

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2015

1. CONVENE: 7:03 P.M.
2. FLAG SALUTE: Board member Zuppan led the flag salute.
3. ROLL CALL: Present: President Henneberry, Vice President Alvarez and Board Members Burton, Knox White, Köster, Tang and Zuppan.
4. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION: None
5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None
6. CONSENT CALENDAR: None
7. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

7-A. 2015-1350

PLN14-0305-2350 Harbor Bay Parkway-Applicant: Mina Patel. The applicant requests approval of Final Development Plan and Design Review to allow the construction of a 99-room hotel on the Harbor Bay Business Park shoreline. The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332-Infill Development Projects. **Continued From the Meeting of February 9, 2015**

Mr. Andrew Thomas, City Planner, gave the presentation.

Board Member Burton asked Mr. Thomas if the Fire Department gave its approval to the proposed project design. Mr. Thomas answered in the affirmative.

Board Member Burton asked Mr. Thomas about setbacks for the planned property. Mr. Thomas explained that staff looked at the project taking into account both parcels on the site. The second parcel would be used for completion of the Bay Trail.

Board Member Burton asked Mr. Thomas about if the owner was present. Mr. Thomas introduced Ms. Mina Patel, the applicant. Ms. Patel stated that she was in discussions with another landowner for another parcel to be used additional parking.

Board Member Burton asked Mr. Thomas about the applicant's proposal to provide ten bikes for guest use, and asked where the bikes would be stored. Mr. Thomas explained that the City requires bike parking on site, and he asked Ms. Patel about where stored bikes would be stored.

Board Member Köster asked about the need for another traffic signal on Harbor Bay Parkway. Mr. Thomas replied that part of the property taxes paid by Harbor Bay Business Park owners, as per the development agreement signed in the 1980s, goes to a transportation improvement fund. As the Business Park expanded, developers knew that there would be a need for traffic signals, and the most recent traffic study suggested to signalize the intersection of North Loop Road and Harbor Bay Parkway.

Board Member Tang noted that correspondence between staff and the applicant indicated that the existing hotels' parking ratio was 1.25 parking spaces per car. He suggested that a crosswalk be included for the safety of pedestrians. Mr. Thomas replied that the city zoning code calls for 1.25 parking spaces per car, but the Board can approve fewer spaces, if appropriate. All of the hotels in the business park should have the same ratio of parking for reasons of fairness. Some of the hotels have had shared parking agreements with nearby businesses in order to minimize creating new parking spaces.

Board Member Alvarez asked for clarifications regarding public concern for the project. Mr. Thomas said that the building is much shorter allowed per the development agreement. Mr. Thomas said that staff had suggested a lower parking ratio because of a variety of reasons, but other hotels have shared parking spaces with businesses. Furthermore, Mr. Thomas said that the Board could mandate certain aspects for landscape design for the property.

Board Member Knox White asked Mr. Thomas about a proposed on-site restaurant. Mr. Thomas replied that there would be no on-site restaurant, but said there would be a breakfast area as is common in many other hotels.

Board Member Knox White asked if the owners will be paying into the Transportation Improvement Fund. Mr. Thomas replied affirmatively.

Board Member Zuppan asked Mr. Thomas about the LEED and ADA compliance level of the building. Mr. Thomas said that the LEED level of the hotel meets state requirements.

Board Member Burton explained that ADA compliance is required for a percentage of rooms.

President Henneberry asked Mr. Thomas to elaborate on his discussions with other hotel owners in the area regarding the parking ratio. Mr. Thomas replied that the other hotel owners, in the interest of fairness, wanted the proposed hotel to have the same parking ratio as existing hotels in the area, which is 0.69 parking spaces per car. The City's zoning code mandates 1.25 parking spaces per hotel room.

President Henneberry asked Mr. Thomas about the property line of the parcel. Mr. Thomas replied that the property line does not go all the way to San Francisco Bay.

The Board opened public comment.

Mr. Robb Ratto, of the Park Street Business Association, spoke in favor of the project. He

said that the City needed more hotels near the airport. He thanked the applicant for proposing a shuttle Park Street. It would help the City as a whole, and the Park Street businesses in particular.

Mr. Sal Robles, architect, spoke against the project. He said that cars currently park across the street from the proposed project, and that some cars park in his company's lots across the street. He said that the hotel's plans do not take into account the needs of the hotel's employees, and the lack of parking spaces available for them. Mr. Robles also expressed concern about the lack of setbacks for the project, which would be a nuisance for bicyclists trying to avoid parked cars on the Bay Trail.

Ms. Wilen Huber, representing IAW, spoke against the project. She said that the amount of parking for the proposed hotel was much lower than needed. She said that many workers might have to walk a quarter mile in each direction to and from their cars. She also said that the location of the hotel might negatively affect the habitat of burrowing owl.

Mr. Dan Reidy, on behalf of the Harbor Bay Business Park Association, reminded the Board that the City Council wanted to upgrade the Bay Trail in the area of the hotel. He said his organization approved the plans of the proposed hotel, and urged the Board to approve the plans. The issue of the burrowing owls, he said, is a non-issue. He praised staff's work on trying to minimize the creation of new parking spaces.

Mr. Kerwin Allen, neighbor, expressed his opposition to the project in its current form. He said that setbacks are far too small for the size of the hotel. He also expressed opposition to stacking cars in the enclosed parking structure, and said that the building is overdeveloped for the size of the lot.

Mr. Michael McDonough, President of the Alameda Chamber of Commerce, spoke enthusiastically in favor of the project. He said that the revenue coming in for the City from the hotel is much greater than from sales taxes. Furthermore, there would be more taxes coming in as a result of people spending their money at other Alameda businesses.

Ms. Trish Spencer, Mayor of Alameda spoke in her individual capacity. She suggested that the hotel include story poles for the project. Mayor Spencer spoke about the transparency of the project. She suggested that decisions made without transparency are of grave concern to her.

The Board closed public comment.

President Henneberry asked Mr. Thomas about whether the amount of waterfront space at the project site would lead to a CEQA exemption. Mr. Thomas replied in the negative; all projects in the City are within an urban area, and the project qualifies for an exemption from CEQA.

Board Member Zuppan stated she was in favor of a hotel in the area. She said that originally, the site was to house a restaurant for the Harbor Bay Business Park, and the rezoning would

lead to a building on the space. She said the project nevertheless is not ready for approval. She expressed concern about the lack of detail on the proposed plans. She said that without more detail on the project, it would be hard for her to vote for approval. Board Member Zuppan recalled that other hotels in the area had to have a reciprocal parking arrangement before Board approval, and wanted approval of this hotel to have these same conditions. She suggested that a crosswalk, as suggested by Board Member Tang, was a great idea, and expressed concern for the architect's absence. The suggestion of story poles, as suggested by Mayor Spencer, was a good one. She also expressed concern with the design of the hotel.

Board Member Burton said he was also in favor of a hotel in the site, but he also expressed concern about the lack of detail in the presented plan. He said there are concerns about parking on the site. He was glad to hear that the applicant was considering additional parking spaces on another parcel, but wanted to know more precisely where these spaces would be located. He also wanted to know where bike parking would be located and wanted to be sure that the free bikes would be accommodated on the site. Board Member Burton expressed concern on parts of the design for the building, and particularly objected to the size of the proposed signage on the building.

Board Member Tang echoed Board Member Burton's comments on the signage. He proposed lowering the signage to the second or third floor of the building, instead of having it at its current location at the top floor. He said that the majority of people who would stay at the hotel will be business travelers, and wanted to know about the effectiveness of the proposed shuttle to Downtown Alameda. He also was concerned about issues about the proposed stacked parking structure, and asked if the applicants had an alternative parking plan. He said that the proposed setbacks of the structure were too narrow and could pose a hazard to bicyclists.

Board Member Knox White said that the area is almost unbuildable because of the development agreements sealed in the 1980s. He said he agreed with the other Board Members, especially with Board Member Zuppan. Board Member Knox White said that the building would be isolated from other buildings in the business park, and said that the public should expect a better-looking building than what was currently being proposed. He said that there are no ways for hotel guests to access the waterfront other than from the front entrance, and questioned if the number of parking spaces on the site is truly appropriate for the site. He wanted to see more access to the waterfront.

Vice President Alvarez expressed disappointment that the architect could not be at the meeting tonight. She suggested that there were issues with the proposed parking, and agreed with Board Member Zuppan's comments about the need for a reciprocal parking agreement. She expressed concerns with the design of the building, and said that airport noise could negatively impact enjoyment of the proposed outdoor balconies. She also worried about the suggestion of story poles to the building. Vice President Alvarez also stated that any approval of alcohol sales at the site should be regulated.

President Henneberry called for a brief break.

President Henneberry said he could not support the project in its current form.

Board Member Zuppan motioned to continue the project. Board Member Knox White seconded.

The motion carried, 6-0-1 (Board Member Köster abstained).

7-B 2015-1351

Public Workshop on Alameda Point Site A Development Plan, including the Housing Plan

Mr. Thomas gave the presentation. He explained that 800 of the 1425 housing units proposed for Alameda Point would be located at Site A. There would be other commercial and retail space in the area in order to make it a mixed-use, pedestrian and transit-oriented project. The housing would be multi-family units located together to decrease automobile traffic, increase density and ensure access to public transportation. 200 of the 800 housing units would be affordable; 128 of the 200 units would be for very low and low-income housing. The entire build-out of the site would take approximately 5 years.

Mr. Thomas introduced Mr. David Israel, of BAR Architects. Mr. Israel reminded the Board of the mixed-use nature of the proposed plan. He said that his team continuously updates the plans for the site, and informed the Board of interest for a hotel at the site. He also explained to the Board about various adjustments made to the proposed open space and street layouts. He informed the Board that his firm was starting to develop architectural prototypes for the constructing buildings and parking plans.

Mr. Israel introduced Ms. April Phillips, landscape architect. She explained that her team had added more details into the plans, and had taken public comments into account of her design.

Ms. Jennifer Ott, Chief Operating Officer of Alameda Point, updated the Board about the City Council meeting held the previous week. She reported that the Council was in favor of affordable housing for both seniors and non-seniors. Ms. Ott noted that there was concern from the Council about the amount of proposed open space; they wanted that the park space to be constrained in order to focus on the buildings at the site.

The Board opened public comment.

Mr. Steven Ased, of the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society, wanted the building materials of the new buildings to be harmonious with those of the existing buildings.

Mr. Bill Smith, of Renewed Hope Housing Advocates, said the plans for the project are getting better, but there are still things needed. He said that he would be meeting with Eden Housing, the low-income housing developer, to learn more about affordable senior housing at Site A. He also said that it is very important that the phasing of affordable housing is guaranteed in the disposition agreement.

Ms. Trish Spencer, Mayor of Alameda, spoke in her individual capacity, said the Council did not vote on the issue. She said she attended the Disability Commission's meetings, and said that the discussions at that meeting urged for all amenities to be accessible. She said that the land on which this project is located is public land.

The Board closed public comment.

Board Comments:

Board Member Köster asked Mr. Thomas about the phasing of the project. Mr. Thomas said that the phasing of the project is very complicated because of the nature of keeping existing buildings as well as constructing new ones.

Board Member Köster asked why the affordable housing would be located in one block. Mr. Thomas said that, from a management standpoint, there are advantages to having all of the affordable housing in one place. Ms. Ott added that low-income housing are also funded separately, and therefore have to be concentrated in order to be competitive for funding. The moderate-income housing would be spread throughout the project.

Board Member Tang said that he wanted to see more restaurants and retail space spread out, instead of concentrating parking and restaurants in one particular area. He wanted to know if retail could be placed between the commercial and residential areas.

Board Member Burton expressed support for low-income senior housing at Site A. He liked how the developer was being very responsible at the site and was providing many public amenities in order to make the transit-oriented. He asked about whether or not Orion Street would be re-aligned; Mr. Thomas explained that they would be moving Orion Street in order to balance the needs of the area in both the short and long-terms. Board Member Burton asked about the gateway to Main Street, and Mr. Israel added that his team will be addressing the gateway to the site in the future.

Board Member Köster asked Ms. Phillips about whether or not parking would be on the street, and how such parking plans affected stormwater drainage at the site. Ms. Phillips explained that parking and trees are, for the most part, in the same alignment.

Mr. Smith explained that affordable housing has to be put together for the benefit of the residents. He suggested that public amenities, such as playgrounds, be integrated for the benefit of all residents.

Board Member Knox White expressed concern about the one way couplets, and wanted to make sure that the fire department was acceptable with the planned layout. He still had concerns with the one-way couplets, and said it seemed like there was an empty space that could not be used. He expressed concern about school bus routes, and that they should be extended into Alameda Point. He said that staff should only focus on the Site A area until it is fully built, but not at the expense of the current residents of Alameda Point. He said that the

infrastructure built at the area needs to serve the entire Point. He wanted to make sure that the designs of the buildings are interesting and unique, and said that the team has been very creative in solving these problems. He wanted to make sure that staff ensured that the streets had as few street walls as possible, and that the corner of Ralph Apezato Memorial Parkway and Main Street had the opportunity for some neighborhood commercial space as well.

Board Member Zuppan said she appreciated what the team has done in incorporating community feedback. She noticed that there are fewer places for disabled parking, especially for people to enjoy waterfront activities. These accommodations need to be implemented in the initial stages of Phase 0. She said that she likes how the streets connect in the plans, and that the general plan for Site A is improving.

Vice President Alvarez said she is part of the subcommittee, and said that she disagrees with Board Member Knox White about parking at the area. It is much easier to plan parking in the present and convert it in the future. There are many people who might need to have parking closer to the water. She praised the developers for working with the community to improve the plans. Vice President Alvarez asked for clarification about the construction of multi-family housing, and the waiver that allows for its construction.

Mr. Thomas explained that voters instituted the ban on multi-family housing in 1972. Currently, there are only two ways to build multi-family housing in the City of Alameda: the density bonus ordinance, which allows the developer to ask the City for bonuses and other financial concessions, and for allowing for multi-family overlay in order to comply with state law. Now that the City of Alameda owns the land, the City has the right to build either single-family or multi-family homes. The easiest way to build multi-family housing on the site is to invoke the density bonus.

President Henneberry asked Mr. Thomas about a proposed workshop with City Council regarding the density bonus. Mr. Thomas said that that workshop will happen on March 10. He said he agrees with the points made by Eden housing, but there should be a full discussion on their proposal.

8. MINUTES:

8-A. 2015-1230

Draft minutes of January 26, 2015

Board Member Knox White motioned to approve the minutes. Board Member Köster seconded the motion.

The motion carried, 6-0-1 (Zuppan)

9. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

9-A. 2015-1232

Zoning Administrator and Design Review: Recent Actions and Decisions.

Board Member Zuppan asked why the Board has not seen very many cell towers proposals coming to them.

Mr. Thomas explained that typically, the Zoning Administrator does not bring cell towers to the Board unless the public asks them to. There have been new federal regulations introduced to limit city interference to the erection of cell towers. If an applicant comes to the city and asks for a lease, the City can decide how they want to address this proposed cell tower. He encouraged the Board to call any Zoning Administrator decisions for review that they deem appropriate.

Board Member Zuppan explained how many second-and third story additions to homes are not creating additional articulation to the existing buildings. She suggested that design review principles be as environmentally friendly as possible also for existing developments.

Board Member Burton asked Mr. Thomas about a recent decision made to a Design Review application. Mr. Thomas said that no permits have been issued at this time for that project.

Board Member Knox White announced he called the Shoreline Cell Tower for Board review. He said there were many calls from concerned parents about potential health risks for their children exposed to cell antennas.

Mr. Thomas announced that the Use Permit for Peet's Coffee on Webster Street was approved, but the liquor license for the Walgreens was appealed, and there would be a public hearing in the future.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: None

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

Board Member Knox White wanted to explain that he was not opposed to street parking, but he wanted to make sure that the parking was done in a head-in manner.

Vice President Alvarez said that there was a lack of clarity from the drawings.

President Henneberry said that the concerns from the subcommittee's previous meeting were incorporated into the drawings.

Mr. Thomas reminded the Board of the joint meeting with the Transportation Commission in two days; the Council has been noticed to come, although he is unsure how many councilmembers would come to the meeting. The Transportation Commission has a subcommittee about the issue of AC Transit at the Point, and wanted a member of the Planning Board to be on that subcommittee.

12. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

13. ADJOURNMENT: President Henneberry adjourned the meeting at 10:35 p.m.