

~~FEB~~
January 6, 2018

Dear Members of City Council,

When I was a kid, gated communities did not exist in my part of New Jersey. There were new developments springing up with landscaped entrances that included low stone walls, and we mocked the pretension that was employed by the sales team to convince buyers that such appendages lent both charm and grandeur to the otherwise rather pedestrian projects.

Little did we know what was in store. Twenty years later my parents moved into a retirement village in the same community in which I had grown up. Shadow Lake, a sprawling community with a single entry point had a guardhouse and a gate, manned by uniformed personnel who made a phone call to my parents when I arrived by car. I couldn't see well enough into the guardhouse to tell if they were armed, but I thought the whole thing was pretty silly. And I marveled that this safety feature was deemed desirable enough for condo sales to justify the investment. This was about 1980.

Fast forward to 1999. My wife and I visited Alameda and I was struck by the reminders of my childhood on the Jersey shore. A low-key community with a 50's feel to it, a culturally diverse population, good schools a little worn at the heel, and affordable to middle class and upper middle class couples looking for a home. Even the bridges were reminders of river and estuary crossings that would occasionally be held up by a passing sailboat, all very charming and picturesque. What a lovely place to raise kids.

We have become what is commonly referred to as solid citizens - knocking on doors for bond measures, cleaning beaches, writing climate action resolutions that gave rise to the Climate Action Plan and CASA, speaking out at AUSD board meetings to address bullying in the schools, supporting socially responsible lecture series, and trying to keep up with the actions that various Alameda boards present on their agendas.

Fast forward again to 2018. I found out only 4 days ago that this city is about to put cameras on those same bridges that I cross every day, cameras which would read and remotely store the license plate numbers, 24 hours a day, of every car entering and leaving Alameda, presumably to aid in the deterrence of car theft.

I don't want to live in a gated community. I don't want my community to move in that direction. I consider the present proposal for cameras a move in that direction. The use of such cameras, once in place, is subject to decisions far down the road, made by persons with different motivations than yours, at a time, perhaps not so distant, when the forces of social unrest bring about conditions that are deemed to require extreme measures.

I don't want to be a party to any decision that might provide tools to aid the enforcement of such extreme measures. I want the record to show that until the case is made in a convincing and public way to the people of Alameda, I am against this proposal.

David Teeters
Citizen of Alameda



Submitted by David Teeters
Re: b-c 2/6/18