

APPROVED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2022

1. CONVENE

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

**Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361, codified at Government Code Section 54953, Planning Board members can attend the meeting via teleconference.*

2. FLAG SALUTE

Board Member Alan Teague led the flag salute.

3. ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Vice President Teresa Ruiz.

4. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION

None.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

6-A 2022-2112

Consideration of General Plan Conformity for Acceptance of An Easement From Alameda Unified School District Related to a Roundabout on Central Avenue at Third Street. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301, 15304, 15061(b)(3) and 15183.

The staff report and attachments can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5670805&GUID=D9871411-BC8D-499F-883A-C6EFBA4A15CB&FullText=1>.

6-B 2022-2113

PLN21-0560 - 2331 North Loop - Design Review Amendment - Applicant: Marieca Tye on behalf of Friends of the Alameda Animal Shelter. Consideration of Design Review Amendment for changes to a previously approved animal shelter on a vacant parcel. Design changes includes reducing the size of the second floor, removal of a rooftop penthouse and dog run, and changes to the exterior siding materials and window types. The design modifications do not alter the site plan or building footprint that were previously approved by the Planning Board in January 2020. CEQA Determination: No further

environmental review is necessary pursuant to McCorkle Eastside Neighborhood Group v. City of St. Helena (2018) 31 Cal.App.5th 80, which found that design review for by right projects is a ministerial decision under Public Resources Code section 21080.

The staff report and attachments can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5670806&GUID=28C71BC7-F857-46CC-BFF9-A74A39F8CFEE&FullText=1>.

Board Member Hanson Hom made a motion to approve Consent Calendar items A and B. Board Member Xiomara Cisneros seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 6-0.

7. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

7-A 2022-2115

Public Workshop to Review and Comment on the draft Zoning Amendments to implement the May 2022 Draft Housing Element to address State Fair Housing Law and Accommodate the Regional Housing Needs Allocation for the Period 2023-2031.

Andrew Thomas, Director of Planning, Building and Transportation, introduced the item and gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5670807&GUID=EDE27399-5488-4708-9A7A-F6F388FF1CD2&FullText=1>

President Saheba opened board clarifying questions.

Boarded Member Teague asked about the status of the McKay project demolition permit.

Director Thomas said they had not applied for that permit yet.

Board Member Hom asked for clarification on what the maximum density was in the R-1 zone. He also wanted to know the average apartment size in Alameda. He then asked for clarification on the transit overlay districts' 1000sq ft. maximum. He wanted to know if that amount actually promoted affordable rental units. He also brought up densities and lot coverages in the residential zones and if a sliding scale was considered. He then asked about minimum square footage and height limits in the MF shopping districts.

Director Thomas said that they hadn't spent much time on the R-1 zone due to all the SB-9 amendments. He said they wanted to clean that up on the next draft since the density wasn't as clear if you weren't doing a SB-9 application. He discussed densities being considered.

Allen Tai, City Planner, added that if they left it as drafted then there would be no density limit and the number of units would be based on the Buildable envelope.

Director Thomas said they didn't have the average floor area for rental units but they did know the average of number of bedrooms. He then discussed if the 1000 ft. was an appropriate threshold and that maybe they should focus on the amount of rooms instead. He then went into detail about density and lot coverage in the residential zones. He then discussed retail/shopping zones and the importance of preserving the retail spaces even as residential spaces were added.

Board Member Curtis wanted to know what would happen to the McKay Ave building if it did get Historic Status, he saw this as a stalling technique. He was boggled as to why people were opposing a project that had already been approved by the proper channels and was something that was going to help so many vulnerable and at risk people.

Director Thomas explained that those who were opposed were attempting to go above the City Council by taking their appeal to the state.

President Saheba opened public comment.

Karen Bey discussed her concerns about losing important retail districts and gave suggestions on how to encourage more shopping spaces that would increase sales revenue for Alameda.

Christopher Buckley, Alameda Architecture Preservation Society (AAPS), discussed a letter the society had sent. He noted that their previous comments weren't in the draft. He believed these changes were overkill and went beyond what RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Allocation) required. The society also that the Transit Overlay Map was too dependent on AC Transit and would be locked in place should the bus lines be rerouted.

Carmen Reid gave her support to AAPS's recommendations and kindly asked that the board endorse and adopt these suggestions. She discussed how these proposed changes were directly against Article 26 and said that the staff was ignoring the public. She also said that when the McKay Ave project was brought to the voters it said "reuse".

Jay Garfinkle endorsed the letter discussed by Chris Buckley. He then said that the State Historic Board wasn't supposed to listen to political sway about the McKay Ave project but many Democratic politicians had weighed in against the rules. He then accused the Planning Board of not taking care of the citizens of Alameda, he said they were applying with the politicians instead.

Fay Adelstein agreed with Jay Garfinkle, AAPS's letter and that the McKay Ave project had mislead the voters. She accused the board of working for the state and wanted to know who was paying them.

Zac Bowling thanked the board and the City Staff for all their hard work and believed the draft was in a good place. He did suggest not doing the MF Overlay and instead do zoning

on all the C-2 properties. He was very much in favor of the changes and said it was on track for meeting the state's requirements.

Josh Geyer discussed the Transit Overlay District and that even if bus lines were rerouted by AC Transit the City Council could vote to rezone and they wouldn't be locked in place. For the McKay Ave project he found it shameful that people had gone through such a sustained and vociferous effort to deny housing to medically frail elderly people. Those people should be ashamed of themselves.

Nanette Geller who lived in the North Park Street Gateway Neighborhood, asked for consideration for her neighborhood due to how crowded it already was. She went into detail about quality of life and parking restrictions.

Melissa Donahue agreed with Nanette Geller. She understood the demands the state was making but she urged the board to consider 2 parking spaces per home. She believed this idea of everyone riding a bike everywhere like the Netherlands was a fantasy.

President Saheba closed public comments and opened board discussion.

Board Member Teague took a moment and explained the role and expectations of a Planning Board Member. Members had to be a resident of Alameda, had to go through an extensive interview process and then the City Council had to vote them onto the board. He then reminded everyone that this was a volunteer position, many hours of work with no pay for the betterment of Alameda.

Board Member Teague pointed out places in the draft that needed clarification. He wanted the definition of Multi-family to be consistent and discussed what needed to be excluded from that definition. He also wanted the same applied to what a kitchen was and what was considered "shared use". He discussed the new term "residential unit" under Senior Housing and wanted clarification on what it meant. He then asked about residential density and wanted to see consistency. The comments about preserving retail on the ground floor resonated with him and he discussed ways to preserve those retail spaces. He went into detail about what could work in the Transit Overlay Districts and what would be better for ADUs.

Board Member Curtis also took a moment to acknowledge the hard work of the City Staff to follow state law and requirements. City Staff has to work with the public to find an outcome that works for everyone and he was really proud to be a member and of the staff.

Board Member Xiomara Cisneros appreciated the comment about wanting to prevent further retail leakage and encouraged finding more ways to correct that. She then discussed the densities proposed for R-1 and the concerns surrounding the Transit Overlay districts. She also briefly discussed her disappointments about the McKay project and all the delays that had stalled it.

Board Member Hom gave this thoughts on densities for the R-1/R-6 and wanted to see consistency to make things easier for everyone. He then discussed structural parking and wanted the zoning to take that into account to allow for higher building coverage. He liked the idea of having the Transit Overlay waiver and didn't see the major lines changing anytime soon but did encourage better defining the area. He liked that they included the definitions for temporary and transitional housing, and gave suggestions on how to make them each more clear.

Board Member Rothenberg discussed the accuracy and attention to detail the letter Director Thomas sent to the Housing and Community Development had contained. She agreed with Board Member Teague about the importance of consistency with the definitions. She also discussed the Transit Overlay districts and encouraged wording that would take into account route changes.

President Saheba discussed the importance of the dedicated City Staff and public interaction that they had arrived at this point. He then brought up retail and how much could be added to the Multi-Family use. He wanted to hear what the properties wanted.

Director Thomas discussed the different levels of interest retail owners had about Multi-Family overlay. He went into detail about the importance of having shopping centers and ground floor retails spaces while opening up the locations for residential use. He then discussed next steps and the first meeting July would reflect their discussion from tonight.

8. MINUTES

8-A 2022-2108 - Draft Meeting Minutes - March 14, 2022

President Saheba opened public comment.

There were no speakers.

Board Member Teague made a motion to approve the minutes and Board Member Rothenberg seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 6-0.

9. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

9-A 2022-2106

Planning, Building and Transportation Department Recent Actions and Decisions

Recent actions and decisions can be found at

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5670802&GUID=B51F9262-FBAF-4E7E-A12D-D0A04BE9A146&FullText=1>.

No item was pulled for a review.

9-B 2022-2107

Oral Report - Future Public Meetings and Upcoming Planning, Building and Transportation Department Projects

Staff Member Tai said the next meeting agenda would have Annual Reports on various projects and that at the July 11th meeting the staff would have the revised package of the Zoning Amendments.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Board Member Teague discussed a conversation he had with Staff Member Tai about the criteria for being on the Consent Calendar. He also wanted to adjourn the meeting in respect and acknowledgement of Pride Month.

12. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

13. ADJOURNMENT

President Saheba adjourned the meeting at 9:53 p.m. with a special note acknowledging Pride Month.