

From: Roxie Rorapaugh <rrorapaugh@att.net>
Sent: Tuesday, June 14, 2011 1:04 AM
To: Rogers, Thomas H
Cc: _CCIN; _Planning Commission
Subject: comment on Menlo Park El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan Draft EIR

Thomas Rodgers

Menlo Park Community Planning Department

Menlo Park, CA

Dear Mr. Rogers,

I wish to submit the following comment about the Menlo Park El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report:

Cumulative Impacts are from likely projects in and near the area are not adequately reported.

Section 4.9-32 under the heading "Geographic Scope" the second paragraph states " . . .Moving southward, both the City of Menlo Park's boundaries and downtown's main thoroughfare, Santa Cruz Avenue, extend westward. Middle Avenue also extends westward from El Camino Real ... Land use changes within one-half mile of the Specific Plan area (approximately to Olive

Street) could contribute to cumulative land use impacts. ... However, given the primarily residential nature of the surrounding area, no substantial changes to the area are expected.”

The Menlo Park Presbyterian Church owns four parcels of land within in the Specific Plan area (on University Drive) as well as land adjacent to the Specific Plan area. As reported in an article publishing the Almanac May 21, 2008, the Presbyterian church plans a campus overhaul and to build new facilities on this site which may include a performing arts center, gymnasium or recreation building for local youth. (web link http://www.almanacnews.com/story.phy?story_id=6256)

The July 2009 TOD TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL BRIEFING BOOK prepared by Menlo Park city staff for the Urban land Institute’s San Francisco District council’s (Ull San Francisco) Bay Area 2009 TOD Marketplace Report also refers to the city’s knowledge of the overall plans that the Church has for this area in Section 8 which outlines private involvement in the project. Subsection e (page 11) is as follows:

e. Others as appropriate (such as private social service providers)

Aside from the unique Stanford University ownership discussed earlier, the only other major private

entity of note is the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, which owns several parcels on the western edge of Downtown at Santa Cruz Ave and University Dr. The Church is interested in a long-term redevelopment of these parcels as part of an overall campus, and has also expressed some interest in partnering with the City for a Downtown parking garage that could be used for both Church events and Downtown business patrons

(web link to briefing book on <http://www.todmarketplace.org/>)

Statements in public by both Menlo Park Presbyterian Church officials as well as acknowledgements by Menlo Park City staff such as those illustrated above clearly demonstrate that a new project on the several parcels owned by the Church or its foundation (Church of the Pioneers Foundation) is likely. The Menlo Park Presbyterian Church has a large congregation and one can expect expansions to its facilities, especially the addition of a performing arts center and/or recreational building will generate increased traffic for regular services as well as special events, would alter the aesthetic qualities of the neighborhood in ways not addressed in the Draft EIR. Failing to include any discussion of this in the cumulative impact section not only renders the DEIR inadequate, it brings into question whether a good faith effort at full disclosure has been followed at all times during the creation of the document.

Respectfully,

Roxanne Rorapaugh

885 Sherman Ave

Menlo Park, CA