



## San Tomas Area Community Coalition

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Residents of Campbell

February 9, 2018

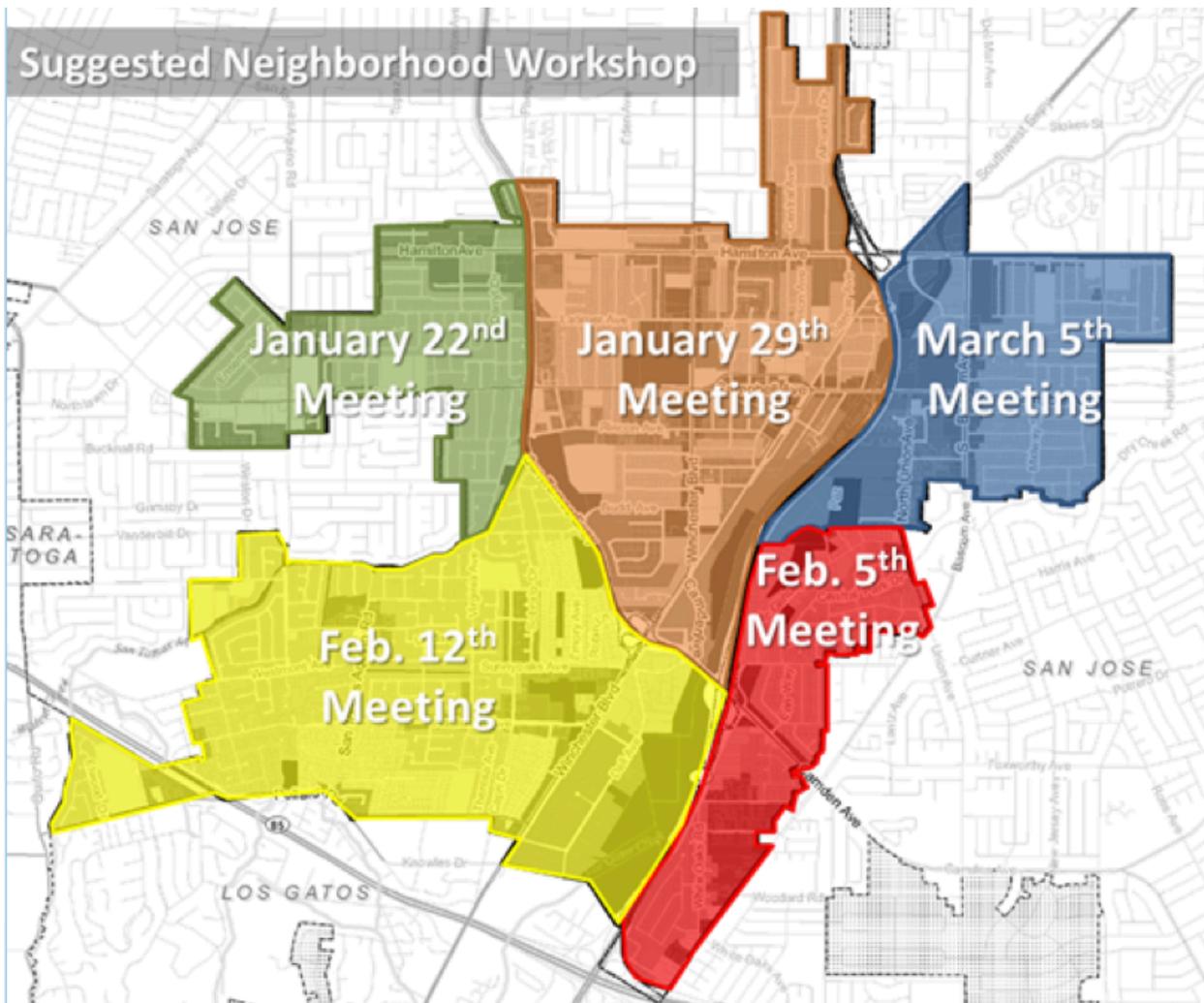
From: Maggie Desmond, STACC Area 7 Captain

**Subj:** GPAC (General Plan Advisory Committee)

Dear Neighbor,

The protocol for building and redevelopment of Campbell is currently under review by the City of Campbell. Written protocol for development is set forth in the General Plan. A city's general plan is periodically reviewed and revised to reflect the redevelopment goals. Currently, Campbell has assembled a committee and paid a consultant, Ben Ritchie of de Novo Associates about one million dollars to work with the community and the members of the General Plan review committee to make recommendations to the City Council on "tweaks" to our current GP. This is not a re-write but a tweaking. There is nothing sexy or titillating about reviewing the General Plan to most of us. But if you have ever wondered how 20 houses went into that lot where one house stood, or if you have wondered why that 24 hour car wash mini mart went in on the corner, or have wondered about the height of your neighbors addition, or the impact on your privacy of a retail complex or any of the other practical building issues that absolutely do impact your everyday life in Campbell then PARTICIPATE in saying your piece at the upcoming neighborhood meetings. They are scheduled for: \_\_\_\_\_. See attached map to identify the meeting about your neighborhood.

I have attended almost all of the General Plan meetings. The public is not permitted to speak or submit written questions at these meetings. The consultant, Ben Ritchie (de Novo) is introduced by Development Director, Paul Kermoyan. Subject matter for that particular General Plan meeting is verbally reviewed and a presentation is made to the General Plan committee and the attending public.



The original make up of the GPAC was 21 members of the community from various areas around our City. Two committee members (Landry & Waterman) had to drop off as they were elected to the City Council. At the mapping meeting there were so few committee members present that the mapping exercise tables had to be consolidated. Only 9 members were present for that important meeting. Staff outnumbered committee members. City Council has not replaced dropped or absent committee members, so nine or ten remains a stable committee make up.

I do not believe the future direction of our city should be decided by 9 or 10 committee members, influenced by staff and the consultant. City Council members, to the best of my knowledge, have not attended a single GPAC meeting. The committee ultimately will be responsible for making recommendations to the City Council on future building.

Nine people, staff and the consultant will be making these recommendations to a City Council who has not been privy to the staff directives or GPAC discussions. No City Council members have been able to hear the discussions driven by the consultant at the GPAC meetings because they are discouraged or prevented from so doing. For what purpose?

The committee has been meeting for about a year and a half. City staff and de Novo, have now put together maps identifying areas where they seek higher density, more retail, high tech and/or urban development, etc., throughout the city. These proposed maps are coming out into the community at the upcoming meetings to be critiqued by members of the community and to receive further input on what we want built here.

This is an opportunity to speak your mind about development in Campbell. It is clear the residents of Campbell want a small town feeling community, they love the downtown area, its walkability, restaurants and nightlife. Residents enjoy the more country like residential atmosphere of our little 5 1/2 square miles of and truly consider it a sanctuary from the hub bub of Silicon Valley.

Being right next to San Jose we are battered, rammed and jabbed to succumb to high tech urban development. It is the current trend in San Jose, Sunnyvale and Mountain View. It is the backbone of Silicon Valley. But I heard in the committee meetings a resounding residential disinterest in cloning Campbell to look just like any other Silicon Valley city. I read, from the residential surveys, that Campbell residents want to keep what unique, country-like, rural character. Is it large lots, is it mailboxes on the street, is it the walkability of the downtown area? There was a unified voice of rejection against turning Campbell into just another extension of Silicon Valley. Residents spoke out against "Google-type" complexes in Campbell, were negative about urban development, and negative about so much high density.

However, after a year and a half of GPAC meetings the "results" are trickling in and I believe that what is being presented by the consultant and city staff is skewed away from what the residents are saying and seeking. The process has been led by city staff and the consultant and does not accurately reflect the wishes of the community. Ya give an inch and they take a mile.

In fact the wishes of the community have been stifled. It appears the results reflect too much urban high density techie development in too many places. It does not provide for

more walkability, affordable housing, more parks, more hiking and biking trails. The erosion of rural cannot be mitigated.

You can go to these meetings and reinforce and support what you want in our community. Although the topic matter of these meetings is dry, it should be of vital interest to every resident as it drives what can move in next door and around the corner.

Calendar the remaining 4 meetings, go and speak up.

Maggie Desmond

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