



May 31, 2017

(By electronic transmission)  
Historical Advisory Board  
City of Alameda  
2263 Santa Clara Avenue  
Alameda, CA 94501

**Subject: Proposed Inclusion of Alameda Marina Buildings to the City's Historical Building Study List**

Dear Boardmembers:

The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS) asks for adding all 30 of the Alameda Marina buildings already designated as historic resources (NR status 3D on the SHRI completed by Michael Corbett, a preservation specialist for industrial buildings in 1988) to the city's Historical Building Study List. (Note: the staff report states that the Study List is now called the Historic Resources Inventory, but we find no record of the Historical Advisory Board approving this change. In addition, the term Historical Building Study List still is used in the historic preservation ordinance as set forth in Chapter XIII of the Alameda Municipal Code.) AAPS has advocated for this action continually for some time after recognizing that 30 buildings were omitted from the Study List in 1988 as a clerical error.

City staff has recommended inclusion of only nine buildings identified in a report completed (and revised) by Bay West's historical consultant Christopher Ver Planck and not the 30 building resources previously identified in 1988 by the city's consultant Michael Corbett. Their differences of opinion revolve around the integrity of cladding materials currently on the buildings and also in 1988, as well as post-1988 changes to doors, windows and other elements.

However, Mr. Ver Planck's report evaluates the site's eligibility for the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), rather than for the Study List. The California Register criteria include integrity considerations, while the Study List criteria, as set forth in the definition of Historical Monuments in Section 13-21.2 of the Alameda Municipal Code, does not. The Historical Monument definition reads as follows:

*Historical Monument* shall mean any site, including significant trees or other plant life located thereon, building, structure, portion of a structure, or group of structures of particular historic significance to the City, such as historic structures or sites in which the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the Nation, State or community is reflected or exemplified, or which are identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, State or local history, or which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period, type or method of construction, or a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect.

Based on this definition, the integrity issues cited in Mr. Ver Planck's report are less relevant to the buildings' Study List eligibility. All of the buildings still retain their basic form and massing and a good case can be made that collectively they still convey a sense of time and place as well as location, setting, feeling and association, i.e. four of the seven aspects of integrity used for both the National and California Registers.

A peer review of the differing opinions should be performed to resolve the conflicting information.

Mr. Ver Planck has suggested a "Historic District" that includes the buildings along Clement Avenue, the Alameda Marina building currently occupied by Doer, the Svendsen main building and a couple buildings towards the east border of the WWII buildings. *(This district, as presented by Mr. Ver Planck, will not meet the space needs of a working boatyard and required dry storage, the first priority of the Planning Board.)*

The Historical Advisory Board's interest should be to determine the qualification of the buildings at the Alameda Marina for the Study List. You should not be distracted by the wants of a developer's Master Plan.

Building #19, which Mr. Ver Planck recognizes as historic, is the large "Alameda Marina" building. AAPS is concerned that Mr. Ver Planck's report omits consideration of Building 19's notable interior, as well as other building interiors. The developer intends to construct four floors within Building 19's interior space, which will adversely affect listing the building on the National Register of Historic Places. AAPS believes the internal space as it exists significantly contributes to the building's historic significance and demonstrates its use as a Machine Shop and Rigging Loft for the construction of ships for WWII.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact Nancy Hird at (510) 523-0825 or [nancyinalameda@gmail.com](mailto:nancyinalameda@gmail.com) if you would like to discuss these comments.

Sincerely,

Christopher Buckley, Chair  
Preservation Action Committee  
Alameda Architectural Preservation Society

cc: Allen Tai, Andrew Thomas and Debbie Potter, Community Development Department (by electronic transmission)  
Planning Board (by electronic transmission)  
Mayor and City Council (by electronic transmission)  
AAPS Board and Preservation Action Committee (by electronic transmission)

**Allen Tai**

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**From:** Nancy Hird <nancyinalameda@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 31, 2017 7:11 PM  
**To:** Chee Chan; jpbullit@concast.net; Lynn Jones; Thomas Saxby;  
norman@nsarchitecture.com  
**Cc:** Allen Tai; ANDREW THOMAS  
**Subject:** HAB Meeting 6-1-17

May 31, 2017

(By electronic transmission)

Historical Advisory Board

City of Alameda

2263 Santa Clara Avenue

Alameda, CA 94501

Dear Board members:

I am not able to attend the Historic Advisory Board meeting scheduled for 6-1-17 and would like to share my thoughts relative to including the WWII era buildings on the City of Alameda's Historical Study List.

These buildings should have been added to the list when it was first created in the 1980's. At that time, the city hired preservation professionals to evaluate the city's historic resources to create our list. Various consultants assisted in this process and studied buildings throughout the city. Mr. Michael Corbett, a leading expert for industrial buildings, evaluated several properties along the city's northern Waterfront including those at the Alameda Marina which had been the shipyard General Engineering and Drydock during the war effort in the 1940's.

For whatever reason, the city neglected to add the industrial buildings identified by Mr. Corbett to the city's Historical Study List. I ask that you right this wrong to put all 30 of the buildings, categorized as "3D" on the completed SHRI form on the city of Alameda's Historical Study List. Due to their designation by Mr. Corbett, they are already considered historic resources so your decision is clear. The buildings, when grouped and viewed as a collection, clearly demonstrate their time and purpose in the context of their contribution to the

efforts of the United States in WWII and should be available to all persons as an example of Alameda's place defending freedom and democracy on the world stage.

I sincerely hope you fulfill your obligation to the city of Alameda and its citizens by adding these buildings to the city's Historical Study List.

Sincerely,

Nancy Hird

cc: Allen Tai, Andrew Thomas

Mayor and City Council (by electronic transmission)

Historical Advisory Board

City of Alameda

31 May 2017

Dear Commissioners,

The revised HRE for Alameda Marina is a substantial improvement on the draft version, and I commend Christopher VerPlank for the evident effort that went into it. My concern is that the report still over-emphasizes exteriors to the detriment of interiors. The descriptions do not do justice to the structural systems which are the salient features of the complex. As previously requested, interior photographs should be included for every building (not selected buildings, as is now the case) so that you, our city officials, can clearly see what is at stake architecturally. To this end, I recommend that the HAB tour the property, taking particular note of interiors, before making a decision. And as previously recommended, the report should undergo third-party peer review (at the developer's expense) to achieve community consensus about the scope and rationale of any proposed historic district. The staff report makes no mention of such a review, and as it stands consensus is sorely lacking.

Sincerely,

Woody Minor