

APPROVED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, JULY 24, 2017

1. CONVENE

President Mitchell convened the meeting at 7:00pm

2. FLAG SALUTE

Board Member Köster led the flag salute.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: President Mitchell, Board Members Burton, Curtis, Knox White, Köster, Sullivan, Zuppan.

4. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION

Board Member Knox-White suggested swapping the order of items 7-A and 7-B.

President Mitchell said he had the same thought but worried that many people were waiting to come for 7-B until 7-A was completed.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Alan Teague, nominee for the Planning Board, introduced himself to the board. He explained his background and approach he would take to issues the board faces.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

None

7. REGULAR

AGENDA

ITEMS

7-A 2017-4581

Study Session on the Alameda Shipways Residential Project

Staff Member Barrera gave introduced the item. The staff report and attachments can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3105092&GUID=9D1B972E-EDA1-46EF-B1BA-A21585248062&FullText=1>

The landscape architect from Ima Design gave a presentation on the park and landscape plan.

Ernie Vasquez, project architect, gave a presentation on the design of the building.

Board Member Zuppan asked what the length of the Del Monte building is.

Staff Member Thomas said the Del Monte building is about one thousand feet long, approximately twice as long as this building.

Board Member Zuppan asked if they were planning to use rip rap or a planted edge.

The landscape architect said they are planning to have a stabilized soil edge which would have plantings at the water's edge.

Board Member Zuppan asked what the plan for sea level rise is for the park area.

The landscape architect said the elevation of the park area was about four feet above current sea level.

Board Member Köster asked about cutting the building in two and creating a public access through the middle of the site.

Mr. Vasquez said that it would create a security concern and that the large setbacks on the sides of the building would create a better connection for the community.

Board Member Köster asked if there were any plans to have any marina or boat access at the site.

Mr. Vasquez said the ownership was not interested in managing a marina and competing against adjacent marinas.

Board Member Köster said the ground floor units near the garage access sites would be heavily impacted and the use needed to be reconsidered.

Board Member Curtis asked if the two garage entrances were large enough to allow two way traffic.

Mr. Vasquez said the driveways would each be two way.

Board Member Knox White asked why none of the Ship Ways ramps were used in the site for the park forms.

The landscape architect said that they wanted to create a usable site and the slope of the ramps were too severe to encourage many of the activities they envision for the park.

Board Member Knox White asked why they needed a roadway next to the existing roadway.

Mr. Vasquez said they see that area as a place for prospective residents to come into the site. He said it could have a different pavement treatment and be a nice feature.

Board Member Burton asked if there has been a parking study done to determine the correct number of parking spaces for a project of this size.

Staff Member Thomas said they have not done that yet.

Board Member Sullivan asked if there is a study to determine the ability to support two separate kayak businesses along the estuary (Encinal Terminals).

Staff Member Thomas said they have not done an official study but are trying to make sure each project has the ability to support kayak launching.

Board Member Sullivan asked how wide the building is.

Mr. Vasquez said the building is 544 feet.

President Mitchell asked if there were public restrooms in the park.

The landscape architect explained that there would be a public restroom on the northern part of the site.

Staff Member Thomas explained that there is a plan for a bathroom for the adjacent marina which would be private and they are trying to coordinate it so that there is a public bathroom incorporated as well.

President Mitchell asked if the Bay Trail would be lit up at night.

The landscape architect said they are not at that level of detail.

President Mitchell asked if there would be plans to use greywater to irrigate the large lawn area on the site.

The landscape architect said they are still in the early stage of planning.

President Mitchell opened the public hearing.

Laura Thomas said she is excited to see a rental project moving forward. She applauded the developer's plan to include inclusionary units and encouraged the developer to accept Section 8 vouchers.

Karen Bey said she supports the project having more housing and will add value to the business park. She said we have an opportunity to amenitize our business park. She said we need to make sure that we get a water shuttle with the project.

Alan Teague said the restroom, fix it station, and water fountain being located together is critical to cyclists. He said conveying the slope of the site along the side of the building could be a nod to its history.

President Mitchell closed the public hearing.

Board Member Köster said he is having trouble figuring out how the project fits Alameda. He said it would be nice if some of the elements of the project reflected the site's past. He said he would like to see two structures with pedestrian access through the middle of the site. He said he would like to see the landscape connect to the water more and reflect some of the historic use of the site. He suggested butterfly or shed roofs that could mimic the old ramps. He suggested using the rooftop as an amenity for the project. He said he preferred the architecture in option C.

Board Member Knox White said the ramps are the defining feature of the site and does not reflect the history of the site. He said he likes the size of the units being smaller and more affordable by design. He said we could lose 100 parking spaces at \$50,000/ space to fund amenities and reduce cost. He said we should start setting the standard of where we want to go in the next fifty years. He said he is excited to see the project move forward.

Board Member Curtis said the site is very difficult and the layout and circulation of the design are very good.

Board Member Sullivan said she likes how the building façade is visually broken up. But she said at street level, you will not be able to see the water because of the 544 foot long wall of building. She said she has concerns over some of the composite materials looking plastic.

Board Member Burton said he would like to see something in the architecture that speaks to the site and not be indistinguishable from thousands of other projects. He asked if the buildings and courtyards could be manipulated to match the rhythm of the existing ramps and crane ways. He asked to see the building step down and break up the massing more. He agreed that option C was the best of the available choices.

Board Member Zuppan said she would like to see more information about the sea level rise planning and perhaps do more than the minimum to protect the park from sea level rise. She said the park should step down to the water somehow. She said she feels 544 feet would be too long of a building. She said she would like to see the building step down to the water and break up the massing. She said the plan needs to connect better to the site history, something experiential.

Board Member Curtis said all the suggestions lead to a potential increase in cost which we need to be sensitive to.

President Mitchell said he was also in favor of option C for the design. He said he would like to see larger entrances to the Bay Trail. He said recycling greywater for the large lawn would be beneficial. He said he supported varying the building heights. He said he does not like the bulb out area and thinks there is an opportunity to improve that area.

7-B 2017-4582

City Council Request that the Planning Board Review Affordable Housing Regulations Citywide

Staff Member Thomas introduced the item and explained the staff recommendations.

The staff report and attachment can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3105093&GUID=A5E99E2A-08D0-4E11-AC44-D7C25CC06070&FullText=1>

Board Member Sullivan asked if the city knows how the low income housing is performing over the last fifteen years.

Staff Member Thomas said that one thing they have noticed is that rental units often work better than forcing homeownership responsibilities onto low income residents.

Staff Member Potter said they contract with the Housing Authority to administer the project. She said they track the units, over 100, and verify residency and perform other functions.

Board Member Zuppan asked if federal changes in funding would affect this project.

Staff Member Potter said the federal government is reducing the amount of funding allowance to administer the Section 8 program and have stopped issuing new vouchers. She said this program is administered and funded at the local level and would not be impacted by the federal government.

Board Member Köster asked if in lieu fees would lead to a city not being in compliance with their housing element because the affordable housing is deferred.

Staff Member Thomas said that would not affect RHNA compliance, which focuses primarily on zoning, not on the projects that actually get built.

Board Member Köster asked if recent developers have complained about the cost of inclusionary housing requirements in Alameda.

Staff Member Thomas said that they know it is a huge cost to overcome, especially the 25% at Alameda Point, but that they do not get many complaints because the requirements are very clear.

Board Member Knox White said they received an email supporting a land value tax as an alternative to increasing inclusionary requirements. He asked if the city could issue affordable housing bonds.

Staff Member Potter said it would require a vote of the people, similar to the countywide A1 bond last year.

Board Member Sullivan asked if we know what is best for the city between affordable by design or subsidized housing.

Staff Member Thomas said they feel like they need to look at all segments of the problem.

Board Member Burton asked if the density bonus law could allow developers a way out of building the affordable by design units.

Staff Member Thomas said they only grant a waiver if the developer can show that it makes it physically impossible to fit the number of units on the site. He said they have never received a request for a financial concession which would require them to show their pro forma to prove the hardship.

President Mitchell asked if we could do an affordable by design study.

Staff Member Thomas said they could. He said the requirement would create a strain on townhome and single family home developments, but all rental apartment projects would have no problem meeting it.

President Mitchell opened the public hearing.

Laura Thomas said Alameda has done a good job of channeling developer profits into public benefits. She said the money for inclusionary housing comes from developer profits. She suggested using boomerang funds, potential profit sharing from Site A, or a bond, for affordable housing.

President Mitchell closed the public hearing.

Board Member Köster said he agreed with the staff report. He said he liked using unit size to define the affordable by design requirements.

Board Member Knox White said he would like to stop using “workforce housing” which leaves out workers on either side of the income spectrum from that definition. He said he is basically supportive of the staff recommendation. He said we have to be part of the solution to the regional housing crisis. He said our recommendation should be to have council look at funding sources for affordable housing.

Board Member Burton said he is not comfortable making these recommendations on the fly. He said he would like to see some economic analysis and get feedback from the builder community. He said he does not like the idea of in lieu fees, and likes integrating folks from different income levels throughout projects.

Board Member Sullivan said she felt we need more analysis before moving forward.

Board Member Zuppan said there is an economic cost to forcing developers to build smaller units. She said an in lieu fee could be an interesting option if priced and administered effectively. She said tweaking the inclusionary percentages to generate more affordable units should be considered.

Board Member Curtis said we need to be careful in imposing anything greater than what we have now.

President Mitchell said we need to be extremely cautious about increasing our requirements. He said we need to study this issue and not make a recommendation off of a gut feeling.

Board Member Knox White asked how many large projects are likely left that would be subject to any future changes in the inclusionary ordinance.

Staff Member Thomas said that North Housing was really the only one. He said that many of the bidders for that property expressed interest in just rehabbing the existing units and renting them out which means they would not be subject to affordable housing rules. He said they could engage a consultant to evaluate the effects of increasing the middle income housing requirements citywide.

Board Member Curtis asked if council would receive the same report the board did.

Staff Member Thomas said he would include the same staff report with some supplemental information.

Board Member Knox White made a motion to: recommend that the City Council proceed cautiously, maintain the 15% inclusionary requirement; consider a 10% middle income requirement for new projects or hire a consultant to study going higher than 10% in a range of housing markets; look at a variety of funding sources, including boomerang funds, Site A profit, a parcel or land value tax. Board Member Curtis seconded the motion.

Board Member Curtis said he is concerned about directing council to look for sources of funding without going to a vote of the public. He suggested splitting the motion.

Board Member Zuppan said she does not feel comfortable voting on a 10% recommendation without getting more information.

President Mitchell suggested including language to review the middle income requirements on a project by project basis.

Board Member Knox White withdrew his motion.

Board Member Knox White made a motion to recommend the City Council maintain its 15% inclusionary requirement, and that because we do not have enough information and because of the small number of potential projects that would be impacted we do not feel comfortable making a recommendation on a middle income housing requirement but feel that would be negotiated during the plan development. Board Member Curtis seconded the motion.

Board Member Zuppan suggested including a study of achieving increased affordable housing by tweaking the percentages of very low, low, and moderate income in the inclusionary ordinance.

Board Member Curtis said he is not supportive of the amendment.

Board Member Knox White amended his motion and said that if council were interested in studying middle income requirements that they also consider adjusting the sub-categories of the 15% inclusionary requirement. Board Member Curtis seconded the amendment. The motion passed 7-0.

Board Member Knox White made a motion to recommend that council look at potential funding sources for affordable housing including: parcel taxes, boomerang funds, Site A profits, land value capture or any other sources to provide affordable housing outside of using market rate units. Board Member Burton seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-2 (Curtis, Sullivan).

8. MINUTES

None

9. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

9-A 2017-4584

Zoning Administrator and Design Review Recent Actions and Decisions

Staff Member Thomas said they have taken no actions.

9-B 2017-4585

Future Public Meetings and Upcoming Community Development Department Projects

Staff Member Thomas gave an update on the calendar. The report can be found at:
<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3105096&GUID=8A1CFED6-67FB-4A10-974D-10CC6742F558>

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

11-A 2017-4583

Subcommittee for Alameda Marina

None

12. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Trish Spencer shared information about the passing of resident Dick Rutter.

13. ADJOURNMENT

President adjourned the meeting in memory of Dick Rutter at 10:41pm.