

**Minutes of the Regular Planning Board Meeting  
Monday, August 14, 2006**

1.     CONVENE:             7:07 p.m.
2.     FLAG SALUTE:     Member Ezzy Ashcraft
3.     ROLL CALL:        President Lynch, Vice-President Cook, Ezzy Ashcraft, Kohlstrand, Lynch, Mariani and McNamara.

Board member Cunningham was absent.

Also present were Planning and Building Director Cathy Woodbury, Assistant City Attorney Donna Mooney, and Planner III Douglas Garrison.

4.     MINUTES:           Minutes for the meeting of July 24, 2006

Member Kohlstrand requested that under Item 9-A (Catellus) the minutes reflect a discussion regarding the retail development block framed by public streets with crosswalks. She noted that Dan Marcus, the developer, had indicated he was willing to incorporate that into the design.

Vice President Cook advised that the last full paragraph on page 13 should include the following language: "...requiring a shopping center in Subarea 3. *In fact, Subarea 3 could include 370,000 square feet of R&D instead of retail, which seemed inconsistent with many of the speakers' perceptions and desires.*"

Member Mariani noted that page 18, paragraph 5 read, "Member Mariani noted that she did not want to see a lot of RVs and parking areas," but that she was not the Member to make that statement.

M/S Ezzy Ashcraft/Kohlstrand to approve the minutes for the meeting of July 24, 2006, as amended.

AYES – 6 (Cunningham absent); NOES – 0; ABSTAIN – 0

5.     AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION:     None.

6. ORAL COMMUNICATION:

President Lynch noted that a speaker slip had been received from Karen Butter regarding Item 10-A, and inquired when it should be heard. Ms. Woodbury advised that it may be heard earlier in the agenda if so desired.

President Lynch noted that he would not object to doing that one time, but did not want to set a precedent that would leave the public without a sense of certainty of when a particular item would be heard. He wished to retain the historical precedent of Oral Communications being reserved for items not on the agenda.

Member Kohlstrand would like the discussion of Measure A to be held during Item 10-A, and to allow the public to make comments at that time.

Ms. Mooney noted that with respect to Board Communications, the Rules and Procedures of the City Planning Board permitted any Board member to speak on any matter, and "limited action may be taken by the Board, such as asking staff for further information, there would typically not be deliberation or action taken by the Board, and that public comments on an agenda item typically immediately precede something to be discussed and acted upon. If the comments were kept to Oral Communications, and Board members spoke during Board Communications, that would be consistent with the Agenda's intent.

President Lynch suggested that both speakers be taken during Oral Communications, and Board comments would be heard during Board Communications.

Ms. Diane Lichtenstein hoped there would be time for public discussion regarding Measure A.

Ms. Karen Butter, League of Women Voters, urged the Board to move forward and hold a public forum on a possible exemption of Measure A for Alameda Point. She believed this was a critical issue for Alameda citizens to discuss and understand the implications of that possibility.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR:

- 7-A. **Use Permit UP06-0010 – N. Saidian & L. Zekster – 1310 Central Avenue (DV).** The applicant requests a Use Permit pursuant to Section 30-20.2 of the Alameda Municipal Code to extend the hours of operation for the Alameda Gasoline – Valero Station, an existing legal nonconforming service station facility. The current hours of operation are 9:00 am-6:00 pm Monday through Friday, 9:00 am-4:00 pm on Saturday, and closed on Sunday. The auto repair hours would be eliminated on Saturday. The Alameda Gasoline-Valero Station is located in the R-4 (Neighborhood Residential) Zoning District. **(Applicant requests continuance.)**

M/S Cook/Ezzy Ashcraft to continue this item.

AYES – 6 (Cunningham absent); NOES – 0; ABSTAIN – 0

8. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

- 8-A. **PD06-0001 and DR06-0054 – Habitat for Humanity – 626 Buena Vista Ave. (DG).** The applicant requests approval of Planned Development and Major Design Review applications allowing the construction of eight new dwelling units consisting of four two-story duets on a lot previously used as a carwash. The project site is zoned R4-PD Neighborhood Residential District—Planned Development Zoning District. **(Continued from the meeting of July 24, 2006).**

President Lynch congratulated Mr. Garrison on his impending promotion to Supervising Planner.

Mr. Garrison presented this staff report, and recommended approval of this item.

Ms. Doreen Soto, Development Services, presented the rest of the staff report, and displayed a PowerPoint presentation describing the scope and layout of the project.

The public hearing was opened.

Ms. Virginia Jhang noted that she lived near the proposed site, and thanked the City for holding the neighborhood meetings. She noted that there were not many neighbors in attendance because many of them did not receive notice, and also because they supported affordable housing on this vacant site. She noted that it was difficult to afford home ownership, and that this project was a great help. She expressed concern about density, traffic safety and accountability. She noted that the developers did not propose to have a homeowners association with CC&Rs to maintain the project. She noted that the project met the Measure A criteria, but was still too dense for its location and lot size.

In response to an inquiry by President Lynch whether her own development had CC&Rs, Ms. Jhang confirmed that it did, and that it was very helpful to her and her neighbors. She noted that it was an entry-level community, and that there was a playground in the common area for the children. She described some of the surrounding businesses, and believed the area was already too dense. She would like to see more open space and visitor parking on [Paramus].

The public hearing was closed for Board discussion.

Member McNamara noted that she was very familiar with this area, and noted that Ms. Jhang's points about traffic congestion were valid, and she hoped they could be addressed and corrected. She supported this project and believed it was a good use of the current lot, while helping Alameda meet the affordable housing requirements. She believed it would be an asset to the neighborhood, and would be a good opportunity for increased home ownership.

Member Mariani expressed concern that when all the Catellus units are rented out, the street will be become more congested and that perhaps traffic calming measures would be needed. She supported this project.

Vice President Cook recognized the traffic problems, and believed that Public Works would be able to find a way to mitigate them. She supported this project, and believed that it would be an asset to the community. She had been a previous volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, and supported the pride of ownership it created. She was not concerned about adding CC&Rs to this site.

Member Kohlstrand supported this project, and was reluctant to put additional burdens on this parcel, particularly for parking. She noted that this project already met Code in that regard. ~~She would like to see~~ The staff report noted that the City would like continuous sidewalks for ~~trash~~ traffic removal and ~~she also felt they should be~~ there for pedestrians to use. She added that the lots were so small that she believed it would be difficult to get all the landscaping in.

Member Ezzy Ashcraft supported this project, but did not find the designs to be attractive. She did not believe they blended well with the rest of the community. She did not see any mention of green building elements in this report, and hoped that it would be included.

President Lynch inquired whether the Board wished to add Member Kohlstrand's request about continuous sidewalks and landscaping to the conditions. Mr. Garrison noted that would be agreeable.

M/S Kohlstrand/Cook and unanimous to add continuous sidewalks and landscaping to the conditions of approval.

AYES – 6 (Cunningham absent); NOES – 0; ABSTAIN – 0

In response to an inquiry by Member Ezzy Ashcraft regarding the explanation of the cost delta for the project, Mr. Craig Meltzner, contract project manager for Alameda Development Corporation, noted that the City funds were actually writing down the total development cost of the project. The actual production cost of the units would be in excess of \$400,000 each, and that the City funds would write down the costs to make them affordable to the targeted groups. The very low income units will sell below \$200,000; the low income units will sell at \$225,000, and the moderate income units will sell at \$300,000. The total development costs would reflect the market conditions, before the application of the City funds.

Ms. Soto noted that Habitat would bring their donations, volunteers and equity into the project to fund the other portion of the project.

Mr. Jim Bergdahl, housing development director for Habitat for Humanity, East Bay, noted that the community can help by donating building materials to the project. With respect to green building elements, they had been using sustainable features in recent projects, including PV panels for all eight ~~panels~~ units and advanced framing techniques. He noted that durability was part of sustainability, and they did not use cheap materials.

In response to an inquiry by Member Kohlstrand regarding maintenance, Mr. Bergdahl replied that

these were privately owned homes, and that the mortgage documents had requirements to require appearances to be maintained.

With respect to the exterior design, Mr. Kirk Peterson, Peterson & Associates Architects, noted that they looked at many designs, and wished they could have had more parking. He noted that this block did not have the typical charm of Alameda, and noted that he tried to follow the 19<sup>th</sup> century models for their simplicity. HardiPlank siding, corner details, double-hung windows and eaves were used to follow that design palette.

Member Ezzy Ashcraft respected the historical aspect of the buildings and *wanted to see the project* ~~noted that the City~~ moved forward as well.

Member Mariani liked the simplicity of the design when surrounded by the commercial clutter.

Member Kohlstrand believed the existing courtyard developments in Alameda were more attractive, but she accepted the fact that 16 off-street parking spaces must be provided. She believed the design should be accepted as presented.

Member Ezzy Ashcraft noted that it would be preferable not to *look at the development from the street and see rows of parked cars* ~~have a row of cars parked on the street if possible~~.

President Lynch was confident in the designers' capabilities, and believed that they addressed as many design features as possible before adding the City's requirements.

M/S Mariani/Kohlstrand and unanimous to adopt Planning Board Resolution No. PB-06-31 to approve a Planned Development and Major Design Review applications allowing the construction of eight new dwelling units consisting of four two-story duets on a lot previously used as a carwash, with the additional modifications as noted by the Board.

AYES – 6 (Cunningham absent); NOES – 0; ABSTAIN – 0

8-B. Appointment of Planning Board member to the Climate Protection Task Force.

M/S Mariani/Kohlstrand and unanimous to nominate Board member Andrew Cunningham to the Climate Protection Task Force.

AYES – 6 (Cunningham absent); NOES – 0; ABSTAIN – 0

9. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:

President Lynch noted that a letter was received from Housing Opportunities Makes Economic Sense, signed by Helen Sause, regarding Measure A.

Member Mariani noted that the reference to City Council taking action on Measure A on the 1991 ballot was to define Measure A.

10. BOARD COMMUNICATION:

- a. Oral Status Report regarding potential future Planning Board Measure A Forum (Board member Cunningham).

Member Kohlstrand recalled that the Board had asked for this item to come to the Planning Board to review the history of Measure A, and for members of the public to give their perspective on it. She requested a report from the Planning and Building Director regarding that progress.

Vice President Cook agreed with Member Kohlstrand's comments, and believed that this issue should be addressed sooner rather than later. She noted that historic preservation and open space planning were important issues, and that a civil community discussion would be needed.

Member Mariani believed there was a full forum on Measure A with the Planning Board and City Council in the 1990s. While it was important for discussion to take place, she did not believe the Planning Board should take a political view on an item to be considered for the ballot. She would feel more comfortable if a separate group or person would drive that discussion.

President Lynch noted that Measure A was the purview of City Council and the public, not the Planning Board. He agreed that it was important for the public to be aware of the genesis of Measure A. Part of that discussion included how Measure A was consistent with existing design guidelines as projects come before the Planning Board. He would like to define the appropriate forum for this discussion.

Vice President Cook perceived the City Council's role as political, and the Planning Board's role as analytical.

Ms. Woodbury generally agreed with Vice President Cook's description of the Planning Board's role, and that the Board must abide by the regulations set forth in the law.

Member Ezzy Ashcraft believed the Board would serve the City better by acting proactively, and noted that the deadline for the November ballot had passed. ~~She would like to see a proposed ballot measure to understand the issue more completely.~~ "We have not even seen a ballot measure on this issue." She would like to hear from some outside authorities regarding this issue for more perspective, and cited attractive developments in other cities. She would like to hear more substantive comments than a series of anecdotal events. She believed an outside facilitator would be a valuable addition to the process.

Member Kohlstrand suggested forming a task force comprised of people with a range of perspectives, as well as City representatives and the EDC.

Vice President Cook believed a less structured forum would be ideal for the problem-solving needed in this issue. She noted that the EDC had interesting perspectives. She would be interested in working with a highly skilled facilitator who could focus the discussion on the fundamental, underlying issues.

Member Mariani suggested consulting with the Mayor and City Council on the Board's role in this matter. She supported an outside forum.

Member McNamara supported using an outside forum to clarify the issues, and acknowledged the emotional component of Measure A in the community. She believed the forum should be televised.

President Lynch noted that he and Ms. Woodbury would develop a plan of action and report back to the Planning Board.

- b. Oral Status Report regarding the Northern Waterfront Plan (Vice-President Cook).

Vice President Cook noted that no further meetings had been held.

- c. Oral Status Report regarding the Oakland/Chinatown Advisory Committee (Board Member Mariani).

Member Mariani noted that no further meetings had been held, and that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, August 22, at the Asian Health Center.

- d. Oral Status Report regarding the Transportation subcommittee (Board Member Kohlstrand).

Member Kohlstrand noted that no further meetings had been held.

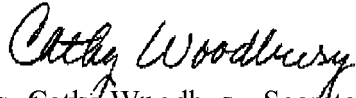
- 12. STAFF COMMUNICATION: None.



13. ADJOURNMENT:

8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
- Cathy Woodbury, Secretary  
City Planning Board

These minutes were approved at the August 28, 2006, Planning Board meeting. This meeting was audio and video taped.