

**Minutes  
Beach/Edinger Special Council Meeting  
City Council/Redevelopment Agency  
City of Huntington Beach**

Thursday, April 17, 2008  
5:00 PM – Huntington Beach Public Library  
7111 Talbert Avenue  
Huntington Beach, California 92648

**A video recording of the 5:00 PM meeting is  
on file in the Office of the City Clerk and is archived at  
[www.surfcity-hb.org/Government/agendas/](http://www.surfcity-hb.org/Government/agendas/)**

**Call to Order**

Mayor Pro Tem Bohr called the special meeting of the City Council/Redevelopment Agency of the City of Huntington Beach to order at 5:09 PM, in Rooms C and D at Huntington Beach Public Library.

**City Council/Redevelopment Agency Roll Call**

Present: Hansen, Hardy, Bohr, Coerper, Green, and Carchio  
Absent: Cook (The City Council granted permission for the absence of Mayor Cook pursuant to Resolution No. 2001-54)

(Councilmember Hardy arrived at 5:15 PM)

**The City Clerk Announced Late Communications**

Pursuant to the Brown (Open Meetings) Act, City Clerk Joan L. Flynn announced the following late communications received by the City Clerk's Office pertaining to the Special Meeting:

Communication submitted by Mayor Debbie Cook requesting permission to be absent pursuant to Resolution No. 2001-54.

Communications submitted by the following individuals stating their opinions pertaining to proposed changes to land use issues on Beach Boulevard: Huntington Beach Automobile Dealers Association, Inc., Bob Miller, Owner Toyota of Huntington Beach and Bill Demarest, General Manager, DeLillo Chevrolet.

**The Following Communications Were Received During the Meeting**

PowerPoint presentation submitted by project consultants Freedman Tung and Bottomley, dated April 17, 2008, and titled *Beach and Edinger Revitalization Strategy and Envisioned Future Corridors*.

Communication submitted by Robert E. Dingwall, President, Huntington Beach Tomorrow, dated April 17, 2008, and titled *Huntington Beach Tomorrow Position Statement*.

### **City Attorney Excused**

A motion was made by Coerper, second Green to excuse City Attorney Jennifer McGrath from the remainder of tonight's meeting. The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Hansen, Bohr, Coerper, Green, and Carchio  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: Hardy (arrived at 5:15 PM) and Cook

### **Public Comments**

(The numbers following speakers' comments reflect the approximate point in time in the archived video the speaker appears at <http://www.surfcity-hb.org/government/agendas>)

Mayor Pro Tem Bohr informed the public that tonight's scheduled presentation would take approximately one hour, and invited anyone unable to stay for the entire presentation to come forward and speak under public comments. He also announced that public comments would again be heard following the presentation.

**Robert Dingwall**, President of Huntington Beach Tomorrow (HBT), read from HBT's submitted statement in opposition to the proposed Specific Plan that addressed points of concern involving conflicting recommendations, amended proposals, and new projects along the Edinger Corridor stating that it requires more time for careful review prior to approval. He urged Council to withhold any and all approvals until the entire spectrum of all land use along the Edinger Corridor can be considered together with their inter-relationships. (01:41)

Councilmember Hansen asked President Dingwall to schedule a meeting with him to discuss HBT's official position in further detail.

**Tim Geddes** spoke in opposition to the proposed Specific Plan and echoed concurrence with comments raised by HBT President Dingwall. He voiced concerns related to the proposed Plan's mixed-use elements, high density, potential parking problems and increased traffic, and associated impacts of these concerns, and urged Council to oppose the proposed Specific Plan. (08:10)

### **(City Council/Redevelopment Agency) Beach/Edinger Corridor Study Held — A Presentation Given by the Project Consultants, Freedman Tung and Bottomley and Tierra West Advisors, Discussing Recommendations for the Beach/Edinger Specific Plan in Response to the Six Community Meetings.**

Interim City Administrator Paul Emery stated that tonight's presentation was a culmination of six community meetings and many hours of work by the consultant and City staff. He introduced lead consultant, Michael Freedman of Freedman Tung and Bottomley, to present the current status of the Beach Boulevard and Edinger Avenue ("Beach/Edinger") Corridor Specific Plan.

Consultant Freedman introduced the following Beach/Edinger Corridor Specific Plan team consultants who would be available to answer questions at the end of tonight's presentation: Tim Mulrenan, Tierra West Advisors, Terence Austin, Austin-Foust Associates, Inc., and Erik Calloway, Freedman Tung and Bottomley. Consultant Freedman then presented a PowerPoint report that included 242 slides titled *Beach and Edinger Revitalization Strategy and Envisioned Future Corridors*.

Consultant Freedman highlighted the purpose and objectives of tonight's meeting by summarizing the Plan's framework, the community meetings held, and input from select focus groups. He provided an historical overview of the Beach Boulevard Corridor and factors that influenced its development pattern. He noted that "forces of change" are occurring, and these transitions would affect the existing retail and commercial development patterns that are no longer sustainable. He outlined principles for Smart Growth by focusing on patterns for city centers, greater densities, and the envisioned forms of the Town Center Core, and Neighborhood Core and Edge. Consultant Freedman shared the findings of the market-demand analysis and identified the opportunities for reinvestment along the Corridor. He concluded with exhibits depicting the transitional concepts and the approaches to the parkway (residential and neighborhood) and Boulevard (Town Center and Neighborhood) designs that are envisioned to enhance the corridors by building a more sustainable city pattern.

During the presentation, Consultant Freedman made the following recommendations for Council's consideration:

1. Accommodate the market's preference for retail concentrations at major crossroads.
2. Plan the corridor retail as part of a supportable city and regional hierarchy of centers.
3. Realign corridors with the forces of market demand - as well as to address long-term mobility and sustainability, "plan real centers."
4. Bolster the continued success of Bella Terra, establish a policy framework that supports the continued augmentation of Bella Terra with critical features that cater to contemporary consumer preferences.
5. Reverse the creeping disinvestment by identifying the "highest and best use(s)" for the Corridor as a whole (and as part of a healthy city/region).
6. Maximize property owner return on property investments, extend residential entitlements to all/most properties along the Corridor.
7. As resources allow, implement street improvements that provide environments that promote and support the desired types of existing and new investment.
8. Support the retention and expansion of auto dealerships: Permit existing auto dealerships to expand anywhere on the Corridor; encourage new auto sales dealership development along segments closer to 405 Freeway, particularly north of Five Points; and city will work with existing auto dealerships to investigate the potential for offsite overflow fleet storage.
9. Make the most of existing assets present along the Corridors by adopting policies that vary in relation to existing conditions.

10. Ensure that each increment of new public or private investment contributes to the development of an increasingly sustainable future city and region.

Councilmember Green questioned whether grocery stores would be included in the proposed Plan. Consultant Freedman described how neighborhood serving retail would include anchor supermarkets, including specialty grocery stores and other stores that provide personal/convenience services.

### **Public Comments**

**Dave Mootchnik** questioned if the concept of increased development in the Bella Terra area could reduce current traffic levels, stating his opinion that traffic will not be able to be contained in the proposed environment. He urged Council not to consider drafting a preliminary Environmental Impact Report (EIR) based upon the minimal impact information available. He discussed the complex process of developing a Specific Plan, and urged Council to further identify the impacts before making a decision. (1:35:05)

**Steve Dodge**, owner of Huntington Executive Park (southeast corner of Beach Boulevard and Edinger Avenue), voiced opposition to the proposed Plan's four-story height limitation for his site. He informed Council of his desire to construct new development of significant, grand-scale nature that would exceed four stories, while serving as the northern "gateway" to Huntington Beach. (1:38:06)

**Maury Golcher** stated that he is in the process of purchasing the property at the corner of Five Points Plaza (the existing gas station/shopping center site), and thanked consultants and staff for tonight's presentation and vision. He voiced opposition to the proposed Plan's height limitation of four to six stories for his site and discussed restrictions imposed by the Fire Department for six-story structures. He explained that for his financial pro forma to be of benefit, he requests at least eight stories be allowed at his site, although he would prefer to build 10 to 12 stories. He added that the increased height would allow him to design a magnificent structure and gateway to our downtown. (1:40:00)

**Bijan Sassounian**, owner of the shopping center at the southeast corner of Beach Boulevard/Atlanta Avenue ("Beach/Atlanta"), voiced concerns related to setback issues, the need for height incentives to ensure more open space, increased parking, and financial benefits to offset costs of new construction, (i.e., increased property taxes and other costs associated with new development). He also discussed cost constraints and regulations of height restrictions, and urged Council to be open-minded on these issues raised. (1:41:30)

### **Council Comments**

Councilmember Carchio thanked consultants for tonight's presentation, stating his support of the proposed Plan. He indicated that improvements are desperately needed in this area, as are additional opportunities for increased sales tax revenue. He proposed that Beach Boulevard needs to become more profitable by building developments designed to successfully compete with like developments in other cities along Beach Boulevard. He voiced concerns that our city is overburdened by existing older centers, and stated the need to partner with businesses/property owners along Beach Boulevard for new development. He stated his preference to explore increased height limitations where warranted and higher-end dealerships to generate

more revenue for the city. He acknowledged the anticipated resistance from citizens and Council, and the importance of tough decisions being made in order to move forward.

Councilmember Green asked consultants how they arrived at recommended height limitations throughout the area. Consultant Freedman explained that although there is a strong demand for housing (the city's best chance for revitalization), the projects won't financially work unless a minimum of 60-65 units are allowed per acre, which translates to a four-story development. He stated his concurrence of greater height at the centers, particularly at Bella Terra. Consultant Mulrenan further discussed feasible financial thresholds of tearing down existing retail/commercial centers to rebuild new, and varying price points of construction that all factor into height limitation decisions.

Councilmember Green asked why more residential is proposed when the city is already perceived to be a "bedroom community." Consultant Freedman explained that the city has no where near the market demand for retail development as currently zoned from one end to the other along the Beach and Edinger corridors. The proposed Plan recommends for areas of non-retail zones to break up the retail/commercial with office, hotel, hospital and other new investments, noting that the engine for change is housing. He also addressed areas within the city that warrant multi-story development including Beach/Atlanta, Five Points Plaza and Bella Terra. Councilmember Green expressed her desire to include green building principles in the proposed Specific Plan.

Councilmember Coerper thanked consultants for tonight's superb presentation, and requested to know the number of people who attended the community meetings. Consultant Freedman indicated that attendance was average to low, with approximately 100 persons at each meeting, a majority of which support the Plan's "vision." He discussed the dichotomy that exists of those who express concern over potential increased traffic congestion and the City's need to become more competitive in development. Councilmember Coerper questioned projected financial benefits of residential versus commercial development, and related improvement costs and traffic flow concerns at Beach/Edinger. Consultant Freedman discussed his recommendations that significant new development along the corridors occur simultaneously with or after additional traffic intersection improvements are done, beginning with Beach/Edinger, as well as at Talbert Avenue. He referred to the term MAND (maximum amount of new development) tied to increasing traffic capacity at the intersections, and that development has to be combined with intersection improvements and limited to the capacity amount those intersections will allow.

Councilmember Coerper questioned (1) financial benefits of the Plan's proposed residential development and (2) height limitation of a potential hotel at Beach/Atlanta. Consultant Freedman explained that the proposed ownership housing at Bella Terra would provide indirect financial benefits to the Redevelopment Agency through capturing tax increment, while retail and commercial would directly benefit the City's General Fund. In terms of height limitations of a prospective hotel at Beach/Atlanta, Consultant Freedman supports up to an eight-story, boutique or sprawling hotel similar to the existing Hyatt and Hilton hotels versus a tower hotel.

Consultant Mulrenan discussed findings of mixed-use development to have the greatest financial benefits to the City, identifying that property tax revenue from proposed housing would be significant, as well. He discussed the decrease in traffic realized when a diversity of uses are created, accounting for shorter trips. In terms of congestion, he reported findings of 80% created by long-term use and afternoon peak usage, stating that we need to identify improvements and incrementally decrease traffic. He stated that immediate improvements are

recommended for Beach/Edinger to be proactive to offset traffic congestion and he discussed the regional transportation currently in place.

Councilmember Hardy questioned the number of units per acre proposed for residential density. Consultant Freedman identified 60 to 65 units per acre for four-story height limits outside of center nodes, easily above 65 units at five-story developments at neighborhood centers, and 80 to 85 units per acre at eight story developments near Bella Terra. Discussion ensued about the City's perceived restrictive parking requirements and the level of specificity that would be addressed during Specific Plan development. Councilmember Hardy also questioned the concept of less traffic for residential development versus retail. Consultant Freedman explained how street improvements required for high-density development provide an increased traffic flow and that when mixed use is created within an exclusive commercial corridor, traffic conditions improve because the overall distance that people are traveling within the region is reduced.

Councilmember Hansen thanked Consultant Freedman for the presentation and voiced support to embrace the vision of the proposed Plan, stating that an increase in population is coming, and the proposed vision begins to address sustainability not just for Huntington Beach, but the entire region. He acknowledged that the retail/commercial uses built 30 to 40 years ago, must evolve to meet today's needs. He voiced concurrence with comments made during community meetings for only pursuing highest-quality development for the future, and discussed appreciation for our City's newest developments of Bella Terra, Hilton and Hyatt hotels, and the upcoming Pacific City and Strand projects, which include high-end boutique hotels and retail shopping.

Mayor Pro Tem Bohr thanked consultants and staff for tonight's presentation, stating that most of his questions/concerns have been addressed. He requested parking actaries be studied for mixed-use development, and expressed his desire for incentive options be offered to the single property owner at the northeast corner of Beach/Edinger for new development. He also indicated his desire to keep the proposed 156,000-square foot retail at Bella Terra II to maximize sales tax revenue, then adding residential.

Consultant Freedman thanked staff from the departments of Economic Development, Planning and Public Works, stating that a lot of hard work has gone into the proposed Specific Plan. He added that if Council provides preliminary approval of ideas presented tonight, the EIR process would begin. He also added a timeline that would include 60 days to draft the EIR, with a 30-day staff review period, followed by a 45-day public comment period prior to a public hearing before the Planning Commission.

### **City Council/Redevelopment Agency Adjournment**

Mayor Pro Tem Bohr adjourned the special meeting of the City Council/Redevelopment Agency of the City of Huntington Beach at 8:10 PM (Councilmember Hardy excused herself at 8:00 PM).

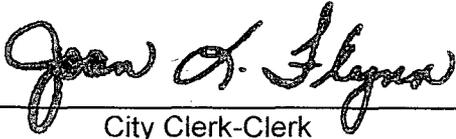
The next regularly scheduled meeting of the City Council and Redevelopment Agency will be Monday, April 21, 2008, at 4:00 PM, in Room B-8 at the Civic Center, 2000 Main Street, Huntington Beach, California.



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City Clerk and ex-officio Clerk of the City Council of the City of Huntington Beach and Clerk of the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Huntington Beach, California

**ATTEST:**



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City Clerk-Clerk



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Mayor-Chair