

## **CAPSS Advisory Committee Meeting**

Summary Notes from meeting on Sept. 9, 2009

Laura Samant began the meeting with a report on project team activities. Meeting attendees provided many comments during this discussion, on the following topics:

### Task 3: development of post-earthquake repair and retrofit guidelines

- Committee members requested more discussion and public involvement in this task. A public vetting process is necessary for the credibility of the project's recommendations.
- The Structural Engineering subcommittee of the Code Advisory committee needs to revise the section of the building code commonly referred to as "104f" soon. They would like to make sure their work corresponds with the work that Bill Holmes is doing on Task 3, and would appreciate him presenting his technical findings to their group.
- A public workshop should be held to discuss policy issues related to this topic. SPUR could be involved.
- Lisa Fricke from the SF Apartment Association expressed willingness to head a sub-committee on policy issues related to this topic. BOMA, SFAA and other groups who have not been regular attendees at CAPSS meetings should participate in these discussions. Banking and insurance groups could be involved.
- Paul Wermer suggested that talking points that could be used to approach neighborhood associations would be a good way to reach a broader audience. He volunteered to work on this issue with someone.

### Task 4: recommending mitigation actions to the City

- Laura Samant mentioned that a workshop to discuss project mitigation recommendations could be held in March or April. Meeting participants asked what stage of the process was the best time to get public input, and what input would be appropriate to seek earlier than the March/April timeframe.
- The group discussed the process of identifying and prioritizing a "laundry list" of possible mitigation actions. The Advisory Committee could look at a list prepared by the project team to give input on whether any issues had been forgotten. The committee, preferably enhanced by additional representatives of the community, could help prioritize them. One possible method is to give each committee member a certain number of votes for their priorities: they could spend all of those votes on one issue, or could spread them out among a number of issues.
- The PEER Tall Buildings project used stakeholder interviews that included asking about priorities. It was useful to have this information going into that project workshop.
- The project team needs to focus their analysis efforts on the top priority recommendations. There is a bit of a "chicken and egg" problem in that many stakeholders cannot state priorities among mitigation choices without some cost-benefit analysis, which will not be available until after the project's analysis.

### Reporting recovery time along with HAZUS loss estimates

- Reporting average recovery time, which mixes the impacts of buildings with no damage with those that need to completely rebuild, is misleading.
- It was asked whether there was any information from Loma Prieta about how smaller buildings, one and two unit residences, fared and the relative performance of midblock and corner buildings. DBI has detailed data on Loma Prieta damage, but no one has looked through it. The Marina experienced long period ground shaking during Loma Prieta, and single family homes are typically short period buildings, so the data from Loma Prieta may not provide much insight into this issue.
- It was noted that HAZUS recovery time estimates did not correlate to the SPUR shelter-in-place concept. Some committee members expressed that it would be beneficial to try to bridge the gap between these two studies. Others recommended that the Task 2 report be kept a “HAZUS” report, and that the project team not try to stretch these results too far. Despite the limitations of HAZUS results, these are the best results the City has; it is currently using them, and will definitely use the updated results released by the project for many important decisions.
- The reliability of HAZUS internal calculations of recovery time were questioned. These numbers are based on professional judgment, not the latest data and research. However, they provide some guidance on this important issue.
- It was noted that the way results are reported in the current draft report is not adequate. The report should have estimates of the numbers of buildings affected.

### Building Replacement Costs

- Laura Samant presented some cost ranges for 2009 construction of residential buildings, based on information from the Assessor’s Office and discussions with developers and architects.
- Committee members felt that the numbers presented as “high end” construction should more accurately be characterized as “mid-range” construction. For single family homes this would be \$350-\$450/square foot for hard construction costs. For multifamily homes this would be \$300 - \$400/square foot for hard construction costs.
- The committee emphasized that it was most important to be transparent about the assumptions used, so readers of the report could understand the basis of its numbers.

Heidi Sieck from the General Services Agency spoke about a citywide post-disaster recovery initiative that she is coordinating. There are about 90 disaster related projects currently underway in the City that fall under this initiative. The CAPSS work is critical to these efforts and will form the basis for many of the decisions the City needs to make. She is the project manager for the Lifelines Council, which will include high-level representation from PG&E and other lifelines. She is also looking at governance and finance issues. For example, the City currently has no system to accept donations from private foundations after a disaster; a similar problem caused the City of New Orleans to lose potential funding after Katrina. Comments from committee members included concern about post-earthquake fire risk and PG&E’s inadequate post-earthquake plans for gas shut-off. It was recommended that the Lifelines Council apply pressure on PG&E to improve their system.

Mary Lou Zoback reported that she had spoken with Christine Deberry at the Mayor's Office to find out whether the City was moving forward to convene a task force to address the CAPSS recommendations for soft story multifamily buildings. Earlier, Mary Lou had sent Ms. Deberry names of some recommended people to serve on that task force. Ms. Deberry said that these names need to be vetted by the City and that the City should announce the task force by the middle of the month, before the Loma Prieta anniversary. Mary Lou plans to call her regularly to make sure that she remains attentive to this issue. A committee member noted that SEAONC has a group of people who are ready to answer questions about such a policy.

John Paxton asked committee members to weigh in on topics they would like to discuss at the remaining CAPSS meetings and priorities for CAPSS in its remaining year. There are about twelve more meetings. At least five of these will be used to vet project draft reports or conduct project-related workshops, leaving, at most, seven meetings where speakers can be invited and special topics can be investigated. John mentioned a list of candidate topics, and also asked committee members to think about issues that should be highlighted in upcoming CAPSS reports or issues that may be overlooked in the CAPSS work. Interest was expressed in exploring the following topics in future meetings:

- how the post-earthquake repair/retrofit policies operated in San Francisco and Oakland after Loma Prieta
- Loma Prieta impacts in the Marina, from a detailed review of City records

It was noted that the draft CAPSS Task 2 report does not address issues of highrise housing. Since the time that report was written, the City has built many units in high rise structure, which could face a variety of occupancy challenges after a large earthquake.

Badie Rowshandel noted that the California Earthquake Authority has funds and interest in studying single family housing issues, and there may be an opportunity to collaborate.