

ITEM 7-B

CITY OF ALAMEDA
Memorandum

To: Honorable President and
Members of the Planning Board

From: Nanette Mocanu
Acting Assistant Community Development Director

Date: April 14, 2014

Re: **Alameda Point – Wayfinding Sign Program – PLN14-0127 – City of Alameda.** Public Hearing to consider a Wayfinding Sign Program for Alameda Point. The proposed signs include street names and addressing, informal landmarks and district naming. Signs are proposed for up to 25 locations throughout Alameda Point. (Applicant – City of Alameda)

BACKGROUND

The City is proposing a short-term (three to five years) Sign Program for Alameda Point to provide a thematically consistent group of wayfinding signs. The proposed signs include street names and addressing, informal landmarks and district naming. Signs are proposed for up to 25 locations throughout Alameda Point. Square Peg Design has prepared a Master Sign Program for short-term signage at Alameda Point (Exhibit 1). The Sign Program establishes criteria for identification signs for streets, individual building addresses, landmarks (e.g., USS Hornet), land use zones (e.g., Spirits Alley) as well as entire districts (e.g., Seaplane Lagoon). This Sign Program would update the Alameda Point Sign Program adopted by the Planning Board in 1998 (Exhibit 2).

As provided for by the Zoning Ordinance (AMC Section 30-6.3 (2)), these criteria may be different from the sign criteria established for individual buildings elsewhere in Alameda because they are located in a distinct area of Alameda. In addition to the existing Sign Program for Alameda Point, similar criteria were approved for Alameda Landing and South Shore Shopping Centers.

The original Alameda Point Sign Program was prepared to: 1) establish interim sign requirements, 2) ensure consistency with the preservation of Alameda Point's unique historic resources and character and 3) provide tenants and interim lessees with clear requirements for signage and permit processing.

The 1998 sign program was put in place to facilitate leasing activities at Alameda Point during the Interim Leasing period. The Interim Leasing period ended in 2000, with adoption of the Lease in Furtherance of Conveyance (LIFOC). While the sign program continues to be in effect, the resolution states that "If

substantial redevelopment of Alameda Point occurs, the Planning Board can adopt a new sign program that would supersede this Sign Program.” With conveyance of a majority of the base to the City in June 2013, it is appropriate to introduce signage to provide information and wayfinding guidance to existing and future tenants, visitors and the general public. Staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt a resolution amending the 1998 resolution approving a sign program to provide temporary wayfinding signage (Exhibit 3).

To ensure that the wayfinding signage is consistent with the preservation of Alameda Point’s unique historic resources and character, the Historical Advisory Board (HAB) reviewed and commented on the proposed sign program at its meeting on April 3, 2014.

The Board’s comments are summarized as follows:

- Signs should be visible and well lit
- Signs should conform to a unified color scheme
- Signs should feature white letters to be visible at night
- Signs should be located near existing light sources or should include illumination to facilitate wayfinding at night events
- Some signs should be double-sided to facilitate wayfinding into and out of Alameda Point
- Signs should be visible to bicyclists and pedestrians as well as drivers

ANALYSIS

The proposed Wayfinding Sign Program provides for temporary signage over the next three to five years. As Alameda Point builds out, District identification will be further refined and more permanent signage will be developed that is consistent with the on-going development and reuse. In addition to this temporary Sign Program, the City is working on a paint palette for the Alameda Point Historic District. Existing tenants would like to paint the individual buildings they occupy and the City will provide them guidance in terms of appropriate paint colors. Following approval of a paint palette program, the City will work on a sign program for permanent tenant signage. Taken together, these activities are part of a larger effort to facilitate development and reuse at Alameda Point.

Sign Program: The location of Alameda Point on a former Navy Air Station at the westernmost edge of Alameda requires special consideration to create an effective sign program for a successful mixed-use area. Existing and proposed buildings will be located on streets with names that may be unfamiliar to Alameda and Bay Area residents. As a result, signage for this property needs to be designed in such a way as to compensate for these locational constraints and support effective transition to civil re-use and redevelopment of the base.

The intent of the sign program is to provide information and wayfinding guidance to existing and future tenants, visitors and the general public. The sign program provides specific criteria for sign design, placement, types, size, materials etc. (See Exhibit 1, Sign Program). The criteria are consistent with the intent of the City's sign regulations and the 1998 Sign Program, and effectively encourage the quality of signage that the City expects from this high visibility site. Staff has identified several features of the sign program that may be of interest to the Planning Board as discussed below.

Entry Signs: There will be one Entry Sign on the north side of Atlantic Avenue (6'-8" x 48'-0", supported 27" off grade). There will be an additional smaller sign on the south side (9'-0" x 8'-0") creating a portal and sense of entry. Construction will be 2' by 8' panels of corrugated metal with paint finish and mounted to steel posts. The words "Alameda Point, Welcome and the City of Alameda logo" would be made of marine grade plywood with paint finish and stud mounted to corrugated background panels. A cost alternate to the corrugated metal panels would be sealed marine grade plywood with a corrugated vinyl print. Groups of commercial grade flagpoles would be installed on both side of Atlantic and would range in height from 25 feet to 45 feet in height (see Exhibit 1, pages 5 through 7).

Boundary Marker Signs: There would be two of these signs. The signs would be two feet wide and ten feet high, constructed of vertical sealed marine grade plywood panels and mounted on wood posts (see Exhibit 1, page 8). These signs provide direction to visitors entering Alameda Point for the first time.

Street Name/Vehicular Directional Signs: There would be up to 10 of these signs that would be located at key intersections within Alameda Point. The sign panels would be approximately one foot high and five feet long mounted to square aluminum tube supports. Supports will be sleeved with thick wall 6" round PVC, all with paint finish. Text will be exterior grade reflective vinyl (see Exhibit 1, page 9 and 10).

Vehicular Directional at Destination Signs: The number of these signs has yet to be determined. These signs would be located at key destinations within Alameda Point. The signs would be three feet nine inches wide and seven feet high, made from corrugated metal panels with paint finish and mounted to steel posts. The text panels would be made of marine grade plywood with paint finish and reflective vinyl letters, stud mounted to corrugated background panels. A cost alternate to the corrugated metal panels would be sealed marine grade plywood with a corrugated vinyl print. (see Exhibit 1, page 11).

Destination Address Signs: There would be up to 30 of these round signs that would be located at key destinations within Alameda Point. The signs would be 2.5 feet in diameter, constructed of wood panels and mounted on prefabricated six inch round aluminum tubes (see Exhibit 1, page 12).

Landmark Signs: Landmark signs could be located at the entryway to the USS Hornet or other landmarks. The sign would be four feet six inches wide and six feet high and constructed of wood panels (see Exhibit 1, page 13).

Site Maps: There would be two of these signs. The signs would be 7.5 feet wide and 3.5 feet high, made of wood and corrugated metal panels suspended between two six inch square aluminum posts (see Exhibit 1, page 14).

Building Graphics: There could be building graphics painted onto individual buildings located throughout Alameda Point, including Hangar Row, Spirits Alley and the Sports Center (see Exhibit 1, pages 15 through 20). These graphics would identify individual buildings and districts and could also include street addresses to provide information and wayfinding guidance to existing and future tenants, visitors and the general public.

The Sign Program will be implemented incrementally based on City funding for the project. Staff is recommending the following priority for installing the signs (see page iii of Exhibit 1): 1) entry sign/boundary markers (AA1 and AD1), 2) street name/vehicular directional (AD3), 3) addressing occupied buildings/building landmark graphics, 4) site map on Atlantic Avenue (AB2).

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The project involves a Sign Program for an existing site with existing and planned facilities. The proposed project is categorically exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Minor Alterations to Existing Facilities. Approval of the Sign Program would not result in any significant effects related to traffic, noise, air quality or water quality.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

This agenda item was advertised in the Alameda Journal on March 28, 2014. Notices were also mailed to Alameda Point commercial tenants

RECOMMENDATION

Hold a public hearing and review and approve the proposed Sign Program by adopting the attached Draft Resolution amending the 1998 resolution to provide a sign program for temporary wayfinding signage

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

Nanette Mocanu
Acting Assistant Community Development Director

Exhibits:

1. Alameda Point Sign Program, prepared by Square Peg Design, March, 2014
2. 1998 Alameda Point Sign Program
3. Draft Resolution