

MEETING OVERVIEW

The City of Elk Grove's Planning Department hosted a meeting on November 14, 2013 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM at the Elk Grove Library to solicit input from residents regarding updates to guidelines in the Old Town SPA. This opportunity for public input takes place every three years. The meeting agenda specifically addressed the design review process, sign regulations, and permitted uses in the Old Town district. Other topics, such as parking and public safety, were raised during the meeting.

Residents were notified about the community meeting through traditional media channels, the City's website and a direct mailing to addresses within a 1,000 ft. radius around the Old Town district. Sixteen (16) people attended the meeting and participated in the discussion.

KEY THEMES

- Participants supported relaxing some design guidelines related to signs, paint colors and permitted uses to allow Old Town businesses more flexibility to respond to the market
- Participants expressed interest in working more closely with the City to address code enforcement issues and to strengthen the connection between Old Town and other parts of Elk Grove
- Public safety at night is a primary concern

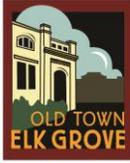
TRANSCRIPT OF PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

Design Review

- Design review process is lengthy and could be streamlined
- Fees were not clear and should be posted on website with an online application submittal option
- The City has received complaints about cost and time associated with Type 1 reviews
 - Should these be even easier to obtain?
- Need to clarify/explain the appeals process
- Community would like to hear from planners about issues in Old Town, not very many people are actively going through design review process – residents don't know what the problems are

Sign Requirements

- Complaints have been received about the strictness of the sign regulations
 - There are lots of enforcement issues for signs in Old Town (44 complaints in 2012 alone)
 - Signage is all over the map, there is a lot of diversity in existing signs, some non-compliant signs are grandfathered in, some new businesses look around and try to match what others do, but that's not permitted any more
 - Willing to be more flexible about signs to allow folks to do what they think is best for success – loosen up the regulations
 - Some felt that flexibility is OK, but there should still be a baseline standard – need to be consistent
 - Concern that the SPA is not enforceable, not enough teeth
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City of Elk Grove
Old Town SPA Triennial Update
Community Meeting Summary
November 14, 2013

- Old Sacramento had a similar issue, so they stopped enforcement completely, which then became a problem when they decided they should enforce again (lawsuits)
- Suggestion to send a City representative through the Old Town district once a month to talk with people and resolve any violations
 - Old Town needs friendly, proactive enforcement
- Concern about the appearance of temporary promotional signs – they look trashy (different issues with temporary vs. permanent signs)
- City needs to be fair, but also needs to have standards to create a level playing field
- Temporary signs are needed to help businesses attract attention – what can the city do to make it more appealing?
 - Should temporary signs only be allowed for 30 days?

Permitted Uses

- Consider allowing some types of minor vehicle services, such as window tinting, detailing, stereo installation
- 76 gas station may be selling cars – not allowed
- More diversity in uses is desirable to young adults
- Consider adding indoor/outdoor recreation uses (mini golf, batting cages)
- City should invest in property and have a permanent presence in Old Town
- Be sure to allow all types of medical offices – clinics, etc – more than just offices

Other SPA Issues

- Parking – street parking is too challenging given volume and speed of traffic
- Consider expanding boundaries to increase recognition from freeway
- Identify funding sources for improvements and development incentives
- Add more plaques or statues that describe the history of each building
- Taro asked group about color palette based on PDX feedback
- Consider approach to restrict certain colors, but not a limited list of allowed colors
- Taro shared that parking requirements have been prohibitive in Old Town, it is possible that special parking rules should apply in the SPA
- City's railroad property could be used for temporary parking until developed

Final Comments

- If a resident has plans and ideas for City property and universal signage, who oversees this?
- Residential driveway safety is important
- Pedestrian crossing is not safe at night, needs better lighting (particularly near the Odd Fellows building)
- Flashing safety lights on the pavement don't work

NEXT STEPS

The City will identify specific changes that can be made to the Old Town SPA to address the issues outlined above. Any proposed changes will be made available online for public review in January 2014.
