



**City of San Diego | Hillcrest Focused Plan Amendment
Uptown Planners Subcommittee Meeting | February 18, 2021**

CHAT LOG

OVERVIEW

The February 18, 2021 Uptown Planners Subcommittee Meeting for the Hillcrest Focused Plan Amendment was held via Zoom. The meeting included a presentation and discussion on land use and building design within the Focused Plan Amendment Area.

The meeting was conducted with the Zoom videoconference platform. Attendees typed comments and questions through the “chat” tool. Each chat submittal includes the time and the participant’s name, which are provided in this document.

CHAT LOG

- 00:31:19 Bill Slomanson: What are the height limitations for future building?
- 00:32:05 Espen Correll: Might you be more specific about the Map - When was the retail space calculated? This has changed dramatically with CV-19. The Equality Business Association estimates more than 1/3 of the local retail space vacated in 2020.
- 00:35:44 Michael Prinz: Building heights vary depending on the zone. A list of zones and development regulations, including building heights, is available in the Existing Conditions Atlas (specifically in section 2.2 on page 18 of the Atlas) available here: https://dd48e4fb-db0c-46a1-b903-50d8bf1516b6.filesusr.com/ugd/987270_29ce16c08fef47668ac41dd9381932c1.pdf.
- 00:39:12 Espen Correll: With the City now extending the Street-side Spaces Through 2022, the 'feet' measures might need to be revisited, eh?
- 00:39:58 Michael Prinz: The business sites data was compiled for the Atlas in 2020.
- 00:39:58 Mat Wahlstrom: To Michael Prinz: I had asked several months ago for the source of the population figures and projections being used to justify this Plan without response. Now I see they're based on SANDAG numbers. However, they do not mesh at all with the City projections and the actual census data I received from the City in 2016, and presented to the City Council (see https://scontent-sjc3-1.xx.fbcdn.net/v/t1.0-9/15317875_348526935508481_7831726255697076634_n.jpg?_nc_cat=105&ccb=3&_nc_sid=2d5d41&_nc_ohc=GrGAoxVF6Y0AX-7eoo3&_nc_ht=scontent-sjc3-1.xx&oh=8ce299a82cecc8685954461f12ba7e01&oe=6054DDD4). Since the historical data has not been presented honestly, I must conclude the projections are equally suspect.

00:40:48 Byron Ross: This is my first time at this meeting, thanks for having me. When you reference the first 30 feet, is that the distance from the street to building?

00:41:57 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: How is the design of Hillcrest reflecting the unique, colorful, diverse, and inclusive nature of the LGBT+ community? What make Hillcrest different than any other neighborhood design?

00:42:22 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: Is the Core being considered at "the Village"

00:42:59 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: how do you build residential units so people can live close to vibrant nightlife

00:43:04 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: ?

00:43:55 Byron Ross: How do we get on the list to be sent the surveys?

00:44:12 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: how do you build to avoid classic urban conflicts like early morning dumpster noise or late night bar noise?

00:45:50 Michael Prinz: For more information and to sign up for future surveys and notices, you can visit planhillcrest.org and sign up for notifications.

00:46:02 Byron Ross: Thanks

00:46:27 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: retail spaces are often too large to accommodate experimental concept stores. have you considered micro retail spaces and how can you build to encourage unique businesses?

00:50:09 Mat Wahlstrom: Speaking to Lu Rehling's point: While maintaining the "street line" for scale and walkability is welcome, I'm not seeing where there's any consideration for preserving existing affordable housing, or that any housing that replaces it will be made affordable. This is especially a concern, as buildings going above 6 stories require concrete and steel construction rather than "wood stick," which automatically price them into the higher end, luxury market.

00:50:41 Carol Emerick: How will you incorporate restrooms for the public that are easily accessible?

00:52:04 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: and close is defined as?

00:53:13 Lu Rehling: Yes, part of what I was trying to ask about existing buildings relates to affordable housing and adaptive reuse versus environmentally expensive demolition and replacement.

00:54:04 Oscar Tavera: Bars/club at bottom/basement floor. offices on top of them which will be empty at night and then residential on top so they're distanced from the noise

00:54:29 Adrian D: Hello, thank you for having me. I am a plant/restoration coord. for the Audubon Society. Is there a chance for native California plants in these areas? Some greenery?

00:55:12 Mat Wahlstrom: One last question: I would like to hear from the presenters who their loyalties are aligned with?

00:55:15 Oscar Tavera: Places such as Barcelona have this very successful. they sometimes have hostels on top of night clubs to house visitors

00:56:55 Espen Correll: Adrian, Great point!

00:57:31 Mary McKenzie: But in many places in the world, there is not ADA accessibility for many of these multi-level plans-bars in the basement, etc. That has to be kept in mind.

00:58:02 Espen Correll: Mary, Very Important. We have many neighbors with limited mobility and accessibility needs

00:58:56 Mat Wahlstrom: To Roy Dahl: I would like to hold my question to the end of the presentation.

00:59:30 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: What part of the design makes Hillcrest unique?

01:00:17 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: tom- we're overbuilt on large un-rentable spaces.

01:00:18 Oscar Tavera: Espen , perhaps sending an email directly with your concerns can be the best method vs interrupting the video stream

01:00:25 Espen Correll: Carol, the pubic restrooms is also critical. Thank you for highlighting this for the records.

01:00:42 Espen Correll: Oscar, Thank you for your share.

01:02:38 Mat Wahlstrom: Actually agree with Ben Nicholls insofar as we should look at "micro retail spaces," such as bodegas, rather than a full wall of storefronts the entire length of a building.

01:04:10 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: Everything looks s a little square and sharp edge. Have we looked at softer lines and curves? I know these are just renderings.

01:04:53 Bill Slomanson: Raise Hand is at the bottom of Participants"

01:05:41 Brer Marsh: Thanks Bill!

01:05:59 Oscar Tavera: I loved Gail's comment. a good compromise could be to demolish the small run down buildings and build density but preserve the facades with set backs for high rise housing behind it

01:06:05 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: question- how do you encourage small scale developers to preserve small lot sizes (which adds to the character) rather than lot consolidation?

01:08:16 Mat Wahlstrom: Again, agreed: lot consolidation is problematic, and needs to be addressed

01:08:29 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: how do we encourage developers to continue design themes such as in the egyptian quarter?

01:09:16 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: YES. continue on design and culture themes. Build on them.

01:09:18 Oscar Tavera: the Egyptian is a great example!

01:10:09 Michael Donovan: what about better use of rooftop spaces?

01:10:13 Mary McKenzie: Take advantage of the rooftops for gardens, restaurants/bars.

01:10:53 Byron Ross: Puerto Vallarta rooftop inspirations!

01:11:02 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: that's important. Can you further define the building style?

01:12:10 Bill Slomanson: Fabulous update. Many thx. Have to go....

01:13:08 Lu Rehling: The corner of Park & University already is characterized by tall residential buildings, but it would be shame to dupe dated building designs, as seen here. & again affordability is key.

01:14:08 Mat Wahlstrom: As I mentioned at the 12/17/20 meeting: "The Atlas condos were given variances to maximize density and build to the PROW because they carved out the corner of Pennsylvania Ave and 4th Ave for one of these "typologies," then after two years removed the water fountain and all amenities, abandoning their commitment to maintain a community benefit in exchange for the added strain on community facilities *and* amenities. So where are provisions in this Plan to prevent these "typologies" being abused in future projects?"

01:15:26 Lu Rehling: Just a reminder: The Hillcrest Plan area is NOT all of Hillcrest. The Plan area, for example, does not include area south of Robinson.

01:15:52 Lu Rehling: Clarification: South of Robinson on the Park Blvd side of 163

01:16:59 Espen Correll: Thanks to everyone for the enthusiasm. . 🏳️. Love seeing our Community united for progress.

01:17:06 sharon gehl: Hillcrest has small town shopping streets, Little Italy doesn't.

01:19:34 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: yes. Perhaps diversity of design is a thought or "theme" to grow? No Kitch. We are in danger of that now.

01:20:01 sharon gehl: There are tall buildings on Park now, more would fit right in. This is the high point for miles around. The view is great!

01:20:48 Mary McKenzie: I think preservation of historic sites is crucial, even if just the historic front...

01:22:25 Oscar Tavera: don't be afraid of monolithic because it has the potential to include more opportunities for housing, parking, offices , shops, etc

01:22:50 Mat Wahlstrom: To the best of my knowledge, CPIOZ has no design component

01:24:02 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: I think "persona development" is a great way to talk about design for the people. Thanks for that lead Brer." Who are the people of the neighborhood? This kind of question might be best for a wrap up.

01:26:14 Oscar Tavera: Roy! hahaha , I love the jab. yes that corner is a great candidate for an uplift

01:26:44 Carol Emerick: How will crime be mitigated? Quickly???

01:27:06 Gail Friedt: it's wonderful to see so many people here. Thank you for participating.

01:27:12 Mat Wahlstrom: FYI: the Eitol "red building" never went nor had to go before Uptown Planners or any body for discretionary review, as it already fit the ministerial requirements even before the 2016 Uptown Community Plan Update. So there's not been a "paper" obstacle against in-scale creativity in design

01:27:22 Carol Emerick: How will mentally ill individuals who are very disruptive be handled???

01:28:04 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: Heart is a difficult word. thanks for 1 of 2 comment.

01:28:05 sharon gehl: There are places in Hillcrest where a large unified design is the right answer. Requiring that all building designs be broken into 50' units results in buildings like the Vons in Mission Hills.

01:28:43 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: how will the promenade connect to the future development at the school dist location in university heights?

01:29:23 Mat Wahlstrom: Curious why this illustration assumes the replacement if not elimination of the Hillcrest Post Office. Where is this coming from?

01:29:43 Gail Friedt: Carol Emerick - the city is planning on utilizing an empty building as a mental health facility. Now there is no place for people to go if they visit either the UCSD or Scripps Emergency Department. I think everyone realizes that there is a homeless issue and I know the city is addressing this.

01:29:58 Espen Correll: Post Office or DMV (?)

01:30:30 sharon gehl: The open space at that corner is not big enough now for community events.

01:30:41 Mary McKenzie: This not the corner of the post office.

01:30:50 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: how about a characterful ped bridge connecting university heights to the promenade?

01:30:59 Espen Correll: This is the DMV street, not post office, That's RICHMOND

01:31:00 Mary McKenzie: The mental health facility I believe is planned for 3rd Ave.

01:31:05 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: Please reference Peter Fink and his use of color

01:31:23 Gail Friedt: Mary McKenzie - that is correct.

01:31:54 Mary McKenzie: ANy room for a small amphitheater?

01:35:30 Mat Wahlstrom: The Newbreak Church in the background shows that this illustration footprint does take in the Post Office site, not the DMV:
<https://www.google.com/maps/place/3920+Normal+St,+San+Diego,+CA+92103/@32.7492074,-117.1507012,18z/data=!3m1!5s0x80d954dd5ba5ea1d:0xfba3310d98ca04a4!4m12!1m6!3m5!1s0x80d954dd43cc2cd9:0x30d9c80a78bbe56e!2sUnited+States+Postal+Service!8m2!3d32.749465!4d-117.1506327!3m4!1s0x80d954e7f14c92af:0x733d724bd31cbe63!8m2!3d32.7496975!4d-117.1496831>

01:36:39 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: Is tis Pride Plaza or Normal St? or Promanade?

01:37:54 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: plan says Washington and park

01:37:57 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: great question Roy.

01:38:00 Mat Wahlstrom: Lincoln is the border of the Hillcrest Business Improvement District, not the neighborhood

01:38:18 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: wahlstrom is correct

01:41:15 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: ped crossings and traffic calming measures will improve the retail feel

01:41:35 Mary McKenzie: Absolutely Ben.

01:42:04 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: strengthen connections to the hospitals and loosen the campus 'feel' of the hospitals

01:43:39 Oscar Tavera: washington definitely

01:43:52 Mary McKenzie: Are the hospitals in the geograophical area of this plan?

01:43:54 benjamin@hillcrestbia.org: median improvements please

01:44:03 Michael Prinz: Yes, the hospitals are in this area

01:46:52 Espen Correll: Well said, Michael.

01:49:14 Mat Wahlstrom: Given the challenges of the geography and the Uptown Village condo complex, believe that we should look at raised walkways, to connect the bridge over the 163 to the east, which would address these challenges, as well as address connectivity from the north to University Heights as well as to the proposed Mystic Park.

01:51:15 Brer Marsh: it had a strong mid century modern character

01:52:02 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: thanks

01:52:02 sharon gehl: Washington Street is wide because there was a trolley line down the middle of part of it.

01:55:05 Mary McKenzie: Also jus thought of a question: someone discussed more office buildings and the like. But post-pandemic, I wonder if we really will need more office buildings? A think a lot of work will continue to be done remotely. So we might have lots of empty office space.

01:55:47 Espen Correll: ^ Mary, great comment ^

01:56:37 Ed Balsamo: There actually are already quite a few commercial buildings in the vicinity of the hospitals. Is there demand for more? Good question about the effects of the pandemic.

01:56:53 Michael Donovan: Great point, MAry - I was really thinking more innovation and collaboration space, think wework or what is happening at hortton plaza rather than classic high rise office buildings

01:57:27 Mary McKenzie: Didn't wework crash?

01:58:07 Michael Donovan: lol, sort of - but temporary/shared space for meetoings and the like F2F are still needed

01:58:08 Matthew Medeiros: I agree, the classic giant office building is not a fit here... we really need spaces that can offer flexibility in design as multipurposed space.

01:58:39 sharon gehl: In New York sunlight might be better than shadow in an icy winter, but remember that this is San Diego and shade is something we will want with climate change.

01:59:21 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: How are we considering Public Art as part of the Hillcrest Destination Experience?

01:59:30 Espen Correll: Yes. Michael D., Multiuse/flex space.

01:59:33 Mary McKenzie: Not necessarily, Sharon. Climate change does not equal more sun in San Diego.

01:59:45 Mary McKenzie: But that's a different discussion.

02:00:47 Espen Correll: Gail! Great suggestion!

02:01:28 Oscar Tavera: Gail, great point. there aren't that many hotels yet so many people visit this area. it would be a great fit there

02:01:40 Mat Wahlstrom: There used to be a hotel right there on Washington. It's now The Warwick apartments.

02:01:51 Mary McKenzie: It was the Somerset.

02:02:29 Espen Correll: To Gail's Point, the community deserves hotel space for our visitors (especially during PRiDE).

02:02:30 Mary McKenzie: Short-term hotels are part of many hospital areas. as long as parking is considered....

02:03:48 Mat Wahlstrom: Again with my last question: I would like to hear from the presenters who their loyalties are aligned with?

02:06:27 Mary McKenzie: The closing off of streets in the core is problematic because of freeway access.

02:07:45 Espen Correll: great point! Hillcrest is Multigenerational.

02:08:16 Adrian D: It would be great to see plant walls on buildings, SD native plants, more greenery throughout Hillcrest. -Thank you.

02:08:42 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: Yes. Who the people are that live, work, visit, in Hillcrest? Thanks Oscar.

02:08:48 Mat Wahlstrom: The reason I ask is, looking at Mr. Velasco's site (<https://www.citythinkers.com/about>), I see that both presenters are mutual "current clients & collaborators," and his firm has at least 3 City-registered lobbyists with projects in Hillcrest -- most notably Atlantis Group, the lobbyist behind the original "Hillcrest Gateway Specific Plan" that is claimed excuse for this metastatic Plan. So I'm concerned with all the proposed high-rises in the backgrounds

02:11:21 Mary McKenzie: But those data on population/housing are only through 2017. A lot probably has changed since then.

02:11:39 Espen Correll: Adrian, We have many local artists; it would be ideal to include their work(s) ---and, research shows that Art/plants reduce stress for drivers and pedestrians.

02:12:48 Amdahl Design @KyleAmdahl.com: I thought I understood that heights limits are now open within 1/2 mile of public transit? is that all of Hillcrest?

02:13:30 Tom Mullaney: "Complete Communities" program,. yes