

Mike Roddy

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Dear Alameda City Council, Planning Commission, and Staff:

Gary Pomeroy of Balboa Capital Partners and I would like to bid low cost housing for the Main Street project near the North Ferry. Gary has built over 2,000 production homes in his career, attended Harvard Business School, and is the author of four books on modular homes. I have built production homes in California, Japan, Romania, and Latin America, and have authored a dozen articles on global warming and the environmental impacts of building materials. [MR1]Linda Sills and I recently hosted a climate activist meeting during AGU in San Francisco, where top scientists, activists, and authors delivered five minute presentations on global warming solutions (sample speeches are available on request).

Gary and I have arranged financing via an initial \$40 million line of credit, should there be interest from the City. We can raise additional funds if needed through my developer friend Eric Cernich of Oxbow Partners of Newport Beach, who has a much larger credit line.

As an Alameda resident, I believe that inadequate attention has been paid to environmental specifications, something residents here believe to be extremely important. Here are some of our ideas:

1. Steel framing. Alameda will be subject to flooding this century, and when wood framed houses are flooded, the structural material is hauled to a landfill, as in New Orleans after Katrina. The average US home lasts 60 years due to wood degradation (though Alameda's older homes, built from redwood and old fir, are much more durable). Further, plywood and OSB used in modern homes for shear and flooring underlayment contains formaldehyde, a potent toxin when there are disturbances. We would use all inert materials to achieve durability and IAQ, a common practice around the world. The current cost premium per house for steel these days is roughly \$1500, per Gary Johnson of Merced, who has framed thousands of them. LEED certification will not be sought, since it's expensive and, in my opinion, not rigorous enough. Wood framing is also quite CO2 intensive: <http://www.forestcouncil.org/pdf/CO2emissions-Roddy.pdf>
2. We propose to build 164 + 200 900' single family homes with lofts largely heated with passive solar, achieved by locating a large south facing window for each house. This requires site planning support from Planning and Public Works, but is achievable.
3. Electric power could be provided by a 3 mgw solar farm, located close to the development, possibly on the parking lot at Main and Willie Stargell.
4. Support and publicity will be aided by cooperation with these friends of Linda and myself: Randy Hayes, Rainforest Action Network founder, Bill McKibben of 350.org, John Knox of Earth Island Institute, Michael Brune of Sierra Club etc. If we maintain integrity throughout, these friends will study our practices and offer support.

5. Auto resistant site design. There could be a common parking area with solar roofs at the site entrance, so residents will walk or, if disabled, access community golf carts. There are multiple benefits here, including eliminating code requirements for wide paved streets and gutters onsite.
6. Enhanced drainage swales, hard gravel roads, and diverse native plant landscaping would also be featured. No monoculture lawns, with accompanying chemicals.
7. Pedestrian paths that include exercise stations

The next service we plan to offer is innovative homeowner or lessee financing. Either way, there would be a lottery, since rents and sales prices would be well below market, due to the City being gifted with the land by the Navy. That would mean intense demand, but this benefit would be shared with the City of Alameda by remitting most of the profits to the City when the property is either sold or the lessee vacates. There are multiple benefits to this program: Alameda would actually achieve affordable housing, but avoid the problem of absentee owners who sublet, flippers, and lessees who could profit when they cede the lease to a new tenant. Alameda would share in sales price or lease appreciation value, so the City, not developers, would be rewarded in the long term for providing Planning services and inexpensive land.

Our design reduces development costs, and the cost of building small houses is reasonable on a per square foot basis, even when steel framing, lofts (living room roof to be pitched), and passive solar design are included. Gary and I have built similar houses in the \$30/sq ft range overseas and a little over double that in the US. We expect hard construction costs for the houses themselves to be under \$90/ sq ft, depending on specifications.

Our team is excited about the possibilities, and we look forward to building a project that meets the needs of affordability, cutting edge green features, and a market that is not being serviced. Young professionals don't like either apartments or large homes, but prefer small but not "tiny" houses. We look forward to pleasing them.

We are not familiar with arrangements with other developers, but are happy to pursue this opportunity as either builders or with the City as a developer partner. Pomeroy has extensive experience here.

All addressees are welcome to call me about this proposal, or arrange a detailed meeting, with slide shows, schematic drawings, and Mr. Pomeroy in attendance.

Best regards,

Mike Roddy