

APPROVED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA HISTORICAL ADVISORY BOARD
THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2017

1. CONVENE

Chair Piziali called meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Piziali, Board Members Chan, Jones, Saxby. Absent: Sanchez.

Staff Member Tai noted that Board Member Sanchez was recusing himself because he is a tenant of the Alameda Marina.

3. MINUTES

None

4. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION

None

5. ORAL COMMUNICATION

None

6. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Piziali said they received letters from Alameda Architectural Preservation Society, Woody Minor, and Nancy Hird.

7. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

7-A 2017-4393

Public hearing to consider the inclusion of identified historic resources at Alameda Marina on the City's Historic Resources Inventory (formerly Historic Buildings Study List). The proposed update to the Historic Resources Inventory is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15305 Minor Alterations to Land Use Limitations and 15308 Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment.

Staff Member Tai introduced the item. The staff report and attachments can be found at: <https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3057315&GUID=DCE42A08-9040-47EC-AB11-2BA4AAA5F6EA&FullText=1>

Chris Verplanck gave a presentation.

Board Member Saxby asked why the change in exterior finish materials was such an emphasis in the report's findings.

Mr. Verplanck said the replacement of the corrugated metal siding changed the feelings of the buildings from industrial to domestic materials.

Board Member Saxby asked why the interiors of the buildings were not considered more heavily.

Mr. Verplanck said many of the buildings with intact industrial interiors were not part of the period of historical significance. He said there is case law that says interiors of private buildings typically are not subject to CEQA review.

Board Member Saxby asked if the buildings on the eastern portion of the site were part of the period of significance.

Mr. Verplanck said the combination of them having low integrity and not being part of the main property until the very end of the war led him to the finding that they were not contributors to the historic district.

Chair Piziali opened the public hearing.

Woody Minor, architectural historian, said he believes the exteriors have been overemphasized and the interiors need to be considered. He said he is concerned about the information that is conveyed in the report. He strongly recommended that they board members take a tour of the interiors of the buildings.

Christopher Buckley, Alameda Architectural Preservation Society, said they believe all the buildings identified in the Corbett report should be added to Alameda's study list, which has a different threshold than the state requirements. He said it would be helpful to have a peer review.

Brian Schumacher said we should preserve the buildings as they are. He said the older buildings are preferable for many marine businesses due to their lower rents.

Sylvia Gibson, Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda, said they would like to see all 30 buildings added to the historic district. She said there is an urban sustainability aspect to preserving the access to the water.

Liz Taylor, DOER Marine, said they need to preserve these work spaces for the blue economy and for defensible space against sea level rise. She said these spaces are being systematically lost around the bay. She said she would be happy to have board members tour their building.

Tom Charron said he owns two boats and hauls his boats out at the boatyard regularly. He said the area should be maintained for the jobs and maritime industry of Alameda.

Maggie Sabovich, Recreational Boaters of California, said the board should maintain the maritime heritage of Alameda. She said housing can be put on other sites instead of urbanizing the waterfront. She said it took her two hours to get to the meeting from Crockett.

Ken Petersen said we should preserve the site for the jobs that it provides.

Chair Piziali closed the public hearing.

Chair Piziali asked for clarification about the board's purview over the interiors of the buildings.

Staff Member Tai said that they typically have no purview over the condition of private buildings.

Mr. Verplanck said he does not usually access the interiors of buildings when reviewing sites.

Board Member Jones said the interior of the buildings is not their purview. She said the question is whether to include more buildings in the historic district.

Board Member Saxby said that the comment about integrity not being required for inclusion in the city's historic study list is leading him to consider including all 30 buildings in the historic district. He said buildings 31-35 appear to be of the same period and significance as those buildings that were included.

Board Member Chan asked if they would have access to the interiors of the buildings.

Staff Member Tai said that the interiors are not part of the environmental impact report or CEQA review. He said Alameda's historic preservation ordinance does not specify criteria for consideration but they do have guidelines from the state to try and follow.

Board Member Saxby asked if a third party peer review would be possible.

Staff Member Tai said that Mr. Verplanck's report is the peer review of the 1988 Corbett report.

Board Member Jones said buildings 33 and 34 were build by a different company towards the end of the war. She said that is the argument for why they were not included in the report, since they were not part of the WWII shipbuilding history of the site.

Chair Piziali said he would add buildings 14, 15, 17, 18, 21, 25, 26, and 13 to the list. He said putting all 30 buildings in the historic district, it would not help the Planning Board and City Council identify which buildings should be kept in a final plan.

Board Member Saxby said building 22 was on the 1988 list and is part of the context of all the buildings providing historical context together. He said he would like to err on the side of preservation, where possible.

Staff Member Thomas gave suggestions on process for considering different groups of buildings for inclusion in the list of historic buildings. He said they could also ask Mr. Corbett to come back next month to provide comments on his list of buildings.

Board Member Saxby said he would like to have another expert review the recommendations of the Verplanck report.

Board Member Jones said the board needs to focus on the exterior of the buildings and she is comfortable going with the staff recommendation.

Board Member Chan said he would support coming back next month.

Chair Piziali asked if they would be holding up the process by delaying their decision for a month.

Staff Member Thomas said they are not ready to release the EIR yet, and coming back in a month would not slow down the process. He clarified that what the board is looking for is a review of the evaluation of the exterior integrity issue.

Chair Piziali continued the item to the next meeting.

8. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

None

9. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Staff Member Tai informed the board about an oak tree that required an emergency removal. He said the board has received invitations for a tour of the Shipways site. He said the board would not meet in August.

10. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Christopher Buckley said it was difficult to hear some of the discussion tonight. He said that the board should consider interiors when deciding historic designation of buildings.

Woody Minor said that the consultant needs to allow the consultant to access the interiors of the buildings in order to properly evaluate their historic value.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Piziali adjourned the meeting at 8:51pm.