

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD MONDAY, JULY 26, 2010

1. CONVENE: **7:14 p.m.**
2. FLAG SALUTE: Board Member Autorino
3. ROLL CALL: Present: President Ezzy Ashcraft, Vice-President Autorino
Board Members Isben, Lynch, and Zuppan.

Absent: Board Member Kohlstrand

Staff Present: Jon Biggs, Planning Board Secretary; Andrew Thomas, Planning Services Manager; Simone Wolter, Planner; Nancy McPeak Recording Secretary; Farimah Faiz, City Attorney's office
4. MINUTES: Minutes from the Special Meeting of June 21, 2010.

President Ezzy Ashcraft corrected a typographical error in the meeting minutes. Motion to approve meeting minutes as amended made by Board Member Lynch, seconded by Board Member Authoring. **Approved as amended 4-0, Board Member Ibsen abstained.**

5. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION:
None

6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

Written Report

6-A Future Agendas

Staff presented an overview of future meetings. Staff mentioned the possibility of canceling the August 23, 2010 Regular Planning Board Meeting due to a staffing conflict.

6-B Zoning Administrator Report

Staff noted the Zoning Administrator hearing of July 20, 2010 was canceled.

Oral Report

None

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Kathy Moehring of the West Alameda Business Association (WABA) spoke to thank the Planning Board and staff for the presentation of the Webster Street Vision Plan at the Special Joint Meeting with the Economic Development Commission on July 15, 2010 at Otaez Restaurant on Webster Street.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR:

8-A **City of Alameda Housing Authority Affordable Housing Development Policies and Guidelines**

President Ezzy Ashcraft requested that the item be pulled from the Consent Calendar.

Debbie Potter, Housing Development and Programs Manager from the City of Alameda Housing Authority gave an overview of the policies and guidelines. Ms. Potter stated that the City of Alameda recently reorganized and consolidated all housing-related programs, such as the Section 8 Housing Program and the Community Development Block Grant Program within the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority is advised by the Housing Commission which recently established an ad hoc committee to update the 1993 Affordable Housing Guidelines. The focus of the guidelines in 1993 was acquisition and rehabilitation and not new construction. The City's largest source of affordable housing funds is generated through the Redevelopment Agency. Twenty percent of all tax increment funds that the Redevelopment Agency receives must be spent on the preservation, expansion, or maintenance of housing that is affordable to very low, low, and moderate income residents.

Ms. Potter stated that it is necessary to spend these funds wisely and that is why the new guidelines are so important. The 2010 guidelines have been approved by the Housing Commission and staff felt they should also be shared with the Planning Board and the Social Services and Human Resources Board. Ms. Potter reported that the new guidelines have recently been applied to a project being considered by the City Council and Community Improvement Commission (CIC) at their meeting on July 27, 2010. The project is the CIC's acquisition of the City owned parking lot at 2216 Lincoln Avenue. It is proposed that the CIC purchase the land from the City and develop it into a 19 housing units for the developmentally disabled. The project should be coming before the Planning Board for design review in the fall, if all of the funding is secured.

Board Member Zuppan motioned to approve the Consent Calendar, seconded by Board Member Ibsen. Motion passes 5-0.

9. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

9-A Harbor Bay Parkway Landscape Plan – Harbor Bay Business Association. The Harbor Bay Business Association requests Design Review approval to replant the existing medians with Bay Friendly Landscape materials.

Vice President Autorino recused himself from the agenda item due to a conflict of interest.

The Planning Services Manager presented the project to replace approximately 1 ½ miles of turf from the medians in the Harbor Bay Business Park medians with Bay-friendly landscaping. The proposal will reduce the water usage by about 2 million gallons a year. The project will improve air quality and prevent stormwater run-off. All removed landscaping will be used to mulch the proposed new landscaping. Staff is recommending approval of the project. The Planning Services Manager introduced Landscape Architect April Philips of April Philips Design Works.

Ms. Philips gave a presentation explaining the design concept for the Bay-friendly landscaping to eliminate the lawn areas in an effort to conserve water and eliminate the pollution from lawn mowers. She explained the sheet mulching procedure, which uses mulch and cardboard or paper to compost the existing landscape to enrich the soil for the new landscaping. Ms. Philips stated that this is the largest sheet-mulching project in the Bay Area.

President Ezzy Ashcraft asked about the type of irrigation that would be used.

Ms. Philips responded that drip irrigation systems, as well as a subsurface systems with timers and controllers would ensure water efficiency.

Board member Lynch asked about outreach to the residents of Harbor Bay Isle to encourage using the Bay-friendly landscaping for homes.

Ms. Philips stated that they are working with the City of Alameda to get some educational grants and looking at doing some press releases once the project begins.

Board Member Ibsen motioned, seconded by Board member Lynch to approve the project as proposed. Motion passes 4-0 (Vice President Autorino recused).

9-B Design Review and Development Plan – PLN10-0192 – 2221 Harbor Bay Parkway – SRM Associates. The applicant requests a Major Design Review and Final Development Plan for the construction of five new office buildings totaling approximately 205,000 square feet in floor area and 689 parking spaces on approximately 13.7 acres. The site is located within the Harbor Bay Business Park.

Board Member Ibsen recused himself from the agenda item due to a conflict of interest.

The Planning Services Manager presented the project for the construction of five new office buildings. He stated that the City approved the Harbor Bay Business Park in 1989 at which time the Development Agreement and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) were also
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completed and approved. As part of the 1989 approvals the City negotiated long-term entitlements in exchange for up-front improvements to the public amenities such as the Ferry Terminal, Bay Trail, parks, and roads. He reported that the City has approved 5.1 million square feet of commercial space, which is far less than what currently exists, because the business park is developing at a much lower intensity than initially approved. In addition to the 1989 EIR, a current study was done to ensure that the assumptions of the original EIR are still sound. The City also completed a traffic and a wildlife habitat survey for the burrowing owl. Both studies concluded no new findings.

The Planning Services Manager summarized that the 205,000 square foot campus will be completed in two phases. The first phase will consist of four buildings and the associated parking, while the second phase will consist of a fifth building and associated parking. He mentioned that the site is a short walk to the ferry building and along the Harbor Bay Shuttle route. Also, two new bus stops are planned for the area. All of the buildings are located along the street and the parking is in the rear. The bay-friendly landscaping design allows for drought tolerant foliage and reduces water consumption.

The Planning Services Manager then discussed the design elements of the proposed buildings. He stated that the project will meet the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold standard and that the project will generate as much as 10% of its energy on site through solar panels, a series of small wind turbines, and solar awnings.

The Planning Services Manager stated that the project meets the City of Alameda development standards and policies. Staff is recommending approval of the project.

The Planning Services Manager introduced Joe Ernst, project manager, of SRM Associates.

Mr. Ernst stated that he and his team are excited to bring this high profile campus project for VF Outdoors to the City of Alameda and the Harbor Bay Business Park. He explained that VF Corporation is the second largest apparel design and manufacturing company in the United States. The outdoor division includes nine global brands and North Face, Jansport, and Lucy would be headquartered in Alameda. The project includes outdoor recreation areas such as basketball courts, volleyball courts, and outdoor meeting areas.

Mr. Ernst explained that the sustainable design and the LEED Gold Certification was very important to the VF Corporation. The site will have bioswales for the storm water runoff so that the flow rate will be the same as in pre-development state. The solar awnings serve three purposes: they provide shading, generate energy and reflect light into the office spaces, reducing the need for artificial lighting. He further explained the choice of concrete, wood, and steel which will work well for the coastal location. Mr. Ernst stated that the project will bring up to 650 high paid employees to the business park and will provide a benefit to the adjacent retail businesses and the City of Alameda.

President Ezzy Ashcraft thanked Mr. Ernst for the presentation. She complimented the North Face brand and its familiarity amongst the younger generation in America. She also mentioned that she is very excited about the project and what it means for Alameda.

Board Member Lynch stated that this was an outstanding LEED project and thanked Mr. Ernst for bringing a project of this caliber to Alameda. He stated that this is a good opportunity for the board, public, and staff to understand the intricacies of a LEED certification project.

Board Member Zuppan stated that the project is great for the community and is very pleased by the amount of the site that is left as open space and the LEED certification. She asked about the requirement on the resolution about fencing around the sports courts.

Mr. Ernst stated that the fencing addressed neighbor's concerns and mitigated a liability concern for the corporation. He stated that he met with the residents and developed a set of conditions for lighting and other concerns. The comments received were generally favorable and they will continue to meet with them should any issues arise.

Vice-President Autorino stated that he was impressed with the project and has watched the area grow for many years. He feels that the business park is well integrated and flows very well. He questioned the need for the amount of parking and wondered if the need for the number of parking bays would be reevaluated prior to starting Phase II.

President Ezzy Ashcraft also would like to see the number of parking spaces reduced.

Mr. Ernst replied that the fifth building and the parking on that portion of the site will not be developed until Phase II and the necessity for the total parking bays will be re-evaluated at that time. Currently, the company wants to receive approval for the number of spaces as requested.

President Ezzy Ashcraft inquired about the City Car Share Program.

Mr. Ernst stated that they have thought of having a City Car Share at the site or providing electric vehicles for employees use.

President Ezzy Ashcraft asked about the schedule for the project.

Mr. Ernst stated that the plan is to break ground in October 2010 and have the spaces occupied by October 2011.

Board Member Lynch asked whether they have thought of impervious pavement for the parking area.

Terri Emery of FME Architects stated that they did look at the impervious pavement early on as an option and discovered that the cost is very high. Because, the systems stop being impervious over time, bioswales were included to handle and account for the stormwater runoff instead.

President Ezzy Ashcraft made a correction to the Resolution on page 2 adding "Alameda" after "City of".

Board Member Zuppan made the motion to approve the Final Development Plan and Major Design Review for the VF Campus Project, seconded by Vice-President Autorino. Motion passes 4-0.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

Staff reported there were no written communications for the Board.

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

The Board had nothing further to communicate.

12. ADJOURNMENT: **8:52 p.m.**