

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2010

1. CONVENE: 7:10 pm
2. FLAG SALUTE: Vice-President Autorino
3. ROLL CALL: Present: President Ezzy Ashcraft, Vice-President Autorino, Board members, Ibsen, Kohlstrand, and Zuppan; Andrew Thomas, Planning Services Manager; Simone Wolter, Recording Secretary; Obaid Khan, Transportation Engineer; Barbara Hawkins, City Engineer

Absent: Board Member Lynch
4. MINUTES:

Minutes from the Regular meeting of July 26, 2010

Motion moved by Vice-President Autorino, seconded by Board Member Zuppan, to approve the meeting minutes as amended. Motion carries 4-0-1 (Kohlstrand abstained.)

Minutes from the Regular meeting of September 13, 2010 (Pending)

Minutes from the Regular meeting of September 27, 2010

Motion moved by Board Member Kohlstrand, seconded by Board Member Ibsen, to approve the meeting minutes as amended. Motion carries 4-0-1 (Autorino abstained.)

5. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION: None.

6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

Written Report

6-A Future Agendas

Staff presented an overview of upcoming projects.

6-B Zoning Administrator Report

The Zoning Administrator approved a Use Permit for Rockwall Winery on September 21, 2010.

Oral Report

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR:

None.

9. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

9-A Stargell Extension Update - The Planning Board will hold a hearing to discuss bicycle and pedestrian access at the new Stargell extension project.

Mr. Khan presented the changes that were built in-field and explained why these changes had not been brought back for Planning Board approval prior to construction.

President Ezzy Ashcraft pointed out that the Planning Board is significantly interested in transportation projects and not solely landscaping design. She added that the Planning Board has a vested interest in ensuring that all residents of Alameda have an equitable access to transportation.

Board Member Kohlstrand pointed out that the plan set has insufficient information and how it could happen that a City project could be built that does not even meet the City standards.

Ms Barbara Hawkins, City Engineer, explained that the City uses CalTrans road construction standards. She added that the CalTrans standards allow for leeway on whether a road is built to 8 feet in width or 10 feet in width.

Board Member Kohlstrand stated that the plans should have shown the appropriate street widths.

Ms. Hawkins stated that the project was done by an outside consultant who separated out the landscaping from the street standards, which has caused confusion in the field. She pointed out that the extensive public involvement process of this project caused updates to a multitude of plan sets.

President Ezzy Ashcraft stated her experience and observations of the project area and noted that the fence around the college may come down in the next few months.

Ms Lucy Gigli, President of Bike Alameda, thanked all involved for pursuing this issue about the bike path. She noted that Bike Alameda was last involved in 2002 with this project and only has had been able to provide comments at public hearings. She is concerned about the process for reviewing project changes not being transparent. In addition, she noted that many bike-related improvements, such as bike racks, on approved plans are not necessarily built as such.

Mr. Khan stated that Public Works is working on implementing a process that would ensure that the public is informed of in-field changes when they are required.

Board Member Kohlstrand encouraged Public Works to implement a program that will ensure transparency and also stated that she would like to see the fence between Alameda Community College be taken down. She would like to see the bike lane continued around the Webster Street and Posey tubes, across Neptune Park and Constitution Way to increase connectivity.

President Ezzy Ashcraft reiterated her interest in providing safe, accessible, multi-modal pathways that will encourage people to get out of their vehicles.

9-B Alameda Point Update-Going Forward – Staff will present a proposal for a series of community workshops to discuss plans for Alameda Point.

Mr. Andrew Thomas outlined how staff proposes to hold community forums to receive public input on the future development of Alameda Point.

Ms Karen Bay, Alameda resident, is supportive of giving the interested public a comparison, such as Option A and B, to evaluate a vision for Alameda Point. She would like to see a comprehensive review that includes commercial, residential, and open space. She would like to see a specific interim plan that would lay out what will occur at Alameda Point, until real development occurs. She encourages residential builders to be included in the discussion, as they are significant job creators.

Board Member Kohlstrand is supportive of the proposal to revamp the development and public involvement process. She would like to know what specifically caused Measure B to fail, whether it was the presentation of the measure, the economics, or the density. She is encouraged that economic feasibility be carefully considered so that infeasible ideas do not even move forward. She pointed out that it should be a high priority to retain industrial waterfront uses, as that feature is becoming a premium in the Bay Area.

Board Member Ibsen whether the City has set aside staff and a budget to facilitate this effort.

Staff affirmed this.

9-C Transportation Thresholds of Significance – Applicant – City of Alameda. The Planning Board will hold a hearing to consider the City of Alameda thresholds of significance for use in the environmental review process for new projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Mr. Andrew Thomas presented the project.

Mr. Obaid Khan added that Public Works also closely worked with AC Transit on evaluating the thresholds. He explained at which point a given project would pay into transportation measures as long as a nexus is given. He explained the methodology of levels of service.

President Ezzy Ashcraft asked how the pedestrian signals impact the traffic flow and timing of service of levels.

Mr. Khan stated that pedestrian signals (with signal buttons) have limited impact on traffic flow.

Board Member Kohlstrand commended staff for tackling such a difficult topic. She is skeptical of the level of service approach, as the level of detail may be overkill given that the traffic speeds in Alameda are maximally 25 m/hr. She pointed to San Francisco and New York for assessing transportation impacts in innovative ways and assessing multi-modal impacts. She questions whether the level of service analysis is really sufficient, as the models are insufficient. In the long-term, traffic impacts will more likely be evaluated in light of greenhouse gas emissions, which will be the greater impact in the long-term.

Board Member Zuppan pointed out that given the significant cost for a given transportation impact analysis, she would like to see less detail and instead a higher level analysis.

Mr. Thomas stated that point is well taken and explained that staff is considering area-wide traffic analysis based on maximal density projections. This approach would also allow cost sharing for mitigation measures as projects come online.

Board Member Kohlstrand supported this idea.

No action was taken on this item.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

Bicycle Master Plan Resolution PB-10-16

Staff and the board discussed the revised version of resolution PB-10-016 and endorsed the revisions.

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

Board Member Zuppan asked what the status was on the Park Vista Project at the former Cavanaugh property.

Mr. Andrew Thomas stated that they are currently still in plan check, but that they are moving forward with the project.

President Ezzy Ashcraft asked for an update on this project at the next meeting.

12. ADJOURNMENT: 10:08 pm