

From: Paul Breitkopf <pbreitkopf@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 12:26 PM
To: Henry Dong
Subject: Re: Application for Certificate of Approval and Design Review PLN15-15-0136

August 26, 2015

Alameda Historical Advisory Board
c/o Henry Dong, Planner
Community Development Department
City of Alameda
hdong@alamedaca.gov

Re: Application for Certificate of Approval and Design Review PLN15-15-0136

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the application for a certificate of approval and design review for 1732 Union St. (PLN15-15-0136). We have owned and resided in 1735 Union St. which is across the street since 2013.

We object to this project for a number of reasons:

We urge the Historical Advisory Board to preserve the historic scale and character of the housing stock on this block and in this neighborhood by rejecting the proposed project as the project is incompatible with the historical scale and character of this block.

The block remains relatively intact with the exception of our neighbor's home at 1733 Union St. which appears to have originally been a one-story, two-bedroom/one-bathroom 1920s bungalow. It is now a two-story, three-bedroom/two-bathroom imposing home with two balconies overlooking our small yard.

Given the smaller lot sizes in the neighborhood, homes of this scale are inconsistent with the historical scale and character of this block.

We also have concerns about parking and increased traffic generated by an enlarged home.

Sincerely,

Paul Breitkopf & Gloria Stevens

1735 Union St.

Alameda, CA 94501

pbreitkopf@sbcglobal.net

Exhibit 3
Item 7-A, 9/3/15
Historical Advisory Board

From: John Watkins <j.watkins@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 6:22 AM
To: Henry Dong
Cc: 'peterSslote'; sjkaplan4education@gmail.com; robinwat12@gmail.com;
johnwat53@gmail.com; mailmom3@gmail.com; pbreitkopf@sbcglobal.net
Subject: Application for Certificate of Approval and Design Review PLN15-15-0136

August 26, 2015

Alameda Historical Advisory Board
c/o Henry Dong
Planner
Community Development Dept.
City of Alameda
2263 Santa Clara Ave., Room 190
Alameda, CA 94501

Re: Application for Certificate of Approval and Design Review PLN15-15-0136

Mr. Dong,

We wish to submit comments pertaining to a certificate of approval and design review for 1732 Union St. (PLN15-15-0136). We have lived at 1806 Buena Vista Ave. since 1991.

The rear yard of 1732 Union St. abuts approximately 65% of the length of our rear yard, on the west. The proposed modifications to 1732 Union St. would result in a significant loss of visibility, privacy, afternoon sunlight and open space currently available in our rear yard at 1806 Buena Vista Ave. and would drastically alter the historic character of this area of the neighborhood.

The proposed design for the project at 1732 Union St. is not appropriate for the site, nor is it compatible with the adjacent and neighboring buildings and surroundings, nor does it promote harmonious transitions in the scale or the historic character of the neighborhood. In addition, the design elements will not be incorporated to ensure the compatibility of the structure with the historic character and uses of the properties.

We are deeply concerned that the proposed project would not be consistent with the modest scale and historic character of the neighborhood we have lived in for the past 24 years.

Sincerely,

John & Robin Watkins
1806 Buena Vista Ave.
Alameda, CA 94501

From: peterSslote <petersslote@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2015 11:14 PM
To: Henry Dong
Cc: Stacy Kaplan; Robin Watkins; John Watkins; celia schwarz; Paul Breitkopf
Subject: Application for Certificate of Approval and Design Review PLN15-15-0136
Attachments: Letter to HAB re PLN15-15-0136 Aug 26 2015.pdf

August 26, 2015

Alameda Historical Advisory Board
c/o Henry Dong, Planner
Community Development Department
City of Alameda
hdong@alamedaca.gov

Re: Application for Certificate of Approval and Design Review PLN15-15-0136

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the application for a certificate of approval and design review for 1732 Union St. (PLN15-15-0136). We have owned and resided in 1712 Union St. next door to 1732 Union St. since 2003. (Note: 1712 Union St. is misidentified in the applicants' plans as 1729 Union St.) We object to this project for a variety of reasons:

The project is incompatible with the historical scale and character of this block. The lots were subdivided in 1875, including the six small (2,200sq') lots at the Buena Vista Ave. end of this block. These lots feature modest two-bedroom/one-bathroom bungalows built in the 1920s. These lots were not intended for three-bedroom/two-bathroom residences, as proposed in this project. The historic scale and character of these residences have provided homes for a broad range of residents since we have lived on this block, and long before. The proposed project would eliminate one such home and replace it with a significantly less affordable home, reducing Alameda's historical inventory of such homes at a time when this neighborhood is being filled in by new developments featuring 3000-5000sq' single family homes with market values well beyond the means of families who would rent or own the simple, modest bungalows on Union St.

We are also concerned that a three-bedroom/two-bathroom home on this 2,200sq' lot could have street parking issues that would be inconsistent with the modest scale and character of the original subdivision. The sole original three-bedroom single-family residence on this block is 1710 Union St. (Note: this home is misidentified in the applicants' plan as 1727 Union St.) This home is on a 4,300sq' lot which comfortably affords off-street parking for three vehicles. The potential future impact on street parking associated with a three-bedroom home on a 2,220sq' lot would change the historic character of this block.

One need look no further than the two-story structure at 1733 Union St., originally a one-story, two-bedroom/one-bathroom 1920s bungalow on a 2,200sq' lot, to see that conversion of these homes into two-story, three-bedroom/two-bathroom homes is inconsistent with the historical scale and character of this block.

We intend to submit additional comments on this project to planning staff regarding the impacts on light, shadow, glare, view and privacy, later in the design review period.

We urge the Historical Advisory Board to preserve the historic scale and character of the

housing stock on this block and in this neighborhood by rejecting the proposed project.

Sincerely,

Stacy Kaplan & Peter Slote
1712 Union St.
Alameda, CA 94501

From: celia schwarz <mailmom3@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2015 9:39 AM
To: Henry Dong
Subject: Proposed addition to 1732 Union St.

----- Forwarded message -----

August 25, 2015
City of Alameda Historical Advisory Board
c/o Community Development Department
City of Alameda City Hall
2263 Santa Clara Avenue, Room 190
Alameda, CA 94501
Re: Historical Advisory Board Hearing on 1732 Union Street, Alameda

Dear Members of the Historical Advisory Board:

I am very concerned about the proposed addition to the home next door to me at 1732 Union Street. As a single mother, cancer survivor and long-time Alameda resident I struggled for many years, often working overtime, to finally buy my little house in 2008 when it was bank-owned. It is a tiny California bungalow, fewer than 800 sq. ft. and built in 1927. It is

identical in size and design to the property under review as well as to a third house across the street at 1731 Union. With the exception of two residences both sides of the block are populated by small, single-story homes on small lots such

as mine. The specter of a 532 square foot addition within 4.5 feet of my property line fills me with dread for many reasons::

- * It would demean the character and architectural integrity of the neighborhood;
- * It would block an important source of sunlight to my home;
- * It would peer right down into my windows and small yard; and
- * It would inflict months of noise and disruption to my quiet existence.

The owners of 1732 have the clear option of purchasing an existing two-story home rather than meddling in the character

as well as the tranquility of our neighborhood for their own purposes. Please decide in the best interests of myself and several of my neighbors and deny the Certificate of Approval for this project.

Sincerely,
Celia Schwarz
1734 Union Street
Alameda, California 94501



Hi Henry,

Thank you for providing the comments to our proposed project to us for our review. While several of the objections raised seem more relevant to the design review process and are not pertinent to an assessment of historical value by the Historical Advisory Board, we would like to take the time to respond to both the concerns related to historical character and also some of the design concerns.

Concerns relevant to the Historical Advisory Board review meeting on September 3rd:

Historical scale and character of the house and street-

We appreciate and agree with the concern raised by John and Robin Watkins that redevelopment efforts should promote harmonious transitions in existing property. We have worked closely with our architect, Alexandra Saikley, to ensure that the design elements proposed in our project plans are consistent with other Craftsmen style homes built in the 1920s. Our front porch which is the central Craftsmen feature on the exterior of our home needs to be rebuilt due to structural flaws that were identified during a home inspection. As shown in our proposed design, the new front porch will be built to the exact specifications and style of the existing porch.

Other design elements such as the windows, including the large portrait style windows on either side of the porch, need to be replaced due to wood rot and energy inefficiency, but we propose to replace all windows with windows which are consistent with both the style of the original windows and using all wood which is the material common to the home's original era of construction. Also, eave and rake details and exterior materials will all be in keeping with the style of the original house.

Additionally, we would like to add design elements to the house including exterior light fixtures and shingles that are defining features of the 1920s Craftsmen style. We feel that this will not only enhance the character of our home, but make it more consistent with other homes in Alameda.

As highlighted by Peter Slote's email, the block may have been originally subdivided into 6 small lots in 1875, but there has been significant development since then. The majority of our block is now comprised of two-story houses. The assertion in the comments from Celia Schwarz that both sides of the block are populated by small, single story homes on small lots is not accurate. Of the 10 homes on the Union block between Buena Vista and Pacific, 6 of these homes are two-story constructions and 2 of those 6 are multi-unit dwellings. Only 3 (including ours) out of the 10 homes are single story, single family residences. The adjacent block on Union Street includes several 2 story houses and 2 multi-unit apartment buildings.

As mentioned in some of the comments, the house at 1733 Union Street was originally a similar if not identical construction as our home. 1733 Union Street has been remodeled with the approval of the planning department and is now a three-bedroom/two-bathroom home. Rather than cutting against the approval of our project, we feel that this further shows that our proposal is consistent with the current character of the neighborhood and should be approved.

Concerns related to the design:

Parking and increased traffic- We are not proposing to change the single-family classification of our home or add additional entrances that would be more indicative of plans to use the property as a multi-unit dwelling. The addition of living space will not impact parking or increase traffic. We own 2 vehicles and park one in our driveway and one on the street as many of our neighbors also do. As we understand it there are not regulations related to how many vehicles can be owned by a resident in Alameda and we are aware of several residents on our block that own more than 2 vehicles and we have not experienced an impact to parking or traffic due to those vehicles.

Small lot size- While our lot is smaller than some of the other homes on this block, there are zoning provisions in place to restrict development that is incompatible with lot size. Our proposed plans do not contemplate an extension that would affect the percentage of dwelling space that is acceptable for the current lot size. We are proposing to develop within the same footprint of the existing structure.

Loss of privacy- Concerns about privacy are understandable and to be expected with the any construction proposal; however, the modest increase in height of our structure that is well within the 35ft. maximum height that zoning allows for while maintaining the existing structural footprint, make it a concern that does not have much merit. Alameda is a densely populated island where you are often in close proximity to your neighbors. Many of the rear yards in our neighborhood are overlooked by multiple houses and our development would not be any different.

Sunlight/visibility- Several neighbors have cited that the plans would block an important source of sunlight to their homes. While again this is not a point that is relevant to the Historical Advisory Board review, we would like to address the concern. We are open to shadow study to ensure that the design does not cause undue amounts of shade to be cast for unreasonable amounts of time during the day.

We have not chosen to address the comments related to our neighbors' perception of how affordability or market value of homes should be controlled or as to our ability to purchase a home elsewhere as these points seem completely irrelevant to both Historical Review Board and the design review process.

Thank you for your time and please feel free to contact us for any additional information or clarifications.

Best,

Meredith and Ken Levins