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City of Petaluma, CA  
Site Plan and Architectural Review Committee

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Minutes

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Regular Meeting  
City Council Chambers  
City Hall, 11 English Street

March 25, 2004  
3:00 p.m.  
Petaluma, CA

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Telephone: 707-778-4301

E-Mail: [cdd@ci.petaluma.ca.us](mailto:cdd@ci.petaluma.ca.us)

8

FAX: 707-778-4498

Web Page: <http://www.ci.petaluma.ca.us>

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The Site Plan and Architectural Review Committee encourages applicants or their representatives to be available at the meeting to answer questions so that no agenda item need be deferred to a later date due to a lack of pertinent information.

14

Roll Call: Present: Teresa Barrett, Janet Gracyk, Mary Shearer, Jack Rittenhouse\*  
Absent: Terry Kosewic

17

\*Chairperson

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19

Staff: Irene Borba, Senior Planner  
Anne Windsor, Administrative Secretary

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Approval of Minutes: Minutes of March 11, 2004 were approved as amended. M/S Rittenhouse/Barrett, 4-0, Shearer abstained.

25

Committee Members' Report: PC reviewed the General Plan alternatives. Many issues – would like SPARC members to participate. Chair Rittenhouse welcomed Mary Schearer.

26

27

Correspondence: Letter from Caltrans regarding Item I and comments from the Bike Committee regarding Item II were passed out at places

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29

Public Comment: None.

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Legal Resource Statement: Was noted on the agenda.

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Appeal Statement: Was noted on the agenda

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**SITE PLAN AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE BUSINESS:**  
**PRELIMINARY REVIEW:**

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**I. MARIN-SONOMA NARROWS PROJECT**

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The applicant, CalTrans is requesting a SPARC preliminary review of three

40

1 proposed aesthetic concepts for the Marin-Sonoma Narrows Project.

2

3 Bill Fleming, Cal Trans: Introduced Thomas Krakow from DKS Associates.

4

5 Tom Krakow: Gave background of the project.

6

7 Ray Akkawi, Caltrans: Presented the four aesthetic concepts for the Sonoma-Marin  
8 narrows project.

9

10 Mary Shearer: Do not think of the area between Petaluma and Novato as barren and  
11 rocky.

12

13 Public comment opened/closed:

14

15 **Committee Comments:**

16

17 Committee Member Kosewic: Thanked Caltrans for bringing this before the Committee.  
18 Regarding retaining walls, my preference would be a rock retaining wall - feel it would  
19 have some history behind it. Would prefer the overpass to be smooth.

20

21 Committee Member Gracyk: We need to think in terms of the entire corridor and there is  
22 water, however, the water is horizontal. We have hills and I would go in that direction.  
23 Sonoma field stone rocks would make sense. The concrete rock is the worse choice.  
24 Make the overpass simple, a plain retaining wall would be ok – if people want a pattern  
25 do a rib pattern that looks like the Sonoma County hills. Different proportions on the  
26 panels would be preferable. Loosing the elms is a shame; highly recommend a row of  
27 elms be put back in. Encourage native landscape plants and shrubs, for example flannel  
28 bushes, coffee berries – hope that is a direction you will consider.

29

30 Committee Member Barrett: I agree that is a tragedy to loose those trees. Simple is  
31 better for an overpass. Do not like the rock. Like the idea of mimicking the knolls – it  
32 would be pleasing to the eye. Would prefer money go into landscaping and canopy trees  
33 even if they are put far back.

34

35 Committee Member Shearer: I like the wave, without the curl and this would be in  
36 keeping with Sonoma County. The overpass is for a particular use, I would put the same  
37 pattern on the overpass as the wall. Would support trees away from the roadway.

38

39 Chair Rittenhouse: Thanked Caltrans. Do not want to give direction on this overpass and  
40 retaining wall as if the design would dictate the future narrows project which is far away.  
41 Do not want to see fake rocks. Want the overpass to be smooth and simple. Would like  
42 the retaining wall to be smooth as well, although I liked Janet's idea to mimic the knolls.  
43 Concur with the statement of the elms and replanting the trees further from the roadway.

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1 **II. PETALUMA VALLEY PLAZA, NORTH MCDOWELL BOULEVARD,**  
2 **McDowell Boulevard @ Rainier Avenue, APN: 007-380-005; 027.**

3 **File: 04-PRE-0133**

4 **Planner: Betsi Lewitter**

5  
6 The applicant is requesting a SPARC preliminary review for a proposal to  
7 construct 398, 484 square feet of commercial space on a 36-acre site.

8  
9 Steve Arago, CSW-Stueber Stroeh: Introduced the project team. Gave an overview of  
10 the project.

11  
12 Craig Johnson, Nadel Architects: Presented the architecture.

13  
14 David Casty, DSL: Addressed the parking. The tenants want 5/1000 and the City  
15 requires 3/1000 so the ratio of 4/1000 was established as a compromise.

16  
17 There was discussion regarding the proposed Rainier interchange and how that would  
18 impact the project.

19  
20 Committee Member Shearer: Seemed a conflict having the plaza areas near possible uses  
21 that are drive through. Do not like the neon and drive-through restaurants on McDowell.  
22 Would prefer the plaza areas more on the interior of the site. There is nothing friendly  
23 about 2/3 of the site.

24  
25 Chair Rittenhouse: Trying to see how you are getting in and out of the site.

26  
27 **Public comment opened/closed:**

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29 **Committee Comments:**

30  
31 **Site Plan:**

32  
33 Chair Rittenhouse: Do not see a clear diagram for the users to circulate inside the site.  
34 You move into the site through a plaza and are then dumped into a sea of parking.  
35 Consider flipping the buildings (Major 1 and 3) and separate 3 and 4 for Lynch Creek  
36 access. Need a corridor ? Walkways between Major 1 and 3 connect only on 1 spot,  
37 looks like a partial pedestrian walkway. Some areas of the parking plan, near garden  
38 center on Major 3 show no landscaping at all. Bike committee has some good  
39 suggestions. Want some landscaping along the walls of the major tenants – need to  
40 soften the structures. Continue the park and bike access at Lynch Creek trail. Pad D,  
41 drive through restaurant – if it went away or was moved you would have a real park that  
42 began and ended. Do not think a drive-through with neon lights is appropriate there. It  
43 would enhance that edge of the property if that building was moved or removed  
44 completely. This proposal does not seem to have an overall concept for the development.  
45 Want to know what the experience will be on North McDowell as you drive by the  
46 Center – would suggest looking at that further. Plaza areas seem to be the left over

1 spaces. Encouraged the applicant to look at the plaza areas and make them different  
2 rather than all the same and lessen the paving. PUD development standards – any  
3 buildings approved will need to come to SPARC.

4  
5 Committee Member Kosewic: Like that the sea of parking is hidden from McDowell.  
6 The architecture has to be befitting of what faces the street – do not want it to be the back  
7 of the building. Have a problem with the site access. Would like to see you use  
8 Professional and Rainier for access. The two major parcels are really large. Put Major 3  
9 next to Rainier and make the creek part of the project so it's not stuck off to the side. I  
10 am a proponent of mixed use – it would be nice if you could do something else. Would  
11 be nice to have some pedestrian access through the parking lot that gave you a feeling  
12 that pedestrians are included in the experience. Would be nice if it was more than just a  
13 shopping center. Would be nice to start a project with pedestrian access.

14  
15 Committee Member Gracyk: Thanked the applicant for bringing the project to SPARC  
16 so early. I agree with most of the prior statements If there is a way to avoid another light  
17 on McDowell that would definitely be worth exploring. You are going in the right  
18 direction of creating plazas and pedestrian pathways. Explore bringing the creek back to  
19 where it is now so it does not become a blight. The City may want to maintain the park –  
20 if it's native grasses you will need trees also – people may think it is an abandoned park.  
21 The park could be used in conjunction with restaurants. Currently there are not enough  
22 eyes on the open space. Tot lot is problematic – good it is close to McDowell for the  
23 residents nearby, however, will be traffic and noise. Could tie yourself down using the  
24 circles for the plaza. Keep an open mind about the plazas. Plaza near cross section F –  
25 two plazas are not related to each other. Where there is a water feature it is not near a  
26 building. Need good paving, no stamped concrete – looks bad over time. Scored  
27 concrete ok, pavers are better. Need a clear access way. Avoid off set parking between  
28 the two majors. Will need to put the required number of trees in the parking area.  
29 Planting plan along McDowell – incorporate more canopy trees. Lynch Creek  
30 connection is critical and will add more people on bikes. Want plants used in front of  
31 and against the buildings, particularly the large majors. The free way site will need some  
32 addressing as well.

33  
34 Committee Member Barrett: Will not reiterate what others have said. Terry is correct  
35 about the cars being hidden from McDowell. McDowell Boulevard needs some  
36 attention. Glad to see the public art you were suggesting and some water features.  
37 Weigh in heavily against drive-through restaurants – they are not for this site. Encourage  
38 you to have sit down restaurants or a food court where you can get food and take it out to  
39 the public areas. Agree that you should not divert the creek because to do so will result  
40 in a park that becomes a dead zone. It's difficult to talk in an outdoor area for children  
41 when you are right up against McDowell. Better visibility for Major 3 if it is closer to  
42 Rainier. Agree to concentrate on car entrances at Professional and Rainier. Believe you  
43 need to connect to the Lynch Creek trail – it will enhance the 101 corridor. You have  
44 massive walls beside the proposed park and facing 101 that do not look good.

45  
46 Committee Member Shearer: Want a shopping area that attracts people – want a clearer

1 picture of how will people will get from one place to another.. Like the idea of leaving  
2 the creek in its natural area where everyone can see it and then it would enhance the site.  
3 Would prefer not to have drive through restaurants on McDowell.

4  
5 Committee Member Kosewic: If you have nothing but pavement between the buildings  
6 people want to get in an out. Agree with more landscaping near and in front of the  
7 buildings. If you approach from the pedestrian point of view it would slow people down  
8 and they may shop more.

9  
10 Committee Member Gracyk: The previous application had the creek where it would  
11 wash the parking lot.

12  
13 Chair Rittenhouse: Want to expand on the idea of the creek. Flip flop Major 1 and 3,  
14 separate 3 and 4 and keep the creek in the center of the site.

15  
16 **Architecture:**

17  
18 Committee Member Shearer: Believe art deco is ageless – do not know if it is suitable  
19 for this center. Want it to be easy on the eye – a clean design can be kept looking good  
20 over time. Do not like to see a lot of bare walls, like windows and views into the store so  
21 it entices people to come in. Am looking for some functional charm on the east side.

22  
23 Committee Member Barrett: My concern is visibility from North McDowell and the  
24 freeway. Big blank walls and signs will not make it. Want a creative use of landscaping  
25 – it helps with the noise and the air quality from traffic.

26  
27 Committee Member Gracyk: I am an advocate for modern. Do not want to refer back to  
28 the historical side of Petaluma. This part of town is all new and therefore the shopping  
29 center needs to be new. Can't understand the intent from the drawings presented. The  
30 smaller buildings look to have more promise than the large buildings. If the smaller  
31 buildings are shallow it loses its effect. Deeply set windows could work. Agree with  
32 other statements about blank walls.

33  
34 Committee Member Kosewic: The front is barely passable. Instead of one continuous  
35 line on the majors, go in and out and use some landscaping. On the back, it's one straight  
36 line – put in a useful awning for the truck delivery and man doors. Will break up the  
37 massing. Equipment on the roof can break of the roofline. Neon as an accent can work  
38 out well as long as it is done tastefully.

39  
40 Chair Rittenhouse: Big box is a tough architectural feat and challenge. This is not art  
41 modern – it is a large split face building. This is not what we are looking for on the east  
42 side. You need to reinvent. Suggest steel and glass canopies and good colors,  
43 landscaping adjacent to the buildings, varying the parapet heights. Vary the materials  
44 and the parapets. Canopy entries could be varied. Shop spaces are not developed enough  
45 – just stucco ideas. If you move the sight plan around, can have a central theme to it.  
46 Encourage the applicant to look at the Kohl's site and how it developed. For the shop

1 and pad buildings, a good example is the Cold Stone building in the Safeway shopping  
2 center. Elevations from the freeway will be critical.

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5 **III. 611 BAKER STREET, APN: 006-301-012**  
6 **File: 04-PRE-0062**

7  
8 The applicant is requesting a SPARC preliminary review for a new SFD at 611  
9 Baker Street.

10  
11 Marty Gold: Gave some history and background of the site.

12  
13 Joel DeSilva: Presented the architecture.

14  
15 **Public comment opened/closed:**

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17 **Committee Comments:**

18  
19 Committee Member Barrett: By moving the garage on the front house to the back, the  
20 house would have more curb appeal.

21  
22 Committee Member Shearer: Looking at your proposal and how it would fit into the  
23 neighborhood. Very few homes present a shoulder to the street. Appreciate the wood  
24 siding; the homes that are unattractive present a shoulder to the street. Would like to see  
25 the front house present a front to the street. The colors sounded a bit busy. Find a color  
26 for the front and then reverse in the rear house. Can use a trellis between the houses.

27  
28 Joel: Went with a few different colors to bring together the feeling of the other houses in  
29 the neighborhood.

30  
31 Committee Member Kosewic: Baker Street has a real mix of houses on it. Believe you  
32 tried to replicate the cheapest building here. Believe it's a little too simple. Improve the  
33 front by putting more windows in the garage that face the street. Make one roof a cable  
34 end, either the garage or the main house, nice if you could lower the roof. Parking is  
35 right next to the garage, pull it away a little then the parking disappears – it eliminates the  
36 right angle of the parking space and the garage. The back building looks like a building  
37 stuck on the pad – incorporate retaining walls. Follow the ground a little more – would  
38 make it more interesting, will eliminate blank spaces. Have potential here. Have  
39 enormous potential – would like to see you use it.

40  
41 Chair Rittenhouse: There are a few things you can do to enhance the project.  
42 Approximately 30% of site is covered in driveway – believe that's the wrong way to go.  
43 The parking in front does not have curb appeal. Move the 611 building forward and put  
44 garage in back. Pull 613 down closer to 611 which eliminates some slope and will  
45 therefore eliminates much of the driveway. Would free up the front yard and the appeal  
46 to the neighborhood. There are a lot of blank walls. Utilize the south elevation for light.

1 They are too plain and boxy – no rhythm and differentiation. If 613 comes forward you  
2 can eliminate half of the stairs. Flat roof over the garage can be incorporated into outside  
3 area. Flat roof does not match the neighborhood. Need to address the site plan first.

4  
5 Committee Member Kosewic: Can eliminate the 20 ft. driveway by sprinkling the back  
6 house .

7  
8 Committee Member Gracyk: Concerned about some private space for the first house.  
9 Providing a front porch on the front building and separating the garage from the first  
10 building and put outdoor space between the two. If you move the back house forward,  
11 make the entrance more graceful. The flat roof on the garage needs to be made into  
12 outdoor space, if you use this design.

13  
14 Committee Member Kosewic: If you pull the back house forward, you could put it across  
15 the lot and the put the garage underneath.

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18 **COMMITTEE BUSINESS:**

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20 **IV. REPORTS:**

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22 **Planning Staff Reports:** None.

23 **Liaison Reports:** Planning Commission looked at the General Plan alternatives.

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26 **V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

- 27 Hansen House
- 28 Boulevard Apartments
- 29 Marina Office Building

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33 **Adjournment:** 6:22