
From: Joanne Sutch <jsutch2@cox.net>
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2018 1:56 PM
To: Jung, Wendy CD
Subject: public comments on downtown plan/part IV

Wendy,

At first blush, section IV is a lot to take in and I find some of the maps incomplete information-wise. You show Glenneyre and Coast Highway, but no ending cross street name, so I am not sure how far down the diagram extends. I would appreciate that info. Love some of the ideas, and am again extremely frustrated by others. In the first place, many of us do not want parklets replacing parking spaces, particularly on Forest and Ocean Aves. I disagree entirely with adding new "underground parking" on Upper Cliff Dr. and with 4 story buildings there. Where exactly is that going to take place?

I also have a concern that, now with the latest plan of separating "Civic" from "art" district: that the cohesiveness of Laguna and its arts driving the community will be compromised. I also am concerned that, once again, people are going to try to "relocate" our Art Museum in the Canyon (as part of the Art District). Aside from the historical significance of the Museum's current location, I also have grave concerns with our priceless collection being housed in the flood plain area anywhere in the Canyon.

The MIG plan is supposedly based on making downtown more "resident friendly," but most residents I know find it very friendly, except in the summer. Most locals actually avoid going downtown in the summer not because of cars, but because of the ridiculous amount of foot traffic downtown. I wonder why we would want to make more." Are we actually creating more business, or just rerouting Festival people into town and cannibalising festival revenue? I have asked several times for a "sanity check" or revenue projection of this downtown change, particularly to Forest Ave, as MIG seems to want a very different type of business atmosphere than we already have, one based on cafes and outside dining (as well as more rooftop and possibly balcony.

Recently I received stats on Laguna's ABC licenses and DUI's per 1000 residents versus other local and coastal towns. As you can see below, we are at a ridiculously high rate of liquor and bar licenses already (even considering that Huntington Beach is so much bigger than we are and has 14 rooftop bars). I don't believe that we need more cafes with liquor licenses. We residents actually need butchers, bakers, candlestick makers (cleaners), etc. We also have many Forest and Ocean Ave. businesses that have fought and survived (and paid the extra high rents) to be in Laguna. Hobbies, Rock Martin's (49 years), Areo (25 years), to name but a few. Their businesses need not only up front parking (for their elderly and disabled customers), but also the back alley that MIG now wants to make into another "people friendly" walking space. How many of those do we need? People downtown actually have to conduct business, receive and send out deliveries (and most of the truck action happens in the alley that you want to take away. This does not appear to be adequately considered in the plan. I would much rather see a beautiful in the sky walkway with trees, etc. that pedestrians can use to navigate between downtown and the beach. Has anything like that been considered?

[cid:0133AA9C-1881-4AED-9272-F017DE4F914B]

As before, I also am extremely concerned with unobstructed escape avenues in the event of natural disasters

(which we are being told to plan on). I can live with Park Ave. being closed off (although there is no good way to park in the library now...which needs to be addressed). However, Forest Ave. needs to remain as is, open and unobstructed, with the left turn in place, as it is what helps traffic flow on PCH. It also should remain visually open for the Ocean view and the view to City Hall. That was part of what Laguna was founded on. A pedestrian scramble there would be a disaster...especially if you already have the Broadway one. Of the two, I pick the Broadway as it would be more effective and safer for all.

Realising that many of these wonderful ideas work very well in other towns, I don't believe that MIG is adequately looking at the fact that Laguna Beach is unfortunately and uniquely completely surrounded by state highways which are becoming increasingly more congested by outside commuter traffic. Several years ago, 67% of Laguna Canyon's traffic neither originated from nor had a destination to Laguna Beach. With Irvine's additional development, I am sure that that number has already risen dramatically and more construction is being planned in Irvine. Additionally, PCH has become a commuter cut through, too, particularly for Northbound traffic from San Diego, San Clemente, Dana Point, etc. I don't have stats, but I believe that PCH is at least 67% commuter, if not much more now. That being said, how is this phenomenon being addressed. Rather than expand, I believe that we should follow that path that we all agreed on of "scenic highways"...not only for the Canyon/Broadway, but also for PCH. CalTrans needs to be carefully managed, or PCH will become the next favourite freeway. It already has traffic North and South in speeds in excess of 60+mph (in 30 and 40 mph zones). Then the pedestrian scrambles are really going to be a scramble.

Is anything being looked at as far as medians in parts of PCH to help both beautify and slow down traffic? What about the City actually taking ROW for parts of the Canyon and PCH? To date the City has always said that it was too costly, however virtually every other Coastal City around has ROW of at least a part of PCH, from San Clemente and Dana Point to Huntington Beach and Long Beach, to name but a few. It allows more input into median and other highway design, which seems to be critical. Corona Del Mar took one ROW and has medians on PCH. This has slowed down traffic some, and is part of the reason why Laguna is now the cut through for the Northbound (they would rather go up Nyes or Glenneyre and cut onto the Canyon than go to CDM).

On that same note, I believe that it is critical for the City to at least look at taking over management of South Laguna from the County. In South Laguna, there are too few pedestrian crosswalks and lights (one is absolutely needed at Aliso Beach).

Parking is free and needs to be paid (at least in the summer). These additions should be put into place before any parking decisions are finalised, as the bulk of our visitors are now parking in the free South Laguna parking (thanks to very explicit maps on social media). These same people, who are visiting, definitely do not want to pay for parking...particularly in a parking facility. We could be building parking facilities that are almost vacant off-season and dodged as much as possible during the summer.

I love the additional trees and planting, and like shop lighting...but not like any of that shown. It may look "cool", but again, I believe that much of it will interfere with views (same with signage). We also have many issues with neighbours and "light pollution" which need to be considered. I would encourage inset lighting wherever possible.

I am definitely against the "wayfare" signage. It is a large expense, which I don't believe is needed. We all know that people are mainly navigating by app and social media, not by signage, so let's spend the money on a terrific app and GPS system instead. Laguna used to be deluged by signs. Thus code enforcement was created. I do not want a lot of signs, especially large ones (at bus stations, etc) creeping back into Laguna Beach. In fact, take a look at the Water District sign at Nyes (the 2nd one we have had). It detracts from rather than enhances the area, and no one really reads it. Ditch the signs. What I would like is some special street signs for our art streets (Wendt Terrace, Rosabonheur, etc.) Someone on Laguna Locals recently gave the history of our streets named for the Muses (Thalia, Calliope, etc.) That were also art-related. I would love this

history to be shared.

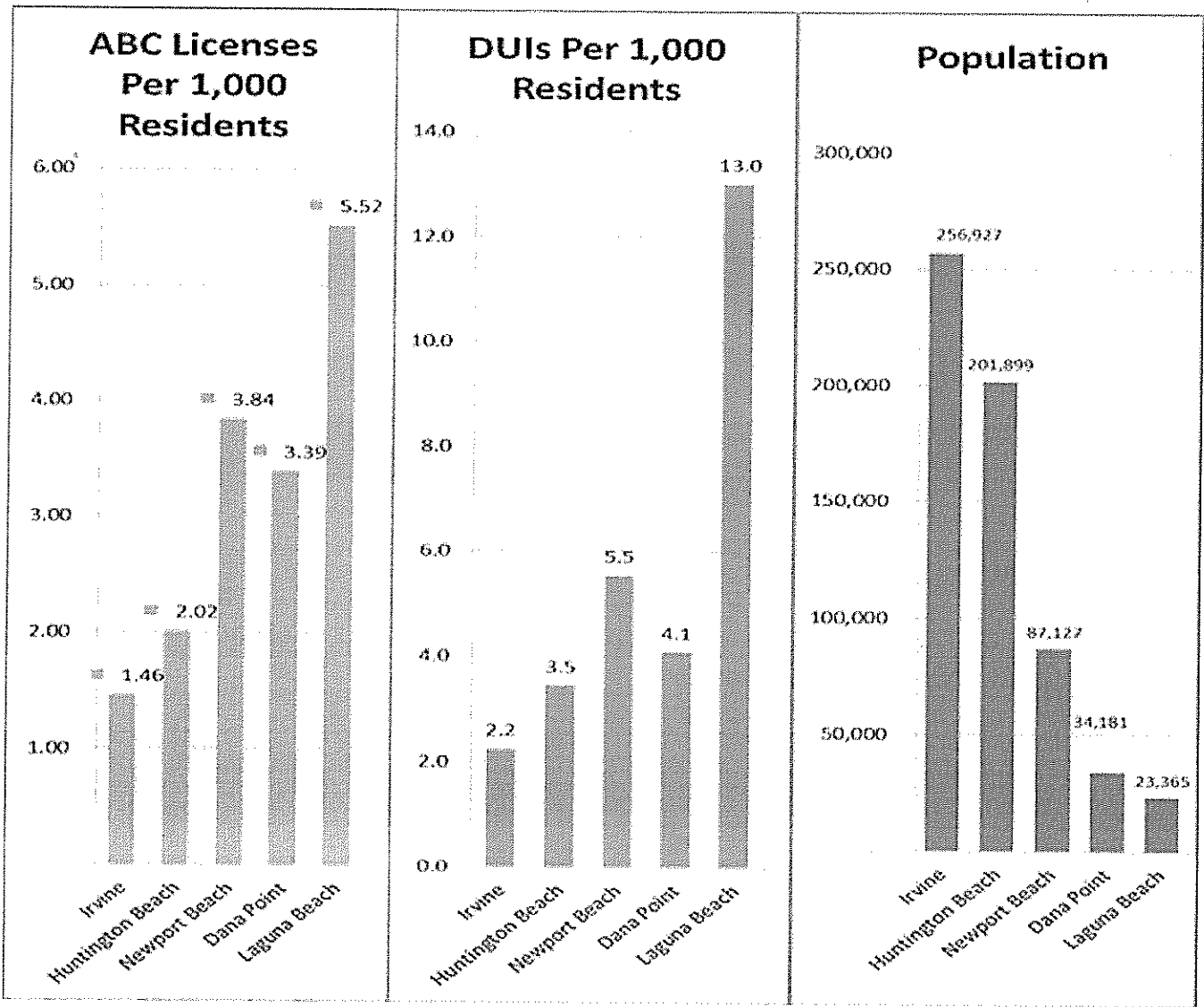
Last Planning Commission, the question was asked re: what are the advantages/disadvantages to separating civic and arts districts. I did not get a satisfactory answer, so would ask that question again. Would arts buildings be allowed in the civics district? What is the point of the separation? Is it a zoning change/advantage? I do have concern that civic or arts buildings could no longer coexist, and I have issues with that as stated earlier. I would appreciate more clarification on this issue.

I have other questions, but believe that the next meeting on this is Feb. 18th. Is that correct? I look forward to learning more about the urban planning portion of the downtown plan.

As always, thank you for your concern, consideration and expert information. Please include my concerns and this memo as part of the public comment for the next meeting.

Respectfully,

Joanne Sutch



TO: Laguna Beach Planning Commission and Planning Staff

DATE: February 12, 2017

FROM: Ad Hoc Committee on the Downtown Specific Plan Revisions

SUBJECT: MIG Suggested Revisions to Section (Chapter) IV of the Downtown Specific Plan

We are submitting our preliminary comments on MIG's suggested revisions to Section (Chapter) IV of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP). Due to the extensive amount of material, this submission may be supplemented with additional comments prior to the scheduled Planning Commission hearing on February 21.

General Comments:

- We appreciate the amount of effort in creating this portion of the DSP, particularly the quality of graphic content.
- At the January 17, 2018 Planning Commission meeting, the updates to the Landscape and Scenic Highways Element and Resource Document were discussed. Much of the focus was on a memo from Commissioners Whitin and McErlene. During this discussion, the Commission approved Action 5.1.1, namely to:

“Hire a qualified landscape architect design consultant to prepare a Downtown Urban Master Plan. . .”

Although Commissioner McErlene emphasized the intent of this action item was to access issues on the health, types, and maintenance of trees, #7 under this recommendation states that the Master Plan:

“Recommends urban design for each street, including shade, seating, street lighting, sidewalk improvements, expanding planting areas and new public gathering areas.”

If this is the City Council adopts this policy, then numerous key components of the Urban Design portion of the DSP cannot be updated at this time. Please clarify.

- A related question is how Chapter IV (Urban Design Details) of the revised Landscape and Scenic Highways Resource Document will be handled since some of the recommendations in that document differ from those proposed by MIG. In addition, urban design recommendations from the City adopted Enhanced Mobility and Complete Streets Transition Plan need to be considered.
- The organization of the document is challenging. By addressing “location-based improvements” first on a topic-by-topic basis (e.g., pedestrian improvements, streetscape improvements, opportunity sites), an area may be addressed in several different contexts. This organization lacks a unified vision for the downtown by concentrating on specific sites rather than beginning with goals for the area as a whole. As the document notes on page 31, “Good urban design for the future requires a clear vision that includes all aspects of the public realm that residents and

visitors interact with daily.” The need for overall goals does show up on page 12, with the text citing the need for both overarching design guideline and individual palettes for key streets. Figure 4.5 on this page reinforces this idea of a unified approach.

- There are noticeable gaps in the first section, namely the areas covered in Chapter III, Topics 10 (Civic Art District) and 11 (Central Bluffs) are not mentioned.
- There are noticeable gaps in the sections, namely discussion of sidewalk design and street furniture.
- Given the amount of material and the critical nature of this topic, one that defines the “look and feel” of the downtown, we request a full workshop patterned after those held during development of the Downtown Parking Management Plan (non-timed dialogues) for all interest parties.

Text Revisions:

- Page 4: Several new terms are introduced to describe sub areas, including “Lower Eastside” and “North Bluffs”. There is no historic precedence for these terms. If they are to be used, then they should have been introduced and discussed in Chapter II.
- Page 5: The definition of “Prominent Entrances” includes the phrase “. . .to provide a seamless transition from the commercial core to the beach.” Why are these then shown at Forest and Broadway and at the signal in front of the Festival of the Arts location?
Why is there no scramble intersection at Broadway and Coast Highway?
Why is there a scramble intersection at Ocean Avenue and not at Laguna Avenue?
Why does the mapping show the Central Bluffs extending to inland of South Coast Highway?
- Page 6: Revise the language on the Village Entrance Opportunity Site to accurately describe the recently approved project.
Remove Ocean Avenue/Coast Highway Intersection for a pedestrian scramble and replace with Broadway/Coast Highway and Laguna Avenue/South Coast Highway.
All of the descriptions under Streetscape Improvement need to be revised.
All of the Opportunity Sites need further discussion and revision or deletion.
Add Hotel Laguna under Notable Landmarks.
- Page 7: Revise the description of the Village Entrance to show the approve plan.
- Page 8: Under A, there currently is a traffic signal at the Village Entrance/Forest Avenue/Laguna Canyon Road intersection that is pedestrian activated.
Under B, there is currently a traffic signal at the Cliff Drive/North Coast Highway intersection that is pedestrian activated. The improvements recommended should be enhancements to the crosswalks to increase visibility as suggested in the Enhanced Mobility and Complete Streets Transition Plan document.

- Page 9: Since Ocean Avenue is close to Forest Avenue, scramble intersections at both Broadway and Forest make more sense.
- Page 10: Under E, a new term, “Lower Core”, is introduced. What area does this refer to?
- Page 12: With regard to parklets, more detail is needed on the elements that create a successful implementation since the trial version from 2016 was judged to be not worth renewing.
- Page 14: The depiction of potential improvements for Forest Avenue offers some interesting ideas. One problem is that the figure shows no parking and thus distorts the feeling of the scene. An additional problem is that the paving surface as depicted could be inappropriate for a pedestrian area if it creates an uneven surface that would create difficulty for elderly and handicapped pedestrians.
- Page 15: Why not use photographs from Laguna Beach whenever possible? The City utilizes rustic benches and does have examples of flowering trees, landscaped bulb outs, and paved intersections.
- Page 16: The redesign of upper Ocean Avenue was presented on multiple occasions with little enthusiasm from the public and City officials. The traffic flow suggested run counter to previous studies on improving circulation by making Ocean Avenue a one-way street for the entire length. That plan would also allow the City to gain 10-12 additional parking spaces on lower Ocean.
- Page 18: Introducing pedestrian scale lighting on Broadway is an excellent idea; unfortunately this is a Caltrans controlled road and options on lighting are limited.
- Page 19: Although potential development of the sites located on the northeast and northwest corners at the intersection of Broadway and Coast Highway may be possible, or even desirable, other options need to be considered. A public park on one or both sites would be an obvious asset. In any case, only single story buildings with significant setbacks from Broadway should be shown to maintain Laguna’s “Window to the Sea.”
- Page 20: First, the description of a potential pedestrian plaza on lower Park (Park Plaza) needs to be updated to reflect the recent trial with lessons learned. Second, given the logistics, a temporary, seasonal use is not feasible. An adoption of the Park Plaza concept should either be permanent or not at all.
- Page 21: Replace the photos with ones showing Park Plaza actually being used.
- Page 22: Replace the depiction of the Village Entrance area with that of the approved plan.
- Page 23: Replacing or significantly altering the Transit Center site is worth considering only if on-street service is feasible given the narrow, congested streets in the Downtown. If options are to be pursued, both OCTA and Laguna Beach have to indicate they would support a redesign.
- Page 24: As mentioned in comments about page 19, any development at the northwest corner of Broadway and Coast Highway should be limited to one story. This site may not even be

appropriate for any structures given the constraints, including gas residue clean-up, flood plain restrictions, and rising sea levels.

- Page 25: Same comment as for page 24 for any development at the northeast corner of Broadway and Coast Highway.
- Page 26: As with the redesign of Ocean Avenue, the idea of placing a parking garage under the current surface parking at Las Brisas and creating a park on the surface area generated little enthusiasm during public presentations. The description of any possible garage should indicate whether or not the project as described would result in significantly more parking than is currently available on the surface lot.
- Page 27: In the first paragraph discussing the existing character of the Downtown, the idea for infilling existing surface parking lots runs counter to adopted language in previous sections of this version of the DSP. These lots provide open space opportunities and can facilitate movement between the main streets.

Given the recently approved plans, the reference to the Village Entrance in the third paragraph as being appropriate to support three-story building needs to be removed.

With regard to three story buildings on Laguna Canyon road, the text should note the current requirements that allow this condition with specific findings.

As for adding second stories in the other cited locations, the text should note the current policy of allowing these with conditions that benefit the City, such as low cost housing. Increased height within the identified zones should be determined on a case-by-case basis, not allowed by right.

- Page 29: Figure 4.9, depicting potential building heights by district, despite the word ‘potential’ in the title, gives the impression that each of the identified zones could achieve the same heights. One of the key elements in developing the original DSP was the desire to keep a mixture of varied heights, not a wall of similarly tall buildings. Rather than the brute force technique shown in this diagram, specific building sites should have been identified where an increased height would meet urban design goals.
- Page 31: As stated in the first paragraph, the purpose of this section is to “. . . establish the goals and concepts for Downtown design and provide the framework for the City’s design review process.” With this in mind, the comments below focus either on missing elements or on cases where the material is addressing policy, rather than design issues.

A couple of additional points. First, all new construction in the Downtown should be consistent with adopted urban design guidelines. The text in the second paragraph of this introduction to design guidelines only references projects requiring Design Review. This should be changed. Second, any conflicts between Chapter IV of the Landscape and Scenic Highways Resources document, the Enhanced Mobility and Complete Streets Transition Plan, and the existing DSP guidelines should be addressed.

- Page 34: Items 2–5 assigning heights by zone are policies that implement decisions that will be made on implementation of figure 4.9 on page 29 on this document. Reflecting our comments on figure 4.9, this section should be modified to give guidelines how to assess under what specific architectural conditions increases in height should be allowed for the various zones.
- Page 36: In our submission on Topic 1 of Chapter III, we suggested encouraging pedestrian paths be added, where possible, to existing parking lots. This would help to facilitate movement between the north-south streets.
- Page 37: Add a guideline to require shielding for parking lot pole lights consistent with dark skies standards.
- Page 39: Items 6–7 on loading facilities addressing hours of delivery operations are policy issues and now design guidelines. These issues should be addressed citywide.
- Page 41: Add a guideline to minimize noise intrusion from commercial uses into second story residential uses.
- Page 42: Consideration should be given under the Architecture section in either adding a section on sustainability or incorporating concepts into the components listed.
- Page 49: Add a guideline to require shielding for building lighting consistent with dark skies standards.
- Page 53: A key element when discussing Streetscape is the design of the sidewalks. This is addressed in Item 2 in a general fashion. There should be clarification if this language needs to be modified to match the language from The Enhanced Mobility and Complete Transition Plan, namely to consider development of a sidewalk zone system. As stated in that document, “Typical sidewalk zones in a business district include a frontage zone, pedestrian zone, furniture zone, and curb zone.” The material on page 12 of the MIG submission, particularly figure 4.5, are the ideal place to address this issue.
- Page 55: Since Items 1-2 on Alleyways are concerned with customer entrances, Item 7 that encourages the establishment of such entrances needs to precede them.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bob Chapman, Ann Christoph, Kate Clark, Norm Grossman, Becky Jones, Barbara Metzger, Kavita Reddy, David Rubel, and Kent Russell

From: Genny Boccardo <GBoccardo@lagunaartmuseum.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2018 3:19 PM
To: Jung, Wendy CD; Planning Commission
Cc: Hasty Honarkar; Lewis Weil
Subject: Comments re. Section 4 of Downtown Specific Plan
Attachments: Urban Design Section 4 comments 1.2018.pdf

Dear Wendy,

I hope this e-mail finds you well. I am writing on behalf of several of us on the Urban Design Committee, regarding section 4 of the Downtown Specific Plan. I have attached for you a PDF of our comments and points that we have put together to be taken into consideration as the Commission reviews this plan.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the meeting next Wednesday evening, and please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions.

With best wishes,
Genny

Genny Boccardo-Dubey
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Laguna Art Museum

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Urban Design Committee
Review of Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan
January 2018

Hasty Honarkar and Louis Weill's points combined, with a few added by Genny Boccardo-Dubey, since there was overlap.

Narrative:

The major objective of the DTSP is to set forth standards that will enhance the special aesthetic qualities of Downtown Laguna Beach and to make the area more enjoyable, attractive, and functional for both residents and visitors. Goals include preserving diversity, strengthening the pedestrian orientations and creating a unique and memorable physical environment that recognizes our history while progressing us forward as a destination for the creative and cultured.

Section 4 Priorities

1. **Enhanced Walkability/Safety for Pedestrians/Access** –
 - Breaker/paver sidewalks
 - Crosswalks
 - Completion of Alleyways - helps create additional unique experiences while providing attractive places to explore and use. String lights, seating, proper paving and art would bring our alleys to life.
2. **Cohesive Visual Identity** - everything should appear strategically planned out and connected, not an afterthought.
3. **Open space locations** - More Courtyards, Plazas, and Pedestrian Passages; areas for visitors and locals to be able to congregate.
4. **Elements of surprise** –
 - Art Features - murals, sculptures, unique experiential additions
 - Rotating installations
 - Adding character and charm
5. **Landscaping** - this can be an art in itself. Helps bring life and color to the downtown.
6. **Street Furniture** - to make the overall experience to downtown more enjoyable and to offer places to “take a break” and enjoy the environment.
7. **Lighting** – create a cohesive, warm lighting for the downtown area. Streetlamps.
8. **Views** and view corridors
9. **Wayfinding** – a smart signage plan that helps visitors and residents find their way around town and not miss any important places and sites.
10. **Inter-accessibility** - connects shops and centers to create lively commercial areas for visitors and residents that also encourages collaboration between tenants.
11. **Promoting Residential Units** - this creates a complete ecosystem to continuously feed the downtown businesses and help build a true “downtown” environment.

Missing Elements for Current DTSP:

1. Maintenance requirements for property owners and tenants.
2. Event guidelines

Subject: UDC Workshop with Planning Commission

From: Julie Laughton [mailto:Julie@julielaughton.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2018 6:16 AM
To: Jung, Wendy CD <wjung@lagunabeachcity.net>
Cc: Julie Laughton <Julie@julielaughton.com>; pc@lagunabeach.net
Subject: UDC Workshop with Planning Commission

Dear Wendy,

I would like to introduce myself. I am local designer builder and have recently joined a group called UDC that originally stemmed from the GAC committee. UDC stands for Urban Design Committee and is made up of volunteer citizens like myself who are interested in the long overdue development and execution of the Downtown Specific plan and seeing Laguna grow and develop as it should with its Charm and History maintained.

The purpose of my email is to ask the planning commission members to have a work shop with UDC to discuss the overall beautification and restoration and maintenance of the overall Laguna Beach Charm. I plan on attending the upcoming Feb 21st Planning Commission meeting and look forward to any response the planning commission has on the possibility of have a workshop with our group. My Bio is attached below for reference. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Julie Laughton

Julie Laughton Bio

Founder and CEO of Julie Laughton Design Build Corporation and Julie Laughton General Contracting Corporation.

Graduate of Iowa State University 1985. Worked in NYC with largest developers in the world 1985- 1991.

Moved to Laguna Beach in 1991 and start JL Design Build business.

Since moving to California I have designed and built and participated in over 500 residential remodels and I specializing in Historical restoration.

I provide a ONE STOP Design Build Service to local homeowners.

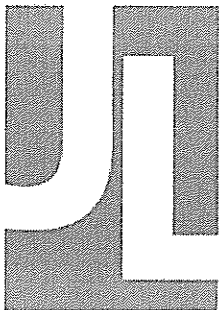
I put out a regular blog and I am a contributing writer for a Local Magazine Joli about remodeling trends and the design and building process and the importance of doing it right from start to finish.

My Moto is "It all starts with a Good Plan".

I am a Licensed Interior Designer and Licensed General Contractor. www.JulieLaughton.com.

Member of Laguna Beach Chamber for over 25 Years. Supporter of Laguna Beach FM Radio KX93.5. Joined GAC 2017.

Member UDC.



JULIE LAUGHTON
DESIGN BUILD



TO: Laguna Beach Planning Commission and Planning Staff

DATE: February 20, 2017

FROM: Ad Hoc Committee on the Downtown Specific Plan Revisions

SUBJECT: Addendum to MIG Suggested Revisions to Section (Chapter) IV of the Downtown Specific Plan

We are submitting this addendum to our preliminary comments on MIG's suggested revisions to Section (Chapter) IV of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) to address issues from the staff report and to enhance our previous submission.

1. We disagree with the staff recommendation on issue area A, Developing a Downtown Urban Design Master Plan. The staff rationale is that the DSP is a goal and policy document that provides broader brushstrokes whereas a Master Plan will focus on details of implementation. However, this is not necessarily the case. According to California State Code Section 65450, ". . . the planning agency may, or if directed by the legislative body, shall, prepare specific plans for the systematic implementation of the general plan for all or part of the area covered by the general plan."

There is no reason why the equivalent of a high-level urban design master plan cannot be developed as part of the current process. There are already multiple sources, including *The Enhanced Mobility and Complete Streets Implementation Plan*, Chapter III, pages 5-20 and Chapter IV of the draft *Landscape and Scenic Highways Resource Document*, the current DSP, the MIG submissions, and relevant General Plan policies, which can be used to define a majority of the urban design issues. Some specific implementation details (e.g., evaluation of the health and care of current street trees) can be addressed in subsequent studies.

We believe that a focused implementation plan, one limited to items 1-6 and 8 under the proposed Action 5.1.1. of the Planning Commission Subcommittee revisions to the *Landscape and Scenic Highway Element*, is worthy of further discussion. This would limit the scope of work of an implementation plan to items related to the health and maintenance of the trees in the Downtown. As part of any discussion, attention should be paid to the draft *Landscape and Scenic Highways Resource Document* to determine how those materials can be used. The discussion should first focus on creating a task force of local experts and interested citizens as opposed to hiring another outside consultant.

Even if a focused implementation plan is desired for details on landscaping, the suggestion of placing policy language in Section (Chapter) IV seems misguided. Section (Chapter) III is specifically designated for discussion and adoption of issues, goals, and policies. Any policy on a new urban design implementation plan belongs in Section (Chapter) III, under Topic 1, Village Character, or Topic 5, Municipal Services, or both.

One final note. The current process of updating the DSP began in 2012; MIG was hired in 2014. The idea of having a partially completed document, especially one missing key elements covering the very important “look and feel” of the Downtown, should not be an option.

2. The staff report does not address the problems with the identification of Opportunity Areas in the MIG report. As we stated earlier, at least one of these, the Village Entrance, should be removed, and two, the Arts District and Central Bluffs, should be added. How will this be done?
3. The issue of height remains a key consideration. We wish to reiterate our support of maintaining a variety of one-and-two-story heights on Forest Avenue. As for other areas in the Downtown, height limits should be increased beyond the current limitations only on a case-by-case decision based on specific findings.

We question why the MIG document classified areas as a whole as eligible for increased height rather than for specific sites, as previously shown, in part, on page 15 of the submission for Task 2.13.

4. We remain interested on the future of the two corners of Broadway and Coast Highway. We urge the Commission to identify the constraints for development at these locations, including both flood plain and wave run-up concerns, which should limit development to one of low intensity with extensive setbacks.
5. Some additional ideas from Section (Chapter) III that need consideration from an urban design perspective include removal of parking on Coast Highway, additional lighting on Forest Avenue, and some conversion of existing second story offices to residential uses.
6. We do not believe that urban design for the Downtown should be passed in one or two hearings with time limited public input. Although much of the DSP is technical in nature, the “look and feel” of the Downtown is a topic that engenders lively public input that should be encouraged. We restate our desire for a design workshop on this topic to fully explore the ideas and options for the Downtown.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bob Chapman, Ann Christoph, Kate Clark, Norm Grossman, Becky Jones, Barbara Metzger, Kavita Reddy, David Rubel, and Kent Russell

Leah Vasquez

From: Leah Vasquez <leahvasquez@cox.net>
Sent: Friday, February 16, 2018 11:16 AM
To: 'wjung@lagunabeachcity.net'
Subject: Planning Workshop

Dear Wendi,

I'm looking forward to the Feb 21st Planning Commission meeting and encouraging the Commission's interest and participation in a joint workshop with the Urban Design Committee (UDC). The UDC members represent a variety of interests and representations by cause-alike groups addressing needs and continuing beautification, preservation and maintenance of Laguna's unique character and assets.

Below: my brief bio to participate in a joint committee:

Leah Vasquez, Artist

Leah Vasquez Fine Art Services : site specific public & private projects

Former Exhibitor: FOA

2018 Vice President Laguna Beach Beautification Council

Current AAUW -L.B. Branch Board : Co-Chair membership & LCAD College University Partner

L.B. Arts Commissioner/Chair Public Arts Policy and AIPP (1983-87); development of Arts In Motion event public arts programs 1983-87

Education: Otis (former LA County Art Institute) BA; UCI MFA Studio Arts- Admin/Adjunct Prof. & Assistant Director Fine Arts Gallery

Tangential disciplines; physiology/ illustration projects: UCI Journal-cell studies; The Inner Ear : Mooney Institute;

Behavior of Wolves, Dogs, and Related Canids: Michael W. Fox

CORO Foundation Fellowship-Public Affairs ; OC Centennial Committee,

Contributing writer: Laguna Beach history by Roger Jones -Lagunas' water wells

50 year LB resident

With Appreciation,



Leah Vasquez

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www.leahsart.com

RECEIVED
FEB 20 2013
CITY OF LAGUNA BEACH
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

February 24, 2018

Dear Planning Commission,

I'd like to suggest that the Downtown Specific Plan Study consider having a seminar on the topic of Urban Studies which basically has two facets: the public realm / streets, and the private realm.

I fear the final product may be tainted by old outmoded, misguided concepts of how our streets should look and be used. Seems to me the way to get past our old failed belief systems (auto centric land planning) is to inform our community about current best practices based on data as a way to move past our current failed beliefs.

I fear your final product will have one foot in the past and one foot in the future. This urban plan must have a crystal clear vision of the final goal. Here is a suggested list of goals:

1. We want the CBD to be free of auto congestion all year long.
2. We want more vitality (foot traffic) in the CBD all year long.
3. We want the CBD to have zero road associated accidents.
4. Adopt and fully integrate Vision Zero, Traffic Calming and Complete Streets into our planning documents.
5. We want to maximize: tranquility, community, beauty, charm, safety, health and prosperity.
6. We must disseminate information about current best practices.
7. We must understand that there is vast difference between auto dependent land planning (suburbia) and the traditional land planning that created our CBD 90 years ago.
8. We want fewer cars in the summer, and more foot traffic in the winter.
9. Laguna Beach City Hall has been focused on how to best facilitate more and more cars since the 1930s. Our city to day is trying to sell us on the idea that we need more parking and bigger roads. These people need re-education. They now tell us we need to park in holes in the ground and park in multi storied garages. We must eliminate the policy that dictates onsite parking requirements.
10. Incorporate these ideas into the Downtown Specific Plan.

More detail on these ideas will be found on the following pages.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael L Hoag

Draft Amendments to the Downtown Specific Plan:

Introduction: Make the CBD more vibrant, walkable, welcoming, prosperous, safer, focusing on how to have more winter time people on foot.

Central Bluffs: Make this area into a No new Parking Zone.

Main Beach: When Main Beach was created, no onsite parking was required; it's wonderful. More sand, less asphalt.

North Bluffs: North Bluffs, Heisler Park has no onsite parking. It's just fine.

Streetscape Improvements: 8 foot lanes less asphalt more landscaping, including requiring bio-swales must use reusable pavers.

Opportunity Sites: We need more people and fewer cars; forever adding parking is out of vogue since the 1970's. Cypress is a good candidate. 133 from Broadway to the Lumber Yard needs to be one lane in each direction which will allow for way more landscaping, protected biking and walking opportunities. It is not true that adding lanes to 133 reduces will reduce bumper to bumper congestion.

Notable Landmarks: Add the water company, Heisler Park, and our old movie house.

Pedestrian Improvements: add "20's Plenty" (mph), road diets, complete streets, DD-64-2 from Caltrans. We need to move toward a congestion free downtown.

Village Entrance: This site is one of the most valuable sites in Laguna Beach. The concept that the VE should mostly be used for temporary auto storage is at best a city hall antiquated, concept. If this site is a car-free development, the arts people can have what they want; the housing people can have what they want; the tree huggers can have what they want. Park the city works at Act V. City workers need to pay like us. This income, is worth about \$350,000 per year. This amount will help pay for a big new parking structure at Act V. Because city hall writes the rules does not mean they get free parking. The urban design concept can look and function as a renaissance town (Age of Enlightenment) such as central Florence, Italy: three stories high, mixed use, some baby streets and of course a cafe on the plaza; maybe a small hotel above the cafe on the plaza. And of course small roof top gardens. Do not think about modernist architecture. Use traditional concepts, as our water company.

Ocean Ave / Coast Hwy Intersection: No Pedestrian Scramble is a cheap fix; this needs 8' lanes, bulb-outs and much shorter crosswalks.

Forest Ave/Coast Hwy Intersection: We need to take PCH from Caltrans. In this regard, Caltrans is so 1950s.

Forest Ave/Third St. Intersection: Again 8' lanes, very short crosswalks, giant bulb-outs.

Improved Alleyways: Convert a few parking spaces contiguous to Forest Lane into fenced in, vine covered storage places for trash dumpsters. Make the PCH end of Forest Lane in to a place where people will acutely want to be.

Streetscape Improvements: All lanes must be 8', all gutter water must flow into bio-swales. No more asphalt--use reusable pavers.

Parklet Program: Parklets are temporary. We did a Parklet; it worked well.

Forest Ave: Go car free, use parking funds to pay for the planning and construction. Create Parking Districts to fund new plazas.

Village Entrance: This site is one of the most valuable sites in Laguna Beach. The concept that the VE should mostly be used for temporary auto storage is at best a misguided concept. If this site is a carfree development the arts people can have what they want the housing people can have what they want the tree huggers can have what they want. Park the city hall workers at Act 5. City workers need to pay like us. This income, about \$350,000 per year will help pay for a big new parking structure at Act 5. The urban design concept can look and function as a renaissance town (Age of Enlightenment) such as central Florence IT. 3 stories high, mixed use, and some baby streets and of course a cafe on the Plaza. Maybe a small hotel above the cafe on the Plaza. And of course small roof top gardens. Do not think about modernist architecture. Use traditional concepts like the our water company.

Ocean Ave: Build a plaza at the lower end of Ocean.

Broadway: One lane in each direction with this extra footage install protected sidewalks, pike lanes and landscaping

Lower Park Avenue: We already did a test run it was fine. Fund with parking fees; Mostly use tables and chairs that can be adjusted by the users. Use little fixed settings and tables. Mostly people prefer movable tables and chairs. Visit the Plaza on Forest Ave. by the post office.

Transit Center: Mixed Use - No cars, no parking, low income. Must have a flow though pathway.

Broadway Northwest: Build to sidewalk as is Forest Ave., no onsite parking, 2 and 3 stories, no setbacks, think Forest Ave. Think the dark pink building next to the Mobile gas station.

Las Brisas Park: No added parking. Or how about car free low income housing on top housing?

Building Heights: Recommendation: Two and 3 story building heights in the downtown core. Try to avoid cookie cutter rules.

Urban Design Guidelines: See Carmel's Planning documents = A+

Site Relationships and Views: Setbacks are so suburban, Forest Ave is our best street because there are no setbacks and no onsite parking.

Scale and Compatibility - Buy historic house on Ocean. No modern flat roofs downtown.

Parking: More parking is so 1950's; car makers can build cars faster than we can add parking; add no new parking in the CBD; disappear onsite parking requirements.

Design Guidelines: See Donald Shoup's work about onsite parking requirement that killed old downtown onsite parking is killing our CBD. We have a few shopping centers witch are setting on top of underground parking. These building have not been successful. Many vacancies, there are two on South Coast Highway that are drop dead ugly.

Parking Lighting, Design Guidelines: No orange lights.

Trash, Storage and Equipment Areas: Trash and storage areas must be screened by converting parking spaces to space for trash containers.

Loading Facilities: Many cities use hand trucks.

Connectivity Between Buildings: Use for front to back

Parking: car free two or three Story Residential: Stop the demand for on-site parking;

Materials: Fight modern concepts, stop flat roofs.

Windows: No pleat glass windows.

Roofs: No flat roofs.

Balconies: Four foot balconies are doodads

Colors: Stucco looks better than paint.

Landscaping: Stop putting trees in hardscape collars. This practice weakens root balls; never use concrete for sidewalks, always use reusable pavers.

Streetscape: 8' lanes will allow for bigger sidewalks, more landscaping, bike lanes, and reduced car speeds.

Plazas, Courtyards and Public Gathering Spaces: This topic is called place making. Few people use the sculpture garden on Second St. Why? A good place is where people gather on a daily basis. Park Plaza was used on a daily and nightly basis.

Grove on Forest Plaza is used on daily basis. Public art is not necessarily place making. How can we convince the arts people that urban planning can be a high form of art?

Street Lighting: No orange lighting.