

MINUTES APPROVED AT THE DRB MEETING ON OCTOBER 14, 2020

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD REGULAR MEETING Richmond, CA 94804

September 23, 2020
6:00 P.M.

All Participation Via Teleconference

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Contra Costa County and Governor Gavin Newsom had issued multiple orders requiring sheltering in place, social distancing, and reduction of person-to-person contact. Accordingly, Governor Newsom had issued executive orders that allowed cities to hold public meetings via teleconferencing. Due to the shelter in place orders, all City of Richmond staff, members of the Design Review Board (DRB), and members of the public participated via teleconference. Public comment was confined to items on the agenda and limited to the specific methods identified on the agenda.

BOARD MEMBERS

Kimberly Butt
Jessica Fine
Macy Leung
Karlyn Neel

Brian Carter
Michael Hannah
Jonathan Livingston

Chair Livingston called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Jonathan Livingston, Vice Chair Michael Hannah, and Boardmembers Kimberly Butt, Brian Carter, Jessica Fine, and Macy Leung

Absent: Boardmember Karlyn Neel

INTRODUCTIONS

Staff Present: Planners Hector Lopez, Emily Carroll, and Enzo Cabili, and City Attorney Shannon Moore

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: August 26, 2020

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/Butt) to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2020 meeting, as submitted; approved by voice vote: 6-0 (Ayes: Butt, Carter, Fine, Hannah, Leung, and Livingston; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Neel).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Emily Carroll described the format of the web-based meeting and the public's ability to speak during the meeting.

Public Forum

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CORDELL HINDLER: *Good evening, Chair Livingston, Board members and staff, I have a couple of comments to go into the record. 1. If you recall when Mr. Griffith came a few meetings back to discuss the plans for the Aspire Academy, I had spoken with the Fairmede Hilltop Council, and their concerns was regarding the building not being seismic safe for students and also regarding traffic especially during the morning and afternoon commute. 2. Also if you remember when the owner came to talk with you all about the expansion of El Tapatio, my recommendation was to have the applicant to talk with the North and East Neighborhood Council once the virus gets lifted. Sincerely, Cordell.*

City Council Liaison Report: None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Boardmember Fine requested the removal of the Consent Calendar item (Item 5) for discussion, to be considered in agenda order.

Chair Livingston announced that any decision approved may be appealed in writing to the City Clerk within ten (10) days, or by Monday, October 5, 2020 by 5:00 P.M. and he announced it after each affected item.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. PLN17-029 | ZHAO SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE |
| Description | (HELD OVER FROM AUGUST 26, 2020) PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A 2,800 SQUARE FOOT SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE ON A ±6,795 SQUARE FOOT VACANT PARCEL. |
| Location | BARTH AVENUE |
| APN | 419-192-020 |
| Zoning | RH, SINGLE-FAMILY HILLSIDE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT |
| Applicant | MIN YU ZHAO (OWNER) |
| Staff Contact | ROBERTA FELICIANO Recommendation: CONTINUE TO OCTOBER 14, 2020 |

The item was recommended to be continued to the October 14, 2020 meeting.

The following public comment was submitted for this item.

BARA SAPIR: *I've conflated this email to include questions about the date of parcel discussion, and the questions I have below [highlighted in yellow]. Regarding the parcel, "Dr. Comments" I request clarification/information on the following: 1. Has any effort gone into contacting the owner of the Barth house above this parcel; I don't know who they are - - and it appears that the height of the house will greatly impact (limit) their view: In fact based on the plans, it looks as though it will completely block it. 2. Will protective provisions be made for the intersection at Harbor View up Barth, if that is where the construction trucks with material will be travelling? Here, there is a steep incline and repeatedly trucks rip up the tar which impact the residents of the streets. At this location is the border between unincorporated San Pablo and Richmond, though I don't know exactly where the exact border is. 3. What is to come of the walking path between North Arlington that meets up with Bayview Court. 4. Also, this house is significantly larger than all the houses directly near it. What is the zoning? 5. What parking considerations are relevant given Capitolina, Barth and North Arlington. Thanks in advance for your help. Bara Sapir*

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ACTION: It was M/S/C (Livingston/Hannah) to continue PLN17-029, Zhao Single-Family Residence, to the DRB meeting on October 14, 2020; approved by voice vote: 6-0 (Ayes: Butt, Carter, Fine, Hannah, Leung, Livingston; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Neel).

- 2. PLN19-038 NAVARRO NEW MIXED USE BUILDING**
- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Description | PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A MIXED-USE BUILDING CONSISTING OF GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL WITH FOUR RESIDENTIAL LIVING UNITS ON A ±4,800 SQUARE FOOT PARCEL. |
| Location | 761 23 RD STREET |
| APN | 529-180-007 |
| Zoning | CM3, COMMERCIAL MIXED USE, COMMERCIAL DISTRICT |
| Owner | JOSE AND ANA NAVARRO |
| Applicant | RICHARD TAPP (ARCHITECT) |
| Staff Contact | JONELYN WHALES Recommendation: CONTINUE TO OCTOBER 14, 2020 |

The item was recommended to be continued to the October 14, 2020 meeting.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Livingston/Hannah) to continue PLN19-038, Navarro New Mixed Use Building, to the DRB meeting on October 14, 2020; approved by voice vote: 6-0 (Ayes: Butt, Carter, Fine, Hannah, Leung, Livingston; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Neel).

- 3. PLN19-259 TWO NEW TOWNHOMES**
- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Description | PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT TWO RESIDENTIAL LIVING UNITS ON A ±5,000 SQUARE FOOT VACANT PARCEL. |
| Location | 657 HARBOUR WAY |
| APN | 534-181-004 AND 534-181-005 |
| Zoning | CM2, COMMERCIAL MIXED USE, NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICT |
| Owner | ORANT LLC |
| Applicant | MAGNOLIA SABRINA ELLIS |
| Staff Contact | HECTOR LOPEZ Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL |

Hector Lopez presented the staff report dated September 23, 2020, for the construction of two attached homes on Harbour Way South that the DRB had previously reviewed and continued with recommendations to further refine the design. The current iteration had incorporated some of those recommendations which he delineated at this time. He stated the project was now well-balanced and the design matched the bulk and mass of the building. He recommended approval of the application subject to merging the two lots, each 2,600 square feet in size, to achieve the minimum required lot size of 5,000 square feet.

Mr. Lopez responded to comments from the DRB and clarified that the proposal complied with the required area for private open space.

NICOLE FEDORA, the applicant, described the changes to the front façade, to the deck where she had used a different material to make it more balanced, to the roof where shorter panels had been used to make it smaller, and the slight variations on the lower roofs at the entryways. She added that the posts on the deck had been removed to avoid intruding over the setback.

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Vice Chair Hannah commented that the roof and fascia had been his primary concerns. He supported the changes that had been made.

Boardmember Leung liked the design, the materials and the fixtures.

Boardmember Carter supported the changes but expressed some concern for the divider between the two decks on the front of the building and recommended a screen, a trellis, or a reduction of the height at the railing level to avoid the awkward appearance.

Ms. Fedora suggested that a metal lattice that was more airy with a planter box on each side could be used to address that concern.

Boardmember Fine referred to Sheet A2.1 of the plans where sliders and fixed elements (side lights Nos. 6 and 7) had been shown that did not correspond to the east elevation, and stated those fixed elements could restrict the idea of planters.

Vice Chair Hannah cited the same section of plans, commented that the windows on the plans had not been shown on the elevation, and there was no clearance to the front of the door to get into the master bathroom. He suggested the plan needed to be internally fixed by shifting gridline four over one foot to the west which would create enough space for the master bath doors to work, and Ms. Fedora agreed.

Vice Chair Hannah referred to the detail for the front deck, emphasized the challenges of cantilevered decks in the Bay Area, and recommended more thought with respect to the drainage and downspouts.

Boardmember Carter offered examples of what could be done to provide the privacy screening and sent those examples to staff and the DRB.

Boardmember Fine acknowledged the frustrations involved for the applicant and explained that not only the design but the building phase of construction and building permit issuance were the kinds of details under discussion and were important to clarify.

As to the guardrail, Ms. Fedora stated that a modern sleek metal railing had been proposed. Chair Livingston referred to the picture that had been submitted by Boardmember Carter and suggested the guardrail in that example be considered.

Chair Livingston referred to the DRB's prior recommendation for a two-foot retaining wall in the rear of the site to control drainage and since that had not been included in the revisions, he asked if the applicant was amenable to a sump pump in the back corners of the property for each unit to address standing water and floods. Ms. Fedora agreed with the recommendation for the sump pumps.

Chair Livingston opened the public hearing.

There was no one to speak to the item.

Chair Livingston closed the public hearing.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/Hannah) to approve PLN19-259, Two New Townhomes,

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subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with 11 Conditions of Approval and additional DRB conditions as follows: 12) Eke out the two windows on either side of the sliders in the front elevation that had been shown on the plan by mistake; 13) Add a divider screen between the two decks as more of a planted trellis to follow the spirit of the exhibit submitted by Boardmember Carter without the “ball-type” detail at the top of the handrail; 14) The smaller window in the master bedroom to be aligned with the front door below; 15) The wood post at the entry to be 6x6 western red cedar clear free of heart center with concealed cap and standoff brace; 16) The 24-gauge galvanized sheet metal fascia and associated gutter shall be dark bronze painted for metal _____ or equal; 17) The applicant to install two prefabricated drainage sump pumps at the corners of the rear property line to drain the roof water and site water to face of curb; and 18) The metal panels between the windows to match the roofing color; approved by voice vote: 6-0 (Ayes: Butt, Carter, Fine, Hannah, Leung, Livingston; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Neel).

4. PLN20-052	CHEVRON CONVENIENCE STORE
Description	PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND DESIGN REVIEW TO CONSTRUCT A ±800 SQUARE FOOT CONVENIENCE STORE AT AN EXISTING GAS STATION.
Location	901 WEST CUTTING
APN	550-012-003
Zoning	IL, LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT
Owner	CHEVRON USA INC.
Applicant	ROBERT PICARD, STANTEC
Staff Contact	EMILY CARROLL Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Emily Carroll presented the staff report dated September 23, 2020, for design review and a recommendation to the Planning Commission for the construction of a new 800 square foot convenience store kiosk at an existing Chevron gas station. The application had been on a previous agenda but had been removed by the applicant to address some comments by the Point Richmond Neighborhood Council (PRNC). The proposal would also include some repair to the existing fueling tanks and piping below ground, landscaping, a new bicycle rack and repair station, the creation of three EV-ready parking spaces, and painting the existing bathrooms and utility building in a design that reflected downtown historic Point Richmond as directed by the PRNC.

Ms. Carroll described what the applicant had done to provide resonance with historic Point Richmond, and explained that Trails for Richmond Action Committee (TRAC) had requested that the applicant consolidate ingress and egress points, provide a bicycle repair station, and contribute to on-street bicycle improvements. She reported that the applicant had identified a co-lease with the adjacent property to the north and could not reconfigure the two driveways, and there was no nexus to contribute to on-street bicycle improvements. The applicant would provide the bicycle repair station, which she noted would be four stalls next to the utility building and restrooms and not next to the kiosk.

Ms. Carroll explained that comments had been received that had been included in the DRB packets and a comment from June Hight from Point Richmond dated September 18, 2020 had been forwarded to the Board. She responded to questions from the DRB and clarified that the replacement of the existing fuel tanks would not trigger any California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) certification.

BRYAN HUFFINGER, Chevron Richmond, stated that Chevron had been working with the Point

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Richmond community prior to the pandemic to make sure that they were incorporating the feedback from the community and had received unanimous approval from the PRNC and would incorporate historical reference to Point Richmond in the design of the building.

GARY SEMLING, Stantec Architects, explained that the initial project related to the required change from single-wall fuel tanks to double-wall tanks and the approaching state deadline. During that effort there was a desire to upgrade the site, improve the landscaping, and increase the size of the convenience store. He pointed out that the shared ingress/egress on the north side of the site could not be closed given that it provided access to the hotel and other businesses. The area was fenced off, there was no landscaping, and the fence would be retained.

Mr. Semling identified what would be removed on the site and what would be retained, described the floor plan of the convenience store, reported that the utility room and restrooms would be renovated, and explained that the landscape plan would upgrade all of the landscaping and add three new trees; two on Cutting and one on Canal, and refresh the entire landscape planters. After three meetings with the PRNC, a design had been approved. The existing monument signs would remain although the slumpstone would be removed and the sign base would be finished with horizontal siding and brick. The building would include display cases that could include art to further express the heritage of Point Richmond.

Ms. Carroll identified the process for public comment.

Chair Livingston opened the public hearing.

JUNE HIGHT, Point Richmond, stated that she was a member of the Board of the PRNC but was not speaking for the Board, had opposed the project as originally proposed, and thanked Chevron for going through the process with the PRNC and for making some of the changes to the plan as requested by the PRNC. She expressed concern that the canopy colors clashed and referred to a treatment that had been used elsewhere that could address that concern. As an avid bicyclist who used the Bay Trail, she understood why the ingress/egress points could not be consolidated but emphasized that the two entrances to the site were very dangerous.

BUZZ BAYLIS, a member of the PRNC Board, officially complimented Chevron on how well they had worked with the community to address the PRNC's comments.

Chair Livingston closed the public hearing.

Boardmember Leung liked the design, the rendering, and the historical context, and asked about the display cases which had been envisioned to be metal cases with glass-hinged doors where photos would be displayed and protected. She verified with Mr. Semling that of the two accessible buttons at the entry doors one would open the door and the other was potentially an emergency shut-off switch that was required to be accessible to the public, and she requested that the open door button be placed lower on the façade to accommodate someone in a wheelchair. She also verified that the trash enclosure would be covered, but not completely, to allow air to circulate, and that the site would be well illuminated without creating light pollution.

Boardmember Carter thanked the applicant for engaging with the community and verified that the slumpstone on the monument signs would be replaced with brick to match the brick of the convenience store. With respect to the brick and horizontal siding on the building façade, he recommended the use of brick throughout without the horizontal siding. He supported the picture frames and the historical context.

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On the discussion of the building façade, Mr. Semling presented the various designs that had been submitted to the PRNC, and explained that the final design presented to the DRB was a hybrid of an all brick design that the PRNC had approved.

Chair Livingston displayed a sketch that he had prepared as inspiration for a discussion of the façade.

SERGIO MARES, Development Manager, confirmed that the final option was a hybrid of the all-brick design based on the Hotel Mac with some relief in the bricks, which had not been received well by the PRNC. A more ornate design to match some of the buildings in the refinery had also not been well received. The last meeting with the PRNC had resulted in the approval of the brick and wood siding option.

On the discussion of the Chair's sketch, Vice Chair Hannah presented an option for a more simplified brick veneer building, suggested that the brick versions presented by the applicant were more ornate than necessary and that a simple brick building with high performance durable materials would bring the building into an industrial tech look that would marry better with the canopy sliding over the top. He suggested the Chair's design in the industrial tech with rivets, showing Rosie the Riveter metal work outside, would marry the lower brick shop with the Chevron branded canopy. Further, that the columns holding up the canopy, if brick, should be all-brick clad, and the addition of simple faux elements could tie everything together. He noted that the Mechanic's Bank was a beloved building and suggested that the art displays should mimic in form the windows, sills, and proportions of Mechanic's Bank amongst a field of all brick. He also recommended adding landscaping over the area of prior access.

Boardmember Butt commented that as a preservation architect, attempts to bring the historical context to a new building should include modern detailing and historical material without mimicking the historic building. She did not see the need for two materials on the small building. She commented that the Chair's sketch mimicked the World War II Kaiser Shipyard 3 building located down the road. She suggested that the brick tied in the connection to the downtown and the modern detailing would be much more appropriate for a gas station, connecting to the building across the street and the Rosie the Riveter Memorial. With respect to the columns, instead of adding a faux beam, she suggested that the two exposed steel columns might be clad in brick to a certain height with the exposed steel remaining to the top. She urged care not to be too literal in mimicking a window sill and preferred that the design be kept simple.

Chair Livingston referred to his sketch and the chairs and Corten planters to protect the seating area and commented that bicyclists would not generally use bike racks at the back of a building in that they would lean their bicycles up against the building to be visible. He recommended a gathering space and pointed out areas of the site where that might occur.

Chair Livingston spoke to the mature palm trees across the street from the subject site and recommended palm trees to mimic those across the street, although Ms. Carroll explained that staff and the PRNC had emphasized the use of native species and palm trees were not native species. Several members of the DRB supported palm trees, particularly since it was a tree that did not block signage.

Boardmember Fine stated with respect to the constructability of brick that it was difficult to find a robust veneer brick or something that would be robust and not fall off over a short period of time. As a result, she wanted to see a spec of the brick.

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Mr. Semling suggested that real brick might work better than veneer.

Boardmember Butt provided images of the Rosie the Riveter Memorial that might tie into the detailing for the subject proposal.

Chair Livingston suggested that instead of “picture frames” that could be vandalized, the pictures of historic Richmond could be burned into an aluminum sheet to be vandal-proof.

Chair Livingston closed the public hearing.

Mr. Semling clarified that contrary to the staff report that the three EV-ready charging stalls would be installed, only one could be installed as shown on the plans, since there was a need to accommodate an accessible parking stall, a loading zone, and an air/water space.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Livingston/Carter) to recommend the approval of PLN20-052, Chevron Convenience Store to the Planning Commission, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with 11 Conditions of Approval and additional DRB conditions as follows: 12) The architecture shall follow Exhibit A submitted by Chair Livingston and sent out to Chevron and the Board, for a simplified brick exterior; 13) The addition of infill where there is no landscaping on the north property line between the hotel and the property; 14) The applicant to address Vice Chair Hannah’s comments and drawing shown as Exhibit B and defer to the Chair’s sketch for detailing, and Boardmember Butt’s suggestion of the Rosie the Riveter example; 15) The replacement of the arbutus on Sheet A2.1 with a palm tree to match the species of the palm across the street, with two minimum to be considered in between the property line of the hotel and the gas station; and 16) The sign to be all brick to match the all-brick building, and potentially the trash enclosure, with the utility and separate bathroom buildings to remain as shown; approved by voice vote: 6-0 (Ayes: Butt, Carter, Fine, Hannah, Leung, Livingston; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Neel).

CC 5. PLN20-119	BELTRAN ACCESSORY STRUCTURE
Description	PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 480 SQUARE FOOT STORAGE SHED.
Location	900 SOUTH 43 RD STREET
APN	509-360-030
Zoning	RL2, LOW DENSITY SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
Owner	SANDRA BELTRAN
Applicant	HECTOR OROZCO
Staff Contact	ENZO CABILI
	Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Enzo Cabili presented the staff report dated September 23, 2020, for a 480 square foot accessory structure in the rear of an 832 square foot single-family home on a 4,800 square foot lot.

Boardmember Fine advised that she had removed the item from Consent to clarify whether the application was for an accessory structure as opposed to an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) since the plans had shown references to both.

Hector Lopez clarified that the application was for an accessory structure, a shed for storage, and not an ADU in that the plan showed no kitchen or habitable space. He suggested that the drawing had not been updated from a previous application for an ADU.

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When asked, Mr. Lopez stated that accessory structures were allowed with half baths, which had not been proposed in this case, and that the applicant could convert to an ADU in the future at which point a building permit would be required.

Vice Chair Hannah verified that the storage shed was electrified and was a size in excess of what was allowed without DRB approval. He cautioned the applicant that a conversion to an ADU would require a permit prior to any conversion. Since ADUs were now allowed in California, which could change in the future, he suggested now was the time to propose an ADU through the permit process, particularly for a rental ADU space that could be sellable later.

Chair Livingston noted that the elevation of the accessory unit facing the street should include a window centered on the gable end in the event the shed was converted to an ADU in the future.

Chair Livingston opened the public hearing.

DARYL TAYLOR, a neighbor, commented that a smaller shed had already been installed in the backyard. He expressed concern for an ADU given the current parking congestion in the neighborhood.

Vice Chair Hannah commented that parking would not be impacted with either an accessory unit or an ADU.

Another (unidentified) resident of the area concurred that the parking in the area was very poor and she would be concerned if the accessory unit was converted to an ADU in the future.

Chair Livingston closed the public hearing.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Hannah/Livingston) to approve PLN20-119, Beltran Accessory Structure (storage shed) subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with 9 Conditions of Approval and additional DRB conditions as follows: 10) The window to be moved to the street side and centered under the gable; and 11) All references to an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) to be removed completely from the application; approved by voice vote: 6-0 (Ayes: Butt, Carter, Fine, Hannah, Leung, Livingston; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Neel).

6. PLN20-173/175 PG&E FENCE AND BUILDING STRUCTURES

Description	PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF BUILDING STRUCTURES, TOTALLING 3,850 SQUARE FEET, AND THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW 10-FOOT HIGH FENCE, INCLUDING UPGRADES TO EXISTING FENCING.
Location	1100 SOUTH 27 TH STREET
APN	560-100-007
Zoning	RICHMOND BAY SPECIFIC PLAN
Owner	PG&E
Applicant	CHRISTIAN BRANTER, RIM ARCHITECTS & MIKE NOVAK
Staff Contact	EMILY CARROLL Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Emily Carroll presented the staff report dated September 23, 2020, for some upgrades to an existing PG&E site which included some offices and a yard. The 17-acre parcel was located to

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the east of the Marina Bay Parkway and was abutted by additional industrial yards and the railway. The two applications were being considered as one project for the construction of two new covered cast concrete building structures, 24 feet high, to house some materials related to the industrial yard. The DRB was also asked to review a fencing plan that required DRB review given an exception for the height of the fence. There was an existing 10-foot high fencing along Regatta Boulevard and the north side of the office buildings with a black steel fence with a press point. A security mesh (anti-climb) would be added to that fence.

The other sections of the site along the railway and Pierson Avenue, which currently had chain link fencing, would be replaced with 10-foot high security fencing with the mesh insert to match the existing perimeter fencing.

Ms. Carroll noted the DRB's reluctance in the past to prevent institutional appearing fences, although given the location of the fencing the proposal was considered to be adequate. She identified the required findings for the exception and PG&E's desire to have security fencing on the side abutting the railway given some recent break-ins on the site.

Questions of staff related to whether there were options to the fencing product that had been proposed, the security issues involved with the proposal, the fact that the zoning of the immediately adjacent areas included residential, and whether any landscape improvements had been proposed as part of the application, and Ms. Carroll pointed out an area along Regatta Boulevard where enhanced landscaping was required.

CHRISTIAN BRANTER, RIM Architects, clarified that the existing fence was 10 feet tall. He explained that PG&E security had 18 police reports in a three-year period of break-ins with \$28,000 worth of materiel and tools that had been stolen from the site. There was a desire to minimize that cost and remove the burden on the Police Department. He stated the existing fence was three years old. He also noted that most of the break-ins were coming through the chain link fence. He added that PG&E used the same fence at all sites and there was a desire to continue that fence around the perimeter of the site, reinforced on the inside with the mesh. The coated mesh had already been installed in some locations where there were gates. He also noted that the mesh somewhat obscured visibility into the yard.

Mr. Branter stated there would likely be no objection to a requirement for enhanced or additional landscaping. Some of the trees would need to be trimmed. He also responded to questions about other elements of security and explained that while digital security had been provided on other sites it had not been proposed at this location, although there were some cameras on site and another camera had been proposed in the corner of the site with the most break-ins.

Boardmember Leung pointed out that the corner of Marina Parkway and Regatta Boulevard was the gateway into Marina Bay and defined the residential neighborhood. She suggested installing mesh behind the existing fence all around would not obscure the PG&E lot to the extent preferred to maintain the beautiful neighborhood, particularly since that area was a well-used walkway to nearby businesses. She supported some visual barrier to the industrial site, such as landscaping in front of the fence to better shield the site. It was noted that the sidewalk was on the PG&E side of the street and not on the Marina Bay side of the street.

Mr. Branter explained that PG&E often installed pre-cast concrete fences although those fences were vulnerable to graffiti.

Chair Livingston asked if PG&E would be amenable to planting vines along the entire perimeter of the site and irrigating it, although an unidentified PG&E representative explained that PG&E

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had not considered that due to the maintenance involved but had discussed potentially doing some landscaping work. In response to comments, he confirmed that PG&E employed a maintenance team, although Boardmember Carter commented that given the poor condition of the landscaping on site, PG&E would have to provide assurance that it would maintain its current landscaping as well as any future landscaping.

Vice Chair Hannah emphasized that the maintenance of landscaping was a very serious issue in the City of Richmond and the community welcomed certain infrastructural elements that made the city work.

Vice Chair Hannah stated that PG&E was a vital cog in that effort and as a utility had a responsibility to the community. While understanding the need for security, he stated the fence was the façade visible to the community and adding welding mesh or screening mesh to an existing steel fence that could quickly erode could make the site look and feel like a maximum security prison. He did not support the addition of the mesh. He did support a 10-foot or 12-foot fence with modern anti-climb treatment that was security wise with a tried and tested recent product that would look great. He strongly recommended that PG&E provide the same digital perimeter security that was provided elsewhere, and address the terrible eyesore of the existing fence. He added that PG&E's care for security measures was very important to the community.

The DRB agreed with the need for an alternative to the proposal, with enhanced landscaping, and urged PG&E to explore the options and consider a better balance for the neighborhood.

Mr. Branter noted that a similar fence had been installed around a nearby residential neighborhood, and Vice Chair Hannah stated that was the problem in that it was seen as acceptable when it was not.

Mr. Branter asked if the DRB would accept the mesh fence along the railway line and there was DRB support for the mesh fence in that area.

Ms. Carroll commented that if the fence was reduced to eight feet it would not require DRB approval.

Chair Livingston opened the public hearing and left the hearing open.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Livingston/Carter) to continue PLN20-173 and 175, PG&E Fence and Building Structures, to the DRB meeting on October 28, 2020; approved by voice vote: 6-0 (Ayes: Butt, Carter, Fine, Hannah, Leung, Livingston; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Neel).

Board Business

A. Staff reports, requests, or announcements: None

B. Boardmember reports, requests, or announcements: None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 P.M. to the next regular Design Review Board meeting on Wednesday, October 14, 2020.