

**CITY OF ALBANY  
PLANNING AND ZONING AGENDA  
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda date: 4/14/09  
Prepared by: AC  
Reviewed by: JB

**ITEM/**            **6d**  
**SUBJECT:**      **Review of Summary of Housing Element Workshop held on March 31, 2009.**

**SITE:**            **Citywide**

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On March 31, 2009, there was a community roundtable discussion about the 2009 Housing Element Update. Community members and Planning and Zoning Commissioners sat at tables in small groups, and discussed the possible sites in Albany for residential redevelopment. The goal was to find some combination of sites to achieve our Regional Housing Needs Allocation of 276 units. At the end of the session, each group presented their preferred sites, providing guidance to staff on how to proceed with preparing the draft Housing Element Update. Below is a list of each site discussed, and a brief description, and for the sites that were unanimously identified as preferred, a brief narrative of the discussion.

**A.) ALBANY BOWL OPTION 1 – DEVELOPING THE ENTIRE SITE: 95 POSSIBLE UNITS**

Albany Bowl Properties owns eight adjoining parcels along San Pablo and Adams that comprise a 50,000 square foot site. If the entire site were redeveloped, including the bowling alley facility, it could contain 95 units of housing at 30 units to the acre.

**B.) ALBANY BOWL OPTION 2 – KEEP THE BOWLING ALLEY: 61 POSSIBLE UNITS**

Another option to develop the Albany Bowl site would be to develop all of the parcels except the actual bowling alley building. These seven parcels, which comprise approximately 2.05 acres, could be developed with 61 units of housing at 30 units per acre.

**C.) ALBANY HILL: 112 POSSIBLE UNITS**

12.5 acres of developable land sit at the southwest corner of Albany Hill. The parcel runs along Pierce Street to the existing residential towers, and extends beyond the top of the ridge. If developed at 9 units per acre, 112 units could be constructed at this site. Optimally these units would be constructed towards the front portion of the site, along Pierce Street. The land outside of the parcel is Preserved Park and Recreational Open Space, and would not be affected by development.

**D.) R-3 INFILL AREA 1 – ALBANY/EL CERRITO BORDER: 24 POSSIBLE UNITS**

There are seven sites in the R-3 district near the Albany/El Cerrito border that have potential under existing regulations for higher density development. These sites are all currently single-family homes being rented out by owners who live elsewhere. The combined acreage of these sites is .65 acres, and at 35 units per acre, approximately 24 units could be constructed.

*All groups agreed on this site for possible development and use in the Housing Element. Several community members mentioned that this site would be an optimal place for residential development because of its close proximity to El Cerrito Plaza and the El Cerrito BART station, thus encouraging walking and the use of public transportation.*

**E.) R-3 INFILL AREA 2 – KAINS AVENUE AND ADAMS STREET: 27 UNITS**

This R-3 neighborhood is the corridor that stretches along the backside of San Pablo Commercial properties. It consists of the western side of Kains Avenue, and the eastern side of Adams Street. Ten parcels along these streets have potential under current regulations for higher density development. Their combined area is 1.6 acres, and if developed at 35 units per acre, could be developed into 27 units.

**F.) R-3 INFILL AREA 3 – BUCHANAN AND PIERCE STREETS: 24 UNITS**

This area is the R-3 neighborhood that sits towards the freeway, between Pierce Street and Cleveland Avenue, on the northern side of Buchanan Street. Eight parcels have potential under existing regulations to be developed at higher density. Their combined area is 1.68 acres, and could contain 24 units of housing if developed at 35 units per acre.

**G.) SAN PABLO AVE. COMMERCIAL INFILL AREA 1 – SOUTH OF SOLANO: 15/23 UNITS**

Two sites along the southern section of the San Pablo Commercial corridor have potential to be redeveloped with mixed-use buildings containing street-level commercial and housing above. One site is at 934 San Pablo, which is currently the 7,500 square-foot surface parking lot next to Kasuga Sushi. It could contain 5 units of housing if developed at 30 units per acre, or 8 if developed at 45 units per acre. The other site at 1061 San Pablo, which is the Hertz Rental Car business across from the intersection of San Pablo and Monroe. It is a 15,000 square-foot site, comprised mostly of surface parking, and could be developed into 10 units of housing if developed at 30 units per acre, or 15 units if developed at 45 units per acre. Combined, these sites could contain either 15 or 23 units depending on the development density.

**H.) SAN PABLO AVENUE COMMERCIAL INFILL AREA 2 – NORTH OF SOLANO: 50/70 UNITS**

Three sites along the northern section of the San Pablo Commercial corridor have potential to be redeveloped with mixed-use buildings containing street-level commercial and housing above. Each of these sites has a surface parking lot that extends back to Kains Ave. One site is at 805 San Pablo, which is a 20,000 square foot site with the

Mechanic's Bank and parking lot. It could contain 14 units of housing at 30 units per acre, or 21 units at 45 units per acre. Another site in this area is at 665 San Pablo, which is a 25,000 square-foot site containing the Sizzler Restaurant and parking lot. 16 units of housing could be constructed if developed at 30 units per acre, or 25 units at 45 units per acre. The third site is at 433 San Pablo. It is the 29,300 square-foot site with the Goodyear Automotive building and parking lot. At this site, 20 units of housing could be developed at 30 units per acre, and 30 units could be developed at 45 units per acre. With these three sites combined, this section of Solano could contain either 50 or 70 housing units, depending on the development density.

#### **I.) UNIVERSITY VILLAGE AREA 1 – WHOLE FOODS MIXED USE PROJECT: 175 UNITS**

At the easternmost portion of University Village, within the UCB Master Plan's designated "Step 3" redevelopment area, there is currently an application for a mixed-use development project. The plans include a Whole Foods grocery store and a senior housing complex. The development will sit street-front along San Pablo, and extend back to 10th Street. 175 units are proposed on the southern parcel at this site.

*All groups agreed on this site for possible development and use in the Housing Element. The main reason many community members chose this site was its viability to actually be developed. The fact that it already has an application in process was an incentive for the groups to choose this option.*

#### **J.) UNIVERSITY VILLAGE AREA 2 – REMAINDER OF STEP 3 PROJECT: 304 UNITS**

In the remainder of the Step 3 redevelopment area, there are approximately 8.7 acres surrounding the Whole Foods project that can be developed with housing. This area extends behind the Whole Foods project to Jackson/8th Street, and sits between Buchanan Street to Codornices Creek. The UCB Master Plan allows 552 units in this area, but realistically, 304 units could be constructed at this site if developed at 35 units per acre.

#### **K.) SOLANO AVENUE COMMERCIAL INFILL: 25 UNITS**

Three sites along Solano Avenue could be developed into mixed-use sites with street-level commercial and housing above. Their combined acreage is .82 acres and could be developed with 25 units of housing at 30 units per acre. One site is at 1451 Solano, which is a 13,000 square foot site containing the California Bank and Trust, which spans the block of Solano between Santa Fe and San Carlos. It could contain 9 units of housing at 30 units per acre. Another site, at 1245 Solano, is a vacant lot on the block of Solano between Evelyn and Masonic. It is a 6,563 square-foot site, and could contain 5 units if developed at 30 units per acre. The third site is at 1216 Solano, which is the Kid's YMCA portion of Cornell School. The School District has discussed plans to move the school administrative offices to the first level of this 16,000 square foot site, and create housing above. It could contain approximately 11 units of housing at 30 units per acre.

*All groups agreed on this site for possible development and use in the Housing Element. Again, the main reason discussed for choosing these sites was their viability to actually*

*be developed. Other reasons mentioned were the parcels' existing underutilization, and the possible improvements that housing development could bring to the sites.*

**L.) BLANK CARD – OTHER OPTIONS FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT: AT LEAST 20 UNITS**

The final option for development was left open for community members to suggest additional sites that had not yet been discussed. One idea mentioned by most groups was the inclusion of 20 second-units in R-1 neighborhoods. One group also brought up the possibility for housing development at the Safeway site.

This photo shows the final product of the workshop. Each letter represents one of the possible options for housing development, the numbers represent the different discussion groups, and the circles represent the amount of support for each site. A full circle indicates unanimous support within the group, a partial circle indicates partial support, and an empty circle indicates no support. The three options agreed upon by all groups were Option D (R-3 Infill at the Albany/El Cerrito border), Option I (the Whole Foods Project), and Option K (Solano Infill). Several groups also agreed on including 20 secondary units as part of the Housing Element.

