BELLE HAVEN & Willow Business Area DESIGN CHARRETTE

"Creating A Sense of Place"

A presentation of The City of Menlo Park & AIA San Mateo County
A Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

EVENT DATE:
Saturday, March 5, 2011

EVENT TIME:
8:00 AM to 8:00 PM

EVENT LOCATION:
10 Network Circle
(Former Sun Campus)

EVENT CHAIRS:
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and
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SUMMARY
The Menlo Park *Willow Business Area Design Charrette* is a cooperative effort between the City of Menlo Park and AIA San Mateo County, A Chapter Of The American Institute Of Architects. The Charrette is expected to involve approximately 100 design professionals organized into four design teams. The teams will be asked to create and present urban design concepts for the area surrounding the intersection of Willow Road and Bayfront Expressway. An emphasis will be placed on creating exciting environments for use by business employees and residents alike, strengthening mass transit connections, and maintaining and enriching surrounding residential and business neighborhoods.

The Design Charrette will be an open forum where the community is invited to provide input as design concepts are developed by volunteer architects and other design professionals. The goal of the Charrette is to begin a community dialog aimed at transforming the area into an inviting and vibrant business and residential area with a strong sense of place. The design teams will consider how to develop unused or underutilized parcels and to enhance existing developments creating linkages between the various parcels and defining the local character.

Members of the public, City Council and appointed boards will be invited to attend and provide comments and suggestions to the design teams through the course of the day. Soliciting, acknowledging, and responding to public input and dialog is an important goal of the Charrette.

Specific goals for the Charrette design effort include:

- Create an overall sense of place, "Sizzle", for the subject area.
- Enhance connections between mass transit facilities, commercial, retail and housing elements.
- Consider how visual elements might enhance and define the area by introducing distinctive and consistent design elements.
- Create concepts that illustrate how land use, building height, massing, and site development regulations could be modified to foster a strong sense of place.
- Propose concepts that make the area more inviting to pedestrians without adversely impacting vehicular traffic.
- Propose shops, restaurants, plazas, or other types of usable indoor and outdoor space that create an inviting "pedestrian-scaled" streetscape in the area.
- Address the potential for introducing mixed-use developments.
- Consider the interface of the train, bus, automobiles, bicycles and pedestrians in propose changes that establish the area as a well-integrated and efficient community.
- Explore new and unique concepts that could give this area an innovative character.
    - Gourmet Food Trucks
    - Raw/Urban
    - Chef's Garden / Community Garden
    - Other community spaces such as shared athletic feelds

The design concepts that emerge from this Charrette will be widely circulated. They will be presented to the Menlo Park City Council at a regularly scheduled public meeting, and subsequently to interested community groups around the area.

It is likely that these ideas will have a significant impact on the direction of development in this area of Menlo Park for many years to come.