

LARA WEISIGER

From: Dorothy Freeman <dfreeman@pacbell.net>
Sent: Sunday, April 01, 2018 7:16 PM
To: Trish Spencer; Frank Matarrese; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; Jim Oddie; Malia Vella; LARA WEISIGER; Liz Warmerdam
Subject: April 3, 2018 Item 9C Council Referral

April 2, 2018

Mayor Spencer
Vice Mayor
Vella

Councilmember Matarrese
Councilmember Ashcraft
Councilmember Oddie

Item 9C: Removing the Multi-Family (MF) Housing Overlay

Mayor Spencer and Councilmembers;

I believe the council referral submitted by Mayor Spencer is, unfortunately, too late to save much of Alameda's commercial property for commercial purposes, and too late to limit the density inside an MX residential project to reasonable number of units. At least three MX sites are presently affected by the practice of treating each proposed development as a project on its own instead of having universal plans that all developers have to adhere to when they decide to develop in Alameda. Encinal Terminals, Alameda Marina, and Shipways are all MX sites. Alameda Landing Waterfront is another development where residential will replace a business community. Alameda Landing Waterfront was projected to be commercial and parks. Now it's just residential and fewer park space. True, part of the land will be used to expand Bay Ship & Yacht, but the other planned commercial space is now gone from there for good.

2100 Clement replaced several businesses. Now it's under construction as all residential. Even Boatworks had a small community of businesses before the warehouses on that site were torn down. Site A was to have a very large commercial area. The developer no longer guarantees that will ever come to pass.

Encinal Terminals is proposed at 90% residential and only 10% commercial. The 10% commercial will be delegated to Starbucks and 7 Eleven types of businesses and not business that will provide a living wage to workers who desire to live in Alameda.

Alameda Marina is another example. There will be more commercial at the Marina, but the problem is that the total number of residential units has been calculated on the total acres instead of the approximately 10 acres that will be dedicated to just residential. Seven hundred sixty units on 10 acres is a density of 76 units per acre. This is a density not anyone in Alameda has ever envisioned for our city.

Shipways has no plans for commercial within a development that will replace 4 buildings of commercial space. Alameda needs to have a uniform plan as future Housing elements requirements will require replacing occupied land for denser residential.

Granted, Alameda needs housing but replacing all of our available commercial space for residential is shooting ourselves in the foot. We all know residential brings more city maintenance costs and lots more traffic. We need a uniform plan on how to divide the lands that are presently commercial and where residential will be proposed. You can talk forever about needing businesses to come to Alameda to provide work force wages but how will you ever do that if all the land has all gone to provide housing units? Please support Mayor Spencer's referral to remove the MF overlay from commercial areas. We will need this for future housing elements that chose to replace business property with residential.

Respectfully,

Dorothy Freeman

cc: City Clerk, Acting City Manager

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**DIVISION OF HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

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March 19, 2018

The Honorable Mayor Spencer and Members of the City Council
City of Alameda
2263 Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

RE: Potential Removal of the Multifamily Housing Overlay

Dear Honorable Mayor Spencer and Members of the City Council:

The purpose of this letter is to assist the Council in its decision-making related to removal of the multifamily housing overlay and other housing element requirements. The City should carefully consider the importance of decision-making consistent with state housing laws, particularly housing element law and the opportunity to seek planning resources to modify zoning in a manner that provides certainty for development and the community.

Our State's housing needs are of vital importance and a priority of the highest order (Government Code Section 65580). California's high housing cost and lack of housing supply compromise the ability to access opportunity (jobs, health, stability) for families and individuals, including working families and persons with special needs. Homeownership rates are the lowest since the 1940s and the State has not met its projected needs for new housing in the last fifteen years. The State disproportionately has almost a quarter of the nation's homeless population and around half of all households overpay for shelter.

On September 5, 2014, the Department found Alameda City's housing element in compliance with state housing element law (Article 10.6 of the Government Code). This finding, among other things, was based on the multifamily zoning overlay capacity being available for a variety of housing types. The finding was also based on identifying sufficient sites at appropriate densities to accommodate the City's share of the regional housing need, including for lower income households. The lack of multifamily zoning and capacity was a significant part of the City being out of compliance for over a decade before establishing the multifamily zoning overlay to comply with housing element law in 2012.

Removing the multifamily housing overlay from any site would impact the availability of zoning and capacity for a variety of types and sufficient sites to accommodate the City's share of the regional housing need. Additionally, pursuant to Government Code Sections 65585(i) and (j), removing the multifamily housing overlay would trigger a review of the housing element and potentially effect the City's compliance status. Removing the multifamily housing overlay from sites could also confound consistency with other related housing laws as described in the City Attorney memorandum dated February 8, 2018.

Compliance with housing element law and taking actions consistent with the housing element are a valuable step in meeting the housing needs of the community. Several existing and potentially future state funding programs consider the housing element as eligibility criteria. For example, CalTrans offers transportation planning grants called the Senate Bill 1 Sustainable Communities Grant which include the housing element and annual report as a factor. In addition, the One Bay Area Grants utilize threshold requirements related to housing element compliance, reporting and meeting housing objectives for all income levels. In short, without a compliant housing element, the City would potentially be ineligible for One Bay Area Grants. Finally, funding in 2019 such as SB 2 planning grants and SB 2 housing money in subsequent years will include the housing element and reporting as eligibility criteria. Also, SB 2 planning grants allow planning and zoning connected to streamlining housing production as an eligible use. For example, local governments could create zoning and development and design standards with clear, concise and objective criteria that provide certainty for developers and for the character of the community. These programs provide a tremendous opportunity for the City to promote and streamline housing through appropriate planning, zoning and permit procedures.

The Department fully respects the challenges and many factors the City is considering in these important land use decisions and looks forward to following Alameda's progress including through the General Plan annual progress reports pursuant to Government Code Section 65400. The Department welcomes the opportunity to provide further assistance. If you have any questions, please contact me at (916) 263-7420.

Sincerely,



Paul McDougall
Housing Policy Manager

cc: Liz Warmerdam, Acting City Manager
Debbie Potter, Community Development Director