

Nancy McPeak

From: Alameda Citizens Task Force <announcements@alamedacitizenstaskforce.org>
Sent: Sunday, October 24, 2021 2:38 PM
To: Xiomara Cisneros; Ronald Curtis; Hanson Hom; Rona Rothenberg; Teresa Ruiz; Asheshh Saheba; Alan Teague; Nancy McPeak
Cc: Andrew Thomas; Eric Levitt; Yibin Shen
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oct. 25 Planning Board Agenda Item 7-A Public Hearing to consider a Resolution Recommending that the City Council Approve Alameda General Plan 2040

ACT

Alameda Citizens Task Force

Vigilance, Truth, Civility

Dear Planning Board Members Cisneros, Curtis, Hom, Rothenberg, Ruiz, Saheba & Teague:

ACT will not be submitting a detailed response to the current draft General Plan because of the limited time of only a week to response to both this item and item 7-B (housing element) to which a detailed response was sent to you earlier today. However, we urge you not to adopt the Resolution recommending the adoption of the Plan to Council without the deletion of the "Spotlight" in the land use element at page 49 which asserts:

"... Article 26 is excluding access to housing for those who can only afford to own or rent a multifamily home in Alameda and severely limits the City's ability to eliminate disparities and burdens, provide affordable and fair access to housing and socio-economic opportunities for historically underserved and under-represented populations."

Article 26 is not a barrier to achieving multi-family housing. In fact, it is irrelevant to the effort because it is pre-empted by the State Housing Element Law (HEL) to the extent needed to comply therewith. The city, since 2012, has created multi-family overlay zoning districts that provide for density levels to meet the HEL requirements for multi-family housing at all income levels. This was accomplished by application of the said pre-emption. This application has not been challenged. As a result, the city's current housing element was certified by the state and has led to the city's approval of over 3000 new multi-family units in all income categories.

It is obvious from the above that Art. 26 has not been a barrier to our current housing production and will not be a barrier to achieving our RHNA for 2023-2031. We urge you withhold consideration of the Resolution until the language quoted above is deleted from the Spotlight.

Sincerely,

Alameda Citizens Task Force Board
Gretchen Lipow, President

Nancy McPeak

From: margie <msnorton@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 24, 2021 4:12 PM
To: Ronald Curtis; Alan Teague; Rona Rothenberg; Asheshh Saheba; Teresa Ruiz; Hanson Hom; Xiomara Cisneros; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; John Knox White; Tony Daysog; Malia Vella; Trish Spencer; Andrew Thomas; Allen Tai; Nancy McPeak; Erin Garcia
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Opposition to Increasing Housing Density in General Plan

The below submitted by Margie Siegal, Alameda Resident

On Sunday, October 24, 2021, 11:37:37 AM PDT, margie <msnorton@yahoo.com> wrote:

Increased housing density is not only unnecessary, but will incite more people to flee the Bay Area. Increasing housing density is also extremely dangerous.

(1) People Are Fleeing The Bay Area Due to Overcrowding and Gridlock

Per Trulia.com, there are 143 rental vacancies in .Alameda as of October 24, 2021. San Francisco's rental vacancy rate is 8.7%, up 190% YoY. (ipropertymanagement.com)

Per KRON TV: "According to a recent poll released by Joint Venture Silicon Valley, a majority of poll respondents from Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties believe the quality of life has worsened in recent years.

More than 70% of poll respondents say the quality of life in the Bay Area has gotten worse in the last five years and more than half (56%) of those polled plan to move out of the region in the next few years, citing a high cost of living and increasing housing prices as the top reasons for moving." (KRON, 10/11/21) 62 percent cited the quality of life. (The Hill, 10/24/21)

There are no plans to improve infrastructure (aging and seriously in need of maintenance) or access on or off the Island. The only public plans for anything are to build more luxury homes, such as the recent plans for Grand Avenue and Clement.

(2) There is No Evidence that the Trickle Down Theory of Housing Works

The construction industry claims that building more, unnecessary luxury housing (see above, presently built expensive housing is sitting vacant) will reduce housing prices for lower income people.

However, Per the EAST BAY TIMES, there are bargains to be had at the high end of the housing market, due to

lack of renters, but “Even in this once-in-a-decade market, Popov said, low-income renters probably won’t find housing for less.” (calmatters.org/california-divide/2021/01/bay-area-renters-market-luxury, January 15, 2021)

Thus, even through there are large numbers of vacancies at the top end of the market, prices for lower income housing are not coming down.

(3) Climate Change Is Making Emergencies More Likely

Scientists are predicting more extreme weather events (<https://www.edf.org/climate/climate-change-and-extreme-weather>) This makes it increasingly likely that Alamedans will have to evacuate. The most likely event is earthquake induced fire. Anyone remember Paradise, California? There were only 4 ways out of town. Seventy people died, due to inability to evacuate. The likely death toll due to an out of control fire in Alameda will be much higher.



October 24, 2021

City of Alameda Planning Board
2263 Santa Clara Avenue, Room 190
Alameda, CA 94501

Subject: October, 2021 Draft Alameda General Plan (Item 7-A on Planning Board's 10-25-21 agenda) - -AAPS comments

Dear Planning Board members:

The October, 2021 General Plan draft looks good. The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS) would like to thank the Planning Board, staff and consultants for the latest revisions, which satisfactorily address our previous concerns.

However there are still several small loose ends:

1. **LU-15b.** We had recommended that the final clause be deleted and thought that this was agreed to, but it is still there. Its continued inclusion may be an oversight, since the clause was shown in strikeout text in the September 13 proposed revisions. LU-15b with the clause shown in strikeout reads:

***Efficient Land-Use.** Optimize the use of limited land in Alameda for residential purposes ~~by maximizing the number of housing units constructed on each acre of residentially zoned land~~*

Deletion of this clause from the Land Use Element seemed appropriate since housing density is now being addressed in the Housing Element.

2. **Section 1.5, Paragraph 3:** Consider the following correction and edit:

The Alameda Municipal Code, ~~issue specific and area~~ and specific plans adopted by the City Council also play an important role implementing the General Plan. All these plans must be consistent with the General Plan, and they provide specific, shorter term actions to achieve longer term General Plan policy objectives. Examples include:

3. In addition, can **CC-26a (Tree Preservation)** be worded more specifically and not just limited to native trees? Here are two possibilities:

Shorter version:

Improve the Tree Preservation Ordinance to include additional species, provide specific tree protection strategies for construction projects and set forth more effective enforcement provisions.

More detailed version:

Improve the existing Tree Preservation Ordinance to:

- a. Include large examples of all desirable species rather than just Coast Live Oaks and certain landmark street trees;*
- b. Provide specific construction-related tree protection strategies to avoid tree removals and/or impairment of tree health; and*
- c. Improve enforcement provisions.*

We had intended to include this as part of the AAPS comments on the March, 2021 draft, but there were too many other more significant issues and it fell through the cracks.

Finally, we would again like to thank the Planning Board for all of your hard work on the General Plan and your support of many of the AAPS recommendations.

Thank you for the ongoing opportunities to comment. Please contact me at (510) 523-0411 or cbuckleyAICP@att.net if you would like to discuss these comments.

Sincerely,

Christopher Buckley, Chair
Preservation Action Committee
Alameda Architectural Preservation Society

cc: Mayor and City Councilmembers (by electronic transmission)
Andrew Thomas and Allen Tai, Planning, Building and Transportation Department (by electronic transmission)
AAPS Board and Preservation Action Committee (by electronic transmission)

Nancy McPeak

From: Drew Dara-Abrams <dda@dara-abrams.com>
Sent: Monday, October 25, 2021 4:04 PM
To: Nancy McPeak
Subject: [EXTERNAL] public comment for Planning Board re 7-A and 7-B

Ms. McPeak,

Would you please add this to the correspondence package for tonight's Planning Board meeting?

Thank you,
Drew Dara-Abrams
resident Calhoun St.

--

Dear Planning Board members,

I am writing in to support recommending the General Plan draft to the City Council and to commend staff's efforts to handle Alameda's RHNA allocation in an effective and fair manner in the draft Housing Element.

Re the General Plan: I appreciate the four themes — equity, access, environment, and character — and how they are defined and referenced throughout the document. We are an island (as many residents do like to point out) and that means our city has certain advantages and responsibilities. This draft plan supports these advantages and follows through on those responsibilities. I particularly appreciate how the themes and the plan's specifics acknowledge Alameda's unique location in the "center of a major metropolitan area" and define character in a broad, inclusive, and dynamic manner. This is a good update on the currently active General Plan, which shows the mythical Southern Crossing bridge on its cover and talks about the still-extant Naval Air Station! A wider range of housing options, complete streets, and a pro-active approach to equity concerns are all features of a 21st century city that are important to see reflected in detail in this document.

Re the draft Housing Element: Thanks to the city's planning staff for working in good faith to meet Alameda's RHNA allocation. This current draft makes positive changes since the last version. I particularly appreciate seeing R1 (the type of zone where my family and I live) now doing its part to contribute toward the city and the region's housing needs. It's unfortunate that all of these potential units are marked at higher income level tiers, but that is probably an accurate reflection of the costs of land and construction. Let's take this as a reminder that the huge changes that NIMBYs fear — or to put it more positively, the more inclusive and affordable outcomes in local housing options for which many of us advocate — are likely to be more modest in actuality over the eight years of this housing cycle. It's also good to see more potential for infill mixed-use housing along Park and Webster, which are great streets but still have too many "gap tooth" vacant or under-utilized lots. Whether or not all of these potential projects will come to fruition in this 8 year cycle, it's great to see this Housing Element distribute the *potential* for a diverse range of housing types across Alameda Island and Bay Farm.

Thanks also to city's planning staff for preparing a straightforward Housing Element. It provides the appointed board members and elected councilmembers of the city a clear and understandable plan to meet the city's obligations to ABAG and the State of California. No magic; no sleight of hand. Please send this on to City Council as quickly as possible. Those two specific projects that require 4/5 super-majority votes will be nail-biters, so it's in the city's best interests to clear those hurdles as soon as possible. As a city resident and taxpayer,

I am pleased to see that the city is on track to meet its obligations to have a General Plan and a compliant Housing Element in place by the required deadlines.

Thank you for your time,
Drew Dara-Abrams
resident Calhoun St.

Nancy McPeak

From: Lara Weisiger
Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 2021 8:22 AM
To: Nancy McPeak; Erin Garcia
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Comments on General Plan For City of Alameda Planning Board Meeting of October 25, 2021

From: William Smith [mailto:smithwja@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, October 25, 2021 7:08 PM
To: Lara Weisiger <lweisiger@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: Andrew Thomas <athomas@alamedaca.gov>; Laura Thomas <ciaolauretta@comcast.net>; Jeffrey Levin <Jeff@ebho.org>; Sophia DeWitt <Sophia@ebho.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on General Plan For City of Alameda Planning Board Meeting of October 25, 2021

Chair and members of the Planning board:

Like EBHO, I appreciate your effort to accommodate the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) by siting housing for all economic levels throughout the city in ways that promote fair housing and racial equity. Your housing element policies promise to avoid concentrating lower income housing in areas referred to by State law as areas of racial and ethnic concentrations of poverty, including recommendations to rezone areas of the city to accommodate multifamily housing in previously exclusionary locations. Still, I am concerned that low Floor to Area ratios in R-1 and R-2 districts will make it more difficult to put affordable multi-family homes in these districts to further fair housing. To affirmatively further fair housing by allowing four comfortable units on existing parcels, as will soon be required by state Senate Bill 9, I suggest that the minimum floor to area ratio be 2.0 for R-1 residential districts and 3.0 for R-2 districts with FAR minimums increased accordingly for R-3 and above districts.

My appreciation to all planning board members and planning staff for updating the general plan to provide a more equitable guide to economic and residential development of Alameda for the next 20 years.

Bill Smith

William J. Smith
Alameda, CA 94501
(510)522-0390