

APPROVED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2021

1. CONVENE

President Asheshh Saheba convened the meeting* at 7:00 p.m.

**Due to Governor Executive Order N-08-21, Planning Board members can attend the meeting via teleconference.*

2. FLAG SALUTE

Board Member Ron Curtis led the flag salute.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Board President Saheba, Vice President Ruiz, and Board Members Curtis, Hom, Rothenberg, and Cisneros.

Absent: Board Member Alan Teague.

4. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION

None.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

7. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

7-A 2021-1322

Amending Alameda Municipal Code (AMC) Chapter XXX to Revise Section 30-2 Definitions and Section 30-7 Off-Street Parking and Loading Space Regulations - Citywide - Applicant: City of Alameda. Public hearing to consider recommending that the City Council adopt an ordinance to amend Alameda Municipal Code Chapter XXX to Revise Section 30-2 Definitions and Section 30-7, Off-Street Parking and Loading Space Regulations, to implement the City of Alameda Climate Action and Resiliency Plan (CARP) and Transportation Choices Plan. The proposed amendments are exempt from the requirements of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), where it can be shown with certainty that the proposed amendments will not have a significant effect on the environment, and Section 15183, projects consistent with a community plan, general plan or zoning, each of which provides a separate and independent basis for CEQA clearance and when viewed collectively provide an overall basis for CEQA clearance. No further environmental review is needed.

Brian McGuire, a Planner, introduced the item and gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5138833&GUID=436A438F-9E81-4521-BF2C-B3300D123799&FullText=1>.

President Saheba opened the board's clarifying questions.

Board Member Rona Rothenberg asked how the minimum parking would be calculated for disabled access. She also suggested not using the word "desirable" and instead focusing on reasonable accommodation. She then had questions about EV (electric vehicle) handicap parking.

Staff Member McGuire explained the math they used in addition to what the California Building Code required. He then explained the use of the word "desirable" and then explained the standard for how they settled on the number of spaces for accessible EV parking spots.

Vice President Teresa Ruiz asked about the intention to deviate from the California Building Code. She wondered if there should be a clause to follow whichever was more stringent. She also asked about encroachment for the parking space dimensions and parking stackers.

Staff Member McGuire said these standards were more stringent and the intention was to go beyond what was required. He then explained that for encroachment they would follow the zoning code. They had not really addressed parking stackers.

Board Member Curtis asked about disabled parking spaces and wanted to know how many spots would be required under the new ordinance. He did not want to see disabled people penalized to make more room for cyclists or pedestrians.

Staff Member McGuire explained how the new ordinance would calculate disabled parking spots and how the feedback they had gotten was in line with Board Member Curtis's concern.

Board Member Xiomara Cisneros asked for an overview of what the Transportation Commission had thought of this ordinance. She also had questions for the Exception Piece and asked for examples.

Staff Member McGuire discussed the highlights of that meeting. He then explained when the Exception Piece might be needed, which would require a Use Permit.

Andrew Thomas, Director of Planning Building and Transportation, discussed what his takeaways were. He acknowledged that better management was needed of on-street parking. He further discussed the Use Permit process if someone needed additional parking for a project

Board Member Hanson Hom asked how the threshold was set, provisions, intensification process, and EV charging requirements. He had other general questions as well and asked about how developers on Alameda point had responded. He also had specific questions about certain parking requirements and how this ordinance would affect ADUs.

Staff Member McGuire discussed how the ordinance would be applied and how this ordinance would work with existing and new developments. He spoke on the needs and issues that had been coming up on Alameda Point. He answered the more specific questions and explained what they would refine before going to the City Council.

Director Thomas discussed further when this ordinance would apply and also discussed projects at Alameda Point.

Allen Tai, City Planner, also helped explain what State Law would and would not allow when it came to bicycle parking requirements. He also answered Board Member Hom's questions about landscaping.

President Saheba asked about ADA parking and what would happen if a person wanted to go to zero parking.

Staff Member McGuire explained what the standard would be if a developer chose to not have parking.

President Saheba opened public comment.

Denyse Trepanier, President for Bike Walk Alameda, strongly supported the staff recommendation on the parking ordinance and hoped that the board also supported it. She then thanked the staff for all their hard work.

Debi Ryan, Community Action for Sustainable Alameda (CASA), thanked Brian, Andrew, and all the staff for their work on this ordinance. She was in full support of this ordinance and anything that would further the CARP plan.

President Saheba closed public comments and opened board discussions.

Board Member Curtis was in support but wanted to change the Use Permit process for additional parking. He wanted it to be done at a staff level to make it more efficient for the developers. Appeals would still come to the Planning Board.

President Saheba discussed why having the Use Permits come before the board didn't feel like a hindrance since it would only be for special cases. He was in favor of keeping the ordinance as it was described.

Staff Member McGuire explained the process in more detail and what would be done at the staff level and what would come before the board.

Staff Member Tai explained the Zoning Administrator Process. He added that they could amend the resolution to reflect that these were Administrative Use Permit by the Zoning Administrator.

Vice President Ruiz asked about parking stackers and how they could affect standard parking size. She was concerned about future developments. She also wanted the language around encroachment to be clarified.

Staff Member McGuire discussed standard parking sizes and how they could work with language to anticipate newer technologies such as parking stackers.

Staff Member Tai also added information about encroachment and what the existing code allowed.

Board Member Hom made a motion to adopt the ordinance as prepared by staff with the following amendments. Clarify that the Use Permit for exceeding parking would be an Administrative Use Permit, that staff would clarify the sections on the encroachments of trees and stackers, clarify the ordinance would only apply to new and retrofitted parking areas/lots, clarify the floor area be based on what staff's understanding was, clarify that ADUs were not subject to any parking requirements or bicycle parking requirements and that lighting design review could be an Administrative Design Review. Board Member Curtis seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was taken. The motion passed 6-0.

7-B 2021-1270

Amendment to the City Council Policy for Naming City Property, Facilities and Streets - Citywide - Applicant: City of Alameda. Public hearing to review and comment on the City Council-initiated revisions to the Policy for Naming City Property, Facilities, and Streets. CEQA Determination: The proposed amendment is not a project under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378 and Public Resources Code Section 21065. No further environmental review is needed

Staff Member Tai introduced the item and gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5124721&GUID=B507AE6D-5707-4D08-9460-7394C5713807&FullText=1>.

President Saheba opened the board clarifying questions.

Board Member Rothenberg asked how names of deceased people had been gathered and how had the 3-year policy been agreed on. She also asked about renters' options and the costs of renaming streets.

Staff Member Tai stated that the 3-year had been in the policy for a long time. He then explained the issues between owners vs. renters and what work would be needed to go into verifying people.

Vice President Ruiz wanted to know if once this was adopted by the City Council would it be part of the Municipal Code. She also wanted to know if there would be an application fee for renaming a street. She also questioned how to shorten the process to make it more efficient and accessible overall.

Staff Member Tai answered no this was an Outside Policy. He said a fee had been discussed, they would need to research to see what administrative costs there were to the city. He then discussed the criteria needed and what the thinking was behind the outlined process.

Board Member Curtis discussed the unintended consequences of renaming a street, it could really impact residents of that street. He wanted consideration for renaming a street to first be to the residents of the street in question. He gave his thoughts on the 3-year policy.

Board Member Hom asked if the 500 signatures needed had to be property owners.

Staff Member Tai clarified that it was both property owners and tenants. It would be residents in general regardless if they were owners or renters.

Board Member Ruiz asked about the process to verify if they were actual residents of Alameda. She wanted to know if they could also distinguish owners from renters then.

Staff Member Tai said that would be a policy decision for the council if they wanted the staff to verify owners from renters. He discussed ideas of how they could apply that and that the public comment was they wanted all residents of Alameda regardless if they live on the street in question to be able to weigh in on street name changes.

President Saheba opened public comments.

Drew Dara-Abrams, an Alameda resident (Calhoun Street), discussed how he and his neighbors had been working on changing the Calhoun Street name. He thanked city staff and the board for doing this important work. He had some concerns about the upfront application process and he was happy that renters' views were being considered as well.

President Saheba closed public comment and opened board discussion.

Board Member Hom discussed how controversial street renaming could be. He thought the 500 threshold was a bit too low, he thought it should be related to the length of the street. He did believe that tenants should be part of the threshold.

Staff Member Tai clarified to the board that the 500 thresholds wouldn't automatically change the name, it was the threshold to initiate the question to the council about the name change. He then explained what would happen if the council agreed on a name change.

Board Member Curtis still felt that people who lived on the street in question should have the main vote. He gave ideas on how the residents could have more of a say in the name change.

Vice President Ruiz concurred with Board Member Curtis's comments that the opinions of the residents of the street should carry more weight.

Board Member Cisneros suggested ways to get the community more involved.

President Saheba liked the recommendations and that the residents of the street, who would be the most impacted, would have more of a say. He agreed the 500 threshold was too low.

Staff Member Tai thanked the board for their input.

7-C 2021-1298

A Public Hearing to Review and Comment on the Draft Climate Adaptation and Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Danielle Mieler, Sustainability, and Resilience Manager introduced this item and gave a presentation. The staff report can be found at <https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5138828&GUID=9EE7404A-B585-461D-956A-0AAFAAF535AE&FullText=1>.

President Saheba opened the board clarifying questions.

Board Member Rothenberg wanted to know if they would be working with neighboring cities to make sure the plans were complementary and inclusive. She also wanted to know specifically about plans for transportation needs (the tubes) since they affected different regions.

Staff Member Mieler discussed the collaborative work they were doing with other organizations and cities that would benefit everyone. She then discussed the funding they had requested for the Posey and Webster tubes and they were working closely with CalTrans on that issue.

Vice President Ruiz asked if they had considered including Supply Chain Resiliency and if they had collected data on private wells for the Asset Inventory. She also questioned other items on the Asset Inventory, such as conduits, and wanted to know more about what the plan was for those assets.

Staff Member Mieler thought that including Supply Chain Resiliency was an excellent idea. She then discussed that private wells were an asset but not an asset that they were readily able to quantify. For the conduits sizes at some of the developments, she believed that was information they could gather for the final plan.

Board Member Cisneros asked about the grants/points collected and reductions.

Staff Member Mieler explained the Community Rating System and how homeowners could get flood insurance reductions. She then discussed grants and federal funding that was in the works.

Board Member Hom asked about flood management and if Alameda could reach a 7 rating.

Staff Member Mieler said she did not have the answer to that but would look into it. She knew it would take a significant increase to get to those higher ratings.

Board Member Hom then asked about earthquake retrofits and wanted to know if Alameda would become more aggressive about requiring these retrofits.

Staff Member Mieler discussed what the options were now and how they could support and encourage owners to get their buildings retrofitted. She added that neighboring cities had already required these mandatory retrofits for their buildings.

President Saheba opened public comments.

There were no public speakers.

President Saheba opened board discussions and comments.

Board Member Cisneros stated that she was in support of the mandatory retrofits.

President Saheba thanked staff and closed the item.

7-D 2021-1321

Request to Review and Comment on the Staff Recommendations to the City Council for a Commercial Streets Two-Year Work Program to Improve the Park Street and Webster Street Striping Plans; Improve the On-street Parklet Program; Maintain the Alameda Avenue Street Closure; and Resume Pre-COVID Parking Management, Fee Collection, and Enforcement Activities.

Rochelle Wheeler, a Senior Transportation Coordinator, gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5138832&GUID=D6E3E109-AF10-458A-94DE-8E9D15015E83&FullText=1>.

President Saheba opened the board clarifying questions.

Board Member Rothenberg asked about safe access for cyclists, an issue that Bike Walk Alameda had brought up in a letter. She also had questions about the design standards, that could be achievable for business owners, for the parklettes.

Staff Member Wheeler addressed the letter from Bike Walk Alameda and what plans were in the works for bike facilities. She then described what safety standards they were proposing for parklets that would bring more cohesiveness and they were still working on those aesthetic standards.

Vice President Ruiz wanted to know if they were able to break down the survey results to know which residents lived on the affected slow streets, she added that Alameda Ave was her main concern. She also wanted to know the operating hours of the parklettes and what safety barrier options for the parklettes the city was considering.

Staff Member Wheeler said they had they did not have that specific survey data and she discussed what the business district had done to address the concerns of the residents on Alameda Ave. For the parklettes, generally during the business hours is when they were allowed to operate and for safety barrier options they did not at this time have a clear staff preference.

Board Member Curtis asked if there were any plans to start charging businesses for having a parklet. He discussed the lost revenue to the city since these parklets were taking the spots of parking meters and it was providing businesses with extra space.

Staff Member Wheeler said that was something they were diving more deeply into. She then discussed what factors would need to be examined to determine those costs and fees. The goal eventually was to pass some of the expenses to the businesses. She then clarified the parklets operating hours, the permit allowed 7 am to 10 pm, Sunday through Thursday, and then through Midnight on Friday and Saturday nights.

Board Member Cisneros wanted to know when the last time the parking meters had been increased. She also suggested some other information that would be helpful in the surveys to better understand the demographics. She also asked about parking turnover.

Staff Member Wheeler said she did not have that information on the parking meters, she knew what the current rates were. She then discussed parking turnover and why having 15% available parking was desirable.

Director Thomas also discussed the importance of having better parking management with better parking enforcement.

Board Member Hom wanted to know if there was enough time for tenants to apply before November 1st, he was concerned it was not a realistic period.

Staff Member Wheeler answered that these recommendations had been announced starting in July. Staff was encouraging businesses to start the process now and not to wait. They would have some sort of grace period to make sure everyone had a Use Permit.

Board Member Curtis asked if there had been increases in fender benders on Park and Webster since the program had started.

Staff Member Wheeler said after viewing the Collision Statistics they had not seen an increase, it might still be too soon to tell.

Director Thomas added that they had learned through the survey that people felt safer.

President Saheba opened public comment.

Kathy Weber, Executive Director of the Downtown Alameda Business Association, urged the board to continue its support of the Commercial Streets Program. She discussed the critical lifeline this program offered Alameda businesses.

Ron Mooney, an owner of Daisy's, spoke in support of this project, he discussed what an asset having the parklets had been. He thought the Commercial Streets program was great and even encouraged lowering the speed limit even more. He added what reach out he had done to make sure residents knew what was happening.

President Saheba closed public comment and opened board discussions.

Board Member Hom stated that he was a big proponent of road dieting and creating more pedestrian-friendly corridors. He discussed how other cities had been doing projects like this even before the pandemic to create more vibrant downtowns. He liked the idea of further studying this project and making it permanent. He did think the Kimley-Horn Study could use further evaluation and he liked all the recommendations that staff brought forward.

Vice President Ruiz did point out a typo in the Kimley-Horn report.

Board Member Cisneros wanted to see clear and explicit language about parking enforcement.

President Saheba discussed how the transformation of both Webster and Park had made the city more walkable and liveable. He did want to see the parklets have the same alignment as the sidewalks to avoid tripping hazards. He discussed other design issues that needed to be thought off and was encouraged that this could be a more permanent thing.

8. MINUTES

8-A 2021-1316

Draft Meeting Minutes – June 28, 2021 (Continued from the meeting of September 13, 2021)

8-B 2021-1317

Draft Meeting Minutes - July 12, 2021 (Continued from the meeting of September 13, 2021)

8-C 2021-1320

Draft Meeting Minutes - July 26, 2021

Board Member Rothenberg pointed out places where her name needed to be corrected on the July 12th and in the July 26th minutes.

Board Member Cisneros pointed out a typo in the July 12th minutes, it should have been Density Discussion.

Vice President Ruiz pointed out that Staff Member Tai's name at been misspelled on the July 26th meeting.

President Saheba opened public comments.

There were no public speakers.

President Saheba closed public comments.

President Saheba took a roll call vote item by item. For the June 28th meeting, the minutes passed with corrections 5-0, President Saheba abstained since he had been absent. For the July 12th meeting, the minutes passed with corrections 4-0, President Saheba and Vice President Ruiz abstained since they had been absent. For the July 26th meeting, the minutes passed with corrections 6-0.

9. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

9-A 2020-1318

Planning, Building and Transportation Department Recent Actions and Decisions

Recent Actions and Decisions can be found

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5138829&GUID=1B8DEA57-9450-472F-8D3E-6FDC28DAE705&FullText=1>.

9-B 2020-1319*Oral Report - Future Public Meetings and Upcoming Planning, Building and Transportation Department Projects*

Staff Member Tai said the next board meeting would be October 11th and the staff was planning a Housing Element Workshop. They would also review a Use Permit for a project at Alameda Point. Then at the October 25th meeting, they would bring back the revised General Plan.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS
None.

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS
Board Member Cisneros verified that the Housing Element Subcommittee meeting was the upcoming Thursday.

Vice President Ruiz asked if they would be discussing the impact of SB-9, Measure A, and the potential conflict in Alameda.

Staff Member Tai explained SB-9 and how the process would work. He added that the staff was still reviewing the law and how they planned to bring it to the board for review.

Director Thomas added that this was being viewed as part of the Housing Element process.

Board Member Curtis asked about the RHNA Appeal, he had heard that it had lost.

Director Thomas said that was true and explained how the process worked. He explained that as of now Alameda's RHNA number was not going down.

Board Member Hom asked if SB-10 could also affect Alameda and was interested in learning more.

12. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS
None.

13. ADJOURNMENT
President Saheba adjourned the meeting at 10:40 p.m.