

APPROVED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, JUNE 26, 2017

1. CONVENE

Board Member Mitchell convened the meeting at 7:01pm

2. FLAG SALUTE

Board Member Curtis led the flag salute.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Board Members Burton, Curtis, Knox White, Mitchell, Sullivan, Zuppan.
President Köster arrived at 7:03pm.

4. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION

None

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Alan Teague said he was researching the Planning Board's work and said he wished that all of the documents referenced (i.e.- CA building code) in the agendas were available to the public.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

None

7. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

7-A 2017- 4464

Public Hearing on Final Revisions to draft Universal Design Ordinance

Staff Member Thomas gave the staff report. The report and attachments can be found at: <https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3082686&GUID=7B56959C-DA03-43D4-B0B5-0E0D8329B17F&FullText=1>

Board Member Mitchell asked for language in the waivers section to be clarified in the ordinance.

Board Member Zuppan suggested they could simply remove a portion of the wording to make it easier to understand.

Board Member Mitchell asked how the proposed ordinance would have impacted costs for previously approved units.

Staff Member Thomas said that projects like Del Monte and Encinal Terminals have no problem meeting the 30% requirements. He said townhome only projects like 2100 Clement would have trouble meeting the 30% requirements.

Board Member Curtis said that most projects in Alameda have very high site improvement costs and asked if it was feasible to saddle these units with higher construction costs that would drive prices higher.

Staff Member Thomas said they have to balance the desire not to drive prices up with the need to build housing that does not exclude entire segments of the population.

Board Member Sullivan said she was very concerned about the increased costs that the requirements would add to new units. She said they do not have enough information to initiate these rules.

President Köster opened the public hearing.

Alan Teague said we should require the minimum amount of items needed to make a unit visitable and not add more, in order to avoid adding unnecessary costs. He said any entrance, not just the front door, can be used to meet the requirements.

Alan Pryor said the requirements for visitability seem like a good idea to help people access their homes as they age.

President Köster closed the public hearing.

Board Member Burton said he is eager to move the ordinance forward. He said allowing adaptable stairs to meet the requirements would be a mistake. He said the \$80,000 number in the BIA letter is a scare tactic. He said we have a reasonable waiver process available if there are issues.

Board Member Sullivan asked if the ordinance was likely to just eliminate the construction of townhomes in Alameda.

Staff Member Thomas said that there are pending applications that include townhomes would not be changed due to the current ordinance because they have a mix of housing types in their projects. He said they can come back and change the ordinance if they find each project asking for the same waivers.

Board Member Curtis asked why we would move forward with an ordinance that we think will have problems in the future. He said the ordinance encourages vertical development and punishes single family development.

Staff Member Thomas said this ordinance would not add additional process to projects. He said the conversation about waivers would happen at the regular design review hearing for their project and not cause more hearings to occur.

Board Member Knox White said he is prepared to support the ordinance. He said the BIA letter was disrespectful to Alameda. He said he looks forward to celebrating when City Council adopts the ordinance.

Board Member Mitchell said he will support the ordinance and is comfortable with the waiver process. He said building these changes in during construction are cost effective and practical. He said developers want predictability, even if it adds some costs.

President Köster said he supports the ordinance.

Board Member Knox White thanked the Commission on Disability Issues (CDI) subcommittee members for their efforts promoting visitability, and for beginning this discussion in the first place.

Board Member Burton thanked Ms. Lord-Hausman and Erick Mikiten for their work on the ordinance.

Board Member Zuppan made a motion to approve the resolution with the clarifying edits provided during discussion. Board Member Mitchell seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

7-B 2017-4466

PLN17-0186 - 2001 Versailles Ave - Applicant: Clifford Mapes. A public hearing to consider a proposed development plan amendment and design review for the first two homes on an 11-lot subdivision on a 1.29-acre property located at 2001 Versailles Avenue at the corner of Fernside Boulevard and Versailles Avenue. The project is categorically exempt from further review under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 In-Fill Development Projects.

Staff Member Sablan gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at: <https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3082688&GUID=B8EB6B20-87BC-4A18-9910-EAD223D8E00C&FullText=1>

Board Member Mitchell thanked staff for saying “VER-sigh.” He asked for an update on the retaining wall along Tilden.

Staff Member Sablan said the applicant is proposing a basic wooden fence at this point.

Board Member Zuppan said her recollection from the previous discussion was that the Tilden fence was supposed to be of above average design and not a simple wooden fence.

Staff Member Sablan said that it is what the applicant is proposing, but the design is up for discussion.

Board Member Knox White asked if they can change items in the development plan beyond the items requested by the applicant.

Staff Member Thomas said they can make any changes they wish to the application.

President Köster asked if the lots had to be 5,000 square feet.

Staff Member Thomas said the lots have been approved by City Council already.

President Köster opened the public hearing.

Alan Teague said they should revise the agreement to match the recommended Universal Design ordinance. He suggested the visitability could be accomplished by going through the garage.

Evan Schwimmer asked that lots 5, 6, and 8 be changed to be single family homes. He said the duplexes on Versailles would change the character of the neighborhood.

President Köster closed the public hearing.

Board Member Burton said he is okay with the setback changes for lots one and two. He said he would go with the board on the setback for the other lots on Versailles. He said the visitability and accessibility requirements are not negotiable. He said he could not support the designs of the first two homes. He said the design lacked character. He said they are enormous 3400 square foot homes, and that they needed more sculpting.

Board Member Sullivan said she does not see much character in the design. She said the fence along Tilden is the entrance to Alameda and needs to have more permanence than a simple wood fence.

Board Member Knox agreed with the two previous board members. He asked who would be responsible for the City's side of the fence.

Staff Member Thomas said they were talking about having vines covering the fence along Tilden to prevent graffiti from being a problem.

Board Member Knox White said they should check with Public Works about maintenance and concerns about pedestrians' proximity to traffic if there is growth along the wall. He said the homes are out of scale for the neighborhood and we should consider setting some guidelines for the sizes of the homes.

Board Member Curtis agreed with the other board members.

Board Member Zuppan agreed with the previous comments about design, scale, and the fence on Tilden. She said the homes are near busy streets and the design needs to take potential accidents into consideration.

Board Member Mitchell said he would like to see the second stories and home sizes better match the neighborhood. He suggested reducing the number of duplexes in the project. He said he would like to see the fence issue come back.

President Köster said he would like to see more variation in the architecture beyond just color and material. He said he would be fine with the ramps being in the garages. He said he would like the universal design requirements to remain.

Steve Sorenson said the builder is a good builder and wants to build good homes.

Mr. Mapes said the crawl space would be more like 30" above grade, not 12". He said there are many duplexes along Fernside Boulevard.

Board Member Mitchell said using garages for accessibility is a bad idea because garages are often cluttered and obstructed.

Board Member Burton made a motion to approve the resolution amending the development plan, keep the visitability and accessible unit standards but allow the front yard setbacks on lots 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 be amended to be 12' minimum to front porch and 17' minimum to face of building, and have the fence along Tilden come back for design review. Board Member Curtis seconded the motion.

Board Member Zuppan asked for clarification as to whether the design reviews for lots 1 and 2 were part of the motion.

Staff Member Thomas said the resolution just defines the setbacks, and staff would be responsible for design review.

Board Member Knox White said that they should give direction on unit size now for staff to consider during design reviews.

Board Member Burton asked what ability they have within the development plan to limit unit size.

Staff Member Thomas said they can limit size via the development plan. He said staff is more concerned with the look of the design than exactly how many square feet.

Board Member Burton suggested that they could ask for the designs to be much more sculpted when they come back. He amended his motion to ask that the designs come to the board for review, rather than being approved at the staff level. Board Member Curtis seconded the motion.

Board Member Mitchell asked if it was possible to have all the designs be presented and approved simultaneously, while allowing the builder to proceed with only 1-2 units at a time if desired.

Staff Member Thomas said they outlined the lots, home orientation, parking locations, and circulation in the development plan. He said they liked the idea of potentially getting some variety by doing the designs a couple at a time.

Board Member Curtis said he was not looking for detailed construction drawings, but rather renderings of streetscapes to put the project into scale for the neighborhood.

Board Member Zuppan said she was concerned about how the private drive and perimeter fence would be maintained.

Staff Member Thomas said he would need to review the original conditions of approval on the final map from seven years ago.

Staff Member Sablan asked if the motion intended for the universal design elements to be installed as originally approved and not just demonstrate how they could be included if the homeowner desired.

Board Member Burton responded in the affirmative.

Board Member Knox White asked that when the plan for the fence came back it include details of how it would be maintained. He asked that staff bring back information on the size of buildings in the neighborhood when the board considers the design of the units.

Board Member Curtis said he was reluctant to vote for something that would require the drawings to be redone because of the cost.

Board Member Burton said they need to set the rules and the applicant can decide whether to do slab on grade or homes with crawl spaces.

Board Member Burton revised and restated his motion to: revise the development plan to change the setbacks on lots 1-8 to 12' minimums to face of porch and 17' minimums to face of buildings, the fence along Tilden and all homes come back for design review, that staff will provide information on the sizes of existing buildings' square footage within one block of the site, that when the applicant comes back for design review that a maintenance plan be presented for the private drive and the fence along Tilden.

Board Member Zuppan asked if there was a plan for when the entirety of the Tilden fence would be constructed, given that the homes might be designed and built in phases.

Staff Member Thomas said the intent was to have the fence built with the first home.

Board Member Curtis asked the developer if the foundation plans have been designed for the first two units.

Mr. Mapes said they have not, but that he knows what it will take. He said he is being penalized for designing a nicer home (raised floor). He said he will do a slab if that is what the board wants. He said it would be cheaper that way.

Board Member Curtis seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

8. MINUTES

None

9. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

9-A 2017-4463

Zoning Administrator and Design Review Recent Actions and Decisions

Staff Member Thomas said they approved four use permits and eight design reviews.

9-B 2017-4465

Future Public Meetings and Upcoming Community Development
Department Projects

Staff Member Thomas said the July 10th meeting is being moved to July 17th. He said there is a Shipways site tour tomorrow at 5:40pm. He listed future agenda items.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

11-A 2017-4461

Subcommittee with Commission on Disability Issues regarding Universal Design Ordinance

Did Not Meet. Staff Member Thomas said they could officially disband that subcommittee.

11-B 2017-4462

Subcommittee for Alameda Marina

None

Board Member Knox White shared that the accessory dwelling unit and shared living ordinances were passed by City Council.

12. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Alan Teague asked what time the tour was and if the public was invited.

Staff Member Thomas said it was at 530pm and open to the public.

13. ADJOURNMENT

President Köster adjourned the meeting at 9:28pm.