

City of Albany

Planning & Zoning Commission Minutes January 13, 2016 Meeting

1 Note: These minutes are subject to Planning and Zoning Commission approval. The minutes
2 are not verbatim. An audiotape of the meeting is available for public review.

3 4 **Regular Meeting**

5
6 1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission was
7 called to order by Chair Donaldson in the City Council Chambers at 7:00 P.M. on
8 Wednesday, January 13, 2016.

9
10 2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

11
12 3. **ROLL CALL**

13
14 Present: Friedland, Giesen-Fields, Kent, Menotti, Donaldson

15 Absent: None

16 Staff Present: City Planner Anne Hersch

17 Community Development Director Jeff Bond

18
19 4. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

20 (Consent Calendar items are considered routine and will be enacted by one
21 motion. By approval of the Consent Calendar, the staff recommendations will
22 be adopted unless otherwise modified by the Commission. There will be no
23 separate discussion on these items unless a Commission Member or a member of
24 the audience requests removal of the items from the Consent Calendar.)

25
26 Ms. Hersch stated with respect to Consent item PA 15-093 for 707 Washington Avenue
27 that the parking request and parking exception needed to be clarified. The existing
28 property had one legally recognized parking space in the garage, the square footage
29 being added triggered the requirement for a second off-street parking space, and the
30 legalization of the secondary dwelling unit required a third parking space, although there
31 was only room on the property for two spaces; one in the garage and one in the
32 driveway. The applicant's request was to waive the parking space requirement for the
33 third space and recognize the second off-street space in the front yard setback with a
34 reduced dimension of 16 feet where 18 feet is the standard requirement. If approved by
35 the Commission, the record and the findings would be changed to reflect that
36 clarification.

1 **A. PA 15-093 Design Review and Parking Exception for 707 Washington**
2 **Avenue.** The applicant is seeking Design Review and Parking Exception
3 approval for a rear addition at 707 Washington Avenue. The subject site is
4 3,500 square feet with an existing two bedroom one bathroom main living
5 unit and a one bedroom, one bathroom secondary unit. The structure
6 was built in 1941. The applicant is proposing to add 305 square feet at the
7 rear of the home, expanding the lower level secondary residential unit by
8 100 square feet and the upper level main residence by 205 square feet.
9 This will result in a 649 square foot secondary unit and 1,138 square foot
10 main residence with a maximum height of 18 feet 6 inches. One off-street
11 parking space is provided in the attached garage. A Parking Exception is
12 required to allow the second off-street parking space in the driveway in
13 the front yard setback. **Recommendation: Review and approve subject**
14 **to the findings and Conditions of Approval attached to the staff report**
15 **dated January 13, 2016.**

16
17 *CEQA: The project is Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303*
18 *“New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.”*
19

20 **B. Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes from December 9, 2015.**

21
22 Commissioner Giesen-Fields advised that he had edits to the minutes of
23 the December 9, 2015 meeting which he would provide to staff in writing.
24

25 **Motion to approve the Consent Calendar approving PA 15-093 for 707**
26 **Washington Avenue, as shown; and the Minutes from the December 9,**
27 **2015 meeting, with staff to incorporate edits from Commissioner Giesen-**
28 **Fields: Friedland**

29 Seconded by: Giesen-Fields

30 AYES: Friedland, Giesen-Fields, Kent, Menotti, Donaldson

31 NAYES: None

32 **Motion passed, 5-0**

33
34 Chair Donaldson identified the 14-day appeal period.
35

36 **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

37 For persons desiring to address the Commission on an item that is not on the
38 agenda please note that each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes. The Brown
39 Act limits the Commission’s ability to take and/or discuss items that are not on the
40 agenda; therefore, such items are normally referred to staff for comment or to a
41 future agenda.
42

43 **Julie Winkelstein**, Albany, distributed information related to Airbnb and its potential
44 impact on the City given over 300 Airbnb listings in Albany alone. Concerned with the
45 effect on the community and the question of what was a neighborhood and what was a
46 community, she suggested the City investigate that situation before it became worse.

1 She noted there was no hotel tax in Albany because there was no hotel, but
2 recommended a hotel tax. She questioned the zoning for that type of activity, and
3 referenced the impacts to the community with respect to parking.
4

5 **Alexa Hauser**, Albany, a member of the Diverse Housing Working Group, updated the
6 Commission on the project to provide community-supported showers for people
7 experiencing homelessness in Albany. She also referred to two reports related to
8 Oakland and the impact of short-term rentals on affordable housing, and alternatives to
9 unsanctioned homeless encampments that she would make available to the
10 Commission, if desired.
11

12 **6. DISCUSSIONS & POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**
13

- 14 **A. Study Session: PA 15-097 Design Review and Conditional Use Permit for a**
15 **New Single-Family Home at 1198 Curtis Street.** The applicant has
16 submitted an application for Design Review and Conditional Use Permit
17 for a new single-family home located at 1198 Curtis Street. The property
18 was subdivided in 2011 and includes an 8,133 square foot lot adjacent to
19 the Cordonices Creek. The applicant would like to construct a 1,973
20 square foot three bedroom, two and a half bathroom home with a
21 maximum height of 22 feet 9 inches. A Conditional Use Permit is required
22 to cantilever a portion of the home in the required Watercourse Overlay
23 setback. The home is proposed to have a contemporary Mediterranean
24 appearance. This is a study session and no action will be taken.
25 **Recommendation: Provide feedback to the applicant and staff.**
26

27 *CEQA: The project is Categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15303*
28 *“New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.”*
29

30 City Planner Anne Hersch presented the staff report dated January 13, 2016.
31

32 **Kevin Wipaki**, the property owner, explained they were currently looking at the footprint,
33 how the footprint could be utilized, and whether or not a cantilever would be allowed,
34 after which the design and materials would be refined.
35

36 In response to questions from the Commission, Mr. Wipaki explained that he, his wife, and
37 two children would occupy the three bedroom, two bath home. He also described the
38 topography adjacent to the creek, stated the garage structure currently on the property
39 would be removed, clarified the location of the property lines, and identified a new six-
40 foot fence along one side of the property.
41

42 Commissioner Menotti noted there appeared to be a large volume of the home to be
43 cantilevered, and he verified that a structural analysis would be provided with the formal
44 application.
45

46 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

1
2 There was no one to speak to the item.

3
4 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

5
6 Commissioner Giesen-Fields agreed that the cantilevered section seemed to be extreme
7 for the heavy load of a bedroom, which was a concern. He supported the style of the
8 home, as shown, in terms of the architectural detailing of the windows, and the
9 landscaping, although he noted the information was not accurate. He was concerned
10 with the size of the cantilevers and the fact it cantilevered over the Creek Conservation
11 Area where some supports might be required.

12
13 Commissioner Kent was also concerned with the cantilevered portion, particularly in
14 relation to the Creek Conservation Area, and suggested that represented an aggressive
15 move over the creek and overreached the setback, moving in and out of the setback.
16 He also expressed concern with the concrete patio in relation to the creek and
17 supported an impervious surface.

18
19 Commissioner Menotti suggested the cantilever could be made to work. He liked the
20 way the patio tried to take advantage of the open space of the creek, but shared the
21 staff concerns for the massing and wanted to see more variation. Given the number of
22 trees on the site, for the next review he wanted to know the plan for landscaping. He
23 commented that in the proposed General Plan there was a section related to
24 construction impacts in relation to the creek, and urged consideration of how the site
25 might relate to that policy.

26
27 Commissioner Friedland supported a style more reflective of the existing natural elements
28 present on the site, which would lend itself better to a modern approach than to the
29 proposed Mediterranean approach, which she suggested would be out of character
30 with the site.

31
32 Chair Donaldson agreed with the need for a more modern approach. Referring to the
33 site plan that had been submitted, he stated a boundary topographic survey would
34 have to be prepared to identify the trees; those to be removed and those to be saved,
35 and recommended a full boundary topographic survey to identify the centerline of the
36 creek and the slopes given the sensitive site.

37
38 Acknowledging the challenges of the site, Chair Donaldson had no problem having the
39 ground floor be smaller than the upper floor and understood the need for the cantilevers.

40
41 With respect to the 3-D rendering, Chair Donaldson commented that it was overly
42 dramatic but suggested that would be softened by the trees and by landscaping. As
43 such, a landscape plan would be critical for the site. He wanted to know what would
44 happen to the street right of way at the front edge which was now a tangle of ivy and a
45 falling down fence, noted the fence was 20 to 30 feet back from the street as more of an
46 internal privacy fence, and wanted to see what the street presence would look like. He

1 also hoped there would be views from the sidewalk of the creek way to allow people to
2 see the creek, which would have to be done thoughtfully.

3
4 Chair Donaldson described the site as quite vegetative and stated that many of the trees
5 should be preserved. He agreed with staff with respect to the rear elevation, had no
6 problem coming up to the 20-foot setback line in the rear, and did not know whether he
7 could accept an encroachment into the rear setback questioning whether the findings
8 could be made. He suggested the placement of the garage was acceptable, did not
9 think the cantilever needed to be cantilevered so much, suggested the railings for the
10 balcony did not fit with the rest of the design of the building, and questioned the reason
11 for the bulb-out on the second floor on the side. As to staff's comment with respect to a
12 carriage style garage door, he agreed with that comment given that the view of the
13 garage door from the street would be prominent. He urged the applicant to work with
14 staff.

15
16 Commissioner Kent noted that the driveway was located mostly in the setback and he
17 asked if the driveway could be pushed closer to the northern property line. He thought
18 the idea of encroaching into the rear setback had some merit. He added that the
19 sketch did not fit into the neighborhood.

20
21 Commissioner Giesen-Fields suggested the applicant consider the possibility of
22 excavating the site to allow a split level to maximize the square footage with a third floor.

23
24 Given the close proximity of the creek that had reportedly flooded in the past, Chair
25 Donaldson verified with the applicant that the flood plain had been considered.

26 27 **7. NEW BUSINESS**

- 28
29 **A. Draft General Plan Study Session.** The Planning and Zoning Commission
30 will conduct a public hearing on the Draft Albany 2035 General Plan. This
31 hearing is intended as an opportunity for public comment and
32 Commission comment on the draft document. No formal action will be
33 taken, with publication of the Final Environmental Impact Report. A
34 subsequent public hearing will be held at which time the Commission will
35 take action on a recommendation to the City Council.
36 **Recommendation: Receive report. No action is required.**

37
38 ***CEQA: The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) is available as part of***
39 ***the public comment period which is November 25, 2015 to January 25,***
40 ***2016.***

41 Barry Miller, the Planning Consultant for the General Plan Update, offered a presentation
42 on the Draft Albany 2035 General Plan, advised that the close of the EIR comment period
43 would be January 25, 2016, although comments on the General Plan would be
44 considered after that date and up to adoption, after which an Addendum to the
45 General Plan would be prepared in response to the comments received. He expected
46 the document to be returned to the Planning & Zoning Commission in March 2016 for a

1 recommendation to the City Council, which was expected to consider the General Plan
2 in April 2016.

3
4 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

5
6 **Alexa Hauser**, Albany, a member of the Diverse Housing Working Group, noted that in
7 their attempt to give a specific way in which their suggestion could be incorporated into
8 the General Plan, the point of the suggestion had been missed. She clarified that the
9 Diverse Housing Group did not advocate for housing on Golden Gate Fields property if
10 redeveloped within the process, but advocated that any redevelopment projects that
11 occurred in Albany should be leveraged to increase housing in whatever ways were
12 appropriate to meet the Regional Housing Needs Assessment goals and percentages of
13 income categories. As such, the Diverse Housing Working Group supported language in
14 the land use and waterfront sections of the General Plan to address the issues of
15 redevelopment projects and making them resources for housing, resources for offsetting
16 housing elsewhere in the City, or creating money through an affordable housing fund.
17 She encouraged the Commission to move forward on changes to parking, specifically
18 the part of Measure D requiring two parking spaces for every new unit.

19
20 **Julie Winkelstein**, Albany, also supported efforts to provide affordable housing,
21 particularly extremely low and low income housing. With only six people currently in the
22 audience, she commented that she had only been informed of the meeting by the
23 Diverse Housing Working Group and she suggested there was not a good effort to solicit
24 good community participation. She urged that a bigger effort be made to encourage
25 residents to participate by posting notices at all public places to encourage the public's
26 participation.

27
28 **Jerri Holan**, Albany, a local architect and a preservation architect, explained she had
29 submitted a letter to the City. She emphasized the need to consider historic preservation
30 in light of the new General Plan, and stated that more needed to be done to mitigate
31 the impacts on Albany's historic resources. She noted that an historic resource was
32 legally as important as a natural resource in regard to the California Environmental
33 Quality Act (CEQA). Given that the size of homes was being increased, she
34 recommended the preparation of a good historic ordinance and suggested starting with
35 language in the General Plan beyond the language that had already been proposed.

36
37 Referring specifically to General Plan Goal LU-6.G, and the language to work with the
38 Northwest Information Center (NWIC) at Sonoma State University to identify resources, Ms.
39 Holan stated the NWIC was stretched. She therefore recommended developers or
40 owners of properties over 50 years old, the state standard, identify whether a property
41 was a cultural or historic resource, and whether the proposal would pose a negative
42 impact.

43 Ms. Holan noted that she was a historic resource for a number of cities and suggested a
44 historic consultant for Albany. She also recommended starting a list of important
45 buildings in Albany. She added that the General Plan stated that historic structures were
46 defined and protected by the zoning regulations, which she stated was not the case,

1 and the language should be strengthened to address that concern. She promoted the
2 idea of starting a subcommittee or a working committee of the Planning & Zoning
3 Commission to study what a historic ordinance might look like in Albany.

4
5 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

6
7 Chair Donaldson referred to a number of typos that he would provide to staff, and
8 complimented staff and Mr. Miller for putting together the final document leading to a
9 General Plan that would be a useful, durable document for the City. The Chair offered
10 the following comments:

- 11
- 12 • Figure 2-1 on Page 2-2, the base map showed Albany situated in the wrong
- 13 county;
- 14 • Page 2-10 in the Albany Fast Facts table, the City's area was shown as 1.7 square
- 15 miles although elsewhere in the document it was shown as 1.8 square miles;
- 16 • Page 3-38, about the potential future Solano Avenue BART station which should
- 17 likely not happen and should be eliminated (although Commissioner Menotti
- 18 suggested it be retained given the 20-year horizon of the General Plan);
- 19 • Page 4-4, the data on automobile ownership was highlighted in light of the parking
- 20 issues in Albany;
- 21 • Figure 4-4 on Page 4-20, questioned whether the upcoming Class IV cycle track
- 22 should be shown on that graphic;
- 23 • Page 6-10, the photo was mislabeled;
- 24 • Page 7-12 in the Conservation Element, the units of measurement appeared to be
- 25 missing in the greenhouse gas emissions reference;
- 26 • Page 7-14, the photo was mislabeled;
- 27 • Page 7-15 with respect to species of special concern suggested adding Peregrine
- 28 Falcon to that list, and noted the name of the California clapper rail had been
- 29 changed;
- 30 • Page 7-16 to include the Peregrine falcon or delete the California brown pelican;
- 31 • Page 7-25, Tree Preservation Policy, recommended that the text be changed from
- 32 "require" the preservation of mature trees, to "encourage" given that the City
- 33 should have the flexibility of preserving or not mature trees; and add language
- 34 that trees would be removed if they endangered a structure or represented a
- 35 health hazard;
- 36 • Page 8-11, Hazardous Materials Chapter, noted the Kinder Morgan gasoline
- 37 transport pipelines along the AM Pacific Corridor that had not been mentioned in
- 38 the EIR or the General Plan and should be acknowledged in the hazardous section
- 39 or elsewhere in the General Plan and in the FEIR;
- 40 • For the Energy and Telecommunications section, the EIR focused on landlines but
- 41 needed to be broader and focus on telecommunications.
- 42 • Recommended draft policies with respect to Golden Gate Fields, which should be
- 43 included in the appropriate sections.
- 44

45 Commissioner Kent offered the following comments:

- 1 • Page 2-3, the image that had been provided was not appropriate for what it was
- 2 to represent;
- 3 • Page 3-16, the open space and natural resource category should include the
- 4 creek overlay.
- 5 • Page 4-7, Transportation Element, requested that the first sentence be removed;
- 6 • Page 4-8, diagram did not include all the gateways to Albany;
- 7 • Page 4-12, diagram showed the class of bicycle lanes which should be used
- 8 consistently throughout the document;
- 9 • Page 4-13, the image of a class I bicycle lane was actually of a pedestrian path;
- 10 • Page 4-32, recommended a change in text to " "encourage public based design
- 11 that encourages walking;"
- 12 • Page 4-33, Policy T-2.9 in the first sentence recommended "Take a 'leadership'
- 13 role" be replaced with "Take a 'proactive' role;"
- 14 • Page 4-36, Action T-3.F, advocated language to allow homeowners to pool local
- 15 resources to improve sidewalks (Mr. Bond noted the action should be updated to
- 16 reflect the City's new Sidewalk Policy.);
- 17 • Page 4-36, Action T-3.I noted that bus stops were not clean and were supposed to
- 18 be cleaned by those advertising in them, which should be mentioned in the
- 19 document;
- 20 • Page 4-37, Action T-4.8 and T-4.9 emphasized with respect to security there was
- 21 more than just lighting;
- 22 • Page 4-37, Action T-4.B noted the problem was that if people parked in the road
- 23 fire trucks could not get by and something would have to be done first to reduce
- 24 or stagger parking, to be managed by the city;
- 25 • Page 6-3, open space and the four types required; recreation, preservation and
- 26 natural resources, managed production, and public health and safety should
- 27 include streets and sidewalks as the most important open space in the community,
- 28 and addressing streets as an enhanced livability aspect had only been mentioned
- 29 once.
- 30 • The Gill Tract was mentioned under open space for managed production of
- 31 resource but was not on the map of the open space;
- 32 • Page 6-5, the map did not show the Gill Tract even though it was mentioned in
- 33 that category and did not show the ballparks;
- 34 • Page 3-11 for riparian corridors showed the setbacks for the Creek Conservation
- 35 Areas but did not show all the creeks in Albany and a reference to the San
- 36 Francisco Estuary Institute Watershed Map was recommended ((Mr. Miller stated
- 37 the map on Page 7-5 showed all the creeks); (Chair Donaldson suggested that the
- 38 project at El Cerrito Plaza would daylight a piece of Cerrito Creek which the map
- 39 should reflect);
- 40 • Page 7-24, Action CON-1.D for creek clean-ups should be reinforced to remind
- 41 people to clean up the creek;
- 42 • Page 10-25, Golden Gate Fields implementing action W-6.A; noted a 100-foot
- 43 setback would have an impact on Golden Gate Fields.
- 44

45 With respect to streets as open space, Chair Donaldson verified Commissioner Kent's
46 reference to sidewalks as open space.

1
2 Commissioner Menotti noted that many times streets were closed off for some event, and
3 in that case it would be open space.

4
5 Commissioner Menotti offered the following comments:

- 6
7
- 8 • Page 4-23 and the Level of Service (LOS) discussion referencing where the state
9 was going with respect to LOS, requested an articulation of how that measure
10 related to the other elements in the plan such as sustainability and public health to
11 foreshadow where that might go;
 - 12 • Page 4-41, Action T-6.B, regarding multi-modal levels of service, suggested was the
13 wrong place for that action. Outside of LOS, he referred to connectivity to the
14 waterfront and another crossing of the freeway on Gilman that while in the City of
15 Berkeley suggested that Albany should have a point of view and a partnership in
16 that project.
 - 17 • Page 4-32 calling out transit served corridors, recommended adding the proximity
18 to the El Cerrito BART station, to be modified to include transit stations;
 - 19 • Recommended the replacement of the old style pedestrian crossing buttons with
20 updated devices for traffic signals.

21 Commissioner Giesen-Fields offered the following comments:

- 22
- 23 • With respect to Golden Gate Fields, supported a policy or implementing action to
24 address speculative development of Golden Gate Fields, with the inclusion of the
25 following language: *Encourage and support a dialogue between the city and*
26 *any owners of Golden Gate Fields and/or land related to Golden Gate Fields to*
27 *encourage development that supports the policies and goals concerning housing,*
28 *natural resource allocation, open spaces, recreation, and mixed use*
29 *development.*
 - 30 • Page 10-25, Policy W-6.1, include a statement to initiate a dialogue with respect to
31 Golden Gate Fields before it gets to that point.

32
33 Chair Donaldson noted that the City had tried to involve representatives from of Golden
34 Gate Fields, although representative of Golden Gate Fields had not been receptive to
35 the City's attempt to start a dialogue.

36
37 Commissioner Friedland reported that she had ample opportunity to make comments
38 previously but supported the insertion of language to refer to the potential future
39 development of Golden Gate Fields. On the comment with respect to the lack of public
40 participation, she asked how many unique individuals had offered comments through
41 the process.

42 Mr. Miller reported that hundreds had been involved in the process because the booth at
43 the Solano Stroll alone had attracted hundreds to see what it was all about. He referred
44 to the meetings specific to housing, and stated that had not been done with the General
45 Plan because they had focused that process with the city commissions which covered all
46 the topic areas in the General Plan. He added that there had not been a huge

1 attendance at the meetings focused just on the General Plan although 20 to 25 residents
2 had routinely participated.

3
4 Ms. Hersch emphasized that she and Mr. Miller had participated at off-site off-hours
5 events over the past two years to inform the public of the process along with other broad
6 public outreach.

7
8 There was a brief discussion of the recommendations from Jerry Holan with respect to
9 historic resources. The Commission recognized that Albany was changing, supported a
10 third-party objectiveness to the process, noted some of the buildings in the city needed
11 some sort of backing to support them, and suggested strengthening the design
12 guidelines to add language around preserving the historic character of buildings in
13 Albany. It was recommended that the item be placed as a future study session around
14 the options and opportunities for historic preservation.

15
16 Ms. Hersch advised that as part of the work plan for 2016, the Commission would be
17 asked to update the Residential Design Guidelines.

- 18
19 **B. Draft General Plan Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) Study Session.** The
20 Planning and Zoning Commission will conduct a public hearing on the
21 Draft Environmental Impact Report. This hearing is intended as an
22 opportunity for public comment and Commission comment on the draft
23 document. No formal action will be taken until the publication of the
24 Final EIR. A subsequent public hearing will be held at which time the
25 Commission will take action on a recommendation to the City Council.
26 **Recommendation: Receive report. No action is required.**

27
28 *CEQA: The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) is available as part of*
29 *the public comment period which is November 25, 2015 to January 25,*
30 *2016.*

31
32 Mr. Miller advised that the plan was intended to be self-mitigating in that the policies in
33 the plan addressed the impacts of development in the future.

34
35 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

36
37 There were no comments from the public.

38
39 PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

40
41 Chair Donaldson commented that a 450-page EIR was too long. He referred to the Land
42 Use Map in the EIR and asked if it had been carefully compared with the Zoning Map
43 and urged that be done. He also referred to the size of Albany and noted on Page 47
44 that the 1.8 square miles and 1,144 acres or 1,145 acres needed to be reconciled.

1 Mr. Miller explained that the discrepancy related to salt marshes and had been clarified
2 by a footnote in the General Plan. He advised that the same footnote would be inserted
3 into the EIR.

4
5 Chair Donaldson offered the following comments on the EIR:

- 6
- 7 • Page 78, the average auto ownership per household of 1.41 in the table was
8 interesting information and should be considered when talking about parking;
- 9 • Page 106, the concluding sentence in the third paragraph about traffic volumes
10 was not borne out by the preceding analysis;
- 11 • With respect to tree preservation, he noted that people wanted to cut down trees
12 to allow rooftop solar, which was an issue that required the creation of policies,
13 which was why he did not want to require the preservation of all mature trees;
- 14 • He offered the same comments in the hazardous materials section with respect to
15 the Kinder Morgan pipelines;
- 16 • Page 279, Table 3.3, noted that the Western pond turtle had earlier been reported
17 as not having been found in Cordonices Creek, although Page 300 had indicated
18 it had been seen;
- 19 • Reiterated that the California clapper rail had been renamed;
- 20 • Page 371, a reference to Policy CSF-2.8 talked about mutual aid with Alameda
21 and Contra Costa counties although the environmental setting section of the EIR
22 indicated that the only mutual aid agreements were with Alameda County. He
23 recommended a General Plan policy to have mutual aid with Richmond and El
24 Cerrito;
- 25 • With respect to schools, the build out of the General Plan would add a number of
26 students to schools and by definition the school fee had to be adequate
27 mitigation, which it was not;
- 28 • Telecommunications needed to be updated to talk about all kinds of
29 communications mechanisms;
- 30 • The visual section did not have enough emphasis in the environmental setting
31 about the views of the Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco that were
32 extraordinary, iconic, and unique to Albany, and that section had to be
33 enhanced;
- 34 • Under the light and glare section, the visual issues caused by light and glare from
35 billboards represented visual pollution and should be so noted. A policy to
36 highlight them and phase them out was recommended.

37
38 Commissioner Menotti noted that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) had
39 adopted a Regional Rail Plan, had looked at the Capital Corridor Alignment, and had
40 developed a long-term strategy to put a transit level of service along the corridor.

41 Commissioner Menotti suggested looking at an infill type of station along the waterfront
42 with any development of the waterfront.

43 44 **8. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/DISCUSSION**

45 46 **A. 2016 Planning & Zoning Commission Work Plan**

1
2 Ms. Hersch distributed the 2016 Planning & Zoning Commission Work Plan, stated that the
3 2016 plan considered the Commission's accomplishments in 2015, which she highlighted
4 at this time, and reported that there were 107 applications which included 35 residential
5 remodels and 8 use permit applications compared with 2014 when there had been 21
6 remodel applications and 4 use permit applications. The work load had increased and
7 was expected to continue.

8
9 Ms. Hersch also highlighted what was hoped to be accomplished in 2016, which included
10 policy implementation, a nexus fee study, continuation of the regular application load,
11 working on a parking study and a nexus study with the City of San Leandro, an update to
12 the massage regulations, fine-tuning the wireless regulations, consider the Residential
13 Design Review Guidelines, and conduct a historic resources study session.

14
15 Sine San Pablo and Solano Avenues were instrumental in the Housing Plan, Commissioner
16 Menotti asked whether there was any proactive plan that could be done over the next
17 year or two, particularly as related to affordable housing.

18
19 Given the workload, Mr. Bond described efforts to increase staffing. He noted that the
20 next major focus after the adoption of the General Plan would be the parking issue and
21 bringing Measure D to the voters in November, after which he agreed with a
22 recommendation from the Commission to look at building envelope and massing.

23
24 As to any requirements related to bike parking in response to Commissioner Menotti, Ms.
25 Hersch described what the city had done with respect to bike parking.

26
27 **B. Reorganization of Chair and Vice Chair for 2016**

28
29 **Motion to select *Erik Giesen-Fields* as Chair of the Planning & Zoning**
30 **Commission for 2016:** Menotti

31 Seconded by: Kent

32 AYES: Friedland, Giesen-Fields, Kent, Menotti, Donaldson

33 NAYES: None

34 **Motion passed, 5-0**

35
36 **Motion to select *Doug Donaldson* as Vice Chair of the Planning & Zoning**
37 **Commission for 2016:** Menotti

38 Seconded by: Friedland

39
40 AYES: Donaldson, Friedland, Kent, Menotti, Giesen-Fields

41 NAYES: None

42 **Motion passed, 5-0**

43
44 The Commission thanked former Chair Donaldson for his leadership over the last year.

45
46 PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

1
2 **Ellen Hershey** offered her thanks to former Chair Donaldson for his many years on the
3 Commission and stated he was an asset to the community.

4
5 **Alexa Hauser**, Albany, thanked former Chair Donaldson for his leadership, stability, and
6 guidance. She also congratulated new Chair Giesen-Fields.

7
8 **C.** League of CA Cities Planning Commissioners Academy, March 2-4, 2016
9

10 Ms. Hersch stated that the League Academy training this year was in San Ramon and
11 any Commissioners interested in attending should identify their interest. Commissioner
12 Giesen-Fields expressed an interest in attending the session.

13 **D.** Parking Meeting on January 21, 2016
14

15 Ms. Hersch reported that one parking meeting had been scheduled for 9:00 A.M. on
16 January 21, 2016 to address the business community, with a second meeting scheduled
17 for 7:00 P.M. on that same day for residents. The meeting had been noticed. There
18 would be no Brown Act concerns for any Commissioner who wanted to attend. For those
19 not able to attend, the meeting would also be recorded.

20
21 **9. NEXT MEETING:** January 27, 2016
22

23 **10. ADJOURNMENT**
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25 The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 P.M.

26 Next regular meeting: Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at 7:00 P.M. at Albany City Hall.
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31 _____
Submitted by: Anne Hersch, City Planner
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35 _____
Jeff Bond, Community Development Director
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