

Santa Barbara Happenings

Terry A. Bartlett – Reetz, Fox & Bartlett LLP



UCSB's Plans for Newly Purchased Complex in Downtown Santa Barbara

UC Santa Barbara has acquired several adjacent properties in downtown Santa Barbara. The properties, Reid's Appliances store (409 Anacapa St.), the previous Staples store (410 State St.), and the Soltara apartments (27 E Gutierrez St.), will help UCSB's goal of having more of a presence in the downtown area.



Image: Soltara Apartments, Independent.com

The newly built Soltara apartments consist of 78 units, from studio apartments to two bedroom spaces (price ranging from \$2,700 to \$6,500, respectively). 65% of the current units are already leased

for the next year. UCSB plans to fill the remaining vacancies over time. The university does not plan to house students in the event of vacancies.

UCSB currently has no plan for the Reid's appliance property. Due to UCSB's status as a state agency, these new properties of theirs will be removed from local property tax rolls.

Construction of Ocean Meadows Housing Development Has Begun at the Site of the Former Golf Course

At what used to be the Ocean Meadows golf course, the Cardinal Group has begun construction of a new housing complex. The complex will consist of 32 single family homes, ranging from 2590-2659 square feet. The homes will be two stories tall. Nine of the 32 homes will include accessory dwelling units with kitchenettes.

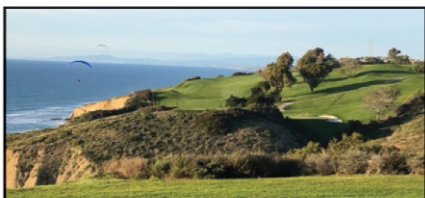


Image: Ocean Meadows Golf Course on Whittier Dr in Goleta, golfpass.com

Additionally, six condominiums will be designated as affordable housing for those making 60% of

the median family income of the area (\$119,100) will be included in the complex. Expected to be two-bedroom, 875 square feet each, the condos will allow an increase the density to the number of units due to their status as affordable housing units. The site is located near UCSB's Sierra Madre student housing complex.

Macy's Building Demolition Approved by City

The city of Santa Barbara has declared that the Macy's building in La Cumbre Plaza, built in 1967, has no historical significance. The city stated that the building's undistinguished architecture plus its lack of association to any well-known or important individual led to its approval for demolition. The building is leased until 2028.



Image: The Neighborhood, artist's concept Independent.com

In place of the Macy's building, developers Jim and Matthew Taylor plan a 689 unit housing project, called "The Neighborhood". As it now stands, the project would include 94 studio, 381 one-bedroom,

192 two-bedroom, and 17-three bedroom units. The project proposes to build 39 units intended for very low-income individuals and families, or those making 50% or less of the area's family median income (\$119,100).

The complex would include six separate buildings ranging from two to six stories. There will be 856 parking spaces available both over and underground. The project is intended to add dining options along with parks and public spaces.

Group Opposes Downtown Hotel Project near Beach

The Garden Street Hotel Project proposed a six parcel hotel development that has been opposed by a nonprofit group and neighbors. The project, which was originally part of a 1983 proposal, is the target of a lawsuit against the city's approval as well as an appeal with the California Coastal Commission.

Attorney Marc Chytilo, filed the lawsuit targeting the subterranean 238 space parking lot included in the plans. Chytilo argues the project was approved

Continued on page 33

despite health and safety concerns regarding contaminated soil and groundwater.

Another La Cumbre Plaza Apartment Project at the Former Sears Store

A new apartment complex located at the former Sears building in La Cumbre Plaza, has been planned by Riviera Dairy Property group.

The plan consists of two four-story buildings, with 443 units total. One building would include 400 units, split among studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom homes. The second building would be 43 units of two and three bedroom homes. In total, there will be 36 studio, 183 one-bedroom, 201 two-bedroom, and 23 three-bedroom units. The project includes 466 parking spaces within a garage and an outdoor lot. In combination with the plans for development at the current Macy's building, 1,100 new homes will replace existing businesses in La Cumbre Plaza.

Spoiler Alert: Pedestrian malls are failing. Why is the city trying to turn State Street into one?

Two State Street Retailers to Close

Retailers Billabong and Volcom (631 State St. and 625 State St., respectively) are set to close. The stores, which both focus on surfer-wear, are holding massive sales at their locations.

New Apartment Design Standards Set for Five Zones throughout Santa Barbara

Recently, Santa Barbara city council passed new design standards with the goal of clearing up the intricate processes developers face. The standards, known as Objective Design and Development Standards ("ODDS") gives developers more certainty in design standards.

The design standards aim to curb the criticisms the city has faced over their old review process, mainly its unpredictability and strictness which has made developments face a slower process. The ODDS look to increase predictability, improve the developer-city relationship, and maintain the existing character of the Santa Barbara community.

State Street's Future Plans?

The city of Santa Barbara discussed possible changes to be made to State Street. However, in lieu of focusing on safety concerns (think electric bikes v. pedestrians), the city came up with a few structural and physical changes to the street.

The council agreed to take down all newspaper racks located on the street. Sidewalk extensions to

be known as "pedlets" are planned to be installed on the 500 block of the street, while also removing parts of the landscape of the 1200 block, but not including trees.

On the 700-800 blocks, more landscape additions plus options for open seating have also been proposed by the city staff. Increasing outdoor dining was a point of emphasis for the council, but restaurants must implement more bathrooms to accommodate the extra patrons.

The city has no plan to address the increasing presence of electric bikes on State Street.

Low Income/Senior Living Apartment Complex for Sale

The Edgerly apartments are known for their accommodations for seniors, especially those who qualify for rental subsidies. The Battistone Foundation, owners of the property, are selling the apartments in order to provide more rental subsidies, rather than maintaining actual housing in the current legal environment.

There are roughly 190 tenants who would be impacted by a sale, though the foundation hopes to cover whatever difference in rent tenants may face under new owners. New owners will be bound by local and state laws that control rents and evictions, and the rights of current lease holders.

The value of the Edgerly complex has been stated to range between \$40 and \$80 million.

Increasing Energy Demand Draws Bipartisan Support for Nuclear Power

California's struggle to provide clean energy needed for Artificial Intelligence has led the state to consider rolling back certain restrictions imposed by its 49-year-old moratorium on nuclear power.

Federal lawmakers last year passed a bill with bipartisan support to increase development of nuclear reactors and the associated technologies. Pacific Gas & Electric, operators for the last nuclear power plant in California, Diablo Canyon, are preparing to keep the plant running longer.

Though nuclear skeptics fear this expansion, both AI and nuclear technology will only get more efficient. Wind and solar power are not sufficient to meet energy needs.

Terry A. Bartlett is a real estate, housing, commercial leasing, and landlord attorney at Reetz, Fox & Bartlett LLP in Santa Barbara.