

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2010

1. CONVENE: 7:08 p.m.
2. FLAG SALUTE: Board Member Cook
3. ROLL CALL:
Present: President Ezzy Ashcraft, Vice-President Autorino, Board members, Cook, Cunningham, Lynch, and Zuppan.

Absent: Board Member Kohlstrand

4. MINUTES:

Minutes from the meeting of February 8, 2010

Board member Cook moved, seconded by Board Member Cunningham to approve the minutes as amended. Motion passes 5-1-1. (Lynch abstained)

5. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION:
None.

6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

Written Report

6-A Future Agendas

Staff presented an overview of future Planning Board hearings.

6-B Zoning Administrator Report

Staff reported that on February 16, 2010 the Zoning Administrator approved with conditions a Variance and Major Design Review for a duplex at 1514 Minturn Street.

Oral Report

None

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Resident Pauline Miller complained about the parking situation in the 2500 block of Lincoln Avenue. She requested that the area be set up as a permit parking area. The Planning Services Manager will contact Ms. Miller to discuss the request

8. CONSENT CALENDAR:

8-A Transportation Thresholds of Significance – Applicant – City of Alameda. The Planning Board will hold a hearing to consider an amendment to the City of Alameda thresholds of significance for use in the environmental review process for new projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. **Staff is requesting a continuance of this item to the Regular Planning Meeting of March 22, 2010.**

Board member Cunningham motioned, seconded by Board Member Lynch, Motion to approved the consent agenda passes 6-0.

9. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

9-A Review and Discussion of the City of Alameda Code Enforcement Program.

The Building Official provided an overview of Alameda's Code Enforcement Program.

Vice President Autorino asked what the oldest case on the books is.

The Building Official responded six to seven years. He explained that the process is to look at each case in as short a time period to determine its validity and urgency. Cases that interfere with life safety are given first priority.

Board member Zuppan asked if the fees generated from code enforcement pay for the Staff.

The Building Official responded yes.

Board member Lynch asked how the lower priority cases are generally resolved.

The Building Official responded that the cases are usually rectified after the second letter is sent to the property owner.

Board member Cook asked how the City of Alameda's code enforcement staff levels compare to other cities.

The Building Official responded that the staffing is low compared to other cities of a size similar to Alameda's.

Board member Cook asked if more Code Enforcement Officers would result in additional revenue

The Building Official stated that in theory it would.

The Board recommended that staff request that the City Manager consider whether

potential fees could be generated from the immense backlog of Code Enforcement cases that could be used to cover the cost of more Code Enforcement positions. It was also suggested that the City consider payment of overtime for Code Enforcement Officers as necessary to enforce use permit violations related to operational hours of businesses.

9-B Workshop Regarding the Community Development Department Work Program for Fiscal Year 2010/2011. A presentation and discussion of Community Development Department work program priorities, resources, and items for future Planning Board consideration.

The Planning Services Manager gave a report on the Work Program for Fiscal Year 2010/2011.

President Ezzy Ashcraft stated the Community Development Department realized reductions in staff and resources this past year and given these reductions, there is an on-going need to evaluate projects and demands on staff time and amend priorities and adjust the allocation of resources. She mentioned that a lot of the same items remain from previous work programs and there was need to prioritize projects in light of resource reductions.

Board member Cunningham stated that the items that had legal time lines should be top priority. He suggested that the Board look at long term planning and put some goals and guidelines in place for when the economy picks up. He stated that with future developments such as the Waterfront Development Design Guidelines, the Civic Center Master Plan, and Alameda Point, the City should start looking at ways to incorporate zero net energy developments and look at opportunities for sustainable development.

Board member Cook mentioned the amendments to the General Plan and believes that they are very important. She stated that the discussion on the Waterfront Design Guidelines should not be limited to the Mixed-Use designations and should cover everything on the waterfront. She agrees that the Climate Protection Element will be very important in future developments. She asked about the Public Art Ordinance Amendment and why that item has gained such priority this year.

The Planning Services Manager stated that the item was brought up by the City Council when they received the annual report on the Public Art Fund. The Council's concern was that the funds be used for development of public art and not spent on staff time.

Board member Cook voiced concern over the lack of funding for long range planning and believes that General Fund monies could be used to keep these plans moving forward. She feels that a lot of the long range planning has been taken away from the Planning Board and handled by other departments. She believes that it is important for the Community Development Department to have a Planning Director.

President Ezzy Ashcraft asked if the Climate Protection Element had a deadline.

The Planning Services Manager stated that it did not. He stated that the only item on the

list with a deadline is the Housing Element, which gets changed by the State constantly. He stated that even though the items don't have deadlines they need to be dealt with because the City will wind up with projects proposals that are not in line with the communities vision.

President Ezzy Ashcraft mentioned that by not being in compliance with the Housing Element the City is kept from applying for grants available through the State. She questioned the reasoning behind having the Historical Preservation Ordinance Amendment fall under the Planning Board and not the Historical Advisory Board.

The Planning Services Manager stated that the ordinance now resides as a part of the Building Code and they should be transferred to the Development Code. Since the item is a change to the Development Code the recommendation to the City Council needs to come from the Planning Board.

President Ezzy Ashcraft asked how long a building can stay on the Historic Building Study List.

The Planning Services Manager stated that the list actually represents a list of buildings with historic significance. He believes that the historic inventory list needs to be revamped and that there is a lot of room for improvement. The buildings on the list do stay on indefinitely.

President Ezzy Ashcraft suggested that certain items on the list can be grouped together such as the Climate Protection Element, and Green Building Code including the ban on wood burning fireplaces. Also the Housing Element needs to stay as a top priority along with the Waterfront Design Guidelines. She made the suggestion for staff to look into having college graduate students help with some of the long range projects.

Board member Cunningham suggested that staff look at ordinances passed by local Cities to help streamline the process.

The Board stated that the Housing Element, Climate Protection Element, Green Building Code, Waterfront Design Guidelines, and the Land Use Element be top priority items on the Work Program.

President Ezzy Ashcraft requested that upgrades to the infrastructure of City buildings be done using green materials.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

12. ADJOURNMENT: 8:40 p.m.