

Date: July 8, 2015
To: City Council, City of Alameda
From: Jay Ingram, Alameda Resident
Re: Del Monte Development

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It is with extreme disappointment that I write this letter, disappointment in the developer Tim Lewis Community Partners mostly. While I planned on attending the July 7 meeting, I'm unable to attend the July 21 meeting. Having to write this communication two weeks in advance, I'm not entirely sure what the requested action will be. However, I ask that you not move forward with the requested approvals at this time. Take the necessary time to send this back to the Planning Board for a re-design and build the project correctly, making sure it fits into its new surroundings. I have expressed concern of the design since the initial public meeting at the Mastic Senior Center last July. Here we are a year later, many public meeting where I have expressed design concerns, commenting that the current designs lack creativity and has an institutional look, certainly not residential. Every one of my requests (and the communities) regarding design improvements has fallen of deaf ears and Tim Lewis Community Partners has simply not cared to make improvements. Who is in charge in this process? Throughout this process I've seen people come and go during public comment, most of which I've only seen once. Take the City Council meeting this past January, dozens of "first-timers" commented on this item. One person, who claimed to be, "Mad as hell and not going to take it anymore," referring to the complaining people not wanting development. While I realize people have the write to say their three minutes then move on, I'm asking that you consider all voices. I'm not against the development, I'm against the low level design quality and absolute disregard for fitting this development into its new surroundings.

I'm amazed at the speed this development has taken shape. At the last Planning Board meeting on this issue the senior housing, which was just attached on the outer edge of the building is blue and silver. This might fit in Emeryville or San Francisco, but not Alameda, certainly not this location. I ask that the City Council require the Tim Lewis Community Partners to produce visual simulations as you pass the property in all directions. The renderings showed to date are lacking and just have the buildings with no context on how the skyscape will drastically change. Requiring visual simulations will enable the City Council (and community) to see the drastic changes this 3-5 story development will change the landscape for decades to come. Gone will be the views of the estuary and the Oakland Hills. It was interesting at a spring Planning Board meeting where the Board praised the new McGuire and Hester Harbor Bay headquarters building as saving the view corridor, but when it came to the Del Monte property discussion that same night the Planning Board glossed over any deliberation of view corridors and just excepted the renderings showing the new senior housing addition as an ugly blue and silver structure, stuck on the side of the development.

I caution you about the PLAN group which have said publically they represent the neighbors. As a neighbor to the property, let me caution you that the PLAN group is three individuals that live close to Littlejohn Park, but do not represent the neighbors. I have spoken with on my block of Pacific Avenue and they do not share the same views on this project as the PLAN folks. Please do not assume that the PLAN group represents the greater Littlejohn neighborhood.

Lastly, the clustering of senior housing on the exterior of the building is unfortunate. Integrating the units into the overall property design would be more desirable. Do as Andrew Thomas suggested at the last Planning Board meeting on this items and move the affordable senior housing around.

This process has been challenging at times as I've attended most meetings, being heard, but not listened too. Most of my frustration is with the developer and their lack of desire to change from their original concept as presented at the Mastic Senior Center last July. They proved then that they weren't interested in taking constructive criticism and that is sad since they have such a nice parcel of land to work with.

There are so many other red flags with this development that have been discussed and dismissed. Money to Jean Sweeney Open Space Park and the School District, but not dedication of funds to improve Littejohn Park (a failing park in need of repair), neighborhood parking impacts, the ownership versus rental discussion for the units within the development, and land ownership status of the Wind River and Pennzoil parcels just to name a few. This development has developed over a one-year period, this is lightspeed for development in Alameda. Slow down and think this development through as it will be with us for decades to come. We can do this, but let's take time to do it right.

In conclusion, not knowing what if any, specific action is requested of the City Council tonight, I would simply ask that no decision be made. This project needs more time to get it right. Please do not rush this project through.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jg" followed by a stylized surname, possibly "Long".

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jay and Jill Ingram <jj2ingram@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2015 12:15 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: City Council Communication for 7/7/15 Meeting - PLN15-0165

Ms. Weisinger,

Please forward this to the City Council and Developer (Tim Lewis Community Partners), prior to the meeting as I'm requesting action prior to the July 7, 2015 meeting.

As a neighbor of the Del Monte property and someone who has been to most public meetings, starting with the July 2014 meeting at the Mastic Senior Center. The majority of my requests have gone unnoticed and for that I'm disappointed. I ask the City Council, prior to the July 7 2015 meeting, require the developer to produce 3D visualization rendering of what the Del Monte (and senior housing) complex will look like when viewed at ground level, looking east, south, north and west. Since day one, at the Mastic Senior Center meeting, I've complained about the lack of "fit" for the improvements. Those requests have gone unrecognized, with the last Planning Board meeting showing a picture of the senior housing that had silver and blue siding. Is this the best Tim Lewis can do and the most that Alameda can require; I think (and hope) not? Months ago I asked that the five story addition to the Del Monte building be at least dressed-up to fit the existing red brick. Last picture I saw was a silver looking appendage that comes up out of the current Del Monte structure - zero improvement from the Mastic Center, 2014 meeting. Ugly and extremely lacking respect for the existing historic buildings and the City of Alameda. I'm not opposed to development at Del Monte, however, I'm extremely disappointed that in the rush to get this project approved, NOBODY appears to have questioned the exterior design and "fit" for the existing neighborhood. This improvement would fit nicely in Emeryville or San Francisco, unfortunately, we are neither.

Please forward this request for consideration to the City Council and developer much prior to the meeting to give the developer time to complete some much needed work. Ground level visualizations from all directions are an absolute must. The visualizations must show existing conditions as compared to proposed conditions.

Thank you,
Jay Ingram