

**Minutes of the Regular Planning Board Meeting
Monday, January 10, 2005 – 7:00 p.m.**

1. CONVENE: 7:08 p.m.
2. FLAG SALUTE: Mr. Lynch
3. ROLL CALL: President Cunningham, Cook, Lynch, Kohlstrand,
 McNamara and Piziali.

Board Member Mariani was not present for roll call, and arrived during Item 9-A.

Also present were Planning & Building Director Greg Fuz, Development Review Manager Jerry Cormack, Deputy City Attorney Julie Harryman, Supervising Planner Judith Altschuler, Planner II Dennis Brighton.

4. MINUTES: Minutes for the meeting of December 13, 2004.

Vice President Cook noted that page 14, paragraph 2, should be changed to read: “She noted that in past site visits *to walled-off developments*, ~~that the~~ play yards ~~were~~ *was* deserted, which she believed was unsafe for anyone who did use the area.”

Vice President Cook noted that page 14, paragraph 5, should be changed to read: “...showers for use after swimming, *and should open onto the pool area*. She believed that *the multitude of* angular pathways of the landscape plan seemed very frenetic to her. She did not believe there was a sense of continuity and flow with respect to the landscaping *and circulation plan*.”

Ms. Kohlstrand advised that page 12, paragraph 7, should be changed to read: “She was disappointed to see a wall *along* ~~across~~ Appezzato Parkway...”

Ms. Kohlstrand advised that pages 17-18 did not indicate the details of the discussion about the reflectivity of the glass, and noted that she inquired as to whether the reflective glass was required functionally for the project; the project sponsor indicated that it was not required. In addition, the conditions of approval included a recommendation that there would be no reflective glass on the building.

President Cunningham advised that on page 1, the roll call should indicate “President Cunningham,” rather than President Piziali.

President Cunningham advised that page 15, paragraph 5, should be changed to reflect that he urged the developer to respond to the comments made by the Planning Board in an effort to clarify their position and stance on the critical elements for success of the project. He believed that Allen Tai’s letter communicated the Planning Department’s point of view.

M/S Cook/Kohlstrand and unanimous to approve the minutes for the meeting of December 13, 2004, as amended.

AYES – 5 (Mariani absent); NOES – 0; ABSTAIN – 1 (Lynch)

5. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION:

President Cunningham advised that no speaker slips had been received for Item 9-C, and proposed that it be moved to the Consent Calendar.

M/S Piziali/Cook and unanimous to remove Item 9-C from the Regular Agenda and to place it on the Consent Calendar.

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

6. ORAL COMMUNICATION: None.

7. Resolution and Commendation for Planning and Building Director Gregory L. Fuz.

President Cunningham noted that Mr. Fuz had accepted a position as Development Services Director for El Dorado County, and would be leaving the City of Alameda. He read the following resolution and commendation into the record:

“Acknowledging Planning and Building Director Gregory L. Fuz for his contributions to the City of Alameda, whereas Gregory L. Fuz accepted the position of Planning and Building Director for the City of Alameda on February 25, 2002, and

Whereas Gregory L. Fuz has accepted a position as the Development Services Director of El Dorado County, and is leaving the employment of the City of Alameda, and

Whereas, as Planning and Building Director, he assisted in the planning process of numerous projects, including the completion of the General Plan Amendment for Alameda Point, and initiation of the Master Planning Process, the adoption and conditional certification of the 2001-2006 Housing Element, redevelopment of the Bridgeside and South Shore shopping centers, adoption of new Citywide design guidelines and development code amendments, and

Whereas he provided clear and complete advice to the Planning Board, and

Now therefore be it resolved that the Planning Board of the City of Alameda extends their thanks for his dedication to his work on behalf of the City, his staff, and citizens of Alameda.”

President Cunningham added a personal note of thanks to Mr. Fuz for his work on behalf of the City.

Mr. Fuz thanked the Board, and said that it was his pleasure to serve the community of Alameda, and that it had been a wonderful experience. He thanked the members of the community that he worked with. He thanked the Board for its dedication and professionalism, and added that it was the best Board he had ever worked with in more than 20 years in the field. He thanked the Planning and Building Department staff for their help, expertise and professionalism, and for making his tenure pleasant and successful.

Vice President Cook thanked Mr. Fuz and noted that she had looked forward to working with him for a longer time. She noted that she would miss working with him, and added that she admired his unflappable nature and his ability to maintain calm and a sense of humor. She added that his analytical mind enabled him to accomplish so much during his tenure.

Mr. Lynch looked forward to working with Mr. Fuz whenever the chance arose in El Dorado County, and said that Alameda was a much better place for his work in the City. He noted that Mr. Fuz set a positive tone for the City's professional representatives

8. CONSENT CALENDAR:

8-A. **Adoption of 2005 Planning Board Calendar.**

M/S Cook/McNamara and unanimous to adopt the 2005 Planning Board Calendar.

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

- 8-B. **ZC04-0013: Christ Episcopal Church of Alameda – 1700 Santa Clara Avenue (DB).** A request has been received to construct a 38-niche columbarium wall within the interior of the Christ Episcopal Church. Columbarium use is not specifically listed as a regulated use within the R-5 (General Residential Zoning District) where the church is located. This zoning determination for the installation of a 38-niche columbarium within one interior wall of the church is being referred to the Planning Board to review the staff recommendation that the primary use remains the church use and the columbarium will be secondary to the primary use.

M/S Cook/McNamara and unanimous to approve a request to construct a 38-niche columbarium wall within the interior of the Christ Episcopal Church. Columbarium use is not specifically listed as a regulated use within the R-5 (General Residential Zoning District) where the church is located. This zoning determination for the installation of a 38-niche columbarium within one interior wall of the church is being referred to the Planning Board to review the staff recommendation that the primary use remains the church use and the columbarium will be secondary to the primary use.

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

- 8-C. Review and consider possible modifications of Section 30-15 of the Alameda Municipal Code regulating Work Live Studios (JA). (Continued from the meeting of December 13, 2004.) Staff is requesting a continuance to the Planning Board meeting of January 24, 2005.**

M/S Cook/McNamara and unanimous to continue this item to the Planning Board meeting of January 24, 2005.

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

8-D. **ZA04-0002 – Zoning Text Amendment for Design Review Regulations (JC/JA).** Update the current Design Review practices by clarifying the previously adopted Webster Street Design Review Guidelines.

M/S Cook/McNamara and unanimous to adopt Planning Board Resolution No. PB-05-01 to update the current Design Review practices by clarifying the previously adopted Webster Street Design Review Guidelines.

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

9. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

- 9-A. **Study Session (JA/JL). GPA04-0004, DPA04-0002, IS04-0003, DR04-0114 -- Warmington Homes -- 1270 Marina Village Parkway (Shipways Site) (JA/JL).** Applicant requests a General Plan Amendment to amend the General Plan to designate the Shipways site as MU-7; a Development Plan Amendment to amend the approved Development Plan for a 143,000 square foot office building and permit the construction of 64 residential units with associated parking and landscaping; an Initial Study to address the environmental effects; and a Design Review for the project. The site is zoned M-X, Mixed-Use Planned Development District.

Ms. Altschuler summarized this staff report, and noted that the design team would make a PowerPoint presentation. She noted that no Board action would be taken, and that the project would require a General Plan Amendment to redesignate the site an MU-7 (Mixed Use) area. She added that an office use already existed on the site; staff requested the addition of a residential component to the site, as well as an amendment to the development plan. The current development plan approval was for a 143,000 square foot office building; it would be changed from an office use to a residential use. An initial study and a design review for a general configuration of the houses, landscaping and parking areas would be done as well. The staff report requested that the discussion relate to the site design, the parking plan, the pedestrian access through the site, public amenities, amenities for the residence, the conceptual architectural style, and the fact that there was a proposal for three-story dwellings, which is not unusual in this area. She requested that the Board provide guidance to the applicant to bring back with the design team, and to incorporate the Board's comments into the proposal. The proposal would be brought before the Board at a later date for action.

The public hearing was opened.

Ms. Joan Lamphier, Lamphier Gregory, noted that she worked for the City on this project, and has been a project planner on this site since 1983. She noted that the primary question that Marina Village was concerned about was to get a reading from the Board as to whether it would approve the change office use to a residential use on the site. She noted that the Marina Village site had always been designated as a Mixed Use development.

Mr. Don Parker, representing project owner, noted that his involvement in this project started in 1979. He noted that the mile of shoreline had been developed with public access and improvements; this would be the last remaining piece connecting the public access with the overall public access running throughout the rest of the project. He provided some history of the site development. He noted that the site was constrained by the fact that it had an existing structure; they planned to leave most of the structure in place. They also dedicated the public access around the perimeter of the site.

Mr. Kevin Levesque, Randall Planning and Design, displayed a PowerPoint presentation of the site and described the site layout. He noted that there would be in-garage parking and storage for the homeowners, with 55 parking stalls proposed in the garage, and 46 guest parking stalls on the podium. In addition, there would be 72 parking spots in the unit garages. The parking ratio would be 2.7:1. He noted that 86% of the homes would be on the water, with a small group in the center, clustered around the Rec Center and the pool. He noted that at the front, the underground parking would eliminate the need for garages on the podium deck, allowing the creation of a central pedestrian plaza running from the front of the project at the pool, to the back of the project, where the public plaza space would be created.

In response to an inquiry by Vice President Cook whether the amphitheatre area would be publicly accessible, Mr. Levesque confirmed that it would be accessible at all times.

President Cunningham commented about the methodology of building a podium, which would be a complex process, and inquired why the podium would be elevated to accommodate the parking underneath. He noted that the parking on the other two sides could be maximized, and noted that a second podium would probably need to be built. He inquired whether an analysis had been performed to remove the current sloping rampways to sink it back down to grade level.

Mr. Parker noted that President Cunningham's suggestion would involve a tremendous amount of demolition. One of their concerns was that the existing Shipway offices were next door, which they planned to keep occupied as office space. The demolition would be very disruptive to the existing uses, and may render the project economically infeasible.

Vice President Cook noted in San Francisco, the existing piers were left intact *and new so that a new structures were proposed to could be built independent of the existing piers-it*. She noted that the cost of removing the old ~~buildings were~~ *structures was* high.

Mr. Parker noted that the podium would be approximately 9 feet over the flat area of the site.

President Cunningham requested a physical model of the project, given the complexity of the project elevations. He believed the treatment of the podium edge relative to the lower level was a critical element.

Mr. Parker noted that they created planters along the base of the wall and around the perimeter near the seating areas. They wished to avoid a large, blank wall in that area,

Vice President Cook noted that she was pleased that there would be residential uses on this site, rather than another office use. She believed a mix of uses would create a more active waterfront. She wanted to ensure a good relationship between the waterfront and the public area, and to be sure that pedestrians felt safe by the waterfront.

Mr. Parker believed the separation worked well, because the entrance into the project was in the middle of the Shipways, and the entrance to the public areas were on either end. He noted that the layout was seamless in relation to the trails, and understood Vice President Cook's concerns.

Vice President Cook liked the idea that much of the parking was hidden, either above or below.

President Cunningham inquired whether the applicants had considered using vertical circulation between Shipways 1 and 2, and 3 and 4. Mr. Parker replied that they had not examined that option, and that they were focused on creating views onto the water. He believed that idea made sense.

In response to Mr. Piziali's question about the flats, Mr. Parker replied that there would be parking on the first floor, then a flat and a flat above it. The units on the large wings of the project on either side had garages included in the plan.

Vice President Cook noted that the use of the podium was an urban landform, and noted that high-rises in San Francisco brought the question of whether a blank face along the street would be present. Mr. Parker noted that they used open metal along the façade, and wished to avoid a blank wall.

Vice President Cook suggested the use of interpretive signage or public art to provide more information for the public.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. McNamara for more detail on the amenities for the residents, Mr. Parker replied that there would be a community building with a pool and a whirlpool.

President Cunningham appreciated the conceptual drawings, and believed that a three-dimensional model would enable the Board to better understand the intent of the architecture.

Mr. Piziali agreed with President Cunningham's request for a three-dimensional model.

Ms. Kohlstrand concurred with Mr. Piziali's comments, and would like a better idea of the orientation of the residential units, as well as the landscaping treatment and how the podium wall would be softened. She also believed that a residential use was fine for this site, but noted that it was a somewhat isolated location, and it was necessary to travel through office sites and parking lots to get to the residential units. The relationship to the street for cars and pedestrians was an important issue for her.

Vice President Cook would like a better understanding of the height *of the proposed project in relation to the Extended Stay America building to the west and the office building to the east*, as well as *to the buildings located across the Estuary*. She believed the scale between the Oakland uses and the Alameda uses on the estuary should be

consistent. She wanted to ensure that the parking requirements were consistent, and inquired where the public would park in order to use the public access area of the amphitheatre.

Mr. Levesque responded that the office building parking lots on either side of the Shipways were virtually vacant during the weekends. He added that reserved parking stalls for the public were also located in the parking lots, and that quite a few spaces were available in the office parking lots.

President Cunningham inquired whether any potential uses had been considered for the bodies of water between the fingers. Mr. Levesque replied that they had not looked at the ability to get access in that area yet. He noted that the concrete structure was essentially one big block, and displayed the area on the screen. He noted that a retaining wall would be built and filled in to provide the lawn area in front of the residential units.

Ms. McNamara noted that she did not see any railings, and inquired whether there were any plans to install them along the waterfront. Mr. Parker confirmed there would be safety railings installed along the entire perimeter.

Vice President Cook believed a site tour would be very helpful on this project.

In response to an inquiry by President Cunningham regarding the schedule for this project, Mr. Parker replied that they would like to enter the housing market in its current condition and that they hoped to meet a timely schedule. He noted that this was a complex site to work with regarding cost and structural issues. He encouraged the Board members to visit the site.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Kohlstrand, Ms. Altschuler replied that there was currently no requirement for guest parking in the Zoning Ordinance, and that there was a requirement for two spaces for each unit. She added that the 0.7 parking ratio was slightly larger than most projects the Board has approved over the last 15 years; the guest parking ratio is normally 0.5.

Mr. Parker advised that they viewed the parking as being self-contained within the project, and not dependent on using any of the office parking. The perception of the high ratio came from the space provided by the garage.

The Board comments were noted. No action was taken. A public hearing will be scheduled for a future agenda.

9-B. **ZA04-0001—Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment/City-wide. Review and revision of Section 30-6 of the Alameda Municipal Code (AMC), Sign Regulations (JS/JA).** The purpose of this amendment is to clarify current regulations and establish internal consistency with various sections of the AMC with the primary focus on regulations pertaining to Window Signs.

Mr. Cormack summarized the staff report.

The public hearing was opened.

Mr. Robb Ratto, Executive Director, PSBA, noted that they wanted the district to look as attractive as possible during the revitalization process. PSBA did not want businesses jamming their windows with posters obscuring the business, and which made the storefronts look junky. He expressed concern about the proliferation of grand opening signs, and the length of time that they are left up. He believed this ordinance would put an end to that practice. He noted that PSBA and WABA were in agreement that a grand opening would last 30 days, and that a permit would be necessary for that signage to remain up. He supported the Planning Board's recommendation to the City Council to enact this ordinance.

Ms. Sherry Stieg, WABA, supported the proposed ordinance, and noted that it was the result of a lengthy collaboration between PSBA, WABA and the Planning & Building Department.

The public hearing was closed for Board discussion.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Piziali regarding enforcement, Mr. Cormack confirmed that the Code Enforcement Division would be responsible. There was currently one full-time Code Enforcement officer, and a planner working part-time in that capacity. He noted that the Planning and Building Department made a commitment to PSBA and WABA for increased enforcement along Park Street and Webster Street and the revised ordinance would assist with that effort.

Mr. Piziali believed that the merchants would police themselves.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. McNamara regarding window signs, Mr. Cormack replied that a business would be in conformance provided no more than 25% of the window was covered by signage. The content would not be examined. He noted that many windows had more than 25% coverage, and that the merchants in violation would first receive a letter, and then the fine system would go into practice. He anticipated that some businesses would not be happy with the new ordinance, however, with the assistance of PSBA and WABA compliance could be achieved.

In response to an inquiry by President Cunningham, Ms. Altschuler, replied that the fee for a sign permit was upward of \$200. She noted that it was necessary to put language in place to address some of the proliferation of the temporary window signs. She noted this

would not be the last request for an amendment to the sign ordinance. Over time, staff hoped to identify the worst offenders in terms of the sign type and the number of signs, and to start working on the issues (e.g., grand opening banner signs).

Vice President Cook supported the incremental nature of this effort, and inquired about the large amount of signage and product display in small grocery stores throughout the City. Ms. Altschuler replied that grocers often stack products in the store windows, which prevented visual access. Staff chose to address that issue in a limited way in this particular ordinance change, and that there was a short discussion of window displays. She noted that the opinions were so diverse that it would not have enabled progress of this action which is focused on window signage.

Mr. Cormack added that most code enforcement in the City is generated on a complaint basis. While this ordinance will apply city-wide, the privacy emphasis for enforcement has been generated by PSBA and WABA.

In response to Ms. Kohlstrand's question regarding leaving seasonal decorations up for a length of time, Ms. Altschuler noted that it would only be for commercial uses, and would ensure that distinction was clear.

M/S Piziali/Cook and unanimous to recommend to the City Council adoption of the revised Sign Regulations with a clarification of current regulations and the establishment of internal consistency with various sections of the AMC with the primary focus on regulations pertaining to Window Signs.

AYES – 7; NOES – 0; ABSTAIN – 0

- 9-C. **Use Permit, UP04-0012/Major Design Review, DR04-0099; Tasha Skinner, Tetra Tech, Inc. For the Alameda Unified School District (Will C. Wood Middle School), 420 Grand Street (DB).** The applicant requests a Use Permit and Major Design Review to install twelve cellular telecommunication antennae (4-foot panel antennas) to be located around the top of the school building at the top perimeter/parapet, plus the installation of a utility shed at the rear of the building. A Use Permit is required by AMC, Section 30-4.1(b)(3) for approval of above-ground utility installations for local service in an R-1 (Single-Family Residential) Zoning District.

M/S Piziali/Cook and unanimous to remove Item 9-C from the Regular Agenda and to place it on the Consent Calendar.

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

M/S Cook/McNamara and unanimous to adopt Planning Board Resolution No. PB-05-02 to approve a Use Permit and Major Design Review to install twelve cellular telecommunication antennae (4-foot panel antennas) to be located around the top of the school building at the top perimeter/parapet, plus the installation of a utility shed at the rear of the building. A Use Permit is required by AMC, Section 30-4.1(b)(3) for approval of above-ground utility installations for local service in an R-1 (Single-Family Residential) Zoning District.

AYES – 7; NOES – 0; ABSTAIN – 0

9-D. **Design Review, DR04-0014: Linda Cortez, 1514 Pacific Avenue. Ms. Cortez is appealing staff's denial of this Major Design Review application (DB).** This application requesting design review approval to raise the existing building one foot, six inches (1'-6") and relocate the building two feet (2'-0") toward the south (rear) property line to accommodate the elongation of the front stair. The proposal to raise the building will create approximately 1,618 square feet of new living space in the basement, resulting in a total completed conditioned floor area of approximately 3,236 square feet. Staff denied this project because of the following reasons: 1. The proposal to raise the building approximately one foot, six inches exceeds the proportionality relative to the upper and lower floors (i.e., Golden Mean) by three feet, three inches (3'-3"); 2. The proposal will create an undesirable massing of the building in relation to neighboring buildings which appear to be of the same design; and 3. The proposal will elongate the front stair and create an undesirable massing of the stair in relation to the building. The site is located within an R-4, Neighborhood Residential Zoning District.

Mr. Brighton summarized the staff report, and noted that the appellants had not presented any new information since the last hearing when the Board had provided general parking direction on implementation of proportionality issue, (i.e. the Golden Mean) during Design Review. Staff recommended that the Board uphold the original denial of the Major Design Review.

The public hearing was opened.

Ms. Linda Cortez, appellant, 1514 Pacific Avenue, noted that they were attempting to preserve their house and maintain the inherent architecture of the house during the remodeling process. Although raising of the house did not conform to the Golden Mean, she did not believe it would change or detract from the inherent architecture of the house in a perceptible manner. She noted that the two adjoining houses next to her house were not identical to hers, and there were slope differences; she distributed photos of those houses to the Board. She did not agree with staff's assessment that the addition of two risers would create an undesirable elongation of the stairs.

Mr. Ian Ordinaria, appellant, 1514 Pacific Avenue, requested the Board's reversal of staff's denial of raising the house. He noted that the Golden Mean did not necessarily address the connection between proportionality and beauty, and did not believe it should be a rule. He did not believe the Golden Mean should be applied to the whole structure, although it was applicable to elements such as doors and windows. It also was not clear that it should be the sole standard for a horizontal or vertical measurement, and he noted that the whole structure of the Cathedral at Notre Dame was not in conformance with the Golden Mean, although sections of it were. He noted that regarding the neighboring buildings, they were not meant to be tract homes. He noted that there were more than 20 homes with visually longer stairways than their home within a two-block radius of their home, including the Alameda Fire House. He requested that the Planning Board reverse staff's denial of their application.

Mr. Walter McQuesten, 1416 Pacific Avenue, supported the applicant's project, and believed their plans would be an improvement for the entire block. He noted that he hoped to undertake a similar project in the future. He believed the raising of the house would provide safety from flooding. He supported the reversal of staff's denial.

Mr. Richard Rutter noted that he was an architect, and supported staff's denial of this application. He noted that in the past, neighbors came to agreements regarding roof lines and design proportions.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Piziali, Mr. Rutter replied that 16 stairs were the limit before a landing must be included, and that the applicants were not close to that limit.

Ms. Janelle Spatz, Alameda Architectural Preservation Society, spoke in support of staff's recommendation. AAPS believed that staff's points were valid, and that in the past contractor Ken Gutlaben had spoken before the Planning Board to say that digging down was as easy as building up. She believed that should suffice for this project, and believed the applicants' plans would be visually disruptive.

The public hearing was closed for Board discussion.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. McNamara whether the neighboring house had a full unit on the basement level, Mr. Brighton replied that he did not have that information. He addressed the simple aesthetics of the structures, and the future use of the interior was not part of the decision. Ms. McNamara noted that there was more than one separate address on the neighboring home.

Ms. McNamara expressed concern that this house was used in the Planning Board's discussion of the Golden Mean; this existing architecture already exceeds the Golden Mean by a significant amount. She was concerned about imposing the Golden Mean on this applicant given the existing architecture, and did not believe that was the applicants' fault.

Vice President Cook did not believe there was a reason to make the architecture proportionality worse, and believed the number of existing houses exceeding the Golden Mean was one of the reasons for adopting that guideline. She sympathized with the applicants, but wished to stem the tide of losing Alameda's architectural heritage. She did not see a unique circumstance to warrant raising the house in this case, and agreed that digging down was a workable solution.

Ms. Mariani agreed with Vice President Cook's comments. Although she sympathized with the owners, 1512 Pacific Avenue was a sister house built by the same builder, and is on the registry. She believed the architectural integrity of this house should be maintained.

Mr. Piziali noted that he felt for the applicants, and noted that the Board directed staff that they wished to follow the Golden Mean wherever possible. He agreed with Mr.

Gutlaben's assessment that going down for the additional square footage would be workable and cost-effective.

President Cunningham noted that the design guidelines utilized the Golden Mean to aid staff in regulating houses being raised.

Ms. McNamara inquired whether the Board would issue a blanket rejection, or to use the Golden Mean in a case-by-case assessment.

President Cunningham noted that context in the buildings was very important in order to preserve the character of Alameda. He believed that the number of houses being raised was beginning to erode that character. He did not believe the Board would issue blanket rejections.

Mr. Lynch believed that excavating down would be a workable solution for the applicants, and believed there was a difference between how the Board applied the Golden Mean as a guideline for individual homes. He noted that for the other individuals who spoke, he would examine every case separately, and would not issue a blanket rejection.

M/S Mariani/Cook to adopt Planning Board Resolution No. PB-05-03 to support staff's recommendation to deny this appeal.

AYES – 6; NOES – 1 (McNamara); ABSTAIN – 0

Ms. McNamara wished to bring staff's attention to the changes made in Ms. Cortez's comments for the minutes of the November 8, 2004, meeting in which this item was heard. She wanted to ensure that those changes were made; the excerpt of those minutes did not reflect that change. Ms. Cortez's original comments were reflected, not the amended comments. The correct wording should be: "She believed that families attempting to increase square footage to accommodate a growing family should *not* be lumped in with houses with many illegal residences."

Ms. Altschuler noted that the changes had been made, and that the draft minutes had been included in the packet. She noted that the correct comments by Ms. Cortez would be reflected in the packet.

Ms. Kohlstrand left the meeting following this item.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

President Cunningham advised that a letter from Monica Slay Richford had been received, expressing support for the Alameda Central Cinema at Central and Ninth Streets.

11. BOARD COMMUNICATION:

- a. Oral Status Report regarding the Alameda Point Advisory Committee APAC. (Vice President Cook).

Vice President Cook advised that there had not been a meeting since her last report. The next workshop was in the process of being scheduled for March 2 or 3 in the City hall Council Chambers, hosted by the Planning Board.

In response to an inquiry by President Cunningham whether the Chambers would be large enough to accommodate the audience, Ms. Altschuler noted that this was the largest venue with a television feed. She advised that Room 360 was also wired for television and uses as an overflow room.

- b. Oral Status Report regarding the Downtown Vision Taskforce (President Cunningham).

President Cunningham advised that the committee had been disbanded, and it was considered that they fulfilled their commitment to the community.

- c. Oral Status Report regarding Northern Waterfront Specific Plan (Vice President Cook).

Vice President Cook advised that there was nothing new to report.

- d. Oral Status Report regarding the Golf Course Committee (Board member Piziali).

Mr. Piziali advised that there had been no meetings since his last report. His attempts to discover whether the Committee was still active were unsuccessful.

- e. Oral Status Report regarding Oakland/Chinatown Advisory Committee (Board member Mariani)

Ms. Mariani advised that she missed the last meeting, and added that they were in the process of sharing information. The next meeting would be held on January 20, 2005, in Alameda.

Mr. Piziali expressed concern about the current staffing level still available in the Planning and Building Department, especially after the departure of Mr. Fuz.

Ms. Altschuler noted that she and Mr. Cormack would be retiring within the next three and six months, depending upon a variety of factors. The City is currently recruiting for a Supervising Planner to replace her position, and there was a position open for a Planner III. She added that City Manager Jim Flint has left, and that Bill Norton was acting as interim City Manager. He had previously been a City Manager in Alameda.

In response to an inquiry by Vice President Cook, Ms. Altschuler replied that Melodie Bounds had taken a position in West Hollywood. Currently, the Planning and Building Department planner staff consisted of Dennis Brighton, Allen Tai, and David Valeska (part-time).

Mr. Lynch believed that the hiring of any planners and the City Manager would best be accomplished following the hiring of Mr. Fuz's replacement. He noted that contract planners were useful, but that their training often took time away from already overworked staff planners.

Ms. Altschuler noted that waiting to hire planners may cause stress on existing planners and other staff members.

Mr. Cormack noted that the Board members' comments were well-taken and was confident that the positions would be filled in a reasonable amount of time.

Ms. Altschuler noted that she was most concerned about the public information counter, and that the planners' efforts were split between working at the counter and writing staff reports. She noted that the contract planners could work with use permits and variances, and the staff planners could work the counter. She noted that she recently spent a day at the counter.

President Cunningham noted that a problem with contract staff was the consistency of information given to the public.

Mr. Lynch supported enhancing the staffing levels.

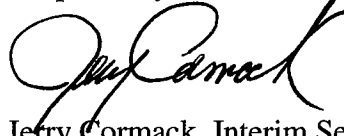
Ms. Harryman suggested that the Board agendaize this subject for a future meeting.

Ms. McNamara noted that the photos in the Webster Street Design Guidelines were all black.

Ms. Altschuler noted that staff would review the document and provide more legible copies for the Planning Board, City Council and the public.

12. ADJOURNMENT: 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Cormack". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jerry Cormack, Interim Secretary
City Planning Department

These minutes were approved at the January 24, 2005, Planning Board meeting. This meeting was audio and video taped.