

**CITY OF SAN PABLO
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
NOVEMBER 28, 2017
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
ONE ALVARADO SQUARE
SAN PABLO, CA**

ROLL CALL

Chairperson Xavier called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. Call of the roll showed present Commissioner Inglis, Chairperson Xavier, and Commissioner Trujillo. Commissioner Feliciano and Commissioner Shi were absent. Staff present at the meeting included: Michele Rodriguez, Development Services Director; Lynn Tracy Nerland, City Attorney; Sarah Maroof, Administrative Secretary; Charles Ching, Assistant to the City Manager/Economic Development; Tricia Stevens, Planning Consultant; and Ron Sissem, CEQA Consultant.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Xavier made a correction to the minutes for the meeting of October 17, 2017. She stated that, under Planning Commission Reports, the following statement needed correcting:

“Commissioner Xavier reported that she missed this month’s Hazardous Materials meeting due to a meeting of the EBMUD Board. She also reported on the Council of Industries’ Bay Tour.”

The foregoing statement was corrected by Commissioner Xavier to read as follows:

“Commissioner Xavier reported that she missed this month’s Hazardous Materials meeting because she was representing the President of EBMUD at the Council of Industries Bay Tour.”

Commissioner Trujillo made a motion to approve the minutes as amended for the meeting of October 17, 2017. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Inglis and approved by a vote of 3-0-2, with Commissioner Shi and Commissioner Feliciano absent.

AYES: Trujillo, Xavier, Inglis.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: Shi, Feliciano.
ABSTAIN: None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PLAN1603-0012: City of San Pablo General Plan and Specific Plan Amendments for the existing City Hall at 13831 San Pablo Avenue and Adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration under CEQA. To consider amendments to the San Pablo General Plan and the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan to allow for redevelopment of a portion of the site for mixed use or residential uses. The amendments

consist of changing the land use designation from public/institutional to Mixed Use Center City Hall Site (new designation) for the 4.46 acre site, along with text amendments. APNS 411-330-37,38, and 39.

This is a City initiated project. An Initial Study (IS) and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Initial Study concludes that the proposed project has the potential to result in significant adverse environment impacts. The mitigation measures identified in the Initial Study and the Mitigated Negative Declaration would reduce the impacts to a less than significant level.

By way of introduction of the project, Director Rodriguez reported that the City of San Pablo conducted a Targeted Industries Study in 2014 and, as part of study, some key sites were identified as having the potential for redevelopment, one being the existing City Hall site. Following that, in 2015, the City Council approved a resolution approving the sale and redevelopment of the existing City Hall site, consistent with the Targeted Industries Study, triggering the initiation of the General Plan and Specific Plan amendments currently before the Planning Commission, as well as the Mitigated Negative Declaration. Director Rodriguez introduced Ron Sisssem, the CEQA Consultant who prepared the policy document; Tricia Stevens, the Planning Consultant handling the project; and Charles Ching, Assistant to the City Manager/Economic Development, who would be available to answer questions related to future redevelopment.

Planning Consultant Tricia Stevens gave an overview of the project and answered questions from the Planning Commissioners. Commission Trujillo asked questions regarding the maximum height and number of stories allowed, referencing page 11 of Resolution 17-19, *Mixed Use Center City Hall Site*, commenting that five stories seemed too high for the area. Ms. Stevens responded that the maximum height of 60 feet and maximum five stories would allow flexibility for redevelopment, and that she believed the proposed amendments were consistent with what was currently allowed along the San Pablo Avenue corridor. Director Rodriguez reported that properties to the north and east of the current City Hall site were designated Specific Plan Commercial Mixed Use and allowed to be up to 40 feet and three stories in height; whereas properties to the south and across Church Lane were designated Commercial Mixed Use South and were allowed to a maximum height of 60 feet and five stories. Because of the park and green space, it was felt that the current City Hall site was more connected to the Commercial Mixed Use South and therefore should be allowed to be up to 60 feet and five stories in height, with the building heights gradually decreasing as they extend toward residential areas.

Commissioner Trujillo also commented that that the Exhibit 1 to Resolution 17-19 should provide more clarity on where residential space would be allowed on the ground floor, suggesting that commercial uses should be required along San Pablo Avenue and that residential uses only be allowed on the ground floor on frontages not along Pablo Avenue.

Commissioner Trujillo also felt that the current City Hall courtyards, which were designed by a prolific East Bay architect, was the most beautiful piece of public art in the City and should be protected, excluded from redevelopment, and preserved as public space accessible by public walkways. Director Rodriguez reported the WSA historic resource assessment conclusion that the courtyards are not recognized as a historic resource in the General Plan, are not eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources designation, and are not of CEQA historic resource value. Despite the courtyards not being designated as historically significant, Commissioner Trujillo wanted both preservation of the courtyards and a future design to create public access with pathways from the historic buildings to the courtyards.

The public hearing was opened. Janet Pottier of the San Pablo Historical Society commented that she would like to see the entire site preserved as a historic park with public pathways connecting the site to parking, but stated that she understood the major problems with the existing City Hall and that redevelopment was probably inevitable for the site. She wanted to keep the historical look of existing buildings and materials in each building. She expressed concern that digging at the site may disturb Native American remains and/or artifacts, and she voiced a desire that any artifacts found on the site should remain in San Pablo for the benefit of San Pablo citizens rather than moving them somewhere outside of San Pablo. Ms. Pottier recommended adding historic markers. There was some discussion about the difficulties inherent in moving the Blume House or the Alvarado Adobe Museum.

Commissioner Trujillo proposed the following changes to Resolution 17-19:

- 1) Amendment to Resolution 17-19, page 12, Table 2-3, adding a superscript “2” to the Minimum column for “Mixed Use Center City Hall Site,” where footnote 2 states, “The frontage of a site along San Pablo Avenue is required to be devoted to active uses. Residential is not permitted at the ground level along San Pablo Avenue.”
- 2) Amendment to Resolution 17-19, page 15, *Specific Plan Page 2-23*, 2-I-17, add “and center courtyards” after “Alvarado Adobe site,” so that 2-I-17 would now read as follows:

2-I-17 Encourage redevelopment of the Mixed Use Center City Hall Site, excluding the portion occupied by the historic Alvarado Adobe site and center courtyards, as a mixed use project with commercial uses and high density residential. Although a mixed use project is encouraged, a high-density residential only project is allowed with Design Review.

Commissioner Trujillo made a motion to adopt Resolution 17-19, amended to incorporate the foregoing proposed changes to page 12, Table 2-3 and to page 15, *Specific Plan Page 2-23*, 2-I-17, recommending to the City Council approval of PLAN1603-0012 amendments to General Plan and San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan for the 4.46 acre existing City Hall. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Inglis, and the Planning Commission voted in favor of Resolution 17-19 as amended by a vote of 2-1-2-0, with Commissioner Xavier voting nay, and Commissioners Shi and Feliciano absent.

AYES: Trujillo, Inglis
NOES: Xavier
ABSENT: Shi, Feliciano
ABSTAIN: None

Commissioner Xavier stated for the record that she voted nay because the center courtyard in front of Buildings 2, 3, and 4 is not historical, another courtyard could be made at a different site, and she felt that it would be too complicated to exclude the courtyard from redevelopment and only allow building around the courtyard. Since the courtyard was not a protected historical site, she did not think it needed to be excluded from redevelopment. Commissioner Trujillo stated he agreed the courtyard was not historical, but there is no current effort to build another public gathering space, especially one designed by a renowned architect.

NEW BUSINESS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

Director Rodriguez reviewed the following items:

- United States Geological Survey Workshop
- Residential Health & Safety Ordinance amendments and community workshop in Q1 of 2018
- San Pablo's Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize achievement

OLD BUSINESS/ UPDATES

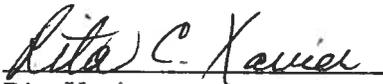
- Development Services Monthly Report
- San Pablo City Council Priority-Setting Workshop Final Report of 11/6/17
- Update on Residential Design Guidelines
- Update on Fire Station #70
- Update on Art in Public Places ordinance
- Continued discussion of possible Planning Commission meeting dates changed in 2018 from third Tuesday of each month to second or fourth Tuesday of the month.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Xavier reported on last Hazardous Materials Commission meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Xavier adjourned the meeting at 7:45 P.M. to the December 19, 2017 meeting.



Rita Xavier
Chairperson


Reina J. Schwartz
Assistant City Manager