

CITY OF ALAMEDA

Memorandum

To: Honorable President and
Members of the Planning Board

From: Andrew Thomas
City Planner

Kathleen Livermore
Planner

Date: May 27, 2014

Re: **Design Review Application PLN13-0380 Marina Cove II; Applicant: Lennar Homes.** Design Review Application to Construct 52 Single-Family Homes and 37 Multifamily Condominium Units, Internal Roadways, Alleys and Emergency Access, and Apply for Two Street Names, on 7.14 acres at 1551 Buena Vista Avenue, Commonly known as Marina Cove II.

BACKGROUND

On October 22 and November 26, 2012, the Planning Board held public hearings and recommended approval of a Tentative Map application (PLN12-0226) for a 53 lot, 89-unit subdivision on a 7.14-acre property located at 1551 Buena Vista Avenue. On January 2, 2013, the City Council approved the Tentative Map application. This approval established the appropriate number of single-family and multi-family units, the location and size of the streets, and the areas to be devoted to public space and landscaping. .

The approved Tentative Map was designed to provide a transition between the small, two-story single-family homes developed as part of Marina Cove I (Ohlone to Grand Street) and the five-acre, two-block long Del Monte warehouse, and to provide automobile, bicycle and pedestrian access from Alameda neighborhoods east of Buena Vista to the waterfront and the Marina Cove public waterfront open space. These objectives were achieved by:

- Placing larger multifamily buildings on the Del Monte warehouse side of the site and smaller two-story single-family homes on the Marina Cove I side of the site.
- Extending two new streets through the site from Buena Vista to the future Clement Avenue and the Waterfront Park.
- Providing a third pedestrian and bicycle connection through the site at the cul-de-sac located between Entrance Road and Stanton Street.

In addition to the above design decisions, the Tentative Map also required a shared driveway for the single-family homes that face Buena Vista. The shared driveways reduce the number of curb cuts onto the street and improve pedestrian safety along the sidewalk.

Upon approval of the Tentative Map, the applicant sold the property to Lennar Homes. Lennar Homes is now requesting Design Review approval for the proposed buildings and landscaping for the property.

The attached plans (Exhibit 1) include the proposed architectural design for the 52 single-family homes and 37 row house condominiums and the specific landscape materials that are proposed for the landscape areas. The Design Review application is intended to complement and implement the Tentative Map application recommended by the Planning Board on November 26, 2012, and approved by the City Council on January 2, 2013.

Staff is recommending approval of the proposed Design Review application subject to certain conditions included in the draft resolution of approval (Exhibit 2).

DISCUSSION

The approved Tentative Map allows a total of 89 housing units, including 10 three-story single-family waterfront homes, 42 two-story single-family homes, and 37 three-story multi-family row house condominiums (See Exhibit 1, Sheet SP1.0). The street grid implements the Planning Board- and City Council- approved Tentative Subdivision Map, with two through streets and a third street that provides an Emergency Vehicle Access and pedestrian access between Clement and Buena Vista Avenues. From an urban design perspective, the development provides an excellent opportunity to create a visual, aesthetic and functional transition between the 250-foot long three-story brick historic Del Monte building on the west side of the site and the single family homes in Marina Cove I and the adjacent neighborhoods along Buena Vista and Clement Avenues to the east. A color and material board will be available at the Planning Board meeting on May 27, 2014.

Architectural Styles:

The Design Review plans include three distinctly different architectural styles. The differing styles create a site where each housing type becomes a unique piece that complements the others. Adjacent influences include the Del Monte building to the northwest, the marina to the northeast, the Marina Cove I development to the southeast, and the existing Alameda neighborhood fabric to the southwest. Each style seeks not to copy adjacent contextual elements, but instead intends to compliment the adjacent street scene. All styles feature multiple variations for each home or building type, high quality building design and materials, and a "Bay Friendly" landscaping palette.

Spanish Styles (Styles C & D): This style is applied to the single-family homes located on the southern and southwestern portion of the site adjacent to the existing Marina Cove I development. The Spanish style continues the theme of the Marina Cove I development and incorporates more traditional Spanish elements to create a complementary street scene along Buena Vista Avenue. The homes offer simple, clean massing in mostly light colored stucco, with tile roofs, wood accents, wrought iron details, and mosaic tile accents.

Harbor Styles (Styles A & B): This style is applied to the three-story detached homes along Clement Street. The architectural style, materials and colors of these buildings are inspired by the marina and Alameda Harbor across the street. The style is a mix of stucco and traditional siding elements. Ground floor porches and upper floor decks and balconies provide views to the water and hills beyond and serve to activate the street. Standing seam metal roofs contrast the traditional massing and materials and complement the new multi-family condominium buildings along Clement Street.

Waterfront Industrial Style: This style is applied to the multi-family condominium buildings. The architectural style, materials and colors are inspired by the proximity of these buildings to the Del Monte warehouse building to the north and the waterfront residential neighborhoods found throughout Alameda and the Bay Area. The Waterfront Industrial style includes primarily siding with larger brick elements in key locations and box bay windows to add visual interest and break up roof lines. At building types “A” and “C”, the style seeks to transition from the adjacent single-family detached homes and provides more vertical elements that define each individual unit. Shingle roofing at these buildings further ties it to the single-family neighborhood. Building types “B” and “D” face the Del Monte building and seek to reflect some of the Del Monte building’s rhythms by incorporating more brick, longer porch elements, and standing seam metal roofing. Building “E” fronts Clement Street and provides a transition from the Del Monte building and the three-story single-family homes. Expanded porches and upper floor decks at this building “E” provide views towards the water. Siding elements carry to the ground and start to break up the brick elements and accentuate the feeling of the individual units.

Building Design:

There are a total of 10 three-story single-family “waterfront” homes within the project. These single-family detached homes are designed with two-story front porches and a strong front elevation design located on Clement Street, the Fortman Marina and the Alameda Oakland Waterfront. All the homes are alley-loaded from the rear of the unit, which eliminates the need for a garage door facing the waterfront. The three-story homes are approximately 36 feet in height. The homes provide two different floor plans (Plans 1 and 2 in Exhibit 1) ranging in size from approximately 2,049 to 2,314 square feet. The homes provide a mix of three- and four-bedrooms. Four of the waterfront homes offer an optional bedroom suite on the ground floor for multi-generational living or residents with disabilities. Each home plan type has two distinct “Harbor” elevation styles and two color schemes resulting in four façade variations. Ground floor porches

and upper floor decks are located along the front elevations to provide exceptional views of the adjacent estuary and Oakland hills beyond.

The balance of the single family homes (42 homes) are designed as “2-pack” homes. These single family detached homes provide a continuation of the housing typology and density present in the adjacent Marina Cove I project and are plotted along the southern and southwestern half of the site. All the homes are in pairs such that both homes share one curb cut at the street, with one unit having a garage at the front and the other a garage at the rear of the lot. The two-story homes are approximately 27 feet in height. The homes provide three different floor plans (Plans 3, 4 and 5 in Exhibit 1) ranging in size from approximately 2,213 to 2,523 square feet. The homes provide a mix of three- four- and five-bedrooms. An optional bedroom on the ground floor for multi-generational living is offered in 34 of the plans. Each “2-pack” home plan type has two distinct “Spanish” elevation styles and three color schemes resulting in six façade variations. The Spanish styles are consistent with the style of the existing Marina Cove I development to the southwest and work to create a complementary street scene transition along Buena Vista Avenue.

There are six, three-story multi-family buildings that are located on the northeastern third of the site fronting Buena Vista Ave, Entrance Road, Clement Street, and Street B. The multi-family buildings are approximately 38 to 45 feet in height. Collectively, they contain 37 condominiums. The multi-family buildings all vary in size with a mix of four, six, seven, and eight units per building. The condominiums feature five different floor plans ranging in size from about 1,332 to 1,963 square feet. The condominiums feature a mix of two- three- and four-bedrooms. All of the buildings are alley-loaded and front onto the street. (Front doors face the public street, and garages are provided on the back of the building off an alley.) Four of the units will have a fully accessible ground floor bedroom and bathroom. An additional 24 units have a bedroom and bathroom on the ground floor. These multi-family buildings include four distinctive, yet cohesive, building types. Each building features an exterior style that seeks to combine and draw from the residential and waterfront industrial influences found in the immediate surroundings. For example, the buildings across the street from the Del Monte Building use brick materials and the continuous awning over the front doors to create a visual link to the City Monument across the street.

Landscape Plan and Open Space:

In 1999, the City required that Marina Cove I build the entire park for Marina Cove I and II as part of the Marina Cove I development. Therefore, the Marina Cove II homeowners will be required to share in the maintenance of the Marina Cove Waterfront Park with the Marina Cove I residents. In addition to the existing public park provided by the project, each single-family home includes a small private open space area in the rear or side yard, and each row house includes a private porch.

The front yards and common landscape areas feature a palette of Bay Friendly plant materials. A Homeowners Association will be responsible for maintaining all common

open space areas. Drought tolerant landscaping will be used extensively in all public areas.

Affordable Housing

Sixteen affordable units will be distributed between moderate-, low-income and very low-income units. The project will restrict six single-family homes for moderate-income households and 10 row houses for seven low-income households and three for very low-income households. The Conditions of Approval require the applicant to execute an Affordable Housing Agreement with the City prior to Final Map approval. This process is now underway.

Transportation:

Pursuant to the Conditions of Approval on the Tentative Map, the project is required to implement a transportation demand management program (TDM) to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips from the project site. The TDM program must be completed prior to issuance of the Final Map or the first building permit.

Streets and Street Names:

The project will be constructing four new streets. Two of the four streets are extensions of existing streets (Clement Avenue and Stanton Street). The other two streets require names. The applicant is requesting that Streets A and B be renamed Balsa Street and Sakas Street. These are both Native American names that have a relationship to the Native American history of the area and are also water-themed names. These names will be considered for inclusion in the City's *Official Naming List For City Facilities and Streets* at the Historical Advisory Board's June 5, 2014 meeting. If the Planning Board approves these names, it will be with the condition that these names are included on the *Official Naming List* by the Historical Advisory Board. Otherwise, the applicant will return to the Planning Board to rename the streets.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, staff believes the architectural and landscape plans included in Exhibit 1 are well designed and will create an attractive and well-cared-for new neighborhood for Alameda. Staff is recommending that the Planning Board approve the Design Review application subject to certain conditions in the draft Resolution (Exhibit 2). Subject to the conditions of approval in the Resolution, staff is recommending that the Planning Board make the following findings, which are included in the draft resolution:

1. **The project will have no significant adverse effects on the persons or property in the vicinity.** The project design is consistent with the site's Medium Density Residential General Plan designation, the underlying R-4/PD-MF zoning district, and the 2013 tentative map for the site recommended by the Planning Board and approved by the City Council. The architectural design and landscape provide for

three distinctly different architectural styles where each housing type is unique yet complementary to the new development as well as adjacent neighborhoods. The visually interesting and varied facades that are accented with multiple changes in materials and colors to differentiate buildings, provide for a pleasant pedestrian experience, and create a dynamic and appealing neighborhood. Visually appealing vertical elements and materials are used to accent the buildings and provide for compatibility between the buildings in the vicinity of the project. The landscape plan provides a unifying design element and landscape materials to enhance the relationship between the buildings and the pedestrian experience. The landscape plan will provide a low maintenance, Bay Friendly landscape palette. As conditioned, the project is consistent with the City of Alameda's Design Review Guidelines because the building and landscape design is compatible with the surroundings and will provide for a distinctive new neighborhood for the City of Alameda.

2. **The project will be compatible and harmonious with the design and use of the surrounding area.** The project design is appropriate for the site because it incorporates various building styles in the vicinity, including the Del Monte building to the northwest, the marina to the northeast, the Marina Cove I development to the southeast, and the existing Alameda neighborhood fabric to the southwest. Spanish Styles in the two-story homes, Harbor Styles in the three-story homes and waterfront industrial in the multi-family homes are featured. Each style complements rather than copies the architectural styles of the adjacent neighborhoods. There are multiple variations for each home or building type and high quality building design is featured throughout.
3. **The project is consistent with the City of Alameda's Residential Design Review Guidelines.** The project will be compatible and harmonious with the design and use of surrounding areas because the architectural design and exterior materials and colors provide for visually interesting and varied facades that are accented with multiple changes in materials and colors to differentiate the various product types.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

On January 2, 2013, the City Council adopted the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Tentative Map. This Design Review application is consistent with the approved Tentative Map and the approved Mitigated Negative Declaration.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS

Property owners and residents within 300 feet of the project's boundaries were notified of the public hearing and given the opportunity to review and comment on the proposal. As of May 15, 2014, staff has not received any public comments on the Design Plans.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the draft resolution (Exhibit 2) to approve the Design Review application.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Thomas
City Planner

Exhibit:

1. Marina Cove II Design Review Package
2. Draft Planning Board Resolution