

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2010

1. CONVENE: 7:05 p.m.
2. FLAG SALUTE: Board Member Kohlstrand
3. ROLL CALL:
Present: President Ezzy Ashcraft, Vice-President Autorino, Board members, Cook, Cunningham, Kohlstrand, and Zuppan.
Absent: Board Member Lynch

4. MINUTES:

Minutes from the meeting of September 28, 2009

Board member Cunningham moved, seconded by Board Member Zuppan to approve the minutes as amended. Motion passes 5-0-1.

Minutes from the meeting of January 11, 2010

Board Member Kohlstrand moved, seconded by Board member Cunningham to approve the minutes as amended. Motion passes 6-0-0.

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 January 19th, 2010 the Zoning Administrator approved two use permits for extended hours of operation for a restaurant, a Use Permit and Design Review for a telecommunications tower, and a Variance and Design Review for an addition to a single-family residence.

Oral Report

Staff reported that a Press Release was received regarding a Notice of Default in the current Suncal development plan application. A copy of the application is available for review in the Community Development Department.

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Ms. Wong, Alameda resident, spoke about an exterior change to a neighbor's house that impacts her privacy.

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 February 22, 2010.**

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

9. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

9-A Design Review – DR05-0132 for a New Single Family Dwelling – 3295 Adams Street. The applicant proposes to construct a two-story single family dwelling with an attached garage on a vacant lot located adjacent to the intersection of Adams Street and Fernside Boulevard.

Staff presented an overview of the project and the changes that have been made to the design of the dwelling since it was first submitted.

President Ezzy Ashcraft opened the public comment period.

Ms. Wong, Alameda resident, stated that the building was too tall and reduced the privacy of neighbors.

Mr. Quintell, Alameda resident, spoke in opposition to the project and that the revised design did not go far enough to address the concerns of neighbors or the Board.

President Ezzy Ashcraft opened the Board discussion.

Vice-President Autorino supported the project and stated that the applicant has worked on the revisions to this project in good faith.

Board member Cunningham supported the project and commended the applicant for his efforts to improve the design. He stated that the proposed project meets development regulations. He requested that staff review the project for the location of the windows and if

the proposed windows intrude into the neighbor's privacy that measures be taken to lessen the impact to the neighbor's privacy.

Board member Cook supported the project and stated that the Board should not be too restrictive when it comes to the placement of windows on new projects, as any new project should have equal access to light. She stated that the compact development and the nature of many historical residences in Alameda, sets a precedent for windows that may have privacy impacts on neighbors.

Board Member Zuppan seconded the previous comments, commended the applicant for his efforts to revise the project and noted her support.

Board Member Kohlstrand supported the previous comments and supported the project without the addition of any restrictions on the second story windows.

President Ezzy Ashcraft commended the applicant for revising the project.

Vice-President Autorino moved, seconded by Board Member Zuppan to approve the major design review application. Motion passes 6-0.

9-B Density Bonus Ordinance – Applicant – City of Alameda. Proposed caps and limits on concessions and/or incentives for Density Bonus Projects on sites in a residential zone district or a site with a general plan land use designation of residential.

Staff gave an overview of the proposed changes to the density bonus regulations.

Vice-President Autorino asked for clarification on the reduction to minimum lot size requirements.

Staff clarified how the reduction would be applied to a density bonus project.

Board member Cook asked how the Density Bonus Ordinance impacts senior housing and the Guyton units.

Ms. Faiz, City Attorney, noted she would review this issue and report back to the Board.

Board member Cunningham asked for an example of how the Density Bonus minimum lot size would apply to a property that is zoned R-4, Neighborhood Residential District.

Staff clarified how the reduction would be applied to a project in an R-4 zone district. President Ezzy Ashcraft opened the public comment period.

Mr. Buckley, Alameda Architectural Preservation Society Representative, supported the Density Ordinance, but stated that the lot coverage requirements be either deleted, or amended to restrict the lot coverage to less than 40 percent. In addition, he suggested that a side yard setback of 3 feet would be insufficient in a historic neighborhoods.

Ms. Lambden, Alameda resident, opposed increasing maximum lot coverage from the current limit.

Ms. Bay, Alameda resident, asked whether these density bonus regulations applied to newly constructed dwelling units or the conversion of existing buildings. She stated she would like to see the density bonus regulations amended to allow affordable housing unit projects on parcels that have less than 10,000 square feet.

President Ezzy Ashcraft closed the public comment period.

The Board discussed the proposed incentives and caps.

Board member Cunningham noted he is not in favor of allowing a 3 foot side yard setback, but is in favor of a five foot or zero-lot line side yard setback and semi-detached houses that would allow more flexibility with side yard setback on a project site.

Staff cautioned that the zero-lot lines for infill projects in an already established neighborhood may disrupt the neighborhood fabric.

Board member Cook seconded that notion.

Board Member Kohlstrand is leaning towards staff recommendations and is not in favor of averaging sideyard setbacks or limiting it to 3 feet.

Board Member Zuppan asked if the proposed list is a guidance document, with preferred alternatives, or if this list would be codified as set standards.

Staff clarified that this list is serving principally as a guide to developers, because exceptions to even these limits or caps could be requested.

The Board discussed providing different standards for mixed-use districts and directed that staff develop a proposal that could provide direction to developers of large-scale developments on in-fill sites.

Board member Cook cautioned against using a front yard setback based on the averages of adjacent properties as it might create an unfavorable neighborhood fabric.

Staff suggested that it may be helpful to develop form-based codes or design guidelines that may assist staff, applicants, and decision makers in evaluating projects, that include requests for incentives.

Board member Cook stated that development asking for these incentives, would disproportionately impact already dense neighborhoods. She would like to see the development of design guidelines that would ensure the compatibility of a project with a neighborhood.

President Ezzy Ashcraft asked staff whether there were deadlines that needed to be met to

comply with State law to pass this ordinance.

Staff noted that there was a desire on the part of the Council to amend the Density Bonus regulations as soon as possible, but a careful review of the regulations would be understood.

Board Member Zuppan cautioned against developing a list of restrictions that makes development of effective guidelines difficult.

Staff requested that the Board identify those areas in the guidelines that they have concerns about.

President Ezzy Ashcraft proposed that the item be continued to the next meeting to allow staff time to address the Board's concerns on setbacks, open space, design guidelines lot coverage, and floor area.

Board member Cunningham motioned, seconded by Board Member Cook, to continue the item to the March 8, 2010 hearing. Motion passes 6-0.

9-C Zoning Text Amendment- Permit Extensions – Applicant – City of Alameda.

The Planning Board will hold a hearing consider an amendment to the municipal code to allow additional extensions for planning permits.

Approved

Staff presented the text amendment.

Board Member Zuppan asked how long an existing design review approval would be able to be extended.

Staff confirmed that the approval would extend an approval an additional two years, if no extension had been granted, or one year, if one extension had been granted.

Board member Cook asked if any consideration had been given to extending the building permits as well.

Staff stated he would look into this and report back.

President Ezzy Ashcraft asked how an applicant would be notified that extensions were possible with adoption of the new regulations.

Staff stated that applicants had been responsive in the past and had submitted extension requests without being prompted.

President Ezzy Ashcraft requested that a press release be issued to notify the community about this proposed change.

Staff supported that effort.

Board Member Kohlstrand motioned, and seconded Vice-President Autorino to recommend that the City Council adopt the zoning text amendment proposed by staff. Motion passes 6-0.

9-D Amendment to the Agenda Order as Stated in the Planning Board Rules and Procedures. The Planning Board President has requested that the Approval of the Minutes be moved to the Consent Calendar. A change to the Agenda Order as stated in the Planning Board Rules and Procedures needs Planning Board approval.

President Ezzy Ashcraft presented the amendment proposal.

Board Member Kohlstrand stated that the Board typically has comments on the minutes, so she favored leaving the minutes where they are in the agenda.

President Ezzy Ashcraft withdrew the amendment proposal.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

President Ezzy Ashcraft announced that the League of California Cities will host the Planner's Institute Forum that will take place in Monterey, and encouraged the Board members to attend if it fit in their schedule.

12. ADJOURNMENT: 9:30 p.m.