

APPROVED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA HISTORICAL ADVISORY BOARD
THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2022

1. CONVENE

Chair Thomas Saxby called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361, codified at Government Code Section 54953, Historical Advisory Board members can attend the meeting via teleconference.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Saxby, Board Members Jones, Lau, Sanchez, Wit.

Absent: None.

3. MINUTES

3-A 2022-1904

Historical Advisory Board Draft Meeting Minutes, February 3, 2022

Board Member Jen Wit made a motion to approve the minutes and Vice-Chair Lynn Jones seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a raise of hands and the motion passed 5-0.

4. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION

Chair Saxby made a motion to carry the General Plan Annual Report and Draft Housing Element Update (Item 7-A) into April in order to give the board more time to review the documents. Vice-Chair Jones seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATION

None

6. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

7. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

7-A 2022-1902

Public Hearing to Review and Comment on General Plan Annual Report and Draft Housing Element Update.

Andrew Thomas, Director of Planning Building & Transportation, introduced this item and gave a brief presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at <https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5541273&GUID=B1FD7828-B331-470A-AAAE-93FFB62384F7&FullText=1>.

Chair Saxby opened the board clarifying questions.

Chair Saxby asked what concerns Director Thomas had about the state's response. He wanted to know about any weaknesses.

Director Thomas discussed what he had seen with other cities, mainly Southern California, as they went through the same process. He went into detail about major concerns.

Board Member Norman Sanchez wanted to know if the city got credit for an ADU that was permitted but not built. He also wanted to know where they were falling short of the State's expectations. He discussed a recent letter sent to the City of Encinitas California. He asked for clarification on how State Density Bonus was used and mandated by law.

Director Thomas answered that if a Building permit was issued they could count it. He went into further detail about how that worked. He discussed how closely they were watching cities in Southern California and he went into detail about the State Density Bonus Law.

Board Member Wit brought up concerns for Quality of Life for the residents of Alameda. She discussed the importance of transportation with the addition of all these new units. She wanted to know the percentage of the projected new units would be Low-Income. She also encouraged getting developers to provide Community Benefits.

Director Thomas discussed the need for Low-Income units and that the State determined that it would essentially need to be 50%. He discussed other ways they could get those Low-Income units since he believed it would be under 50%. He then discussed the work that was going into transportation and finding alternative ways to move about the island. He then discussed ways that Developers were already contributing Community Benefits and he acknowledged the need for more infrastructure.

Board Member Alvin Lau wanted clarification on how SB-9 could help create more ADUs. He also discussed infrastructure and what was possible.

Director Thomas explained how SB-9 worked to get more units in the R-1 Residential Zone. He then discussed what was possible at Alameda Point and how they would try and push the possibilities.

Vice-Chair Jones asked about the different types of units and what could be counted towards the RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Allocation) numbers. She also inquired if there was a way to make sure ADUs were being rented out instead of being used as just additional space.

Director Thomas answered that whatever the unit it counted toward the RHNA and that the city has created zoning that would encourage smaller more affordable units.

Chair Saxby opened public comment.

Chris Buckley, Alameda Architecture Preservation Society, discussed missing information in the presentation. He also discussed his concerns with upzoning, State Density Bonus Law and the Transit Overlay Districts. The society was also concerned about the proposed height limits for Park and Webster St. He also wanted to know what the plans were after the April 19th workshop with the City Council.

Chair Saxby closed public comment and opened board discussion.

Board Member Sanchez asked Director Thomas to address the 20% surplus and what it meant to limit density.

Director Thomas answered that the HCDC (Housing & Community Development California) required cities to have a buffer, once you have your Housing Element certified you had to keep those numbers in. He then further explained No Net Loss, the 20% was that buffer. He discussed that the changes that staff were recommending would mean that developers would not need to rely on State Density Bonus.

Chair Saxby thought that Density Bonus was what encouraged Affordable Housing.

Director Thomas answered that they still had the city's Affordable Housing requirements.

Chair Saxby discussed that he would like to see Alameda allow greater densities within existing building envelopes. He agreed with Mr. Buckley about the Transit Overlay and saw it as a problematic provision and wanted to see it more targeted. He also discussed his concerns with upzoning, he believed it would open the doors for the Density Bonus. He also discussed his vision for Park and Webster St, he didn't want zoning changes to impact historic developed areas.

Board Member Wit wanted to know if developers had a minimum floor area they had to meet for a unit. She was concerned about overall quality and happiness for residents.

Director Thomas answered that there were Building Code requirements. He then discussed the different needs that were needed for housing. He then discussed the many requirements the state put forth and what developers were actually able to do. He then discussed the Transit Overlay and all the factors that had gone into the process and how the staff were still working through issues.

Board Member Lau discussed the option of treating Park and Webster differently and allowing Webster to have higher height limits.

Director Thomas said that was an option and that Fair Housing also played a factor in that decision. He added that Land Inventory also was a factor and that HCDC would look at that closely.

8. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Board Member Wit questioned a large part of land near Target being used for a storage building and how that got approved with the need for Housing.

Henry Dong, Planner III and Board Secretary, answered that it was going to be a 4-5 story personal storage building. The land was zoned as industrial.

Board Member Wit wondered why that was possible so close to a Senior Living Facility. She wanted to get the max use of land to get the required units built.

Staff Member Dong said it goes back to zoning and having the proper land use categories.

9. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

9-A 2022-1903

Certified Local Government Program -- 2020-2021 Annual Report

Staff Member Dong briefly discussed the report. Attachments can be found at <https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5541274&GUID=9C9B2408-0C62-4017-832D-6DBFD08AD9BF>.

10. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Saxby adjourned the meeting at 9:19 pm.