

## **Harvest Properties The Landing**

### **Summary of Pre-Application Community Meeting**

Date: February 4, 2021  
Time: 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm  
Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

The Community Meeting was conducted in both English and Spanish, and consisted of a presentation by the Harvest team to describe and summarize the plans and design for “The Landing” project, followed by a Community Feedback period, providing the community the opportunity to provide input and ask questions to the Harvest team. This Community Meeting was conducted as part of the Pre-Application process for the City of East Palo Alto.

The Landing is proposed as a mixed-use development project, located at 1990 Bay Road, 1175 Weeks Street, and 1250 Weeks Street, in East Palo Alto (EPA).

This Summary will be organized in the form of describing the question or comment from the community, and the response to such question from the Harvest team and the City of East Palo Alto team (for specific questions). Please note that this is not intended to be a transcript of the meeting, but a summary of all the meeting participants’ comments and the Harvest and City teams’ general responses.

Please note that the presentation and a recording of this Meeting is also available on The Landing’s website: [TheLanding-epa.com](http://TheLanding-epa.com).

### **Community Feedback**

#### ***Question/Concern:***

Please clarify what is considered community space that will be free of charge. Will this space be only for residents of East Palo Alto? Traffic is a main concern.

#### ***Harvest Response:***

The community space includes all the ground frontage along Bay Road and along Weeks Street, other than the two lobby entrances to the buildings. It was very important to activate these areas as the team believes that these are the most accessible, and will allow for the creation of a neighborhood ‘Main Street’ feel. In addition, the other retail areas are the retail pods that we have proposed to be built into the buildings at the waterfront. We also designed a marketplace along Weeks Street to create a destination for people to visit, which would also serve the local neighborhood. We envision these spaces, as well as the retail pods along the waterfront, as rotating or ‘pop ups’ to encourage and include a variety of vendors, with some converting to more permanent businesses. The other space along Weeks Street would be for other uses, such as a co-working space; this community space would be specific to EPA residents. We look forward to working with the City and community to determine the businesses that will be housed in these spaces.

Harvest agrees that traffic is major issue in the Bay Area, and specifically in EPA. The Harvest team then outlined its approach to traffic – a “four-pronged” approach: 1) Project-specifically; 2) Ravenswood Business District; 3) East Palo Alto; and, 4) Regionally. For our project specifically, we are aiming for the City’s 40% reduction in single vehicle trips generated from the project. We are also looking at traffic sensitive design, such as designated queuing areas, dedicated drop-off, and bus areas. For RBD, we are looking at widening Bay Road from two to four lanes to improve circulation and the addition of a proposed Loop Road to connect from Bay Road to University Ave. More regionally, the team has been a strong advocate for the Dumbarton Rail to create a stop in EPA, to become a true transportation hub for EPA as well as a ferry service at Cooley Landing. The Harvest team outlined several other ideas, including a public/private shuttle system, bicycle boulevards, and traffic calming measures, as well as working collaboratively with other regional resources, such as Commute.org and Manzanita Works.

*City Response:*

Radha Hayagreev (City of East Palo Alto, Community and Economic Development Department) introduced herself, and explained the terminology of RBD (Ravenswood Business District) and TDM (Traffic Demand Management). She explained that the RBD is a Specific Plan area. This is a priority development area, with The Landing being one of four (or more) major development projects being considered. Ms. Hayagreev encouraged any community member to reach out to her or Chris Dacumos, if anyone should have any questions. Mr. Dacumos will be the project manager for The Landing project, and the other large development projects.

**Question/Concern:**

There are a lot of people parking on the street (didn’t specify the street).

*Harvest Response:*

Harvest team responded that others have asked about parking at the project. At the project, there will parking dedicated for public use for both the retail and open space.

**Question/Concern:**

When will the project start and finish?

*Harvest Response:*

Right now, the project is going through the entitlement process. Realistically, this process will take another 18-24 months. If the project is to get approved after that period of time, we would go through a permitting process, which can take approximately one year. Our best guess is that we would start construction in three years, and construction typically takes 1.5 to 2 years. So, all in, we estimate it would take five years to complete the project. The project might also be phased and built over a longer period of time.

**Question/Concern:**

When will the Bay Road widening finish?

*Harvest Response:*

The City has already started moving forward with the Bay Road improvements, which include a lot of infrastructure improvements as well as the creation of sidewalks and re-paving of the road. This work doesn’t include the widening at the final end portion of the road. This is the work that

the Harvest team and other developers would be pursuing. Our best guess for the timing is what was described above for the overall project's construction timing. This work will not happen unless projects are approved and move forward.

**Question/Concern:**

Is there space in the green areas for families to gather, have picnics, and other outdoor events?

**Harvest Response:**

100%. There is 7.5 acres proposed in the project. This will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest park in EPA. We have designed the majority of this open space to include space for people to gather, with picnic tables, BBQs, and other amenities. In designing the space, we really tried to make sure it was for people of all different ages, and therefore would include areas and equipment for all ages (i.e., play structures, sports courts). We will be listening deeply to the community to understand how we can make these park and open spaces better. The big question is how we entice people to come into the project. We wanted to draw people into the project, to ensure that the community feels welcome. We needed to create these more activated areas in order to do so. That's why we have a variety of spaces: the dog park, the amphitheater, grassy areas for people to hang out, flowing into the large public plaza, retail built into the buildings along the waterfront, the Community Marketplace, and then the park at the southern end.

**Question/Concern:**

Who is funding the project?

**Harvest Response:**

Harvest Properties (the team on the call tonight) and our partners, will be funding the project. We have a long-term vision for the project, with the project developing over time. It's very important to Harvest that we are part of the community long-term.

**Question/Concern:**

I remember there were some issues with water rights and sewage, these were a problem in EPA for some time. Have you already talked to the City about this?

**Harvest Response:**

Yes, we have been discussing this with the City. As you might remember, there has been a long-standing discussion regarding water rights. The City was able to secure adequate water rights for existing and future uses (in the RBD and City-wide). In our project, we will be making every effort to reduce the use of this scarce resource, by using low-flow fixtures, and using new recycled water technology. As discussed in our presentation, the project could be one of the most sustainable projects regionally, and perhaps in the country. We have taken this same approach with all the infrastructure in the project, including the sewer system and onsite treatment facility to reduce our reliance on the City's system. We will also be working shoulder-to-shoulder with the City and the community on how best to upgrade the existing system. Regardless of development, the existing system requires repairs and improvements and will need to be upgraded/relocated as part of the levee project. Understanding that these issues were so important, at the beginning of the process, we began to work together with the City and the other developers of EPA projects. There are potentially many positive solutions to these issues.

**Question/Concern:**

Will there be a dog park?

*Harvest Response:*

There will definitely be a dog park. It is located right before Cooley Landing at the top part of our site. It is a large area because we had a lot of people ask for dog park. It will be located next to the community gardens.

**Question/Concern:**

Is there any affordable housing included in the project?

*Harvest Response:*

As we mentioned in our presentation earlier, the lands of the property were formerly contaminated. As result of its history, there are specific governmental regulations precluding the development of housing on the site. The site is now largely remediated and in a safe condition. We will be bringing in clean soil as part of the development project to create an even larger barrier/cap.

However, we are working on some other ideas around affordable housing in the near future. We may eventually have an affordable housing component on another site, as we know how important this is to the community. Additionally, if the project were to be approved, it would provide over \$10 million in immediate affordable housing funds, which could generate a significant number of affordable housing units (40-50 units). The project would also generate ongoing annual funding of \$2.25 million through Measure HH, which over time could produce several hundreds of units of affordable housing. These units would hopefully provide a positive impact in EPA.

**Question/Concern:**

Is there going to be a library?

*Harvest Response:*

Right now, we do not have a library planned. One of the reasons is that one of the other developments (Four Corners project) is currently proposing including a library in its project. However, we are open to input as well.

*City Response:*

Chris Dacumos also wanted to respond to the question about a library. The Four Corners development is considering proposing a library, but this hasn't been decided yet. The City is considering other potential sites as well.

**Question/Concern:**

How about a grocery store, like Trader Joes or Safeway?

*Harvest Response:*

We don't have a grocery store planned for the project. One of the reasons for this is that the feedback we received is that our site is not as central of a location. We thought the better way of addressing this need is through the Marketplace we are proposing. Our idea for the Marketplace draws inspiration from places like the Essex Market (NYC), San Pedro Square, or

the Emeryville market. We would have a lot of different vendors (not just providing ready-made food), but local vendors selling goods as well. We see this as a place for crafts, arts, and food, as well as a venue for the community to host events or live performances. We are looking for as much feedback as possible for how to get the right services to provide the right benefits. We see this as a community destination, where the community can enjoy the waterfront, have locally produced goods, and enjoy an indoor/outdoor place, given the great local climate.

***Question/Concern:***

Are there any areas designed for the East Palo Alto youth?

***Harvest Response:***

Yes. The 1250 Weeks site we have dedicated and designed for a park. There are basketball courts, a fitness station, and a playground. More central in our project, we also have a plaza with a water feature, for kids to play in. Additionally, we have been talking to EPA Arts center to create a shared venue, and are looking forward to collaborating with them. All of the feedback provided in the Community Survey is very helpful to us as well for the project's design, to refine the ideas, and eventually land on what the community needs the most. We also have the proposed amphitheater, which is conceived of as a large grassy hill, next to the café, overlooking the bayfront. This is a great place for people to hang out, and at night, we can have movie-nights (with an outdoor projector) and performances on the stage being proposed.

***Question/Concern:***

Who will manage this development after it is built?

***Harvest Response:***

Harvest will be managing the project. We will be involved from start to finish, from entitlements, through the development, and long-term ownership. Our goal is to continue to stay involved in the community and with the community organizations long-term. Harvest Properties is locally-owned, and only focused on the Bay area. Because of this, we take our relationships and reputations with the communities in which are working very seriously.

***Question/Concern:***

Will there be jobs for local residents in construction and in the local stores, once the project is built.

***Harvest Response:***

The key to providing rent free space for the community is to ensure that local businesses in EPA can afford to run their businesses here. Additionally, this enables the retail to be affordable for the local community as well, to ensure that the food and goods are not extraordinarily expensive. Along Bay Road and Weeks Street, we are planning that these businesses would be local to EPA, and employ EPA residents (i.e., restaurant, bakery, coffee shop).

We are also very excited about the arts program, and commemorating EPA's history in the art program. This could mean a walk-of-history along Bay Road, but we would like to get community feedback. We would like to employ artists, and bring in live music. The artist's community is so important to creating a vibrant, cultural, business, arts district.

There will also be a lot of service jobs, and construction jobs (i.e., engineers, plumbers, landscapers, maintenance staff, security). There will be jobs created during construction and then, long-term at the project when it is developed.

The City just kicked off its First Source Hiring initiatives. We plan to work with our tenants to abide by this (i.e., career days, posting job opportunities). Also, a lot of Measure HH funds go to job training in the community.

Within the project, we are also planning on building a commercial kitchen that will be part of the Community Marketplace; any of the vendors in the Marketplace can use the commercial kitchen. We also hope that the kitchen will open to the community for a variety of uses (i.e., cooking classes).

*City Response:*

Radha Hayagreev mentioned that in the Chat there was a link with additional resources regarding this initiative. The City has decided to use Measure HH funds for the First Source Hiring program. Community members can also go to the City's website to find out more information about this program. There is an opportunity for the community to learn more about this and get involved in the process.

**Question/Concern:**

Do we have a tenant for the office/R&D space?

*Harvest Response:*

We are not working with any particular tenant. We have not yet started marketing the space. The reason for this is that we are still in the Pre-Application phase, and we don't yet know what the project will become. We are looking to obtain as much feedback as possible. Typically, in the Bay Area, we have to build new projects speculatively. There is significant risk in doing this and committing to all the benefits we're proposing. That is why we need the density we do and have also designed the project flexibly enough to accommodate all different uses. These will likely include retail, civic space, R&D, office, and life-science/lab space.

**Question/Concern:**

A lot of EPA residents are coming from different places around the U.S and the world. It is important to honor not just the history of the City but the backgrounds of the local community members.

*Harvest Response:*

We definitely appreciate that. One of the other developers – Emerson Group – is doing a project right now to archive the history of EPA and understand what parts of that history the community wants to commemorate. That will be such an incredible project for EPA, and we plan to support them in those efforts and use that information to guide our installations. At our project, art is the most logical way to commemorate the history, but you could also accomplish this through education opportunities, which we plan to have as well.

**Question/Concern:**

What about sustainability? Will the project be green?

*Harvest Response:*

We applaud the city in passing their new Reach Goals, and the proposed project will go beyond what those require.

The site was formerly contaminated, and went through a 40-year clean-up effort, spending \$40+ million. We viewed this site as an incredible opportunity to turn one of the most contaminated sites into one of the most sustainable projects regionally, and perhaps in the country, which would be a tribute to the efforts of East Palo Alto's residents in removing those corporations. As mentioned in our presentation, we will use low-flow fixtures, efficient systems, on-site water treatment and re-use, large-scale renewable energy (i.e., solar) installations, battery backup, and potentially all-electric building design.

We also want to be respectful of the natural environment. In our site design and building design, we want to mimic the natural environment and topography (i.e., green roofs and landscaping). The site is uniquely positioned with over a ½ mile of Bayfront frontage. Additionally, there is a levee that is being proposed for development next to our site. It is very important to our development team that this levee is built in the right way, since it is currently proposed as a large mound that could block views to the waterfront. For the Harvest team, it is very important to activate this area around the levee to make it an amenity to the community. We are proposing to raise our site 6-7 feet to match the top of the levee, and design this eastern edge of our property as a public park. We have been working closely with SAFER Bay on this project to ensure that it is properly coordinated.

We will continue to do more and more research on the essential topic of sustainability, as we go through the process, but it is one of the key, important themes for the project.

**Question/Concern:**

Is the cleaning of the contamination of the land on this property done?

*Harvest Response:*

Yes, it is. As was previously mentioned, for 40 years, the site was remediated with oversight of the Water Board, as the regulatory agency. There is no further remediation of the site that is necessary, and it currently has an asphalt cap on the site. The development of the site will allow us to bring in an additional 6-7 feet of clean soil to add an extra barrier to all the past contamination.

**Question/Concern:**

Will the area that is green on top of the buildings be open to the community?

*Harvest Response:*

We are still working on the programming of these spaces. We are not sure how open it will be, as it will be echoing the ecology of the marshland area. Likely this space will be private because of its relationship to some of the commercial buildings.

***Question/Concern:***

Thank you for having these meetings to hear what the community has to say.

***Harvest Response:***

Thank you. We know it is a big sacrifice to join these meetings – it is late, people have family obligations. Your opinion truly matters to us, and we are available any time a question might come up. We look forward to when we can meet with you all in person.

***City Response:***

Ms. Hayagreev said that the City really appreciates all of you being here. Going from in-person meetings to being here can be challenging. Thank you for all the community members who filled out the survey. It is her department's hope to reach as many people as possible. We are rolling over to a Study Session with the Planning Commission (Feb. 22); it will be a similar format, another opportunity for the community to come and voice what they aspire to see with the project. The City Council will have a Study Session after that. These are Study Sessions, not formal hearings. We would love to hear from you; please spread the word.