

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, JUNE 8, 2015

1. CONVENE: 7:02 P.M.
2. FLAG SALUTE: Board member Burton led the flag salute.
3. ROLL CALL: Present: President Henneberry, Vice President Alvarez and Board Members Burton, Knox White, and Zuppan
Absent: Köster and Tang

4. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION:

Andrew Thomas, City Planner, requested that Item 9-B be moved to the beginning of the hearing.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Rion Cassidy, resident, reiterated her comments from the last meeting regarding the Del Monte project. She feels that the project has inadequate parking and that the 1.6 parking spaces per resident will not be enough and doesn't account for visitor parking.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR: None

9-B Presentation on new technologies available on the City website
BuildingEye and Community View GIS

Allen Tai, Planning Services Manager, gave an overview of the two new interactive systems to help residents with permit and Alameda County information.

Vice President Alvarez stated that she uses the tools a lot, but asked if older information was going to be made available.

Mr. Tai stated that the older data needs to be cleaned up before it can be loaded onto the system.

Vice President Alvarez stated that she has heard complaints about availability of data.

Mr. Thomas stated that the system has only recently been made public.

7. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

7-A PLN15-0083 - 2615 Buena Vista Avenue - Applicant: Michael Hartigan. An appeal of Design Review approval to allow a second-story addition to a single-family home. The project consists of an approximately 235 sq. ft. second-story addition above an existing attached garage. An approximately 81 sq. ft. First-story addition and second-story deck are also proposed on the west elevation. The proposed project is Categorically Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines 15301 Existing Facilities.

Henry Dong, Planner, gave a description of the project and read letters received from neighbors in support of the project.

Board member Zuppan question the lighting and a requirement for motion sensor so light turns off automatically.

Mr. Thomas stated that it is not standard, but can be conditioned.

Michael Hartigan, Architect, stated that the addition has gone through several iterations and he said that the appellant's drawings misrepresent the project. He mentioned that the windows do not line up and the distance between windows is 14.5 feet, and the view from kitchen angled towards the front. The encroachment is necessary to maintain conditions.

Board member Burton stated that the main concern is privacy over the windows. He questioned the need for the side windows with the generous bay window in the front and the existing skylight which should provide ample light, possibly other options without windows or high windows.

Mr. Hartigan responded that they considered no windows but it does not meet the aesthetic requirements for historic preservation. He mentioned that art glass is a possibility. He stated that they tried to minimize the windows as much as possible and still maintain historical proportions

President Henneberry opened the public comment.

Catherine Johnson, appellant, stated that the privacy is being compromised at her property 2609 Buena Vista Avenue. She also stated that the shade does impact her property and the lack of privacy devalues the home. She does not believe there is enough room for the conditioned landscaping "to provide adequate screening."

Michael Johnson, appellant, stated that everything is small and there is no room for an addition to the home.

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Mark Gillman, neighbor, spoke against the project stating that he has worked on many homes and does not understand the project.

Dean Millican and Julie Hamilton, neighbors, spoke in support of the project and stated that they are the owners of a similar home and understand need to expand the kitchen.

Lisa McDonough, applicant, stated they have owned the home since 2008 and since then the family has doubled in size and the existing layout is not conducive to family life. The proposal will make the kitchen whole again

David McDonough, applicant, stated that the existing windows create less privacy than the proposed addition and said the existing layout is not conducive to family life. He mentioned that he spoke with rear neighbors and they support the project and feel that it fits in with the neighborhood.

Stefan Janowski, neighbor, spoke in support of the project and stated that his purpose for speaking is to uphold property rights. He read a letter in support of the project.

President Henneberry closed the public comment period.

Board member Burton thanked everyone for their comments. He stated that in general he is supportive of the addition as it meets the requirements, and there has been an effort by owners/applicant about mitigation of the impact. Realizes there will be an impact. Are not building whole length of property line + height is lowered. Would suggest consider (agrees with MH on reasons for having window) condition windows obscure view, but allows light and exterior articulation. In regards to landscaping, similar situation next door, columnar trees must cast large shadow, possible to do more damage in shading than new building. Achieve privacy but not shade neighboring house.

Board member Zuppan stated that she went to neighborhood and looked closely at the property. She acknowledges that the opinions have been sensitive but the property owners have a right to improve their property and to deny is encroaching on property rights. She understands the concerns of appellant, but is not concerned with privacy of windows, other options, pitis forum (silver sheen) as landscaping to use with proper landscaping. Feel project conforms to standards. Can make findings needed. Okay if no landscaping. Property owner is getting their 2 feet back. Lights need to have a motion sensor to turn off at night.

Board member Knox White questioned the solid screening around the deck.

Mr. Hartigan responded that with lattice on both sides so it could not be seen through but not a single plane.

Vice President Alvarez thanked everyone for their input. She stated that the applicant has worked on mitigating the effects, not perfect but a compromise. She agrees with light issues and the window treatments. She requested staff recommend a condition of approval.

Mr. Thomas asked for clarification on the new windows.

Vice President Alvarez responded that the bottom of new windows be translucent.

Board member Zuppan asked Vice President Alvarez if she is okay with art glass

Vice President Alvarez stated that it is not her first option.

Mr. Tai address concerns about requiring an awning window for the breakfast nook, kitchen sink window stay the same.

Vice President Alvarez stated she would want them to stay same.

Board member Burton also would want to keep them the same.

President Hennenberry does not agree with the need for translucent or privacy and would approve as is without the conditions.

Board member Zuppan moved for approval with the condition for motion sensor lights pointed away from the neighbor and clarified she was not including changes to windows.

Board member Burton seconded the motion.

Motion passed Ayes – 4 – Zuppan, Burton, Henneberry, Alvarez
Noes – 1 – Knox White

7-B PLN15-0179 - 2437 Eagle Avenue - Applicant: Housing Authority of the City of Alameda. A request for approval of Design Review and Density Bonus and Waivers to allow the construction of one two-story building and two three-story buildings containing twenty-two residential units located at 2437 Eagle Avenue. The proposed project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Public Resource Code 21159.23 Exemption for affordable low-income housing and CEQA Guidelines 15332 In-fill Development Projects.

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Mr. Dong presented the staff report and explained the project.

Zuppan wanted clarification on where the notices are mailed to the owner or tenant.

Mr. Tai clarified that both the tenant and owner get the notice.

Board member Knox White asked the size of the recreation play area and the vision for the area.

Mr. Dong responded the size is 15x50.

Ms. Victoria Johnson, Director of Housing and Community Development, stated that the play area has not been fully designed.

Ms. Johnson gave a presentation of the project.

Ms. Tze-Yan Szeto, Anne Phillips Architecture, Project Architect provided a presentation explaining the design selection and integrating it into the surrounding neighborhood. She stated that it is a diverse neighborhood, and she worked with neighborhood on the design.

Board member Knox White asked why the trash enclosures are in the front.

Ms. Szeto stated that she worked with the Public Works Department and they wanted the trash enclosures directly accessible from the street.

Board member Knox White stated the need for greenery and open space and questioned how the trade off between parking and open space made.

Ms. Szeto stated that the full landscaping is not shown in renderings, but is in the landscape plans.

Board member Zuppan stated that she wanted clarification on landscaping.

Luisa Howard, project landscape architect, described the project landscaping and stated that she wants to integrate the play areas into other landscape areas.

Ms. Szeto pointed out the storm water management bio-retention areas.

Board member Burton stated that he likes the bike parking, but is unclear on the nature of bike parking enclosure and wants clarification.

Ms. Szeto stated that they made it central so it's used and convenient. The enclosure has a translucent screen, and metal mesh to maximize daylight. The short term bike parking is translucent to provide site lines for residents.

Board member Burton questioned where the means of egress on the second floor are and thinks that there is a need for a second means of egress for upstairs units

Mr. Tai stated that the Building Official only sees a need for a second staircase between buildings B & C but not A.

Ms. Szeto stated that it would sever the stairway.

Board member Zuppan referenced page A2.1 and the back of building C asking about the closet opening next to electric panel.

Ms. Szeto stated that it is recessed for storage and utilities, and allow workers to be off driveway, clarified it will be lit.

Open the public comment period

Melanie Wartenberg, neighbor, stated she does not agree that high density residential is suitable for site, and a better use is green space as the neighborhood is underserved. She doesn't feel the plan is open to community. She stated that Edison Elementary School is already full and will only be burdened by project, senior or disabled housing would be preferred. Measure A should be enforced. Concurs with Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS). City can do better affordable housing elsewhere, disenfranchised residents are not served by this neighborhood.

Patsy Paul, neighbor, does not agree with the density of the project. Wanted to know about accounting that says 22 units is needed. Project does not provide neighborhood green space. Design is too boxy and the light colors do not match neighborhood

Dick Rutter, AAPS member, stated he understands the intentions of project architects forced diversity but it weakens the project, articulation and color, advocates simplification and not using flat roofs. Buildings are uniform, but porches and stairs are where articulation is.

Shane McKay, neighbor agrees with the previous speakers and feels the wedge community is cut off by thoroughfares and currently has to leave the area for activities having to cross dangerous to pedestrian streets. She feels the project is going to increase potential for accidents. Density should not be approved, project will overshadow existing neighborhood. Advocates traffic calming

measures in wedge neighborhood (traffic circles, enhanced crosswalks, speed bumps).

Steve Aced, AAPS, strongly dislikes the architecture of the building, does not feel the project imitates the surrounding neighborhood.

Nancy Gordon, resident, feels that the project is ugly. Agrees with the need for housing and affordable housing, but the project does not fit in the historic neighborhood. It is possible to do affordable housing without high maintenance costs.

Helen Sause, Alameda Home Team, stated that the old island high site has been a site for proposed low income housing for a long time. Feels it is a good site with close proximity to amenities, diverse land uses, unique access to shopping and services. The site has been vacant for too long and the housing authority will be good stewards, and the potential to provide housing for 22 of the 1,000+ families on the housing authority waiting list.

Christopher Buckley, AAPS, thanked the design and development teams. He is concerned with the treatment of elevations, residential infill project incorporate neighborhood, feels neighborhood is more residential and not like commercial uses on park street, Feels the building masses needlessly articulates, methods of breaking up bulk does not match neighborhood. Neighboring buildings are not attached row housing and project should be broken up. More sloped roofs, not enough gables, detailing is too rudimentary. Showed photos of an affordable housing project in Hercules.

Doree Miles, neighbor, is a long time resident of the area and presented photos of residential the buildings in neighborhood. She stated that parking is an issue because some houses don't have driveways, also most of the residential buildings are not flat roofs, would like to see lower density and green open space, play yard not realistic, parking does not accommodate residents, been involved in design process and does not feel neighborhood feedback has been heeded, agrees with previous speakers and endorses Victorian style new homes at lower density.

Closed the public comment period

Board member Burton stated he is supportive of the concept of the project, he understands the neighbors call for a closer to parks, and he likes the access to public transit, Nob Hill grocery store only two blocks away, walkable to Park Street, to other schools and hopes housing authority would assist, feels it's a good application with density bonus. Not supportive of current design and layout, does not like the amount of green space, concerns over the trash enclosure feel they need to be sensitive of what neighbors across the street are exposed to, concern with egress and building safety, likes the bike storage material and

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concept, possible to do modern design to fit in with neighborhood, feels architecture is drab and underdeveloped, better proportions or details, breaking up form with change in colors is not acceptable, feels it needs to be worked on.

Board member Zuppan stated she appreciated the community hearings and community input. She does not like the back wall and conflict of driveway next to residential use, she feels the project is too walled in, feels the Everett Street elevation is not good enough. She raised several issues in the neighborhood including the towing company noise violations, auto shops and speeding. She mentioned that the State law does not make density discretionary. Existing affordable housing projects do not use up all parking, would be on board with reduction to increase green space, Wanted clarification on what is ADA accessible, got clarification from Victoria Johnson that only ground floors. In support of Christopher Buckley's comments that a single architectural style should be used, particular attention to window recess and massing.

Board member Knox White stated he agrees with fellow board members and is okay with modern architecture, but if a historic style is needed maybe possible to have two different styles for individual buildings, he mentioned that the project site was considered during North Park Street rezoning. Also the Density Bonus Ordinance is necessary to make projects work. Does not like the extra driveway for trash enclosure, in commercial projects they are hidden not put in the front of the street. Agrees with fellow board members about lack of play space, had hoped open space would have a greater community benefit, feels the current design is not conducive to use, small but usable places is possible, thinks traffic circle is possible at sit, and cited past problems in upkeep from neighbors.

Vice President Alvarez stated that she doesn't feel the site is appropriate being next to two heavily traveled streets but that the space had already been dedicated for affordable housing, Her only problem is the architecture, does not care for it and thinks the architecture needs to go back to drawing board. She does not advocate for a modern look, recommends housing authority work with AAPS and neighborhood on the design. She stated that she can't approve the project because of the architecture, does not like trash enclosure and Everett Street elevations.

President Henneberry stated that he agrees with the other board members, is a proponent of affordable housing but thinks project needs more work.

- 7-C PLN14-0305 - 2350 Harbor Bay Parkway - Applicant: Mina Patel.** The applicant requests approval of Final Development Plan and Design Review to allow the construction of a 99-room, five-story hotel. This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 - Infill Development Projects. **The applicant is requesting a continuance to the meeting of June 22, 2015**

8 MINUTES

9 STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

- 9-A Zoning Administrator and Design Review Recent Actions and Decisions – Mr. Thomas provided the report

Board member Zuppan requested clarification on approval of the Use Permit for the Churchward Bar. Staff reported it was an expansion into the second story and that the Police requested conditions be placed on the establishment to address existing nuisance issues.

10 WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS-None

11 BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

Board member Burton stated that he will be out of town for both meetings in July.

12 ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:
None

13 ADJOURNMENT 10:24 p.m.