we have an already existing, under-utilized parking structure NOW, literally 4 blocks from the center of downtown. We could access those spaces with some sort of trolley, perhaps to allow employees to park there, saving the downtown spaces for the customers our merchants so desperately need.

Robert mentioned that the Pearl district in downtown Portland is Wi-Fi enabled, some solar powered, and the setup is very effective, easy to use and quite functional. Funding source discussion followed, and Michael noted that some of the "pay station" companies actually have setups that allow municipalities to pay for the cost of the systems with the meter fees.

A discussion began regarding the homeless issue, and to that end Jill Martinez will be coordinating a tour of the Santa Barbara parking garage(s) - DVO is invited to speak with City representatives to discuss issues of housing, retail and timelines for merchants in regards the structures and how Santa Barbara and People's Self Help has instigated change in their downtown.

Next meeting: THURSDAY MAY 31

Agenda item: coordination with Jessica Cusick, more parking

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**5/3/07**

PLEASE NOTE: NEXT DOT MEETINGS ARE MAY 24 AND MAY 31. FROM THAT POINT ON, WE ARE SCHEDULED FOR EVERY TWO WEEKS, 9AM AT THE HQ

The meeting started at 9:06 and present were Jerry Breiner, Greg Smith, Jeff Smith, Dave Armstrong, Sid White, Christy Weir, Irene Henry, Barbara Evans, Michael Faulconer, Mike Merewether, Ed Warren, Jill Martinez, Debora Schreiber, Tim Schiffer, Tom Mericle and Quinn Fenwick.

Tom Mericle gave an update on the parking strategy and implementation. There is now a signed contract at the City Attorney's office to bring Michael Kodami on board. He is scheduled to work for 18 months, more or less two days a week. At our next DOT meeting in three weeks, Tom and Michael will bring information relating to the fieldwork requirements and perhaps some private and public lot info. The

current time frame is to take the fieldwork information this summer and to sit down with DOT to discuss his findings and recommendations, looking for input and direction from DOT. The first areas he will focus on are the potential target locations for meters and structures, as well as site selection/design of the actual structures. Tom told us the City Attorney's office should have their results from the research they have performed on the existence and validity of the parking districts.

Tasks under Michael's wing include, but are not limited to: researching the different types of meter systems, if and when and where to use them, code implementation of existing and perhaps proposed ordinances, new development sharing of parking, supply/demand, time frames per lot/space, leases on private lots that the City pays for, etc. As the Council has approved (1) the hiring of the parking consultant and (2) the beginning of structure design for one if not more than one of the new structures, Michael's task is clear. DOT will be here for consultation, and anyone interested in voicing concerns or opinions on same should make it a point to attend our meetings every other Thursday (with this month's exception - see first line above).

Ed asked when the right time would be to bring up the idea of removing parking on Main Street between Chestnut and Oak (or Palm), reducing the parking to widen the streets for pedestrian use. He asked if there was a consensus: discussion followed. Tom mentioned that when there is a private supply of parking, the City may act as a facilitator between them and the private owner, though discussion followed as to whether that job should be left up to the Parking Management District board (if there is one). Discussion followed regarding the concept of parking bonds to build structures, the history of them in downtown and the history of the districts, in-lieu fees and assorted related items). Tom noted that the original assessments went into purchasing and fixing up parking lots in the downtown. As the idea of parking, and the need for it in the 200-block came up, we discussed the need for DOT input into the questionnaire and research being done by Jessica Cusick for the City. Coordination between Tom's office and Jessica was suggested, and Tom and/or Christy will try to set up a meeting between them as well as have Jessica come to a DOT meeting in the very near future.

Dave A noted that Council is asking for an update on owner participation projects, between Palm and Chestnut, Main and Poli. There are 3 projects currently being discussed at length, specifically as to parking requirements and supply: (1) behind the library, between Main and Poli; (2) behind the movie theater, between Main and Poli and Chestnut and California; and (3) behind the Ventura Inn, between the Inn and Poli. Dave noted the plan is to maximize the parking in the area, perhaps doubling the parking behind the library. The RDA is asking to trade land for additional parking. The county-approved workforce housing (Steve Bennett) property is a possibility on the corner of upper California and Poli, next to the Poli Oak building.

A loading zone discussion followed, noting that there is a consensus within the group that the loading times need to be altered downtown, to alleviate danger and congestion. Suggestions were made to limit loading and unloading times to 10am weekdays. Discussion followed. Mike Merewether asked, with the approved projects along Thompson Blvd, will they affect new parking structure design, or vice versa? Jill spoke of the People's Self-Help Housing location at the El Patio, and suggested from experience, that whatever the city does (or DVO, for that matter) a budget for PR be included. There is an immense amount of education the public will need as we go forward with the parking plan, and the more everyone knows about the projects the more they will feel a part of the end-result. Discussion followed about the possibility of having downtown property owners take a trip to SB just how they have done it.

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## **4/12/07**

Meeting started at 9:00 with Jerry Breiner, Christy Weir, Jim Dearkland, Greg Smith, Dave Armstrong, Sid White and Dan Frederickson in attendance. Discussion for the entire meeting centered on Monday's city council meeting, remarks and questions made there and since, and DVOs place in that grand scheme of things.

Should DVO take a stand on the homeless issue, and if so, how? When we first began, our primary

"causes" that the public and visitors have always mentioned were security, safety, public restrooms and the homeless situation. Is it REALLY the "homeless" situation that we have a problem with, or is it something more? Chronic offenders, violators of the law, transients who routinely affect visitors and residents' safety or perception of safety seem much more of a problem to all of us in attendance today, but what term can we couch them all under? From a recent report, Christy noted that of the people interviewed in that report, 31% reported that, regardless of where they "live" or "get services", they sleep in Ventura.

Why?

That is the question DVO needs answered, and it will not come easily and it will not come from one source. We need better management of the disparate service providers downtown. The section 8 housing vouchers and users of same easily eclipse the homeless population in downtown, and the problem we seem to always go back to refers more to the "problem" population than the homeless population. Question: if the county subsidizes these housing units, is not the County liable for downtown's safety in regards? Is not, then, the county liable to provide County Sheriff's to add downtown to their patrol area? Good question, we thought.

The concept of how use permits are used, required, created was discussed. We discussed the concept of proportionality: the idea that all of the Ventura county cities should harbor their own, and proportionally-shared responsibility, homeless/transient/indigent/whatever-you-call-it housing and concerns. There is no doubt that our downtown has massively been over-burdened - and continues to be over-burdened - by the County, who apparently view downtown as the defacto dumping ground because they have no better place? We agreed that a concerted and concentrated effort take place, on the part of DOT (and by extension DVO) to get the data needed to take a public stand on the issue, however it's defined.

We decided that the first step would be to contact Peter Brown at the City who has been, for years, one of our best sources for information on the subjects we are discussing as well as very intelligent and intuitive person. Where are the SROs downtown? How can we find them and address them one by one, or as a group? Dan noted that perhaps our strategy should involve DVO's reasons for existing in the first place. We were formed, and have made progress, on significant issues that the community has raised. Specifically:

cleanliness - we have been in constant contact with City Services in regards the cleanliness of the streets, sidewalks and the parking structure at Santa Clara and California. We continue to coordinate with them on multiple levels

safety - we have been in constant contact with VPD, support any additional police funding, utilize the resources of the VIPs

retail & office - strategy just endorsed by Council this last Monday, focusing on bringing new life to downtown's retail and office culture

parking - we are actively engaged with the City parking management study, under Tom Mericle, and have been charged with commenting

homelessness (or, again, whatever the actual subject is) - we need to now define the magnitude of the problem once accurately described, be it those with mental health issues, drug a/o substance abuse problems, indigents, the "actual" homeless - and then form a public strategy to successfully take our responsibility on at a proportional basis with the other cities, and with other areas of Ventura, in Ventura County.

Discussion followed on the subject of ordinances. Would a new ordinance requiring a "use" permit for uses that create more problems be useful? Greg suggested the need to focus on the negative behavior: we all agreed that the particular reason for the public's perception of lack of safety is just that. He said the first step might be to consolidate our data in one place. Sid noted that the City has to complete their housing element study by years' end, and this might be the perfect time to bring this up.

Dan suggested the idea of hiring a consultant to pore over and put together this data we need. At the end of our suggested consulting period, we would need answers to our questions. We will need to know what affordable housing, what locations, including mobile home parks, are available. Jerry brought up the concept that "ghetto-izing" the homeless in one location is proven to have a negative effect on them. Jim mentioned a personal story of one of his low-income owners and how living in a community where everyone is NOT on the dole has had such a positive impact on her. We all thought his personal story should be one of many to share.

next meeting is THURSDAY MAY 3. This discussion will continue, along with an update on Parking from Tom Mericle. Looking forward to seeing everyone there.

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### **3/29/07**

The March 29, 2007 meeting of the DOT committee of the DVO began at 8:38 with Jerry Breiner, Tom Mericle, Mike Merewether, Christy Weir, Dave Armstrong, Michael Faulconer, Ed Warren, Barbara Evans, Quinn Fenwick and Jason Collis in attendance.

Tom took the helm and updated us on the latest parking strategy task force workings. The contract to hire consultant Michael, who we meet last month, is now in the City attorney's office, and all looks well - we look to have a signed contract with Michael very soon to begin implementation of the scope of work. The scope can be adjusted over time, and as the City or DVO feels there are issues not currently being addressed they can be added at any time. Tom feels Michael will be fully on board, working 2-3 days per week, within the month. In April, the parking survey will begin in earnest, regarding traffic, traffic patterns, pedestrian usage of sidewalks, structures and the rest. This committee will serve as a sounding board with the City in regards to the findings, and our recommendations are happily encouraged. In May, an expert on emerging downtowns and their parking concerns will be coming to Ventura, and the expert will attend one if not more of our meetings to discuss strategies, ideas and the like.

Discussion followed on the concept of the "flex" car-sharing program and how it might efficiently help the overall parking crunch downtown. Located at the western edge of town, both Patagonia and the WAV project could benefit from this idea. Currently the City owns 2-3 "flex" autos that are shared amongst City employees and departments. These cars would most probably be added to the downtown "fleet" if and once this concept gets launched. We are still a few years away.

The way the system usually works is that someone who might want to participate in the program signs up on-line. Typically, the membership fee runs around \$40, then the user signs up for a specific date a/o time period, goes to the car which has a transponder to take credit card info, and the user then can open the car. Average charge is around \$9/hour in other cities, and this includes gas, insurance, maintenance etc. The use of hybrids and bio-fuel cars was discussed following.

In re: parking downtown, Tom asked Jason about his opinion, being an impacted tenant, whether a change in the allotted parking time in the lot behind Jonathan's/J's would effect him, how it might, and to what time period might he believe would work. Currently, it is listed as a private lot, but it is not and there are cars parked there all day. It is also a haven for drug deals downtown - with a 2 4 or 6-hour parking limit there would be more traffic in and out and the police would have more of a reason to regularly visit the site.

Nelson Hernandez and Rick Cole are continuing talks with Trader Joe's to consider another location in the downtown, due to the news they pulled out of negotiations with Jim Dearkland due to a number of factors, one of them obviously being parking and the lack thereof. Michael Faulconer said he had attended a parking and traffic conference and showed us a diagram showing the percentage of cars cruising for parking as opposed to actual parked or parking and how the correct pricing creates the availability factor of 85%. He noted that correct pricing, and this is always a changeable option, can make or break the availability of parking in any downtown. The right price is the lowest price to charge, basically. In

addition, he and Tom noted that Mike Dougherty, the attorney hired to assist Bob Boehm in the parking district fracas, has finished or is about to finish his job.

Mike Merewether asked if anyone had an opinion or comment on the Pa Ventura column in last week's Star, noting that "downtown has a problem with building new structures when the one at the beach is not even used most of the time." We discussed the obvious fact that patrons won't walk two blocks, much less 5, to park. Still, it is something to be aware of in conversation and discussion. Quinn noted that the California-at-Thompson study regarding the proposed use of "red light cameras" is on-going. He asked if we had any opinions on the subject, some did. We thought it might be good that they don't look as institutional perhaps as other parts of the City, and painted the color of the posts wouldn't stand out so badly. The bottom line, we all agreed, is that visitors coming off the Freeway don't really need to have the first thing they see downtown, after Jeff Becker's great sign, is a camera poised to get a picture of them going thru a red light.

As a final side note, The Smith Family have pulled the lease on the parking spaces at the proposed new Top Hat location.

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**3/15/07**

DOT committee meeting started at 8:45 with Jerry Breiner, Dan Frederickson, Barbara Evans, Christy Weir, Tom Mericle, Sid White, Dave Armstrong, Mike Merewether, Michael Faulconer, Greg Smith, Jeffrey Smith and Quinn Fenwick in attendance. Agenda for the meeting was to: (1) create the bullet points for upcoming Council meeting 3/19, at which the DTSP is to be adopted and (2) discuss various and sundry parking notes with Tom Mericle.

After discussion, the following bullet points were decided upon (individual members could talk about any subject, but the following we agreed needed to be emphasized without fail). These are in no order, and since we don't know who will be called up and in what order, the following should be read by whomever is called up first - PLEASE PRINT THIS OUT:

-----  
 The DVO wishes to thank planning staff and especially Nicole Horn, the economic development staff especially Sid White and Nelson Hernandez, as well as Tom Mericle, Vicki Musgrove and various and sundry other staff members for their support, encouragement and dedication in listening to our concerns and suggestions - and incorporating so many of them into the plan Council has before it tonite. DVO believes this is a viable and workable plan, and we urge everyone involved in the process, staff and public alike, to continue building on the communication level we have enjoyed during the editing of this document, a process so very necessary in any thriving downtown - and to continue to work to bring downtown Ventura to where it rightly belongs, alongside other great California beach towns.  
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**1. MIKE MEREWETHER TO ADDRESS:**

- Requirements for parking on ALL streets in the downtown specific plan area, including Main Street, shall be to provide parking on site, off site within the DTSP guidelines (1250 feet?), shared with private/public enterprise or paid in-lieu fees. AND
- Main Street exemption is to be removed and a note to Council, Sid White, Nelson Hernandez and Rick Coles's office with following to be sent via email:

REMOVE section III, page 25, item 2C in it's entirety.

**2. MIKE MEREWETHER TO CONTINUE:** Develop a strategy for future development where parking cannot be provided on-site. This includes the concept that any new application for development include with it as a condition of approval and approved and viable parking plan. (This should include the following sent via email to the above group:

INSERT at end of section V, 6, paragraph 4 at bottom: "...at a threshold to be determined at time of

adoption."

3. DAN FREDERICKSON TO ADDRESS:

- Parking should drive our strategy, not follow it. AND
- The impact on retail, office and commercial users downtown as to the loss or potential loss of parking in terms of economic viability.

4. MICHAEL FAULCONER TO ADDRESS:

- The promise of the parking management program AND
- Parking should be provided before the need arises (with examples from Santa Monica, Santa Barbara, Culver City, Pasadena, and the Granada Parking Garage/Paseo Nuevo Malls in Santa Barbara. AND
- There should be flexibility in the Land Use Matrix due to conflicting causes between it and the remainder of the document

5. JEFF SMITH TO ADDRESS: Public/private partnerships

6. JERRY BREINER TO ADDRESS:

- DVO Support of a paid parking strategy, that downtown parking must be managed as a business, managed by an empowered public-private partnership, 100% of whose revenue gets put back in to the district it serves for management and maintenance of same and
- DVO supports the immediate, active pursuit of additional multi-level, multi-use parking structures and
- 
- the need for consistency and clarity.

Tom Mericle then addressed the current status of the parking study and questions from the floor. There will be an agenda item brought forth Monday night 3/19 to fund a proposal to hire Michael Kodami (we met last meeting), to study the parking management plan and analysis over an 18-month period. He will be hired as an extension of staff to coordinate the creation of the ordinances necessary to put the parking garage(s) on the fast track. With \$200K in design monies available from RDA, the focus will be on the downtown with the few obvious choices, namely the Smith Family properties in the 400- and 300- block as primary ones. The City would act as a co-developer going forward, working with the individual property owners to exact a solution. Mike Merewether asked if DVO is setup to get revenues from the parking, if the Oak Street Offramp and Oak Street Improvements would be fast tracked along with this, and if the "cash-out" program will affect ALL employers (State Law reads "50+" employees). Discussion followed. Tom responded that the offramp funds of \$15M are there and the preliminary and environmental reports are approx 75% complete to go forward. However, it will take a return to the State and a period of an additional 9-24 months for additional funding needed to start and complete the project. Dan asked if a non-taxable bond could be setup as a valuable fund-raising option to keep it on the front burner. The question was posed: Can we do the Oak Street improvements now and not wait for the offramp to be completed? Yes, Oak Street could conceivably be done in late 2008 and the funding is there for design, but there is no reason to go forward until the State signs-off from Caltrans on the offramp project. Our consultant will NEED to address the area's needs with the property owners BEFORE the plan or strategy is worked on in its entirety.

Mike M noted that Patagonia, in the current draft, shows as a non-conforming use and discussion followed as to if and how to address that. Michael Faulconer will address in his part (see above).

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**3/1/07**

Present were Ron Calkins, Jim Dearkland, Barbara Evans, Jerry Breiner, Clarey Rudd, Dave Armstrong, Ed Warren, Sandy Smith, Tom Mericle, Dan Frederickson, Michael Faulconer, Greg Smith and Michael Kodami.

The finalization of the scope of work for Michael Kodami (with us today) is due shortly, and he will be working on an update of the supply/demand study as determined in the DTSP. There is a lot of interest

from the City and the DVO in the solutions and data to be found in the study, and both Michael and Tom will be updating us on a regular basis. Michael has worked with the downtown Burbank stakeholders when they went through this same type procedure years ago. Some of the data we will see may have suggestions as to meters (if, where, type, when, how much), new parking ordinances (why, where, implementation), parking districts (do they exist? if they don't, how should they be set up?), ratio of spaces to total square footage needs, ratio of spaces/business or spaces/address. We will have a current list of the available public and private spaces, giving us a starting vacancy factor. Currently parking req'ts are set at 2 spaces/1000 sq.ft. of commercial space and 1 space/1500 sq.ft. residential space. Should part of the new plan include a 10-20 year projection of needs? All in attendance agreed with this assumption and suggestion.

In the existing study, the demand was documented. In addition, the sewers need to be (are to be) replaced at some point starting next year. Ed suggested that, at that same time, we consider the elimination of parking on Main Street between Palm and Chestnut (perhaps). The question was raised: Do the projections for parking at this point include the possible (probable?) new Oak Street offramp? It should, by consensus. The analysis will look at the need for public and private needs and participation. To do it right, Tom said a partnership is really required with the proposals going forward and coming to the table in the next few months. Ron stated that he and his department are anxious to get a parking strategy asap, as there is a need for a common strategy and plan for each block, determined by block. He would like to see an analysis per block, as soon and as up to date as possible.

We have not had a parking strategy in 30 years, and this speaks volumes to the troubles we are having at present. From a redevelopment standpoint, there is a need to prioritize the demand for a structure to be built, and to allocate city assets perhaps in conjunction with private assets to accomplish the same. The question was asked: "What does success look like in a downtown like ours and how do we accomplish that?" Discussion followed, and Ron noted that upon implementation, enforcement of the new and existing regs will be there. He said he would like to look in to capturing revenues and putting them back in to the program as efficiently as possible, from parking fees, meter fees, enforcement fees and assessments. The lack of personnel tends to slow this process, but with new fresh revenues to fulfill those needs we should be able to build up the parking district AND self-maintain it.

What is the block-by-block strategy's ETA? Tentative strategies could come as early as late summer, early fall Tom told us. The work will be on a fast track, with Michael up here at least twice a week for 18 months. We need to be able to give consistent information to those seeking input, and there will be a great need for a group meeting of all the key property owners downtown to discuss the plan. Hopefully, between now and then, these property owners will take place in some of the DOT meetings, and at the least let us know via email their feelings, concerns and opinions.

We finished up discussing a variety of topics in short, including the question of how much revenue are we losing from not having enough enforcement downtown, how many tickets are generated daily/weekly /monthly downtown. Ed asked the obvious question: how much support do we have from Council on the subject of paid parking? on the subject of meters?

To be found out..

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**2/15/07**

Meeting started at 8:35 with Dave Armstrong, Christy Weir, Sid White, Betsy Chess, Terry Ragan, Nick Deitch, Jerry Breiner, Barbara Evans, Clarey Rudd, Jeff Smith, Jim Dearkland, Jim Friedman, Dan Frederickson, Mike Merewether, Steve Eustis, Hugh Oliver, Jim Luttjohann, Ed Warren, Michael Faulconer and Jason Collis in attendance.

To keep the meeting as short as possible, Sid mentioned prior to leaving early that at the recent executive leadership gathering at the City, the scope of work necessary to provide everyone (public, city alike) with the appropriate and complete and total information regarding downtown's parking situation is

now underway. Tom Mericle has been charged with completing this task, and DVO is welcomed as an advisory to the commission he has to put together. Without delay, this research is being undertaken, and DVO needs to weigh in on anything we feel is necessary to get the completion of this study done. There will be a rough draft once in a tangible form, and our input will be heavily counted upon by staff and the like. Many thanks to Sid, Tom, and Dave for keeping this ball rolling.

Following was the presentation of the SBFA concept for the Cultural Arts Village, PowerPoint by Nick Deitch with assistance from Jim Friedman, Betsy Chess and Terry Ragan of the SBFA. Nick noted that Figueroa Plaza, in its current configuration, was a community investment project in the 1970s, and though there is no commerce on the plaza (other than drug deals) it would be a terrific use of that public space if retail, office or arts-centered usage of the areas fronting on the plaza could be utilized. The passage from Palm through to the museum was a plan since 1994, though no discussion was (nor has) taken place with the property owners along the route, perhaps only in small bits and pieces here and there. Originally the site was earmarked for the movie theater but through various and sundry reasons the theater ended up in its current location on Main. The original plan for the village included a 600- and a 200-seat theater, but there is a suggestion from the theatre community presently that there is a need to reevaluate the need for two - and perhaps one 400-500-seat theater would suffice. There are current program service access issues that are being addressed with the Knights of Columbus hall and others in the 200-block south side.

Questions came in regards the loss of parking from a few members of the committee. There was and is nothing in the MOU the SBFA has with the City that indicates, suggests, encourages or demands that the SBFA provide any parking. On the contrary, it is their belief that it is the City that needs to provide this parking. The concept of moving the Farmer's Market to Figueroa Plaza was suggested by Nick, a much better use of public space. How many spaces/stories could a structure realize? Jerry suggested that a 5-story structure with a mix of uses could be built there, possibly even more if using underground areas. Currently, the City and the private owner (Smith/Hobson) have a 99 spaces and there are 132 on the current location of the proposed center. Nick and others in the room agreed that parking is a "downtown" issue, not just an SBFA one.

Dan suggested the possibility that the entire project, including a new structure, be put together with bond money. He also suggested possibly putting out the build design to RFP, sent out to architects who build such projects and Betsy said that is the plan at current. The original plan was to put the center in Mission park, but the City is not in favor of changing that park to that degree. The plaza is under-utilized however, and perhaps energizing might help to eliminate the homeless situation there. Currently the park works as a sump, but with some judicious use of space and materials an outdoor amphitheatre could be put up. Discussion followed.

Terry next spoke of the phasing of the project, the offices and work spaces slated to be first in line for completion. We discussed a multi-level parking structure possibly to anchor the west end of downtown, potentially to be located in the museum parking lot west. Nick noted that subterranean parking might be possible at a number of locations downtown with 2 levels below and possibly 4 or 5 above. He noted that Greenwood & Associates have given the SBFA a quote of \$300K to do an archaeological "cleaning" of the site if needed, removing and cataloguing any and all subsurface items found (short of bodies). Process would take 2-3 months, based on low findings. On March 5 of this year the City will be doing a radar reading of the entire parking lot for such a purpose, and the results will be available to the public, DVO included.

Dan or Barbara asked if there was any reason why the design did not incorporate the possibility of 3 story buildings - consensus seemed to indicate that it was a good idea to keep on the table. Smaller footprint, greater possibility of higher rent amounts in total. Dan suggested that if indeed there is a market for other tenants, without the loss of significant interaction space, that a proforma of potential rents based on three story buildings get created to woo potentials to the site. This would a loan to be created to build the structures sooner than later. He also suggested to Betsy to not give up on the idea of using the Mission Park. In his view, Dan would require the retail establishments within the Village to be open certain hours, much like a mall, to guarantee foot traffic (to a degree).

Terry mentioned that the original MOU had the real estate transferred in the name of the foundation by the City, gratis. The question came up: is the Cultural Arts Village going to pay in-lieu fees for the parking displaced, with the assumption the City will build a parking structure on an adjacent private property? Sid explained that the City will replace any lost parking at a minimum of 1:1 ratio. Based on current asking and selling prices in the immediate area, Jeff figures that the City would have to come up with something like \$18M to replace the parking lost. The Village currently has \$3-4M in pledges with plans to get more. Nick noted that Parking is a public utility in any city, and the discussion followed on Santa Barbara's splendid model. The City of SB has provided the much-needed parking, behind their main street, to facilitate economic growth.

Jerry asked Sid what in his eyes DVO could do next to help the process along. He said as soon as the housing starts to show up, Sid would like all of us to participate in the study and the work needed to get the study and the interaction accomplished. This coming Wednesday night, at Council, the SBFA will give their update. Mike M asked if there was to be a request for an extension. Terry replied in the negative. All agreed that a Plaza-Museum connection would be a great tactical maneuver for many reasons, not the least of which are security, the perception of security, a possible mitigation to the homeless situation at that end of town, lighting and other subjects. Jim Friedman said the whole idea is to create the greatest lines of communication between all of the affected parties, and if there is a misdirection of communication it gets noted, fixed and moved out of the way. The village fits in with the City's and Council's plans for downtown and the City. Terry noted at the end that the majority of the parking in the lot would be remain for quite a long time, as the performing arts center would be the last thing built. Our parking study's results are necessary to finish up the model, and the fact that the City will replace any existing parking lost is key to their ability to make it happen.

Meeting adjourned approx 10am.

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## **2/1/07**

Jerry called the meeting to order at 8:45 with Ed Warren, Greg Smith, Quinn Fenwick, Clarey Rudd, Dan Frederickson, Jim Dearkland, Mike Merewether, Barbara Evans, Zoe Taylor, Sid White, Dave Armstrong, Tom Mericle, Christy Weir and Jerry in attendance.

We were finally able to sit down the Tom Mericle, City of Ventura Parking, to discuss some of our ideas, concepts and suggestions. He started out the conversation with notes on a parking consultant the City is speaking with who has worked in Burbank, in the City's initial implementation phases of downtown's parking management issues. There will be analyses to update the numbers we are currently working with, outdated now by at least 3+ years. Discussion followed in regards: if we go to a joint-shared unbundled parking mechanism, how will it work and how will it be managed? If it is unbundled, there may be a surplus in residential areas, and they will need to be managed by a central entity, either self-managed or public-privately managed. City parking staff may be able to handle it in the near-term, but there is a desire to work with private property owners. Dan asked what is the probable TOTAL of all spaces in the downtown we are talking about. Tom replied that there is no current inventory of the private spaces, so the answer would have to be a guess. To that end, part of the existing study would have to be appended with this info, and Greg's family's lot @ Santa Clara/Palm has not been designated as part of the pool, at least from what Greg knows. There is a huge potential turnover of property with the rate it is changing hands between owners and developers, and it is vital that we nail down at least an approximate number to work with.

Mike noted that both Council and Planning gave the thumbs up at the December meeting to our suggestions, and he wondered what is holding up progress on it? How can we get it on the fast track - what do we need to do? Jim stated his notes on the proposed Parking and Mobility Actions, saying he liked the plan overall (There was consensus from the group on this at this point), but the timing seems to be delayed too much. The group agreed that our time line, the one proposed to Council, was not reflected in this study, and it is important to make a note of that to Planning and Council by the 20th. Tom noted that, precedent to any changes is the completion of the study. However, because the Coastal Commission

can take a year or more to give the okay to the DTSP, the plan at City Hall is to complete the study before the Code gets implemented. When the DTSP gets adopted the Code will change in the Downtown Core. As a result of the inventory, Tom noted that if it shows we are running out of supply (which all agreed already exists) it will imply we need to create more.

Should development be put on hold on City-owned lots until a determination is made for the make-up of this lost parking? Jim asked Sid and Dave for comments: Dave noted there are some City lots that MAY be held back, based on what is planned per lot. One of the things in the study will be evaluating leased land and to figure out a way to take them out of the equation. For example, the Senior Center and its parking are high on the grid, and it is the only large lot the City owns big enough to build a structure on. The Chestnut/Poli project is moving forward with 1:1 parking as part of its current plan. Tom said as soon as the City starts charging for parking the marketing of parking will pick up.

As a side note, Mike Merewether noted that attorney Mike Dougherty has volunteered to work with the City Attorney's office to research the true history and current status of the parking districts and their ownership. His preliminary answers should be had within the month. Tom mentioned that, at this point, it seems that the Parking Advisory Board and the Parking Authority are two separate and distinct groups, the latter being City Council.

Discussion then began on the "cash-out" concept, whereby State law says that employers with 50+ employees have to pay the employee for a parking space if they do not use it. In our downtown, the only private employer that meets that criteria currently is Tolman + Wiker. Tom noted that the fee has to be an identifiable, out-of-pocket cost to the employer, and Dan noted that we should really encourage this funding mechanism as we go forward. As an example, the Downtown Parking District has a need for x number of spaces. A bond could be issued, the spaces could be leased and a structure could be built using that revenue stream. Other possible streams we have discussed include meters, either on or off Main and in the structure(s), pay parking, possible RDA funds, County/Federal funds, business tax licenses, PBID assessments. Sid noted that the RDA paid for the last structure, and it is possible that in the next 2-3 years a new bond could be raised.

Dave noted that there needs to be an incentive to use the structure, as on Main there is no need. People park for free with no reason to move their cars, and from multiple studies done in cities who are undergoing change similar to ours, the answer is not more free parking. It is the opposite. The following is an article forwarded by Mike to illustrate some of the challenges faced by cities such as Ventura:

#### The Parking Fix

Free-market economists are overhauling a frustration of American life -- and erasing what may be one of the last great urban bargains.

Redwood City, in the heart of California's Silicon Valley, faced a vexing problem last year. During the busy lunch hour, downtown was gridlocked, with cars orbiting the block in search of one of the few prime parking spots, while just a half block away, a four-level garage was never full. So the city is trying something new: installing meters that charge more for the best spots.

As anyone who has ever circled the block for a marginally better spot knows, parking is an American obsession. It occasionally boils over into rage, or worse. Since the parking meter was first introduced 70 years ago, in Oklahoma City, the field has been dominated by two simple maxims: Cities can never have too much parking, and it can never be cheap enough.

Now a small but vocal band of economists, city planners and entrepreneurs is shaking that up, promoting ideas like free-market pricing at meters and letting developers, rather than the cities, dictate the supply of off-street parking.

Seattle is doing away with free street parking in a neighborhood just north of downtown. London has meters that go as high as \$10 an hour, while San Francisco has been trying out a system that monitors usage in real time, allowing the city to price spots to match demand. (A recent tally there showed that one meter near AT&T Park brings in around \$4,500 a year, while another meter about a mile away takes

in less than \$10.) Gainesville, Fla., has capped the number of parking spots that can be added to new buildings; Cambridge, Mass., works with companies to reduce off-street parking.

Economists have long made the case that the solution to the parking crunch many cities face lies not in more free or cheap parking but in higher prices. The idea is that higher prices result in a greater churn -- and get more people on buses and subways -- which leads to more open spaces. But this notion has often run up against city planners and retailers arguing that cheap and plentiful parking results in more commerce and, thus, higher sales taxes and a vibrant economy.

Now, in places like Redwood City, some officials are finally listening. One reason is that after decades of losing people to the suburbs, many city centers are swelling again. Many of these new residents are bringing cars with them, creating the kind of traffic that makes them yearn for the suburbs again.

One of the most influential of the parking gurus is Donald Shoup, a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles who commutes on a bicycle. Since the publication in 2005 of Mr. Shoup's "The High Cost of Free Parking," he has become something of a celebrity at academic gatherings and parking-industry meetings. Lines form at his book signings. "He's a parking rock star," says Paul White, of Transportation Alternatives, a New York group that advocates for pedestrians and bicycles.

Mr. Shoup charges as much as \$5,000 for speaking engagements, accuses cities of "mismanagement of the worst sort" and labels some transportation engineers "charlatans" for their misguided parking policies. He has no shortage of invitations. "A lot of people thought I was nuts until the book came out," says the 68-year-old professor, who has a fondness for tweed coats and has owned a total of three cars over his lifetime.

Space Technology: New meters in Redwood City, Calif.

Mr. Shoup has popularized what might be called the "85% rule": Cities, he says, should charge whatever rates lead to about 85% of the spots being filled up at any given time, moving rates up or down as demand fluctuates. The 85% target now serves as a policy guideline for cities including Portland, Ore., and Anchorage, Alaska.

In Portland, bus ridership to its Lloyd District, a shopping area and home to the NBA's Portland Trail Blazers, has increased to 33% of traffic, from 10% a decade ago. One reason: Parking prices have been raised to about 75 cents an hour from free, nudging store and office employees onto the bus.

Dan Zack, downtown development coordinator for Redwood City, has bought in. A few years ago, his boss presented him with a problem. "He said, 'We're adding a million visitors every year, but only 600 new parking spots -- make it work,'" Mr. Zack recalls. After visiting neighboring cities and reading books like "The Dimensions of Parking," Mr. Zack was handed an article by Mr. Shoup.

The city recently raised rates to 75 cents for some prime downtown spots that had been free, and ditched its one-hour time limits, so cars can prepay for as long as they'd like. The move has helped steer more cars to underutilized parking garages away from the main drag.

In the past, Cheryl Angeles has had to jump up in the middle of a coloring treatment, foil in her hair and a black-plastic cape around her neck, to pop more quarters into the meter. Twice the self-storage company regional manager got \$25 parking tickets when she didn't make it in time. Now that the time limits have been removed, she can pay once and return when the appointment is over.

The new market-based approach to parking isn't being rolled out everywhere. Many towns and cities still have lower-density development, and parking in those places is likely to remain free until there's a shortage. Also, the most dramatic parking changes are largely confined to commercial areas -- in residential neighborhoods, parking continues to be mostly free and unrestricted.

But the idea has plenty of detractors, starting with those who say the price increases fall

disproportionately on people for whom they are a hardship. Also, many market-based plans eliminate minimum parking requirements for developers, which critics say gives developers a profit boost and creates a parking crunch down the line. And, some merchants remain convinced that free or subsidized parking is a necessary ingredient to a thriving shopping district. And, of course, people at any income level rarely welcome paying for something they're used to getting for nothing.

"It's just frustrating that they keep taking free parking away," says Terry Peterson, a grants and contracts administrator at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle. Ms. Peterson has a 15-minute commute to her office, where she parks in one of the area's free spots.

In spring, the city plans to put in new meters that will cost around \$7 a day on average, the result of a recent study that found that most on-street parking in the neighborhood has an occupancy rate of at least 90%. She says she'll probably end up parking at a private lot, which runs about \$1,800 a year.

San Francisco, perhaps more than any other city, shows how radically some cities are rethinking their parking. The city is one of the toughest places to find a meter spot in all of America, and there have been a spate of attacks by angry drivers, against parking enforcement officers. One block near the popular Fisherman's Wharf has average stays of four hours -- even though there's a two-hour time limit -- and some spots are filled for days at a time.

Recently, the city hired a company to lay hundreds of 4-inch-by-4-inch sensors along the streets in some areas. The sensors, which resemble reflectors, have recorded some 250,000 "parking events" across 200 parking spots. City planners can now tell you which spots are occupied the longest and how traffic flow affects parking supplies.

If the sensors get a wider rollout, the city has floated a number of ideas. When there's a Giants baseball game at AT&T Park, the city could temporarily charge about the same as private lots near the stadium. The ground sensors are also connected to the Internet wirelessly, which creates the possibility that parking enforcement officers equipped with PDAs could get real-time information on parking violations beamed to them. It also means consumers could get information on which parking spots are open.

About a month ago, the city also installed new kiosks that take credit cards as well as quarters, and boosted prices from a flat rate of \$2 per hour to a four-hour rolling rate that starts at \$3 and rises to \$5, for a total of \$15 for four hours. That's more than the day rate at many privately owned parking garages in the area. "We're pricing to match demand," says Tod Dykstra, chief executive of Streetline Networks, which installed the sensors.

For Leslie Howard, a yoga teacher who regularly parks in the area, her tab has grown to about \$8 a day from \$5. Yet parking spots remain elusive. "People are just eating it," says Ms. Howard.

The idea is to use our downtown land at its highest and best use. Our stores need to thrive, our downtown needs to be alive, and the bottom line is that we need the merchants, residents and the property owners responsible for their own parking requirements. Commercial users will always pay because they need to KNOW that they have available spaces. To that end, we agreed that:

ACTION S1.2 should read: Code needs to change to reflect the recommendation of exempting Main Street from Urban Standards, page III-25, C, 2, c, 1.

In regards the in-lieu fees, currently residential needs off Main Street are met. In concept, the in-lieu fee would go to the Parking District Fund for off-site parking within the core. The fees would be paid in to the fund but with no guaranty of an actual physical space. However, unbundling the requirement guarantees a space. Currently the in-lieu fee's working scenario has to prove that on-site parking doesn't work. The missing link in all of this is the developer: How do you incentivize the fee directly in to the project? You can't guarantee the location. For example, with costs covered for a structure within the next 5 years, will the RDA or the City be able to give the Parking District a low-cost loan to subsidize a structure? Dan believes the only thing that will prevent the concept from moving forward will be the funding mechanism. He suggested a plan to support funding research with a request to Tom Mericle to report back within a month with the data he spoke of earlier in the meeting. Christy suggested we have specific language

when going to Planning a/o Council so the task is easiest to understand.

Mike asked what is the long-term need for the USPS site, with mail use being cut away by email and other electronic connection systems? Will they need all that space 5 years from now? And on one level? They have a huge lot with a one-story, open parking lot which could be much better utilized if their location moves.

Dave suggested the addition of altering ACTION 3.1 in regards the timing issue.

We ended discussion this morning on the fact that none of the past parking studies have come up with a plan to address and accommodate downtown parking's future needs. Dan suggested to the property owners in attendance if they are up to the task of putting in funds for a structure in the 400-south block of Main? If so, the discussion as a business matter should be held with parking being the requirement. Could be paid by a PBID or some type of contractual process, but there are a number of ways to get buy-in from the adjacent property owners. Ed suggested we put our collective heads together to get something done sooner than later.

Most agreed that "later" has already arrived.

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### **1/25/07**

Meeting started at 9AM with Barbara Evans, Ed Warren, Christy Weir, Michael Faulconer, Jeff and Greg Smith, Jim Dearkland, Jerry Breiner, Mike Appel, Mike Merewether, Tom Wood and Ron present.

Christy noted that February 20 will be the Planning Commission workshop for comments, and we need to get our comments to them before then. Jerry will email the completed notes to both groups as well as the Parking committee approximately 4 days prior, and Greg, Jim and Mike M will be speaking directly with Council and Planning in the days just before to refresh and hammer home our points.

We spoke of the concept of unbundling parking, where instead of each new development being forced to build on-site parking that the parking and the housing are separated. This can help create a surplus of parking downtown, and it can give the buyer/renter the option to have or not have a parking space. Greg recommended that we remove the minimum parking requirements, and Christy noted that it speaks to that end in the latest DTSP draft though not for years to come. Christy asked if the unbundling might create a management nightmare, and who would decide questions on management of same? Operating costs for private parking could be run by the HOA handling that particular residential development, but what about the rest? Residential and mixed use could have a "shared" parking situation.

Tom stated that there is an overlap of available spaces and their ensuing maintenance issues/liabilities that could be taken care of by the parking management association, board or commission. The City would need to provide, or rather allow, a higher level of maintenance and security for the shared spaces, especially at night, and DVO's budget actually speaks to that issue in year 3.

A short discussion on the bus stop outside the VCB offices showed a unanimous consent that it should be moved if at all possible, due to many issues including length of the bus, the busy-ness of the corner and the damage already done so far. Bill Fulton is the City liaison to SCAT, and the group agreed DVO should make a recommendation in regards. Jerry will pass on the info at the next board meeting.

Dave Wilson, VPD, will also be at the next board meeting to discuss the current situation in regards to the VIPs. Currently there are 35 VIPs in circulation, and discussion was had on being able to use them to do more than they are currently. The suggestion to assigning VIPs to the structure and perhaps have a central point of contact was discussed. A parking management district, such as currently exists but unenforced, could manage such a "work force." Tom noted that we can't legally use parking district property for the City's use if there was a disbanding of the districts - if there was a "disbanding" it would have needed to be done the same way it was formed, due to State law mandating such a thing. Discussion

followed on the subject and the concept of putting together a meeting with Rick Cole, Bob Boehm, Tom Mericle and at least 3 of our committee members including Tom.

A suggestion to copy all the Planning Commissioners on our appeal/a/o/request letter was vetted. John Hecht is the new commissioner and emails were sent to Jerry in regards. Mike suggested that all the commissioners and Council members get the email this time. 2 or 3 of the committee needs to speak at Council, other than Jerry, to follow up the email we will be sending the week prior. Jim Dearkland suggested that we incorporate our changes to the DTSP and parking study in the email. All agreed. Tom noted that nowhere have we read or at no time have we heard the reasons behind altering the existing parking districts. The assessments were taken by the districts in to the lat 1960s. He would like to hear the City's take on why the City feels they can do a better job than the individual landowners and/or parking district already in existence. The Santa Barbara districts were set up with bond and tax increments to the property owners and they seem to function very efficiently. The parking districts are very similar in design to the Port District in the way they were setup. Tom believes, and a number of us concur, that we are owed an explanation at the least of where the funds and allocations are and what's been done with them since the early 90s. Discussion followed and all agreed that DVO should request a face-to-face meeting with Rick Cole, Bob Boehm, Tom Mericle and any City staff member who may be able to help us sort through the muck of the situation and resolve the situation with direct answers. Jerry will bring it up at the next board meeting.

Michael Faulconer suggested that all relevant points and changes to the draft be bullet-pointed for ease of use by the commissioners and Council. Also, not everything in the Mobility plan is being adopted, so we need to check carefully when going through.

Next meeting is THURSDAY FEBRUARY 1 at 8:30 with Jim Friedman discussing our answers to the SBFA presentation.

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**1/18/07**

Jerry called the meeting to order 9:05. Present were Barbara Evans, Dan Frederickson, Zoë Taylor, Don Davis (engineer/City of Ventura), Ed Warren, Mike Merewether, Jeff and Greg Smith, Sid White, Christy Weir, Dave Armstrong, Doug Halter and Jerry Breiner.

Dave Armstrong stated that before the latest DTSP draft was issued, he had requested to clean up the parking strategy part of the plan, focusing on the supply side while Tom Mericle focused on the demand side. It looks like it's being worked on at present diligently, said Sid, though the current format needs comment asap from groups such as ourselves. There won't be any determination as to how many structures or where they may go in the plan. That would be up to a Parking Advisory Board, and that would need yet another study. Sid has not seen the current version but he told the group that the 80% parking threshold has already been met, in regards to the benchmarks noted in the draft. Dan said it's imperative that we make the assumption that the future demand will increase, based on historical fact. Dave said that the City is under current commitments for development which will reduce our parking supply downtown by 25% - it will simply go away, and there is no mechanism to replace it.

Christy said Tom Mericle has the City's lead on the subject but DVO would be the tool to make the case to the City in regards to alterations in the plan that don't make any sense, at least to our group. A feasibility study must take place upon the approval of the DTSP, and the money to begin that process is already in place. The city recognizes the urgency and is seeking to begin the study no later than Jan 2008. At the last Council/planning joint meeting in December, all agreed that parking solution must be worked on, and staff got their "marching orders" at that time to spend the time to get it right in the DTSP. Dan noted that new businesses are less apt to come here without parking solutions in place.

There are two potential parallel tracks that, if implemented concurrently, could save time in the long run in getting a parking strategy moving and working. The first would be to launch a present-and-future needs assessment study, the second would be to launch a supply assessment study. Don noted that there

is a project going in for studying feasibility of a parking structure at the Santa Clara/Palm location. Part of the results would be focused on an "if/when" scenario. Dave said we don't have to wait until one study is complete before we start another - there is no need to look at the problem in a linear fashion. Dan wanted to know (1) how many spaces are available, (2) What is their usage rate, (3) shouldn't we agree on the assumption that nobody knows what we need or how to get there, only what we HAVE needed and what we did in response. Mike said our total in the parking structure is something like 598 spaces total. There are a lot of different scenarios out there about what/when/where for the structures, but there are opportunities and models to emulate that prove that paid parking works - in one major way, a serious boost to invigorate the downtown. Our first focus should be to refresh the 2003 data, and Christy said DVO needs to frame what we want in a simple and palatable way and let Council know what we feel we need.

Doug stated that parking needs in the 93 plan were based on a big footprint that went far beyond the boundaries of the current DTSP boundaries. If the building stock was full and fully rented, what would the total need be? Would the future needs be any different? Common wisdom says yes. Sid said that Tom Mericle s working towards the problem's solution on a number of fronts, and Don noted that it is probably not best to dwell on the past but focus on a solution for the future. Barbara asked if we have another study that only focuses on the present are we going to learn anything new? Will we know by the new study the anticipated build-out of the downtown? Dan asked Don when we could expect output from the analysis of the current study Tom is doing. The end of 2007 was the answer given, all in agreement that is not soon enough. The get the raw data, demands and assumptions could take just a few months - the results will take longer. Mike believes the City is planning on creating a shared parking situation downtown, based on info he has received, and wanted to ask - hypothetically - how many projects will it take to solve the whole issue? Doug thought we overcomplicate things sometimes, where Santa Barbara's elegant solution looks and works great.

Jeff noted that a quicker look at the difference between 2003 and now, using that as a basis or benchmark for the future, will give us a lot of data quickly and easily. Mike asked what is the key element the coastal commission will need to approve/disapprove the DSL's parking plans? Don said they could replace what is lost in kind and could still operate within the existing plan - not a great thought to many at the table. Zoë stated that losing 25% of downtown's parking due to Council's currently-approved plans gives us a lot of leeway to engage discussion with the powers that be. The idea of putting triggers in to the mix is a much more intelligent way to go about creating and attaining the desired changes we are looking for. The language needs to be changed so the parallel track and the conversation is the same: this is the scenario of 10 years ago. Doug noted that Mark Hartley proposed a multi-story lot at Poli/Oak and is currently working on 3 projects in parallel with replacement parking. Dan suggested that we could help the City get on the fast track if we brought a fully-formed plan to Council a/o planning. Barbara asked if a new study would include both public and private parking. Sid and Don mentioned it would be comprehensive, would have to be.

Greg suggested our research give us the following: (1) what do we need in terms of future square footage, demand and supply? (2) How will we accomplish the goal of getting there? (3) Where will the money come from? Doug suggested that angled parking is a band-aid to the entire problem but it DID help in the core in the early 90s when implemented. He said we already know the commercial square footage, and we already know the number and type of businesses in those spaces. 90% of the info we can get readily, and he doesn't understand why the results can't be put together in much less time than a year (as per Don earlier in the meeting). Dan suggested the study be done in pieces, with the basic data (the population of parking spaces and assumptions) being able to be ascertained my late spring. Don suggested that late summer the City may have the raw data. Doug noted that we have known for years that some buildings have not been utilized anywhere near their potential, and counting cars doesn't make for a very accurate survey. The assumption from the early 90s was that parking would be created - not so. Greg said counting cars cannot be used for determining the FUTURE requirements, and Sid noted that as a result of the above discussion he has asked for someone to interface with DVO. We agreed to invite Tom again, to hear about the active management side of the situation. We will also look to have Jim Friedman at the next meeting to comment on the Foundation for the Arts

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**1/11/07**

Meeting started approx 9:00am at the new downtown HQ. Present were Sid White, Quinn Fenwick, Michael Faulconer, Jim Luttjohann, Jerry Breiner, Jim Dearkland, Loretta and Mike Merewether, Dan Frederickson, Christy Weir, Ed Warren, Jeff and Greg Smith and Barbara Evans. Jerry noted we need a bigger table and/or more room.

#### SAN BUENAVENTURA FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS PROPOSAL

Greg mentioned, in response to a question by Jerry about his lot at Palm and Santa Clara, that his family had various ideas and thoughts and about what exactly might be done at that location. They would prefer not to sell but want to be involved, a trade possibly. There has also been no discussion between the Labys and the Smith Family in regards to the parking situation. As discussion followed, Sid noted that he was not aware of any formal discussions with the neighboring landowners in regards the parking situation for the proposed cultural arts village. Some of the parcel owners, informally, have told him that they might like to be partners in the development of that sector. As far as the SBFA development and presentation to DVO earlier in the week, the discussion followed that apparently a phased approach is what is on the table currently. There is an agreement with the City for that specific parcel (the former Schiapapietra mansion, now parking lot between Landmark 78 (Ed Warren's property) and Jim DeArkland's on the corner). If a plan goes to council with the downtown specific plan in mind, there will continue to be a "placeholder" on the map for the cultural arts village at that location.

Discussion followed about the group's feelings on the location's viability and problems. Dan noted that the presentation in his eyes was unacceptable. Mr Laby did not say SBFA was bonded to finish the job, and in effect said they were not bonded to finish the job. Jim Friedman is their consultant, and those who saw the presentation felt it would most probably be a good thing to have Jim be their spokesman. To that end, the group discussed the idea of presenting to Jim, for written and in-person discussion, a number of questions we have. Sid noted that discussion is definitely needed on this project, Christy noting that after speaking with Jim that he felt bad there so many unanswered questions and would be open to speaking with us. We all agreed that would be a good thing - and a plan.

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Mike Merewether noted a critical question in his mind as he learns more about it: how does something of this magnitude get its operational expenses including debt service funded once in place? The agreement SBFA has with the City apparently only goes so far as the creation of the project, not the continual upkeep and maintenance. Jim Dearkland noted this could languish for years with the open-ended agreement the City now has with the organization. From what Jordan said at the board meeting earlier in the week, it was his idea that the neighboring property owners and the City would stay involved. Group discussion followed about the great need for a new study, based on the wavering and apparently differing concepts of how big the project is, based on who is delivering the presentation. Michael Faulconer said the CEQA analysis will undoubtedly find things to be mitigated and that will only happen after a concept is brought before DRC and planning during the formal application process. Dan noted that if the neighboring property owners want to do something on their property nearby, are they impacted? There was a resounding yes from most of those at the table.

Discussion followed in regards the Rubicon and its part in the cultural arts village, if any, Mike said they needed full time usage for periods of 6 weeks per show (usually 4 weeks long plus at least a couple weeks prior to opening for set and practice) which means really almost year around usage. Jordan said he had talked to the Rubicon and that they were not interested in being a part of the Cultural Arts Village since they had their own facility, but Mike M didn't know or with whom that conversation was with. Christy said she has spoken with Jordan and SBFA has no intention of working with the Rubicon at this location. There might be another home for the Rubicon downtown at some point, perhaps in the renovated garage on North Chestnut. Suggestion was that it should be further discussed in an updated usage study.

Mike M asked if the City was on board with the "phased" approach. Sid said that to actually move forward for comment an actual development plan must be submitted, and currently all there are concepts and discussions, one of the reasons we are here to day. In discussion following it was agreed that anyone with

questions would forward them to Jerry for dispersal and Christy would ask Jim to respond to the questions in writing as well as speak with us on the 25th.

#### DISTRICTS

Dan mentioned that in his opinion it would probably be wise to hire a professional to research in-depth the current and past legal situation regarding the parking district(s) downtown, and suggested that some of the property owners who will and are effected participate. Jim D said we absolutely need a plan, and though Christy mentioned the DSP should be approved by Council in March there is still time for public input, in addition to the note we delivered in December. Dan suggested that the Parking Committee state our needs, based on legal input. He will be sourcing someone to do the job who has a background in land use, city government, CEQA, parking districts, state law, provisional parking, eminent domain and the like. All agreed that Tom Wood would be an excellent source of information to help get the ball rolling, and Jerry said he would try to get a hold of him. Dan suggested having the consultant who put together the mobility study speak with us, but we need a 2nd opinion. Tom Mericle probably has the most history on this, along with Dave Armstrong, and both would be great to speak with at the next meeting. After discussion, the group agreed that Dan would create the scope of work for this research/consultant he will hire, and at our next meeting we try to get Tom and the mobility consultant there to help us move forward. Greg said that since the existing districts deal only with off-street surface parking, we will probably require the addressing of multi-level off-street parking as well. Christy noted we should probably ask Nicole Horn what became of our committee's recommendations from December, though Sid noted that Staff is heavily involved in these changes and there is a lot of action on many levels in regards our requests already in motion.

Next meetings will be at 9:00am THURSDAY JANUARY 18th and JANUARY 25th, hopefully with an update on the mobility study and Dan's work.

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