

***Rockridge Safeway
Stakeholder Meeting #1 – Meeting Notes
September 10, 2008***

Overall Objective – “Working toward a collaborative solution”

- Collect and incorporate the ideas and suggestions generated by this group and create a plan everyone can embrace/support

Today’s Objective -

- Share individual perspective and feel heard

- Establish norms for our process

** Susan from Concerned Neighbors asked if she could audio tape record the meeting. The group voted and permitted the tape recording.*

Stakeholders:

RCPC,

Concerned Neighbors,

Contiguous Neighbors,

Contiguous Merchants,

RDA,

CENA,

Safeway,

2 independents – an independent Berkeley building owner (Ito Ripsteen) and an independent Oakland neighbor who is an attorney (Fred Hertz)

Agenda

- Introduction/Context

- Stakeholder Committee Dialogue

- Close/Next Steps

- Public Comments

Hopes for this meeting

- Contiguous Neighbors- Clarification of selection of stakeholders – Several people objected to Safeway’s hand picking additional people to sit at the table that do not represent established organizations or groups of Stakeholders.

- Concerned Neighbors- Process that is transparent and bought into

- Contiguous Merchants- Form a Base that allows us to think expansively about solutions that benefit the community and Safeway.

- RCPC: Get people's perspective on the table and establish a process that we can all support
- Safeway: Hope that the level of trust increases
- Ito Ripsteen; Everyone is heard and gives careful consideration is factored in when sharing
- CENA: Would like to know why we're here – what this is all about – what's the purpose?
- RDA; Can we consider creative options when problem solving, rather than negatives. What is our sphere of influence?

Ground Rules

- Remain Open
- Share comments equitably (with regard to time)
- Support each other
- Listen to understand
- Ensure quality of conversation
- Stay focused and present
- Respect time and process
- Don't speak unless called on
- Respect/hold to public comment period of time

** While the stakeholders had already previously received the themes compiled from the phone interviews, hard copies were handed out, reviewed and approved by the stakeholders.*

Dialogue Process:

Share (3 minutes)- Each Stakeholder was asked to answer the questions below:

- What is your perspective on this issue?
- What are your interests in getting involved?

Reflect (1 minute): One person was asked to reflect back what had just been said and the questions below were to be their guide:

- What did you learn?
- What interests did you hear behind the perspective?
- What part of their perspective can you appreciate?

- Use post-it notes for Questions & Comments – we will address them in next meeting or put on agenda
- Use journals to record comments regarding issues/concerns shared

Stakeholder Committee Dialogue

Susan – representing Concerned Neighbors

- Save our neighborhood
- Formed in response to tremendous uproar re: Safeway’s plans
- Scale of development is outrageous
- Maintain size and scale of current satellite store
- Keep this store a satellite to the larger store at Broadway & 51st Street
- Maintain Oakland’s economic gold mine/ tax base that is currently on College Avenue.

Patricia – representing Contiguous Neighbors

- Continuation of ongoing conversations we’ve had with Safeway – with very little response
- Has quality of life concerns, and makes the following requests:
 - Relocate trash compactor- Noise and smell is too close to residential property
 - Enforce 5-minute idling time of truck unloading
 - Monitor and restrict noise levels of truck unloading
 - Limit the hours during which the loading dock is open, banning early morning deliveries
- Concerns about the future store voiced by others include: size, C-31 zoning, and the incongruous design.
- Additional requests for renovation of the store include:
 - Establish buffer zone on Safeway property adjoining residential property lines
 - Move main entrance and driveway for care parking and trucks away from adjoining residential property lines.
 - Minimize traffic flow on College, Claremont, and Alcatraz Avenues
 - Build privacy fence of sufficient, but not imposing height
 - Security lighting for store and parking lot cannot create light pollution for residential neighbors
 - Trash compactor moved inside.

Joel for Fred Hertz – independent

- Alternate for Fred – no prepared comments

- Fred is a knowledgeable land use lawyer
- Focused on architecture (interior and exterior)
- Community impact – charitable provisions
- Reasonable tenancy
- Assist financially

Sara – representing RDA

- Won't repeat some of the points that have already been made
- Scale and Design – affect unique block
- As a merchant concerned about impact to others on the street
- Safeway hasn't taken design to creative level
- Question about independent stores and Safeway's role as landlord
- Fabric/strength of this block
- Claremont and College are GATEWAY to Rockridge neighborhood
- Concerned about increased traffic congestion

Dean – representing CENA (800 members)

- Representing 800 members
- Size – the store can be renovated but should remain the size it is now – like the Grand Avenue store
- Traffic is a major issue – understand these issues well
- Health concerns
- Strong on keeping design the same

Ito – independent

- Know that there's a party at your neighbor's house and want to be included
- Neighbor and property owner – care about vitality on this street
- How do we maintain retail vitality?
- Echo what is across the street – there's a very good mix of merchants, this business needs to reflect what is already there
- Explore using Claremont to address issues on College Avenue
- Happy about the gas station site being a good reuse as retail

Todd – Safeway

- Come up with something that addresses the issues he is hearing tonight
- Heard the questions
- May not get everything discussed
- He wants to be an open book on this – “everything is on the table from his perspective”
- Safeway has some non-negotiables – will be honest about these
- Wants to give strong assurances of what is possible, doable, acceptable
- He will go back to Safeway’s management – sell solutions back to the organization
- Bring to market a store that is better than what’s there now

Stu – representing RCPC

- Representative of RCPC
- Issues (size and parking) are already on the table
- Rockridge is a valuable shopping area to Oakland and must be maintained
- C31 Zoning – preservation
- Retail impact – tenants for small stores, want local merchants, no national chains
- Plan “Community feels proud of”

John – Representative for the Contiguous Merchants across from Safeway (Owner/Developer of retail) He stated this is his perspective and “that of my tenants”

- Appreciates value of Safeway – it’s an important relationship and has been a good relationship
- 40 years in Rockridge
- Preserve quality and character of College Ave shopping experience, and maintain scale and character of Rockridge (the scale)
- “Not bad impact” – don’t want this to snowball

Bike Rack/Parking Lot Items

- Address the concerns regarding stakeholder independents – 5 out of 9 people at the table want to discuss this issue and put it on the agenda for the next meeting
- Secure a PA system for the next meeting
- Review the schedule of meetings – 4 out of 9 people want to discuss – can send some alternate dates out via email – suggestion was made to have all meetings held on

Wednesdays, specifically the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month so that there is a two week period between the Stakeholder meetings and that then the groups can caucus their membership for their direct feedback prior to the next public Stakeholder meeting.

Suggestions for Agenda #2

1. Process issues – address the concerns regarding the independent stakeholders – what was the criteria used in selecting the stakeholders. Several stakeholders expressed concern about the two independents during the stakeholder portion of the meeting. A specific concern was that Fred Hertz shares an office with Safeway’s land use attorney.
2. Safeway parameters (non-negotiables) – Todd to provide details on what is on the table and what is off, with the level of openness – add in the “barely” areas as well
3. Size*- Nine of the nine members would like to discuss the size of the proposed store
4. Design* (if time permits)– five of the nine members would like to discuss the design of the proposed store

* The topic of prioritizing issues to be discussed in subsequent meetings was voted on. The group agreed to discuss the issues in the following order: 1) Size, 2) Design, 3) Traffic. The other issues, noise, health/safety, parking, and tenants will be voted on later. Size – all nine members at the table would like to spend time discussing size

Other topics for follow-on meetings:

- Traffic
- Noise
- Health & Safety
- Parking
- Tenants

Resources needed for the next meeting:

1. Reference materials – current size vs. proposed size – plans and specs
2. Architect

Public Comments

- A lot of good will here - Stakeholders are the representatives of large groups of people in the community There is a fundamental difference in equivalency between the groups and the 2 individually selected people.
- Having the main entrance and exit on Claremont Avenue running along Alcatraz property lines is unacceptable. He said that the main entrance with the **driveway** along the residential property lines was what is objected to

- The original store is a hideous site – the landscaping is awful -consensus that we're against this proposal
- Be clear about who is bringing what information to these meetings, e.g. maps, plans, etc.
- Hudson Street neighbors are not against the size of this plan but are concerned with the design – The architecture needs to match the surrounding architecture
- Alcatraz neighbors are concerned about health and safety issues – the pollutants, emissions, increases dangers of health risks, e.g. cancer, benzene, an ethyl benzene emissions
- How are the 6 groups organizing to stay focused on key issues?
- Extremely concerned with the term “non-negotiable” in a negotiation process
- Concern with visual of hills might be impaired by a tall building that fills the entire site – concerned about lack of open space – can we use the space for different purposes – more open space
- ULTRA group representative – main concern about this plan is in keeping the area a walkable area, pedestrian-friendly
- Concerned that Safeway may steamroll this process – will it be authentic? Traffic concerns – this plan will impact traffic issues
- Concerned about height, square footage and set-backs. Need to have land use regulations at the meetings – are the notes/information available? Requested that the zoning restrictions on the site that currently are in force be brought to the meeting; What could Safeway do that would NOT require conditional use permits.
- The term non-negotiable is not appropriate; Need to have visuals of the proposal; Concern about losing open space
- 2 independents chosen by Safeway at the table is out of line, How will this data be used?
- People remember the history with Dreyer's and that process – we're asking will that happen again? Use this opportunity to establish vision of what we want for our community