

Planning & Land Use Meeting - February 19

Meeting began at 7:05pm

Committee Members in attendance: Chair Neal Anderberg, Ryan Bradley, Katherine Costa, Eli Lipmen

1. PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comment
2. Progress Report: Woodbine Park looks great and will re-open on Thursday, February 20th at 10:00am with Councilmember Paul Koretz. This was a project brought to fruition by the work of the Palms Planning and Land Use Committee, particularly its long-time chair Niall MacMenamin.
3. People Street Info Session: Join the Los Angeles Department of Transportation on February 24th for the launch of People St., a citywide program for installing plazas, parklets, and bicycle corrals.
4. Project Update Presentation & Possible Action in support of JMB Realty's proposed 731,000 square foot Century City Center ([www.centurycitycenter.com](http://www.centurycitycenter.com))  
Presenter: JMB Realty - Sara Shaw, SVP of Realty  
Sara Shaw started by talking about JMB Realty's community involvement; works with neighbors to improve the community, including the Palms Rancho Park upgrade and renaming. The lot being considered for development is on Avenue of Stars and Constellation Boulevard. It is the last vacant parcel in Century City. Originally approved by the City to build condos, but there are now other residential projects being built and the market collapsed during the recession. JMB is asking for approval to be re-entitled for office space - no offices have been built in Century City since 2006. It is 40% smaller than the previous design. It is a 37 story tower; 5 levels of parking covered by 2 acre garden with 5000 square feet of creative office space and 4000 square feet of retail. The design includes a mobility hub and transit portal where someone can buy bus passes, get transit info, and rent a zip car or bicycle. It provides choices for commuters other than cars. The transit plaza will be place for people to congregate. It is the first LEED platinum high rise in Los Angeles and one of only a handful in the country. It sets the standard for LA.

The next presenter was from Gibson Traffic - offices look very different than they did 35 years ago when the Century City North Specific Plan (CCNSP) was developed. How does traffic really work today? The trip generation model for most buildings is 8.5 trips per thousand square feet per day. Gibson Traffic counted 4 comparable high rises in Century City the empirical count found 4.7 trips per square feet. This was adjusted for economic increases to 4.97 and approved by LADOT. If it is more, JMB has to do a mitigation program (must count trips everyday). Elements of plan include transportation demand management; mobile app with transit information (zip car, bikes, etc.); mobility hub to give people options; adding more cameras to DOT transit system; and a maintenance fund. The plan mitigates all impacts on intersections and will operate at, or better than, these intersections currently do i.e. traffic will not get worse because of project.

JMB Realty has funded the Transportation Management Organization in Century City, which developed and supports a system that has reduced 61,000 trips, 2.5 tons of carbon. JMB has committed to add millions of dollars in transit if they exceed trips. The Environmental Impact Report is NOT tested with future subway - it uses real traffic counts (and not future counts).

JMB Realty's lawyer then presented. He said the CCNSP allows a developer to do an alternative trip generation count. It is not an exception to the plan, just an alternative. He argued that a use does not have to be unique to use the alternative trip generator; DOT agreed with their alternative count, but still has a backup plan. JMB is bound by 4,114 trips, but will generate less trips. JMB does not need to purchase more trips for this site; even if JMB bought more trips, they still are going to generate less than 4114 trips. JMB knows their buildings - had extra

parking spaces at their MGM building and built solar panels on the top floor. Most properties in Century City are at or near their FAR limit, so they can't get any bigger. No one can exceed the trips cap regardless of whether they use the CAPGP calculation, or the alternative trip generator.

JMB concluded by listing their supporters - 9 Homeowners Associations; many community and enviro groups like National Resource Defense Council, MoveLA, and labor groups. Project benefits include \$350 million investment and 6,000 union jobs. The next steps in the process are the City Planning Commission and then City Council.

### **Questions from the Committee**

Ryan Bradley - is it true that the alternative trip generator has only been used once? Response: The shopping center also used it but it wasn't meant for a unique situation.

2nd Question: Why not purchase more trips? The building use won't generate more trips.

Eli Lipmen - when was the study of trips done? Response - studies done all day long and looked at counts throughout the day.

2nd Question: Why are you taking trips using one calculation and then using a different calculation for new project? Response - The previous facility was a drive-thru bank facility - had a lot of trips so JMB received a lot of trips.

3rd Question: Why have no mitigations been looked at north/south along Robertson Blvd, Overland Avenue, and Motor Ave? Response - JMB looked at Century City to Expo Line shuttle, treatment along Robertson, Overland. However, this is outside their EIR. Mitigations will happen, but there are additional mitigations if, and only if, 4114 trips are exceeded. Parking costs are unbundled from leases, meaning they have to purchase it separately.

Neal Anderberg - we know traffic mitigation is needed and you've studied various options already; why not just do it instead of waiting to see if you'll be required to? Response- trying to do as much as they can to improve the situation, but really traffic is a larger policy issue that is outside the realm of this project. Need a more holistic approach. JMB is going above and beyond what is required.

### **Public Comment**

Michael Lowinger - how many trips are allowed in Century City total? 100,000 trips total, this is 4,000. 3-4% of total. Is this all political or just competition? JMB answer - not sure, maybe both

Ken Alpern - representing Mar Vista, Westside Village Homeowners, CD 11 - have not received money; JMB lobbyist courted Paul Koretz. This project is precedent setting. Trip logic is bad logic. For Transit Oriented Design, but this isn't TOD because people will be parking in neighboring communities. They sold their credits and made money and now they won't pay for those credits. There should be \$100 million in mitigation upfront, instead JMB is changing the law unfairly. I have no problem with the project, I have a problem with breaking the law.

Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE): - in favor of JMB project. Excited by opportunity that this development represents. Good development, good jobs, and better transit options. Best development it could possibly be.

Pete Brown - representing 'Save the Westside' which includes a coalition of businesses, including Westfield, JP Morgan, homeowners, and individual citizens. JMB is going above and beyond the limits of the plan. Their opposition is about playing by the rules and respecting the community plan. Previous projects respected the rules; now they are out of credits and are

coming up with an alternative. This decision has regional implications that must be considered; if JMB breaks the plan, then others will too.

Leslie Gerzikoff - a development on this property is going to go forward. We want a builder with integrity. JMB honors its commitments.

Ben Reznik - JMB sold their CAPGP trips. They received trips pursuant to specific plan menu with the understanding that they would use them according to plan, but they did not. The purpose of the plan was to cap development; JMB is building outside their limits and will allow everyone to build higher. No one has analyzed the full impact of this decision.

Rob - Developers have worked with the City. Project neither created, nor will solve the traffic problem in the Westside.

Doug Fitzsimmons - Robertson is primary feeder into Century City and needed to be included in EIR. SORO was disappointed that it wasn't included. Fruitful collaboration for the public benefit, but not part of the EIR process. Intersections are already overloaded; working with JMB to try and mitigate this issue, but the plan for Robertson is unfunded.

**Committee Discussion:** Ryan Bradley argued that the assumptions underlying the calculations are outmoded - we work differently and drive differently than we did 30 years ago. The best way to address changing habits is to re-assess the credits issue. If changes are going to be made to the CCNSP, it shouldn't be done through special exemptions but through a re-writing of the plan.

Neal asked whether we are truly endorsing a precedent, since LADOT has already allowed the actions to occur. Neal stated that ultimately, voting against this project won't automatically get us anything better by just hoping for a better deal – the lot will remain vacant longer, delaying new jobs, allowing for the blight to continue. He argued that we should support the project and get involved in the conversation on mitigations and re-writing the Century City North Specific Plan if we really want to be involved in solutions. Neal called the motion to question on whether to support the proposed JMB project.

MOTION: (made by Neal Anderberg, seconded by Katherine Costa): Support the proposed JMB Realty 731,000 square foot Century City Center project

Vote: 3-1-0 (Eli Lipmen noted he sits on the MoveLA Board, which supported the project but has no fiduciary role with the organization and was not present when the decision was made)

5. Overland Avenue Project: Discussed ideas generated from brainstorm, which went under two Headlines:

**a)** Address abandoned property with

- incentives for parklets (temporary) or permanent
- zoning and access changes
- mixed-use - parking, retail, creative office space

**b)** Identify as "Palms" by creating a culture of Palms (Outreach)

At the next meeting, discuss the current zoning and suggest zoning changes. Tally up empty lots and identify spaces for temporary parklets & permanent community gardens. Katherine will do some research on this. Ultimately, the goal is to come up with a vision for Overland that can be reconciled, possibly at an Executive Committee meeting.

Public Comment: Michael Lowinger said the focus should be on Motor Avenue as the center of the community because Overland Avenue is a hodgepodge and a much more difficult project

6. Approve January 22nd Meeting minutes. Motion (Neal Anderberg, Second: Eli Lipmen): Unanimous vote in favor of approving the minutes

7. Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm