

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD MONDAY, MAY 24, 2010

1. CONVENE: 7:10 pm
2. FLAG SALUTE: Board Member Kohlstrand
3. ROLL CALL: Present President Ezzy Ashcraft, Board members Cook, Cunningham, Kohlstrand, Lynch, and Zuppan.

Absent: Vice-President Autorino

Staff Present: Jon Biggs, Planning Board Secretary, Andrew Thomas, Planning Services Manager, Simone Wolter, Recording Secretary, Farimah Faiz, City Attorney's office, Jennifer Ott, Deputy City Manager

4. MINUTES: Minutes from the meeting of May 10, 2010.

Board Member Kohlstrand and Board member Cook provided corrections to the meeting minutes. Motion to approve meeting minutes as amended made by Board member Cunningham, seconded by Board Member Zuppan. **Approved as amended. 6-0.**

5. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION:

None.

6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

Written Report

6-A Future Agendas

Staff presented an overview of future meetings.

6-B Zoning Administrator Report

The Zoning Administrator approved a Use Permit for a second dwelling unit at 2412 Clement Avenue at the Zoning Administrator Hearing on May 18, 2010. A Use Permit for a directional sign on Tilden Way was withdrawn from the agenda and continued to a later date.

Oral Report

None.

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR:

- 8-A **Grand Marina Village Master Plan Amendments - Applicant - Warmington Homes.** Proposed amendments to the Grand Marina Master Plan to maintain consistency with the City of Alameda affordable housing program and amendments to landscaping plans. The property is located at the intersection of Grand Street and Fortmann Way and is zoned M-X Mixed Use.

Board member Cook requested that the item be pulled from the Consent agenda so she could ask some clarifying questions about the project. **Item 8-A was moved and heard as the first item under 9, Regular Agenda Items.**

- 8-B **Community Commercial Zoning Ordinance Amendments-Applicant City of Alameda, West Alameda Business Association, and Park Street Business Association.** Proposed amendments to the Community Commercial Zoning District related to certain retail uses and height limits. The Community Commercial zoning district applies to areas in the Park Street and Webster Street Commercial Areas. **Staff is requested that the item be continued to the Planning Board meeting of July 12, 2010**

Motion by Board Member Kohlstrand to continue the item to the July 12, 2010 meeting, seconded by Board Member Lynch. Motion passes 6-0. Board Member Lynch requested that staff work with the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society to fine-tune the proposed ordinance language.

9. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

- 8-A **Grand Marina Village Master Plan Amendments - Applicant - Warmington Homes.** Proposed amendments to the Grand Marina Master Plan to maintain consistency with the City of Alameda affordable housing program and amendments to landscaping plans. The property is located at the intersection of Grand Street and Fortmann Way and is zoned M-X Mixed Use.

Board member Cook asked whether the Planning Board would have had the ability to require more public amenities or a better site plan in this development when this project was originally reviewed and why more public amenities are not being included with the request for fewer affordable housing units.

Staff responded that the current status of the economy makes financing and profitability of these developments difficult. In order to move forward with the phased development, the applicant, Warmington Homes, was requesting a decrease in the number of affordable units pursuant to the new inclusionary housing requirements that were adopted by the City

Council in 2009.

Board Member Lynch asked if the City was involved in the financing process and who monitors these developments to insure the required number of units are being sold at rates that meet affordable housing requirements.

Staff stated that the review and monitoring of affordable units would be done by the City of Alameda Housing Authority.

Board Member Kohlstrand and Board member Cook commended Warmington Homes on the quality of the model homes. Although Board member Cook felt that the site [plan should have been brought back for Planning Board review in light of the request for fewer affordable units.

Board Member Kohlstrand motioned, seconded by Board member Cunningham, to amend the Master Plan. Motion passes 5-1, with Board member Cook voting no.

9-A **CONTINUED from May 10, 2010** -- Entitlement Application for Proposed Alameda Point Project

Jennifer Ott, Deputy City Manager, presented an update on the project.

Board Member Kohlstrand motioned, seconded by Board Member Lynch to reopen the public comment period. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Sweeney, Alameda resident, is opposed to the project for the lack of feasible financing concepts, transportation issues, and conflict with zoning plans. He also stated environmental impact report is inadequate.

Mrs. Sweeney, Alameda resident, is opposed to the project because she is concerned it is in an area that is seismically unstable and will not be able to withstand significant earthquakes.

Ms. Decker, Alameda resident, is in favor of a transit-oriented development with good pedestrian access. She favors concentrated density to make transit alternatives feasible.

Mr. Krueger, Alameda resident, favors the current proposal and the density bonus option in particular. He added his support for transit-oriented development.

Staff clarified that SunCal prefers the Density Bonus alternative and that the EIR would analyze this alternative against other proposals. Staff added that the scope of the EIR has not been negotiated at this time.

Board member Cunningham suggested that the alternative analysis evaluate in simple terms the physical layout and benefit analysis of the higher density and other alternatives in order to build consensus amongst the community.

Board Member Kohlstrand supports an alternative that concentrates density to allow more open space in other areas. She would like to see an alternative that preserves the Least Tern habitat. She would also like to see that an analysis be done on the level of density that is required to support the essential services such as transportation, infrastructure, schools, and what additional density could support other miscellaneous amenities like a sports complex or marina.

Board Member Zuppan asked that the alternatives analyze the impact of timing of toxic clean-up by the Navy on the proposed project. She stated that the current plan lacks specifics on commercial trucking impacts and the ferry terminal location. She noted that the public transit systems is precarious and is concerned about the longevity of the systems.

Board Member Lynch stated that the planning process for the development has not been transparent and the public has not been given the opportunity to provide input on the proposed plan and to prioritize the important features needed and required by the community.

Board Member Cook stated that the developer provided a considerable amount of public outreach and tried to build a consensus with the community, but that the process was different than the typical review process in the City and perhaps was less comprehensible to the public.

President Ezzy Ashcraft stated that the proposed plan lacks specific details and assurances on transit, streetscape design, financing, housing types, sustainability plans, and historic and habitat preservation. She would like to see the EIR address wetland impacts, Least Tern habitat impacts, and historic preservation. She asked whether the proposed Veterans Administration facility could be incorporated into the SunCal development area, to facilitate job creation in the commercial areas.

Board Member Zuppan is concerned that the assumptions for seismic building stability, for example cripple wall strengths, have changed since the Chilean earthquake and would now like to see that the proposed buildings are evaluated against the new set of data or requirements gleaned from that natural disaster. She would like to see that the street infrastructure be evaluated for tertiary impacts, like the width of streets being adequate for garbage trucks. She added that she does not want the rest of the City being negatively impacted by the development. She would like to see that the proposal's phased approach evaluated, as well as ongoing impacts to residents. She supports sustainability concepts, but would like to have them evaluated in the EIR, so that one could understand the environmental impacts of green systems. In addition, she supports historic preservation that is reasonably feasible. While she supports increased density, she is concerned that high-rise buildings could create turbulent wind and shading impacts. She requested that data points be developed to evaluate the economic feasibility and need for density bonuses.

Board member Cook stated that the proposed development's setbacks appear to create a

very compact and monotonous development plan. She urged the land planners to develop more site and building lay out variations and carefully review the proposed development standards.

Both Board Member Lynch questioned the parking space need assumptions as being too limited.

Board member Cook stated that the proposed plan lacks specificity regarding what elements would in fact be provided by the project which were merely project goals and that it is unclear what elements of the plan would be provided by the developer or the City.

Board member Cunningham commented that the EIR should also review the impacts of not redeveloping Alameda Point, which would likely negatively impact the City of Alameda.

Board Member Lynch asked what the City's involvement will be for the development of Alameda.

Staff responded that the City has not finalized the Development Agreement that would outline the dollar amount that the City would put into the project. City staff is currently evaluating the pro forma for the density bonus alternative.

Mr. Braun, SunCal representative, described the past public outreach effort. He stated that SunCal's polling efforts resulted in wide-spread community support for Measure B, but a lack of understanding of the financial details and transportation issues resulted in its defeat. He explained that SunCal is committed to a timely and economical land analysis as well as developing in-depth design guidelines for buildings and structures.

Board member Lynch stated that he does not agree that there was wide-spread support for Measure B, for if there was the Measure would have passed.

The Board thanked staff and the SunCal representatives for the information they provided and responses to questions. The President of the Board noted the item would be coming back to the Planning Board at a future meeting for consideration. The Board took no further action on the project at this time.

9-B Boatworks Project 2229 Clement-Public Hearing to a Proposed Reduced Density Alternative for the Property. The City of Alameda Planning Board will be holding a public hearing to receive comments on a proposed reduced density alternative for the property. The alternative would reduce the number of housing units from 242 to approximately 175 and increase the public open space from less than a 1/4 acre to approximately two acres. Major issues for discussion will include extension of Elm Street and Blanding Street, proposed standards and guidelines for the design of the proposed housing, and park design criteria. The public is encouraged to attend and participate in the discussion. No final action will be taken by the Planning Board at this meeting.

Mr. Thomas, Planning Services Manager, introduced the project.

Mr. Banta, Project Architect, presented the reduced density alternative project with 179 units.

Board Members Cook, Zuppan, and Lynch expressed concern with the proposed road pattern or street layout and requested that the Alameda street grid pattern be incorporated and an effort be made to tie proposed roadways with Elm Street and Blanding Avenue.

Board member Cunningham asked whether the project has received a preliminary approval by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC).

Staff responded that BCDC was favorable to the project and supportive of the proposed amount of public open space along the waterfront.

President Ezzy Ashcraft noted concern that the street pattern does not incorporate accessibility features for those with disabilities and there are limited public parking opportunities for accessing the waterfront park area.

President Ezzy Ashcraft opened the public comment period.

Board member Cook motioned, seconded by Board Member Kohlstrand to limit the speaker time to 3 minutes per person.

Mr. Sweeney, Alameda resident, is disappointed that the park along the waterfront is not in the amount of land called for in the General Plan. He hesitantly supports the lower density residential concept, but is concerned about impacts to Park Street traffic levels.

Mrs. Sweeney, Alameda resident, is disheartened that there will not be a 4-acre park on this site. She recommended that public restrooms be included close to the public access area. She expressed opposition to the four-story residential apartment complex.

Ms. Redfield, Alameda resident, is supportive of redevelopment of the site, but is concerned with the design of the development. She is disappointed that the park is not larger and that it will appear to be for the exclusive use of residents of the development.

Mr. Bolton, Elm Street resident, stated his concern with traffic increases along Clement Avenue when the traffic levels of this development are coupled with those generated by the Grand Marina development. He would like to see more parking provided for the residents of the development and for those using public open spaces.

Ms. Field, Elm Street resident, is disappointed that the park will not be larger. She recommended that the proposed park be landscaped like the Union Point Park on the Oakland Embarcadero. She is concerned that the apartment complex and the residential buildings are too tall at three and four stories respectively.

Mr. Kim, Elm Street resident, while supportive of redevelopment, is concerned about the traffic circulation pattern and the appearance of a closed-off development without easy public access to park spaces. He added that the design of the development is not pedestrian friendly. He recommended that the developer be asked to provide some economic feasibility analysis to explain to the public why the number of dwelling units is so high.

Mr. Ratto, Executive Director Park Street Business Association, spoke in favor of the reduced density concept and expressed his hopes that this project will remedy the blighted appearance of the property and spark the Park Street renaissance. He supported the 2-acre park and the narrowing of Blanding Avenue through the development.

Mr. Jones, Alameda resident, is concerned that the traffic impacts will be significant on Park Street. He requested that public amenities be included in the development.

Ms. McNally, Alameda resident, finds it difficult to understand the Density Bonus and how it is applied to projects in Alameda.

Ms. Decker, Alameda resident, is in favor of the redevelopment of the site with a sustainable, pedestrian-oriented development. She recommended that the higher buildings are stepped back from public space frontages to create a favorable pedestrian environment.

Mr. Krueger, Alameda resident, favors extending the street grid to continue through the site. He is concerned that the proposed project would appear to be closed-off and prevent public access to the waterfront. He recommends that Elm Street be continued down to the waterfront.

President Ezzy Ashcraft closed the public comment period.

Board Member Kohlstrand commended the effort to revise the project. She is supportive of the green space extending from Clement Avenue towards the waterfront, with parking and vehicular access. However, she strongly encouraged that Elm Street and Blanding Avenue be extended through the site. The streets need to have standard widths and must maintain the streetscape of the rest of the City. She favors removing alleyways and pedestrian pathways and integrating vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian pathways, plus adding on-street parking. She is concerned that the current proposal does not provide adequate access to the waterfront or public parking spaces for this use. Instead of higher buildings, she prefers allowing reduced or zero side yard setbacks.

Board member Cunningham is concerned that the streets' width and feel will not be compatible with the rest of the city. He supports continuing Elm Street to the waterfront and is concerned that there are six access points for traffic onto Clement Avenue.

Board member Cook is supportive of the sustainable development aspects, but is concerned that the applicant is not really addressing concerns raised in the last meeting,

with respect to the street grid pattern and traffic impacts during peak travel times. She finds that the public access to the waterfront is too small and insufficient and, in essence, seems to privatize this public space. She recommended that the applicant consider other locations for the multi-family structure.

Board Member Zuppan supports the redevelopment of the blighted site, but is very concerned about the lack of public parking and the sense that this development appears closed-off to Alameda with access to the public park restricted. She favors that Blanding Avenue and Elm Street be continued through the development and that there be vehicular access to the waterfront. She supported Board member Cook's recommendation from the last meeting to include opportunities for commercial ventures along the waterfront.

Board Member Lynch requested that information be provided on the feasibility analysis so that the Board can properly evaluate the density bonus proposal.

President Ezzy Ashcraft is supportive of the sustainability concepts of this development. She favors a continuation of the existing street grid pattern through this development and public access to the waterfront park along with providing parking for visitors to this park. She is supportive of the need to separate vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian travel paths, but is concerned about having too many street intersections along Clement Avenue.

Following Board member comments, the President noted that a lot of input had been provided by the Public and the Board and emphasized that this information should be given careful consideration when the final site plan is developed. No additional action was taken by the Board at this time, but it was noted that this project would need to come back to the Board at a later meeting date for consideration.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

12. ADJOURNMENT: 10:45pm