

**Minutes of the Regular Planning Board Meeting  
Monday, October 23, 2006**

1. CONVENE: 7:04 p.m.
2. FLAG SALUTE: Member Mariani
3. ROLL CALL: Vice President Cook, Cunningham, Ezzy Ashcraft, Kohlstrand, Mariani and McNamara.

President Lynch was absent.

Also present were Assistant City Attorney Donna Mooney, Planning Services Manager Andrew Thomas, Supervising Planner Cynthia Eliason, and Planner III Douglas Garrison.

4. MINUTES: Minutes for the meeting of October 9, 2006

Member Kohlstrand noted that in the vote at the bottom of page 12 to extend the meeting, Member Mariani is listed as abstaining. She recalled that she voted against the motion, and noted that the vote should read: "AYES – 6; NOES – 1 (Mariani); ABSTAIN – 0."

M/S Cook/McNamara and unanimous to approve the minutes for the meeting of October 9, 2006, as amended.

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

5. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION:

Acting President Cunningham noted that staff requested that Item 8-C be heard after Item 8-A.

M/S Kohlstrand/Cook and unanimous to hear Item 8-C after Item 8-A.

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

6. ORAL COMMUNICATION:

Ms. Susan Pieper noted that she had received a notice about proposed exterior modifications for part of Alameda Towne Centre, referring to the old Walgreen's to Ross and Petco. She noted that it had been reviewed by the Planning & Building Department for architectural design prior to building permit approval. She urged the City to bring this issue before the Planning Board for discussion, in order to avoid a piecemeal approach to Alameda Towne Centre.

Ms. Dorothy Reid noted that she wished to discuss the permit to make the changes on Buildings 300 (former Walgreen's), 400 and 500 in Alameda Town Centre. She noted that was the corner that residents were concerned about with respect to bus traffic. She requested clarification on the plans for that area of the center. She expressed concern about the 37-foot-high tower, which she believed was unnecessary. She was very concerned that this project may get out of control, and appreciated staff's efforts in working on this project.

Mr. Thomas noted that there had been many changes at South Shore over the years, and that there were periodic amendments that come before the Planning Board. In this case, staff sent out a notice to the neighbors, as is customary with all design reviews. If the neighbors have concerns about what staff was considering, staff has the ability to bring it to the Planning Board. Staff anticipated having a study session on the South Shore project at the November 13, 2006, meeting. The gas station proposal will also be discussed.

In response to an inquiry by Member Ezzy Ashcraft whether the Planning Board members could receive the same notices received by the neighbors regarding the proposed developments, Mr. Thomas confirmed that would be possible. He believed that should be part of the normal noticing procedure, and would ensure that took place.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR:

- 7-A. **Applicant: Harbor Bay Acquisition LLC (FDP06-0002 and DR06-0062) (CL).** Applicant requests a Final Development Plan and Major Design Review to allow a one-story building of approximately 36,899 square feet in floor area with 69 parking spaces to be constructed on a 4.1 acre site. The site is located at 2275 Harbor Bay Parkway within the Harbor Bay Business Park in the C-M-PD, Commercial Manufacturing, Planned Development Zoning District. **(Applicant requests continuance.)**

M/S Cook/Ezzy Ashcraft and unanimous to continue this item.

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

- 7-B. **Applicant: City of Alameda (BB).** Review the bus shelter survey results and recommend City bus shelter design standards for future bus shelter locations in Alameda.

M/S Cook/Ezzy Ashcraft and unanimous to continue this item.

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

In response to an inquiry by Member Kohlstrand whether one particular bus shelter had been recommended, Mr. Thomas replied staff would need more time to coordinate with Public Works with respect to a recommended shelter.

- 7-C. **Applicant: City of Alameda Community Improvement Commission (RS).**  
Applicant requests a finding that the proposed Sixth Amendment to the Community Improvement Plan for the Business and Waterfront Improvement Project conforms to the City of Alameda's General Plan as it exists and is currently being amended.

M/S Cook/Ezzy Ashcraft and unanimous to adopt Planning Board Resolution No. PB-06-38 to make a finding that the proposed Sixth Amendment to the Community Improvement Plan for the Business and Waterfront Improvement Project conforms to the City of Alameda's General Plan as it exists and is currently being amended.

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

8. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

- 8-A. **Applicant requests a Final Development Plan and Major Design Review to allow five new buildings totaling approximately 100,795 square feet in floor area with a total of 268 parking spaces to be constructed on a 7.7 acre site (CL).** The site is located at 1900 - 1980 North Loop Road within the Harbor Bay Business Park in the C-M-PD, Commercial Manufacturing, Planned Development Zoning District. Applicant: SRM Associates (FDP06-0003 and DR06-0071). **(Continued from the meeting of October 9, 2006.)**

Mr. Thomas summarized the staff report. Staff recommended approval of this project.

The public hearing was opened.

Mr. Joe Ernst, applicant, SRM Associates, displayed the site plan and described SRM's efforts on sustainable design and attracting more business services to the park. He noted that they were an Alameda-certified green business, and that every building they own implement green programs, including cleaning and carbon-offset programs. He noted that they have four LEED-rated projects, 1 in process.

Mr. Stephen Fee, project architect, noted that as a former member of the Planning Board, he understood the challenges faced by the Board with respect to large projects. He presented the refinements that had been made to the parking plan and the architectural design for the project.

There were no speaker slips.

The public hearing was closed for Board discussion.

In response to an inquiry by Vice President Cook whether there were any incentives for the tenants to buy into a green building, Mr. Ernst replied that was not necessary because every prospective tenant he has spoken with wanted to "go green." He did find it necessary to provide education on the costs and benefits of green building, which he found to be an effective way for the tenants to incorporate green elements into their designs. He described how the tenant improvement program can help the building gain LEED points.

*Member Ezzy Ashcraft* ~~Member Kohlstrand~~ noted that the 75% recycling rate of construction materials was impressive.

In response to an inquiry by Vice President Cook how the applicant planned to make changes at the Master Plan level that would facilitate getting more services on the site, Mr. Ernst noted that they had given thought to that issue, and that it was a challenge for them. He noted that 30 acres close to the Ferry terminal were available, including 10 acres right on the water; he believed that was their best opportunity. He noted that the residents must embrace services such as a restaurant, which would be difficult to be

supported only by the business park.

In response to an inquiry by Member Kohlstrand whether the proposed parking was 268 spaces, where the minimum required was 189 spaces, Mr. Ernst noted that they did not want to oversize the parking. He added that while the parking ratios on the footprints alone may look high when adding the mezzanine component to the office, they will come back in line; he noted that every buyer wanted mezzanine space because of the cost of real estate.

Member Kohlstrand believed that if the applicant kept everything the way it was, but removed the parking spaces in the front, she would be very comfortable with the project. She would like to see less parking in front of all the buildings, and appreciated the applicant's responsiveness. Mr. Ernst noted that these buildings have a very well defined front for the office component, and a back for the manufacturing/warehouse components. The applicants believed that it was very important to separate those functions, which added to the long-term value of the project. They tried to break up the parking by added street trees and breaking up the parking with a hedgerow, which blocked the rows of cars. He noted that the presence of cars was a positive factor, which indicated there was activity on this formerly sleepy parcel.

Member Ezzy Ashcraft noted that she was very pleased and *impressed* ~~impressive~~ with the environmentally friendly design elements incorporated into this project, and she believed this was a responsible design. She believed the buildings were attractive, and understood the challenges of leasing buildings in such a site. She believed that SRM had made a good-faith effort to attract businesses. Mr. Ernst noted that they had a 30% vacancy rate, which was still relatively high. Member Ezzy Ashcraft believed the City should encourage the applicant's efforts to encourage occupancy.

Member Mariani noted that she was also pleased with the project, and would like to see all of the architectural enhancements in Phase I.

Member McNamara noted that she had been concerned about the architectural design, and was very pleased with the changes that were proposed, especially with the change of textures and three-foot recesses to add interest. She supported the addition of those features to Phase I where possible.

M/S Ezzy Ashcraft/McNamara to adopt Planning Board Resolution No. PB-06-39 to approve a Final Development Plan and Major Design Review to allow five new buildings totaling approximately 100,795 square feet in floor area with a total of 268 parking spaces to be constructed on a 7.7 acre site, with the modification of adding trees and sun louvers in Phase I.

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

8-C. **GPA05-02, R05-04, MP05-02, DP05-02, TM05-02, IS05-03 –Grand Marina Village Residential Development (AT).** The applicant requests approval of a

General Plan Amendment, Rezoning, Development Plan, Master Plan and Vesting Tentative Map and adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration to allow the development of forty (40) new detached single family homes. Development of the residential project would involve the reconfiguration of the existing marina parking lot and improvements to the existing waterfront path and open space areas within the 8.36 acre Master Plan area. The site is located in the M2 (Heavy Industrial) Zoning District at the intersection of Grand Street and Fortmann Way to the south of the Oakland Estuary and recreational marina facilities, north of the Pennzoil property and City of Alameda Animal Shelter and Corporation Yard, and west of Grand Avenue. **(Continued from the meeting of October 9, 2006.)**

Mr. Thomas presented the staff report. Staff recommended that the Planning Board recommend to the City Council approval of the mitigated negative declaration, a General Plan Amendment to specific mixed use consistent with the Northern Waterfront General Plan Amendment, rezoning to the MX zone, the Master Plan, the Tentative Map, the development plan and design review.

Mr. Don Ricci, Dahlin Group, displayed and described in detail the project's architectural design and landscaping plan. He described the features of the homes and the sites, and displayed the elevations. They proposed Craftsman, cottage and coastal-style elevations, which they believed were appropriate for a waterfront location. The elevations were articulated, and the massing stepped back in the front to add interest to the street. The porches would be five feet deep on all of the plans, and two of the three styles have second-floor verandas; both the porches and the verandas would be deep enough to furnish, encouraging people to use them, and interacts with passersby on the street. Stucco, board and batten siding, and shingle siding would be proposed for all four sides of the homes, not just the fronts. They also hoped to use a rich and varied color palette for the entire project, bringing vibrancy to the streetscape. He described the various plans in detail, and displayed a video simulation of the streetscape and elevations.

There were no speaker slips.

The public hearing was closed for Board discussion.

Member McNamara noted that she was very impressed by the presentation and the designs. She was pleased with the revisions, and believed that many of the issues raised in January had been addressed. She inquired about the maintenance of the open space and the parks. Mr. Ricci confirmed that they would be maintained by the homeowners.

Mr. David Day, Warmington Homes, addressed Member McNamara's question and noted that the CC&Rs contained the details. The part of the BCDC parks where the homes were fronted would be maintained by the HOA. The 20-foot paseo would be maintained through the association. She liked the fact that the amount of parking was reduced, and that the open space was maximized.

Vice President Cook noted that she liked the old wood pier, which she believed was more

appropriate than the asphalt pier. She inquired whether the applicant had considered taking the asphalt off. Mr. Day noted that they were open to the idea, and did not know the condition of whatever was under the asphalt, which is in poor shape. He noted that they had planned to put a sign before the pier, warning drivers, rather than bollards, but added that was still open for discussion. He noted that there were bollards across the way, going into the boatyard to stop traffic from going into the park.

Mr. Thomas believed that BCDC staff and City staff were on the same page, in that they did not want the wood pier used as a parking lot. They would need to develop a way to allow vehicle access, and then manage it so that people do not use it as a parking lot. Staff would need to do research on the asphalt issue, especially with respect to the water quality issue raised by Vice President Cook. He noted that the broken asphalt was unsafe and in very bad shape.

Vice President Cook believed a wooden pier would have a more authentic appearance. She also suggested appropriate signage and safeguards to protect pedestrians and bicyclists from automobile traffic.

Acting President Cunningham noted that Christopher Buckley had submitted a speaker slip, and requested a motion to reopen the public hearing.

M/S Cook/McNamara and unanimous to reopen the public hearing.

Mr. Christopher Buckley, Alameda resident, noted that with respect to circulation, he agreed with having Hibbard cut through to the shoreline; the connection between Hibbard and Grand would be converted to open space. He had looked at the traffic counts and the estimated parking use of the marina function, both on weekdays and the weekends; it seemed to him that the cars would then be directed through the middle of the residential development on Hibbard Street; the connection between Hibbard and Grand that might reduce the impact of the traffic on the development. He requested a response from the developer or staff to that observation.

Mr. Thomas noted that there were currently two ways into that parking lot, and that many people enter on Fortmann, or can go to the end of Grand Street. With the recent change in the circulation at the end of Grand Street, drivers would have to go through parking area where the boat trailers are left before cutting into the parking lot. He noted that most of the users of the parking lot have already shifted their patterns to taking Fortmann. Staff and the traffic engineers have examined the traffic flow which currently goes to the marina and which could go to the new development, and determined that the flow would be very small; this area was at the end of a *cul de sac*. Staff was not at all concerned about the loss of the access to the parking lot by the boat ramp.

Mr. Buckley suggested that staff consider measures to encourage traffic to use Fortmann rather than Hibbard if they want to leave the parking area. Mr. Thomas replied that until the new site develops, Fortmann was the only street to use. He added that bulbouts and landscaping were used to make Hibbard into more of a neighborhood street. Staff believed

that using Fortmann would be a more natural movement.

With respect to the design of the buildings, particularly the three-story buildings, Mr. Buckley inquired whether they could be redesigned so the third floor could be better integrated to the rest of the building. He noted that the Guide to Residential Design specifically discouraged popups as additions to existing historic buildings; he believed these buildings were attempting to reflect the historic architectural character of Alameda, and that this design principle might apply to these buildings. He wished to call attention to the detailing of these buildings, and while looking on the City website, could not find the Planning Board resolution for a permanent Planned Development in the design review. He would like more information on window selection, trim, porch elements, which he believed were very important. He knew that Warmington Homes generally handled these elements very well.

Mr. Thomas noted that the packet in the staff report contained the resolution approving the Planned Development and design review. The Master Plan also contained some details, and there were conditions of approval requiring that prior to the issuance of a building permit, there would be a final landscape plan and final architectural detail to be submitted to the Planning Director for final approval. He noted that the Planning Board may add specifics to those conditions.

Member Kohlstrand wished to compliment the project sponsor for their enhancements to the project, and believed it had improved greatly. She shared Mr. Buckley's concerns, and suggested that signage be included showing marina access was via Fortmann. She noted that 12 spaces along Hibbard were assigned to BCDC.

Mr. Thomas noted that there were 12 guest spaces on one side of the triangular parks. However, within the large public parking area for the marina, BCDC wanted the City to assign 10 spaces for public users of the waterfront so boat users don't park there.

Mr. Jason Neary, CBG Engineers, addressed the parking issue, and noted that under the permit, BCDC identified 10 parking spaces to be available for BCDC's use. He noted that those 10 spots would be allocated somewhere along the marina parking area for BCDC use.

In response to an inquiry by Member Kohlstrand regarding concerns about the borrowed easement and shadowing, Mr. Day replied that they had not had any negative feedback about the borrowed easement. He noted that there was a lot of light in the third story during the day, and noted that the third story can only be 500 square feet by code. He added that would result in shadowing of a very small percentage of the house next door, and added that the homeowners like the private sideyard for barbeques and other social activities.

Member Kohlstrand noted the condition recommending that all the sidewalks be a minimum of five feet wide, and inquired whether the sidewalk along Grand could be wider. Mr. Thomas believed that would be an acceptable condition for Grand, and described several landscaping possibilities near the sidewalks and alleys.



In response to an inquiry by Member Kohlstrand whether the City had a long-term plan for dealing with the end of Grand Street, Mr. Thomas replied that the applicants had proposed curb and landscaping to replace the temporary solution with the flip-up barriers.

Acting President Cunningham complimented the applicants on their progress in refining this application, and believed it could be further improved. He believed that some living standards were being compromised in this design, and believed the density of this project could be reduced. He believed there were many small compromises within the project and added that the general project was very good.

Vice President Cook commended the applicants on how far the design has come, and was excited about the paseo and the grid. She was happy that several of the units directly fronted the waterfront, and liked the grass in front of the houses. She would like grass *instead of some of the shrubs in other landscaped areas* ~~near the other landscaping, such as the low shrubs~~. She expressed concern about the heights of the houses, and that there would be 30 three-story homes. She did not want the affordable units to stand out. She believed that the market has changed somewhat with respect to the economic feasibility of this project, but would like to reduce the number of units somewhat to allow the owners to have a little more room. She noted that while this project would be consistent with Measure A, she also was hesitant about having a somewhat shaded eight-foot side yard.

Acting President Cunningham noted that while this project may be compliant with Measure A, he wondered whether this particular density would be desirable in this case.

Member Ezzy Ashcraft stated that she could support wider alleyways and more moving space for pedestrians and cars, but she also wanted to note that Alameda needs a variety of housing stock to meet the needs of different kinds of people. She noted that there were many busy working families that would like to have a smaller yard to reduce the amount of maintenance, and believed there were many creative ways to landscape a home. She believed this kind of project could offer a good housing choice for certain lifestyles and household types.

Member Mariani did not feel that this project was too dense because of the presence of the waterfront. She complimented the developer on the progress made on this design, and noted that she did not prefer the three-story design, especially if the two-story homes were designated as the affordable units. She liked the way the different styles interacted, as well as the historic perspective put on the designs. She believed the designs were very appealing.

Member McNamara recalled that the Clement Street project had a density of 24 units per acre, whereas this project was 11 units per acre. She noted that she had once lived in a zero-lot home, and understood the lifestyle choices with respect to home maintenance.

Member Kohlstrand noted that she did not have an issue with the density, and agreed with comments made by Members Mariani and Ezzy Ashcraft indicating that it did have a certain open feel to it. She believed the City needed to provide different types of housing in Alameda, and that not everyone wants or can afford single-family homes with big yards.

In response to an inquiry by Member Ezzy Ashcraft whether any of the units could be considered disabled accessible, Mr. Ricci replied that they were not, and that the porches were purposely elevated for the design purposes. He noted that there were no downstairs bedrooms in these homes.

In response to an inquiry by Member Ezzy Ashcraft whether there were any green building elements built into these homes, Mr. Ricci replied that with the exception of the standard Title XXIV practice, there was no requirement for LEED certification in this residential segment. He noted that they did include dual-pane windows, wall insulation, and noted that it was very difficult to design for solar orientation in a subdivision environment. He noted that Warmington Homes did what they could with respect to green construction techniques, using recycled materials, recycling construction debris, and using crushed concrete as a base.

In response to an inquiry by Acting President Cunningham whether they intended to have air conditioning in these homes, Mr. Ricci believed that was the case.

Mr. Day wished to address the issue of affordable units, and noted that on the Bayport project, the affordable units were smaller and attached. Architecturally, they have a similar amount of detail, and they had not heard any complaints about the BMR units being recognizable at all.

Member Mariani noted that she did not like the two-story/three-story distinction. She believed that the affordable housing plan should be fair.

Acting President Cunningham did not care for the visual impact of the third story on top of the main part of the house, and did not believe it was as well-integrated as it could be. He believed the two-story design was very nice. He suggested eliminating some of the three-story homes in the project.

After a discussion describing the affordable units and criteria, Member Kohlstrand noted that she would support maintaining the number of affordable units, and suggested that the square footage be varied.

Member McNamara agreed with Member Kohlstrand's comments, and added that the number of variable designs helped the neighborhood environment. She did not believe the two-story homes should be strictly affordable units.

In response to an inquiry by Member McNamara whether a one-story home would be an option, Mr. Ricci replied that would not be feasible, resulting in a 600-square foot home.

Mr. Thomas advised that the City Council, acting as the Community Improvement Commission, will have to approve the affordable housing program for this site. The Planning Board would make a recommendation as to the distribution of affordable housing units for consideration by the Community Improvement Commission.

Member Mariani believed this site presented a major opportunity for Alameda, and that the designs were beautiful and colorful; she noted that the high price for the market-rate homes made the disparity between the market-rate and affordable units that much more noticeable. Mr. Thomas acknowledged her concern, which he said ran through all of the City's projects.

Vice President Cook suggested that the landscaping near the Alaska Packers building be reconsidered, and that some of the ground cover, grasses and shrubs be replaced with lawn that would allow people to have sit and have lunch.

M/S Kohlstrand/Cook and unanimous to adopt Planning Board Resolutions recommending that the City Council adopt the Negative Declaration, adopt the General Plan Amendment and adopt the Zoning Amendment.

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

Mr. Thomas described several conditions of approval by the Planning Board that the Planning Board would need to decide on whether to add to the Master Plans Tentative Map and Final Development Plan.

M/S Cook/McNamara and unanimous to adopt the following conditions of approval:

1. The applicant will study the feasibility of exposing the underlying wood planks and provide a consistent cosmetically appealing walking and bicycling surface. If upon further study by the applicant, it is determined by the Planning and Building Director that exposing the existing wood planks is financially infeasible, unsafe, or contrary to water quality standards, the Planning and Building Director may approve an asphalt resurfacing plan.
2. To provide a continuous waterfront promenade with consistent materials throughout the Northern Waterfront, the existing asphalt pedestrian path from Grand Street to the Alaska Packers building will be replaced with a concrete path to match the concrete path provided along the Marina Cove waterfront.
3. The applicant shall provide signage to direct traffic down Fortmann to the marina parking lot to discourage use of Hibbard by marina-bound traffic.
4. The Grand Street sidewalk shall be widened to facilitate pedestrian access to the waterfront.
5. The waterfront open space landscaping plan between Hibbard and Alaska Packers should be revised to include larger areas of turf for informal seating.
6. The final architectural submittal to the Planning and Building Director shall include revisions to the third story elements to ensure compatibility with the City of Alameda Residential Design Guidelines for third stories.

M/S Cook/Cunningham to adopt a condition of approval to widen the front porches to eight feet.

AYES – 2 (Lynch absent); NOES – 3 (Ezzy Ashcraft, Kohlstrand, McNamara); ABSTAIN – 1 (Mariani)

The motion failed.

M/S Cook/Cunningham to adopt a condition of approval to revise the elevations and designs of the third story to better reflect the City's design guidelines.

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

M/S Cunningham/Cook to adopt a condition of approval to extend the paseo to the triangular park, with the understanding that two units may be eliminated.

AYES – 4 (Lynch absent); NOES – 2 (Ezzy Ashcraft, Kohlstrand); ABSTAIN – 0

M/S Mariani/Cunningham to adopt a condition of approval to require that distribution of the ten affordable units will be adjusted so that a minimum of two of the ten units shall be three story units and two of the two story units be available at market rate.

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

M/S Cook/Kohlstrand and unanimous to adopt Planning Board Resolution No. 06- to approve the Master Plan, Final Development Plan, and design review with the added conditions.

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

Member Mariani left the meeting after this item.

- 8-B. **V06-0005/DR06-0052- Christopher Seiwald – 2320 Blanding Avenue (CE).**  
The applicant requests approval of Variance and Major Design Review applications to allow the construction of a 17,058 square foot addition to an existing 27,300 square foot commercial building. The total building square footage of the proposed three-story structure is 44,358 square feet. A Variance to the parking requirements is requested to allow the provision of 111 parking spaces where 120 parking spaces are required by the Alameda Municipal Code. The project site is zoned M-2 General Industrial (Manufacturing). **(Continued from the meeting of October 9, 2006.)**

Ms. Eliason summarized the staff report, and recommended approval of this proposed project.

The public hearing was opened.

Mr. Richard Hornberger, project architect, summarized the background of the project, and introduced the property owner.

Mr. Christopher Seiwald, applicant, noted that his company, Perforce Software, was started in Alameda and added that they were rapidly running out of room; he estimated that the current building could accommodate another year or two of growth.

Mr. Hornberger noted that in the new layout, two curb cuts were deleted, resulting in 3 parking spaces.

Vice President Cook believed this was a good use, and expressed concern about intensifying what she perceived to be a very dangerous corner. She hoped that Public Works would look at that corner. Mr. Hornberger noted that the applicant was very sensitive to that corner. Vice President Cook added that the corner should be striped, that it should be clear where people should be when they turn the corner, and that there *probably* should be a stop sign at that corner.

Ms. Eliason noted that staff would pass that information to Public Works.

Member Ezzy Ashcraft realized that this block did not contain the most attractive buildings in the City, and while she believed the proposed building was generally attractive, she was concerned about the color renderings in the back of the packet that illustrated the conspicuous three-story buildings. She inquired whether the roof line could be changed to add some visual interest. Mr. Hornberger noted that they could re-examine the design, and believed that the combination of the banding at the top and the bottom helped the building blend in. He added that the strong vertical element and a stepped planter also helped. He believed the introduction of another element would add to the visual busyness.

Member McNamara believed this building would be an enhancement to the current area, which she believed was currently blighted. She did not object to the nine-parking-space variance out of 111 parking spaces. She did not believe there was any room on Oak Street

for on-street parking, but believed that there would be room on Blanding and on Clement for an additional nine cars if needed. She understood Member Ezzy Ashcraft's design concerns, and believed the current design of the new building should be compatible with what was already there.

Member Kohlstrand believed it was exciting to have an office building in downtown Alameda, where the workers could support the existing businesses and a new café. She would like to see more buildings like that, and she was comfortable with the variance. She was concerned about the consistency of the application of the in lieu fees, and she tended to act in favor of the variances over the in lieu fee. She agreed with Member McNamara's comments about the design in terms of integrating it with the existing structures.

Acting President Cunningham noted that he did not object to the parking variances, and inquired whether there was a shear wall in the parking area under the building. Mr. Hornberger confirmed that it was a shear wall and a support structure for the structure above. Acting President Cunningham inquired whether removal of the two end spaces in the middle aisle would ease circulation. Mr. Hornberger replied that more spaces would be lost, but added that there was already an adequate 24 feet for backing up. He added that they discussed adding a three-foot backup at the end wall at both sides, and that they would probably convert the three spaces next to the stairway into compact spaces.

Acting President Cunningham commented that the existing entrance and the awnings worked very well, and suggested de-emphasizing the two finger maroon elements that protruded into the air, or to bring them in line with the parapet. He also suggested reducing the height of the building in the center element to reduce the visual impact. Mr. Hornberger agreed with that suggestion.

Acting President Cunningham inquired what would replace the parking that would be temporarily lost, Mr. Ken Carvalho, Buestad Construction, noted that they planned to park along Oak Street.

M/S Ezzy Ashcraft/McNamara and unanimous to extend the meeting to 11:30 p.m.

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

Member Kohlstrand would like the street frontage along Blanding enhanced to avoid continuous building massing, and to add pedestrian interest and articulation.

In response to Vice President Cook's inquiry regarding the café parking, Mr. Hornberger replied that it would be adjacent to the café itself. He added that there would be two handicapped spaces for the café in the back, and noted that the seating area would face a patio area with a trellis.

The public hearing was closed for Board discussion.

Member Kohlstrand supported the variance and would like to see more work on the façade.

M/S Kohlstrand/McNamara to adopt Planning Board Resolution No. PB-06-40 to approve Variance and Major Design Review applications to allow the construction of an addition to an existing 27,300 square foot commercial building. A Variance to the parking requirements is requested to allow the provision of 111 parking spaces where 120 parking spaces are required by the Alameda Municipal Code. The following modifications will be added:

1. The height of the glazed element of the parapet on the addition would be reduced, and the awning level would be brought down;
2. Pathways to the parking area would be created; and
3. The street frontage on Blanding would be enhanced with planters and/or setbacks.

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

8-D. **Major Design Review – DR06-0034 – Applicant: Mohamed Elhashash – 1530 & 1532 Ninth Street (CE).** The applicant requests a Major Design Review for alteration of three single-family homes, each into a duplex, for a total of six units. The site is located at 1530 and 1532 Ninth Street within an R-4, Neighborhood Residential Zoning District.

Ms. Eliason summarized the staff report, and recommended approval of this item.

The public hearing was opened.

Mr. Thomas Touhy, project architect, described the background of this application, and noted that they had reviewed comments received by the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS), the Historical Advisory Board (HAB) and City Council. They worked with the applicant to address those comments, and developed some recommendations. In the meeting, they worked through the accessibility issues for the lower units for the two front buildings, as well as the relative benefits and costs of raising the buildings versus digging down. During that meeting, they decided to leave the buildings exactly where they were, which seemed to solve a lot of problems with respect to proportions and the Golden Mean. He noted that Christopher Buckley had provided additional comments, which he believed were generally supportive of the changes in the project. He noted that the existing porch railing may have been boxed in, and if so, the existing railing will stay. If the existing railing is missing, it would be a more difficult issue with respect to adding a new element to meet the building code. He noted that the applicant would install all wood windows, and will consider the hipped roof line for the rear additions. With respect to moving the house, the applicants had decided not to lift the buildings up at all; they were in their historic locations, and they preferred to leave them there. He noted that with respect to siding, the applicant will be able to show what areas would be retained. He noted that much more would be able to be retained since the buildings would not be raised. He believed it would be fair that the applicant would prefer that the control of the design stay within the purview of the City.

Mr. Christopher Buckley, AAPS, noted that they had submitted a letter on October 23, 2006, with their comments. They believed the design detail showing the bay window was very good, but it was only a partial elevation; he would prefer a fully detailed elevation for the whole front elevation. AAPS was especially concerned about the handrail treatment, which Mr. Touhy referred to. He noted that the handrail tops should form a strong horizontal alignment with windowsills in Victorian buildings to form an architectural base to the main floor. The heights of the existing handrail was 29 inches, below the Building Code height of 36 inches. Rather than using an extension, they would rather see the stairway design have a continuous rail that went down to a fairly substantial newel post. Alternatively, the existing lower rails in front of the building could be kept, with a simple supplemental railing to achieve the necessary Code height. He appreciated the use of wood windows. He wished to clarify Item 6 of the letter, requesting the additional details of the rest of the front elevation, including the porch column and rail treatments in a complete set of details for consideration by the Planning and Building Director prior to the issuance of the building permits and allowing AAPS and interested



members of the public to comment on those details before a decision was made.

The public hearing was closed for Board discussion.

Member Kohlstrand complimented the improvements and enhancements of these historic structures, and believed the return to the historic character would be a positive change.

Acting President Cunningham noted that the applicant generally agreed with Mr. Buckley's comments, and that he was in tune with the handrail; he believed that sticking with Mr. Buckley's recommendation would be beneficial. He was concerned about getting neighborhood input, and had not heard any comments.

Member McNamara noted that this project was re-noticed to the neighbors, and added that Mr. Buckley was not originally noticed because he lived more than 300 feet away from the project. She stated she was very interested in hearing the neighborhood concerns, and supported the project design.

Acting President Cunningham supported the City maintaining control of the project, as well as garnering comment from AAPS.

Member Ezzy Ashcraft noted that she was excited about this project, and believed that HAB's input had been very beneficial. She liked the proximity to public transportation, as well as the disabled access for the unit in the back. She was concerned about the 29-inch rail, when Code calls for 36 inches, and believed that was a safety and liability issue.

Vice President Cook liked this project and agreed with Mr. Buckley's comments. She expressed concern about the landscaping in the staff report, and hoped the Planning & Building Director would consider fast-growing hedges.

M/S Ezzy Ashcraft/Cook and unanimous to adopt Planning Board Resolution No. PB-06-45 to approve a Major Design Review for alteration of three single-family homes, each into a duplex, for a total of six units, with the following modifications:

1. The proposed windows on 1530 and 1532 Ninth Street will be double-glazed wood clad fiberglass.
2. The railings and newel posts on 1530 and 1532 Ninth Street will be uncovered and restored. If they do not exist, appropriate replacements meeting historical designs shall be approved to the satisfaction of the Planning and Building Director.
3. Complete elevation drawings will be prepared once the shingles have been removed and will be approved the satisfaction of the Planning and Building Director.

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

**8-E. Appointment of Two Planning Board Members to the Big Box Retail Working Committee.**

M/S McNamara/Kohlstrand to extend the meeting to 11:40 p.m.

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

Ms. Doreen Soto noted that they were anxious to commence with this committee, and noted that representatives had been selected from the Economic Development Commission and the Transportation Commission. She requested two nominees from the Planning Board to schedule an initial meeting and look at the scope of work from the consultant. They hoped to have an initial meeting before the end of the year, if the holiday schedule allows; they hoped to complete the study within six months. The final product would be an analysis of all of the issues surrounding big box stores, starting with a definition. Ms. Eliason noted that zoning amendments or policies may result from these meetings.

Member Ezzy Ashcraft volunteered to sit on the Committee.

M/S Kohlstrand/Cook and unanimous to nominate Member McNamara to the Committee.

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

9. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:

This item was continued to the next meeting.

10. BOARD COMMUNICATION:

- a. Oral Status Report regarding the Northern Waterfront Plan (Vice-President Cook).

This item was continued to the next meeting.

- b. Oral Status Report regarding the Oakland/Chinatown Advisory Committee (Board Member Mariani).

This item was continued to the next meeting.

- c. Oral Status Report regarding the Transportation subcommittee (Board Member Kohlstrand).

This item was continued to the next meeting.

- d. Oral Status Report regarding the Alameda Climate Protection Task Force (Board Member Cunningham).


This item was continued to the next meeting.

12. STAFF COMMUNICATION:

This item was continued to the next meeting.

13. ADJOURNMENT: 11:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Woodbury". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cathy Woodbury, Secretary  
Planning & Building Department

These minutes were approved at the November 13, 2006, Planning Board meeting. This meeting was audio and video taped.