

# MINUTES APPROVED AT THE JANUARY 14, 2026, MEETING

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD REGULAR MEETING**  
**440 Civic Center Plaza, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Richmond CA 94804**  
December 10, 2025  
6:00 P.M.

## BOARD MEMBERS

Brian Carter  
Karlyn Neel

Ben Kellman, Vice Chair  
Vita Rey, Chair

Chair Vita Rey called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

## ROLL CALL

**Present:** Chair Vita Rey, Vice Chair Ben Kellman and Boardmember Karlyn Neel

**Absent:** Boardmember Brian Carter

## INTRODUCTIONS

**Staff Present:** Planning Manager Avery Stark, Assistant Planner Pete Srivarom, and Planning Technician Nino Prieto, and Senior Assistant City Attorney James Atencio

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** October 8, 2025

<b>ACTION:</b> It was M/S/C (Neel/Rey) to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2025, meeting, as shown; approved by a Roll Call vote: 3-0 (Ayes: Kellman, Neel, and Rey; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Carter.)
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## APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

There were no changes to the meeting agenda.

## MEETING PROCEDURES:

Chair Rey identified the meeting procedures.

## PUBLIC FORUM

BRUCE BEYAERT, Chair of the Trails for Richmond Action Committee (TRAC), announced that the long-awaited Point Molate Bay Trail was now under construction; 2.5 miles of new public access to the shoreline all the way from the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge to the Point Molate Beach Park and the Winehaven Historic District. He stated it was a cooperative venture between the City of Richmond and the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) funded by a number of grants and would be completed within a year.

**CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:** None

**CONSENT CALENDAR:** None

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## APPEAL DATE

Chair Rey advised that the appeal date for actions taken by the Board at this meeting was no later than 5:00 P.M. on Monday, December 22, 2025.

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

<b>1.</b>	<b>PLN20-245</b>	<b>ESCOBEDO RESIDENCE</b>
	Description	REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A 2,240-SQUARE-FOOT TWO-STORY HOME WITH A MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 27 FEET.
	Location	VACANT LOT SOUTH OF 669 4 <sup>TH</sup> STREET
	APN	534-212-033
	Zoning	RL2, LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
	Owner	ISMAEL ESCOBEDO
	Applicant	RAMON SALCIDO (ARCHITECT)
	Staff Contact	PETE SRIVAROM
		Recommendation: <b>CONDITIONAL APPROVAL</b>

Pete Srivarom presented the staff report dated December 10, 2025, for a request to construct a 2,240-square-foot two-story home with a maximum height of 27 feet on a vacant lot in the Iron Triangle neighborhood, which contained single-family and multi-family residences with one and two stories. The home would include four bedrooms, three full bathrooms and one-half bathroom. The project met all the development standards in the code for compliance in the zoning district and met all of the zoning compliance standards for single-family housing for garage size, parking, and garage frontage.

Mr. Srivarom identified the two-story structure with gable roofs in a 4:12 pitch, with an 8-foot-deep front porch, a one-car garage painted in the same color as the trim, and metal panel material. The applicant had provided examples of the building colors. The style was typical of the Iron Triangle neighborhood with gable roofs in a 4:12 pitch, a front porch and a small garage, with a 6-foot wooden fence in the side yard area to match the trim color, and landscaping as required in the front and rear. The landscaping met all the compliance requirements and the Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance (WELO), which included one street tree along 4th Street and one on-site tree in the front yard, along with permeable lava rock in the non-landscaped areas.

Mr. Srivarom reported that no comments had been received from the Iron Triangle Neighborhood Council or from the public. All design review findings had been met, the project was consistent with the Richmond General Plan, Zoning Code and Design Standards for single-family housing, and no other approvals were required. The proposal was in keeping with the prevalent designs in the Iron Triangle neighborhood. Approval was recommended.

Mr. Srivarom responded to comments and clarified that the light specifications had been included in the plans and would have to be compliant with the code.

Chair Rey opened the public hearing.

Mr. Srivarom clarified that the homeowner was present but had nothing further to add to the staff report.

Chair Rey referred to Page A-4.1 of the plans, suggested the column and the blank wall where the bathrooms were located should include something like a small privacy window or a trellis to break up that flat façade, and asked the homeowner if there was a willingness to consider such a privacy window.

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From the audience, Mr. Escobedo indicated a willingness to consider that recommendation. Boardmember Neel agreed with that recommendation and also recommended that the lights appear to be high between the round vent/window and the doors and could be brought down five to six inches to look better.

Boardmember Kellman commended the design, was pleased that the lot was being developed, and suggested that the control joints for the stucco be shown to align with other architectural elements. He did not object to the addition of a small privacy window as recommended.

No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

Chair Rey closed the public hearing.

Chair Rey advised that the two recommendations were just suggestions.

**ACTION: It was M/S/C (Kellman/Rey) to approve PLN20-245, Escobedo Residence, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with the nine staff recommended Conditions of Approval; approved by a Roll Call vote: 3-0 (Ayes: Kellman, Neel, and Rey; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Carter.)**

<b>2.</b>	<b>PLN25-0312</b>	<b>KEATING RESIDENCE</b>
	Description	REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A 2,312-SQUARE-FOOT TWO-STORY HOME WITH A MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 30 FEET.
	Location	7 OCEAN AVENUE
	APN	558-232-011
	Zoning	RL1, VERY LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
	Owner	TAMMI AND ANDREW KEATING
	Applicant	BAHAR JALILI (ARCHITECT)
	Staff Contact	PETE SRIVAROM
		Recommendation: <b>CONDITIONAL APPROVAL</b>

Pete Srivarom presented the staff report dated December 10, 2025, for a request to construct a 2,312-square-foot two-story home with a maximum height of 30 feet on a vacant lot with a steep downhill topography, with its highest point along Western Drive and its lowest point along Ocean Avenue in the Point Richmond neighborhood, surrounded by other single-family homes. The home would have three bedrooms and three bathrooms. The front of the home would face Western Drive and be sited at the highest elevation while the rear of the home would face Ocean Avenue and the shoreline. The proposal met all the requirements for the zoning district in terms of building height, lot coverage, floor area and all setbacks, and met all the City's standards for single-family housing in terms of parking spaces, garage frontage, building entrances, paved area, driveway width and landscaping requirements. The home was in a contemporary style with a flat roof and eaves flushed to the side, included a front porch and a rear balcony hugging the entire rear elevation on the second story, and a one-car garage and driveway. A materials and sample board had been provided.

The site had a steep downhill topography and the structure was set 42 feet from Western Drive since there were no sidewalks. There would be two street trees along Western Drive and Ocean Avenue, with one on-site tree in the rear yard and a planter along the rear wall. A temporary sewage holding tank would also be located in the rear given the current Keller Beach Sanitary Sewer Moratorium in Point Richmond where new residences were currently not permitted to connect to the existing sanitary sewer line.

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Mr. Srivarom reported that the City's Public Works Department was currently in the process of developing and finalizing standards for the holding tanks. He referred to Condition 3 where the applicant would accept the standards adopted by the City upon their release. He noted that the temporary holding tank might require service every few weeks. It would be located approximately 30 feet from Ocean Avenue and no landscaping would be allowed in front of the tank to ensure access for service.

There had been no comment from the Point Richmond Neighborhood Council although two letters had been submitted from members of the public and had been distributed, as appropriate.

Chair Rey opened the public hearing.

DON MILL, Architect, 877 Ocean Avenue, Point Richmond, stated he had submitted an email dated December 10, 2025 indicating concern for the 52-foot-wide balcony above Ocean Avenue that from below would appear to be overbearing. He wanted to see a deeper deck in the middle of the building at the dining room. He disagreed with staff that the entry deck projection met the letter of the Zoning Code and stated it did not accomplish the intent of the General Plan to avoid planar masses facing the street. He suggested a trellis or roof structure be added above the entry deck to break up the street facing wall.

Mr. Srivarom reported that a resident of 811 Ocean Avenue had called him this date. That resident lived directly across the street from the subject site and asked for more information about the project. The resident expressed concern regarding the location of the underground sewage tank that would be located approximately 30 feet from Ocean Avenue in front of his residence and the potential impact to his property.

On the DRB's discussion of the implications of the sewer moratorium and the requirement for the applicant to adhere to sewer connection regulations and standards that had yet to be defined, Mr. Stark explained that the Planning Department had reviewed the preliminary specs for the underground and above ground holding tanks, and the Public Works and Building Departments were currently finishing up the review that would be brought to the City Council at the beginning of the year. The condition of approval would be that the future design of the system would meet those specifications. In this case, the storage tank would be a below grade septic system.

Mr. Stark stated that eventually there was a desire to reconnect to the new sewer laterals and the holding tanks would be removable at that time if it was the City's decision to require a retroactive connection to the public utility services. He clarified that a homeowner would be able to submit for review of building permits but no building permits could be issued to begin construction pending finalized plans from the Public Works Department. He noted there could always be a condition of approval placed on the building permit that the storage tank could be a different submittal, which should not hold up the development of the home.

As to whether there were other homes in the neighborhood with similar storage tanks, Mr. Srivarom stated the sewer moratorium was a recent action and no other development had been permitted since then. Only recently had a list of lots been identified as eligible to be built subject to a temporary storage tank, and this application was the first.

BAHAR JALILI, the project architect, described the simple, single-family two-story home to be built in a way to have the least impact on the sloped site. She described the materials to be used, noted that eaves would be on top of the front elevation to cover the front porch and the

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home had been designed to maintain the views of the adjacent properties. To that end, the building had not been designed to the maximum 35-foot height allowed by code.

Ms. Jalili added that the building had been put in an elevation at the proper slope for the garage while the home would step down elsewhere. Having been asked about the adjacent property owner's comments related to the deck, she explained that the deck had been proposed to allow the property owner to take advantage of the views and there was no desire to change the configuration of that deck.

Chair Rey supported Mr. Mill's suggestion for a trellis or roof structure above the entry deck to break up the street facing wall, and Ms. Jalili stated that a trellis could be considered but noted other things that had to be considered as well, such as structural issues and the budget.

Boardmember Neel referred to the windows that looked like a bronze while the stone had more brown. She commented that she liked that tonal which went more with the garage. She verified with Ms. Jalili that the material board colors would be made more accurate with the renderings.

Boardmember Neel agreed with the comments about breaking up the mass in the front but she also recommended for the back elevation and the long deck that the stairs be extended to reduce the mass of the top level. She characterized the project as beautiful.

Boardmember Kellman commented that he did not object to the long linear deck in the rear but suggested it was a lost opportunity and he recommended a deeper deck, although Ms. Jalili explained that the deck was five to six feet wide, which was how much a regular wood structure could cantilever without having to go to a steel structure or having long posts to the ground, which was not desired.

Boardmember Kellman referred to Grids A and D of the plans, which looked incomplete, and he asked about a barge rafter or something else on either side, and Ms. Jalili stated there was an intent to have eaves on the sides, although there was an issue with the zoning and the setbacks and the eaves could not be extended.

Mr. Srivarom explained that the building had six-foot side yard setbacks and the code allowed for projections into the required side yard, although the code for eaves only allowed projections for one-third of the wall. Projections were allowed but could not exceed one third of the building face, intended to break up massing, although that might not be feasible with the current design, which was why the applicant opted to make the awning flush with the home instead.

When asked if she would consider pushing the stone element forward four to six inches to make it more prominent and less like a flat service, Ms. Jalili stated that could be done although it would reduce the width of the porch.

Mr. Srivarom advised that he would work with the applicant to see if that could be done and still meet the required porch standards.

CHRIS \_\_\_\_\_, Point Richmond, spoke to the proposed temporary underground tank associated with the proposal and explained why that temporary tank was required because of an unidentified leak. As the owner of the property from across Ocean Avenue, he was impacted by all that leakage. Given that the proposed tank had been proposed in front of his home and given that leakage was associated with the servicing of those tanks and that servicing would always be in front of his property, he objected to the location of the tank that would impact his home. He asked if the tank would require review by the Contra Costa County Health Department.

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Mr. Stark stated the tank would not be reviewed by the County until the building permits and the proposal for the specs had been approved by the City Council, at which time it would be reviewed by the County.

It was clarified for the benefit of the speaker that the specifications and the design of the tank would be handled by the Public Works Department and there would be a time for public review and comment on the tanks in the future. At this point, the proposal was in the DRB phase. It was also clarified that the design and location of the tank would have to be appropriate to serve the needs of the home. There was a likelihood that the moratorium would be extended.

JEFFREY J. MULVIHILL questioned the need to discuss a proposal for a home that could not be constructed without sewer, and questioned whether a holding tank within the municipal boundary of a city and state could be allowed by code. He did not support any approvals until a solution for the sewer connection had been resolved.

Mr. Stark clarified that the sewer moratorium prohibited the issuance of any new building permits for the development of single-family homes but did not prohibit the application for the development of a new home. He could provide residents with the business card of the appropriate contact in the Public Works Department who could clarify the situation with respect to the sewer moratorium. He stated the DRB did not have the purview over the moratorium. He responded to comments and verified that project approvals were good for two years and there was an ability for an extension, although the moratorium would need to be resolved to allow building permits to be issued.

The DRB verified with staff the issue of the sideyard setbacks and the restriction on projections along with the steps that could be taken to address that situation, and the project architect was encouraged to add awnings over the front façade to break up the appearance, particularly from Western Drive.

Chair Rey closed the public hearing.

**ACTION: It was M/S/C (Neel/Kellman) to approve PLN25-0312, Keating Residence, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with the ten staff recommended Conditions of Approval and additional DRB conditions as follows: 11) Add awnings over the garage and over the front entrance, to be modern in appearance, with the building projecting over the garage and over the front entrance; 12) The material palette to match the renders; and 13) A recommendation to extend the second deck underneath the window glass and move the stairs to the right; approved by a Roll Call vote: 3-0 (Ayes: Kellman, Neel, and Rey; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Carter.)**

<b>3.</b>	<b>PLN23-117</b>	<b>MARINA POINT RESIDENTIAL PROJECT</b>
	Description	PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE DESIGN REVIEW OF 70 NEW SINGLE-FAMILY UNITS AND 30 JUNIOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (JADUS) ON A 4.92-ACRE SITE.
	Location	TERMINUS OF MARINA WAY
	APN	560-181-121
	Zoning	CM-5, COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE, ACTIVITY CENTER
	Owner	GUARDIAN COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE, LP
	Applicant	GLEN L. POWLES, GUARDIAN CAPITAL
	Staff Contact	AVERY STARK                      Recommendation: CONTINUED FROM NOVEMBER 12, 2025

Avery Stark presented the staff report dated December 10, 2025 for a public hearing to consider the Marina Point Residential Project of 70 new single-family units and 30 Junior Accessory

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Dwelling Units (JADUs) on a 4.92-acre site at the terminus of Marina Way. The role of the DRB was to review and comment on the design based on the City's Objective Design Standards.

Mr. Stark described the site as formerly a part of the Kaiser Richmond Shipyards. He reported that the application had been filed originally as a preliminary application under SB 330 in February 2023, with the formal application submitted in April 2023. He stated the City's response deadlines under SB 330 had not been met in that a written determination of consistency had not been issued within 30 days of the application being deemed complete. As a result, the project was deemed consistent as a matter of law even though it did not meet the City's density or land use standards.

Mr. Stark stated that situation limited the DRB's authority to reviewing only objective design standards, materials, articulation, lighting and landscaping but not land use, policy or density. He identified the General Plan designation as high intensity mixed-use and CM-5 for zoning, which required a minimum of 40 du/acre, and noted that the project proposed 16.1 du/acre. Due to SB 330 procedural issues, the property must be treated as procedurally consistent for the entitlement proceedings but that inconsistency was documented in the staff report for the record.

Mr. Stark stated the project lay within the Shoreline Overlay District, which imposed objective environmental and public access requirements, all developments in the zone required a Conditional Use Permit from the Planning Commission for design, and the standards remained enforceable because they were objective and independent of the SB 330 application process. The application would also be further reviewed by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) in terms of compliance with its 100-foot shoreline ban for development, to be handled separately.

Mr. Stark presented renderings of the three-story town homes with a maximum height of 35 feet, and included a variety of siding, stucco and masonry veneer with a coastal-inspired color palette found around Marina Bay that would complement the adjacent Rosie the Riveter Museum. He identified three different floor plans and described the vertical options, colors and materials for the project. He also identified the circulation and access to the site through two private internal streets that would connect to Marina Bay South, noted that sidewalks would extend throughout the project and connect to the public San Francisco Bay Trail, and the internal street design would comply with Fire Department standards for emergency vehicle access (EVA). There would be a total of 154 parking spaces, each unit would have two-car garages, and there would be 14 guest spaces. Thirteen proposed parking spaces would be in the public right of way and staff would work with the applicant on that aspect of the plan in connection with the adjacent schools. Twenty five percent of the site would be landscaped exceeding the minimum requirements of the Richmond Municipal Code (RMC), and included native coastal scrub, a bioretention basin and a private community park, with trees from the approved City Tree List. He presented the details of the lighting plan with all exterior lighting to be downward-directed and shielded to avoid glare, and be wild-life sensitive, especially in the shoreline area. The project included a Vesting Tentative Map for 70 individual ownership lots and five common area Homeowner Association (HOA) parcels.

Mr. Stark stated the proposal would have to comply with the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance and its requirements including 10 percent of the units to be affordable. The environmental review had determined that there were no significant impacts. He highlighted the objective design standards, and reiterated that DRB findings must rely on objective standards. The DRB could offer comments on design but could not require changes based on subjective preference or land use policy issues. He also highlighted the proposed conditions of approval. He added that the project was procedurally deemed consistent under SB 330, although not actually consistent, and the DRB's authority was limited to objective design review.

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Chair Rey clarified with staff that the application was limited to five hearings and any appeal of the project would count as a hearing, and Mr. Stark again clarified the limits of the DRB's authority in this case, and clarified that if the application was appealed, it would go to the City Council.

Chair Rey opened the public hearing.

MARCIA VALLIER, CSW, the project landscape architect, stated the project was an infill, a reuse of the vacant site at the end of Marina Way South, part of the historic Kaiser Shipyard known as Marina Point, and slightly under 5 acres in the Marina Bay neighborhood. The applicant had met with the Marina Bay neighborhood and with the National Parks Service to get comments and talk about the process and the project. The plan envisioned 70 small lot single-family homes, 10 percent of which would be offered at affordable sale prices to moderate income households, as required. There would be 30 ADU units, a lot, shared open space, landscape frontage and pathways throughout the site. There were different housing types within the Marina Bay neighborhood from single-family detached to townhomes, and condominiums from two to three-story heights along with an elementary school, a high school, commercial buildings, the Rosie the Riveter Museum, the adjacent Ford plant and the Richmond Ferry. The desire was to blend the coastal landscape with the Kaiser Shipyard look. She stated that one remnant concrete wall along the frontage within the BCDC 100-foot setback would be retained, and along with the few other historic sites, the proposed development would be weaved in with those varied sites as well as with the existing neighborhoods.

Ms. Vallier stated the housing had been kept out of the 100-foot BCDC setback, set back along the Bay Trail that ran along San Francisco Bay, and the site was adjacent to Lucretia Edwards Shoreline Park, and the roadway would come down to a cul-de-sac with parking to service the park and the shoreline, a requirement when the park had been built. Thirteen parking spaces had been proposed along the frontage. The Richmond Wellness Trail being developed by Placeworks would link into the Bay Trail and the Shoreline Park. She identified a proposed small park with a tot lot, picnic tables and a community area, to be designed as a nod to the Kaiser Shipyard history. She presented elevation views of the proposed development and referred to some specific sections to show the relationship of the development with the adjacent properties.

DAVID BURTON, Associate Principal with KTG Architecture and Planning, explained how the design of the homes had been approached. He clarified a couple of points that were incorrect in the staff report in that the proposed units would be independent single-family homes, with five plan types, and three elevation styles in each plan type, and none of the Below Market Rate (BMR) units had JADUs given the deed restrictions in the BMRs. The site was unique with high visibility from a distance, from the water and from the two parks. He suggested the primary focus in the distant view should be the Craneway Pavilion and the Ford Assembly Plant. As a result, as many homes as possible had been placed facing the water and the Bay Trail, with front doors, decks and major living spaces facing outward to get premium views without limiting others' access to the waterfront. The goal with the design was to make some reference to the iconic neighbors while also providing an intimate residential scale to the homes.

Mr. Burton identified some of the features of the homes that were consistent with the iconic neighbors such as shed roofs as a reference to the sawtooth roofs, skylights that were a key feature of the Ford Assembly Plant, and brick as a nod to the Rosie the Riveter Museum. Each home had a one- or two-story base to maintain a pedestrian scale to the buildings, along with front porches and a variety of gable, hipped and shed roofs to provide visual variety.

Mr. Burton explained that the BCDC had expressed great concern about having the homes encroach on the 100-foot shoreline ban reserving that space for public access and use. At the

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entry to the neighborhood there would be a welcoming tree-lined street with homes facing on to it. All homes had front doors and large decks overlooking the streets. The varied rooflines and material palettes provided visual variety and helped give each home a distinct identity along with a language of forms, materials and details common in coastal communities in Northern California, to create an enduring look over time that would not easily be identified as being from a particular era.

MARGARITA MITAS, President of the Marina Bay Neighborhood Council, expressed concern for the proposal given that the proposal was being pushed forward despite major unresolved issues affecting shoreline protection, public access, emergency, safety and community trust. She stated the applicant had come to a meeting with the Marina Bay Neighborhood Council on November 8, 2023 and had heard residents raise critical deficiencies and concerns, and at no time was SB 330 raised. The Neighborhood Council had worked in good faith and expected a return of the developer to address the concerns. No environmental or geotechnical analyses had been presented at that time, no traffic study had been released, and the project would have 100 units that would include upwards of 200 plus more vehicles coming through Marina Bay. Concerns for density or emergency access had not been addressed since that time and there had been no further communication with the Marina Bay community for two years. The concerns had been documented in a letter to the applicant and the Planning Department and none of the issues had been incorporated into the design or communicated back into the community.

Ms. Mitas emphasized that the developer had contacted the Council and had asked for the meeting. She highlighted the intent of SB 330 and stated that would not eliminate shoreline protections or health and safety standards, erase long-standing objective shoreline rules, nullify overlay districts or compel approval of unsafe or noncompliant projects. The project was objectively inconsistent with the zoning, the major public safety and infrastructure issues remained unresolved, the environmental and financial risks were not disclosed, and since the project was in a Marina Bay self-assessed district there was no indication that the applicant would pay into that district, which also needed to be addressed.

Mr. Stark clarified that he had inadvertently allowed each public speaker three minutes instead of the DRB's usual two minutes for public comment. As such, the DRB would continue to allow three minutes for all public speakers.

BRUCE BEYAERT, Chair of TRAC, referenced an email he had submitted to the City for the Planning Commission which he highlighted at this time, to request that the submittal to the Planning Commission include plans for the 50-60-foot-wide open space between the Bay Trail and the wall of the homes. He noted the Bay Trail had been shown in the wrong place in the rendering in the packet. He stated the applicant would need to be asked to pay the cost of the Richmond Wellness Trail on the project frontage that other neighboring property owners had been required to contribute their fair share to build the bikeway along the street, and he emphasized the need for adequate public parking and explained that TRAC recommended 35-40 public parking spaces.

VIRGINIA FINDLEY, Marina Bay resident, noted that the proposed homes ranging from 2,016 to 2,338 square feet would include four bedrooms with two garages, only one with a driveway, and she questioned whether those garages would be able to accommodate the occupants of the home, an objective standard that should be addressed to avoid future problems with the overflow creating an unworkable community.

LYNN THERRIAULT, Marina Bay resident, commented that one of the big problems for the community was the train, which blocked the road, impacting not only the residents but the students of the two adjacent charter schools. She added that the parking and circulation problems would be further exacerbated by the vehicles and traffic associated with the ADUs.

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Chair Rey thanked the speakers for their comments and stated the DRB received email comments as well. She reiterated that the DRB was limited on what it could require for the subject application.

Boardmember Neel added that DRB members were provided with those emails and read them prior to the meeting.

Email comments were received from the following who expressed a number of concerns related to the Marina Point Residential Project:

SOREN HEMMILA, Richmond

TOM BUTT, Richmond

K. LYNN BERRY, Superintendent, Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park

JORDAN DeSTAEBLER, 631 Western Drive, Richmond

OWEN L. MARTIN, JR., 1019 Ventura Street, Richmond

MIKE UBERTI, Richmond

RICHARD MITCHELL, Retired Director of Richmond Planning and Building

ROBERT GRANT, Richmond

DEAN ROBINO, Richmond

JONATHAN LIVINGSTON, Richmond, former DRB Chair

### **REBUTTAL:**

STEVE RILEY, a member of the development team, clarified that the original design had encroached in the shoreline band and members of the development team had met with BCDC and attempted to make other improvements in that area, although BCDC did not want any encroachment into the 100-foot shoreline band and the development had been pushed back 100 feet as a result. The hope was that in the future that property could be dedicated to the City and the City might have a better result with the BCDC. With respect to the environmental documents, the development had hired its own consultant to do the studies and there was a geotechnical report, a traffic report and a report on air quality and other topics, and the development would adhere to any mitigation measures that might result.

Boardmember Kellman requested another clarification of the DRB's purview of the item at this time.

Mr. Stark stated there were a number of limitations under several state laws, but specifically under SB 330, the DRB was limited to the objective standards identified in the RMC, with the challenge that since the application was deemed to be complete and consistent there were even more limited areas of an objective nature that could be achieved. In terms of parking, AB 2097 was the state law that restricted the City from requiring a minimum amount of parking. Because the project was within a quarter mile of the ferry terminal, under state law it would technically not be required to provide any parking, although in this case the applicant chose to provide parking. He stated there were a number of different laws pertaining to locations close to high quality transit areas that changed the rules as to how the City could administer local regulations around parking minimums.

With respect to the separate BCDC shoreline issue, Mr. Stark understood that the applicant had gone to one BCDC Design Review Board hearing. He did not know the status of that application but having watched the hearing he was aware of a substantial amount of comment at that time.

BRIAN WINTER, Land Use and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Attorney for the applicant, stated that because the project had been pulled back entirely from the BCDC shoreline ban it was no longer with the BCDC, and while a permit was required and while the project was

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within the shoreline ban, it had been pulled back and after two BCDC hearings and multiple meetings with staff, there was now no more hearings or permitting associated with BCDC. He added that the environmental review had been peer reviewed by the City's consultant three times and the project was exempt under Class 32 Infill Exemption, and streamlined under Sections 15168 and 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines. The project was considered to be consistent with the environmental documentation the City already had within its General Plan and Zoning, and within the scope of the environmental analyses the City had already conducted. He was aware of no mitigation requirements for the project.

Mr. Stark confirmed that there was no mitigation requirement associated with the posted CEQA documentation from First Carbon Solution. He stated that First Carbon Solution's document had been peer reviewed by ESA, which had then been peer reviewed again to ensure compliance with CEQA law.

Chair Rey understood that the property line was to the Bay Trail but the applicant would not build within the 100-foot shoreline and currently there were no plans to add anything, not even landscaping to that area given BCDC's position and there may be an eventual agreement with the City of Richmond for that land. Further, that the recommendation to build new parking along the roadway leading to the cul-de-sac had been rejected by the applicant.

Mr. Stark stated that was an outside improvement outside the scope of the project.

Boardmember Neel questioned the insurability of the homes due to sea level rise, and Mr. Winter stated there was no reason to believe that the homes would not be insurable.

In response to Boardmember Kellman's question as to the big difference in the density proposed from what was allowed, Mr. Winter explained that the property had been foreclosed by a prior developer who had been attempting to do something that was more dense. He stated the Richmond General Plan allowed up to 125 units per acre and the zoning spoke to 40 to 125 units. Anything under the General Plan was consistent with the density range up to 125. The project from the foreclosed applicant was not economically viable. The current developer had looked at different options for a viable project that would meet the objective requirements of the General Plan, which was less than the minimum required by the zoning. While there was another potential approach to address that it was now irrelevant given that the project was deemed consistent as a matter of law with all of the City's land use regulations.

Mr. Riley referred to a unique thing with the project site and other sites along the Bay where there was a deep layer of "young Bay mud," and when trying to place a big dense multifamily or larger building on top of it the amount of geotechnical remediation or cost of driving piles to support the load would make the project economically infeasible. He added that in today's market with high interest and other rates it would not be economically feasible to develop something like 40+ units to the acre. He acknowledged that some neighbors were concerned because there did not appear to be enough parking, but to do so would require an underground parking garage or other type of structure and the cost of construction would then far exceed the cost of the building.

When asked if he had been present at the meeting with the Marina Bay Neighborhood Council, Mr. Riley stated he had not. He suggested securing the contact information for the Marina Bay neighborhood and would determine who might want to continue to stay informed. He pledged to do a better job of keeping the neighbors informed, arrange a meeting to go over the plans in detail, and make a special effort to get all relevant information to the neighborhood.

Ms. Vallier, who had been at the referenced meeting, recalled that the neighborhood wanted the proposed site to be more dense, but others wanted less density, more parking, and there were

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other contradictory statements. In the notes she had taken at that meeting, the applicant had tried to create more of a buffer along the edges with the landscaping, but could not address more parking and more density based on the product type. In response to comments from the audience, she stated there had been public meetings and a lot of public noticing. She acknowledged statements from the audience that the neighborhood also had concerns for traffic circulation within the development.

Boardmember Kellman noted his concerns with the parking when he had first reviewed the proposal. He stated the designs looked nice but did not look like Richmond and he suggested the design was out of place.

Mr. Burton explained that the shed roof forms and incorporating brick were the nods to the iconic neighboring properties but there was no intent to mimic those properties. The intent was to use materials and forms as a nod to the iconic structures. He sought help and a clear understanding from the DRB to understand what it meant about being more Richmond.

Chair Rey referred to Ms. Vallier's elevation view of the project from the San Francisco Bay as a template to open a design critique for recommendations to make the proposal look a bit more like Richmond.

In an effort to explain what the DRB meant, Boardmember Neel stated the landscape was incredibly important to the City, its history, image and future. She referred to the adjacent iconic uses such as the Craneway Pavilion, the Ferry, the Rosie the Riveter Museum, the Bay Trail, and the City's fireworks from the water. She emphasized the need for parking and asked the applicant to think outside the box and consider the impact of parking on the future residents of the development. With respect to the DRB's role and being objective, she explained that design language should be consistent and in harmony with the building and the spaces it was going into. She emphasized that the City had design standards of different architecture, the site was unique in that the proposal would be going next to the Oil House and the Craneway Pavilion, which had a simple yet stunning color palette and rhythm to the buildings.

Boardmember Neel described the design of the proposed units as very busy in that the top material in some cases with brick next to the wood chopped up by the white created a lot of busyness and she recommended simplifying and using tonal colors. With respect to the Oil House and the Craneway Pavilion, she referred to rich colors that could be brought down the whole building or because they were on the top it made the building feel top heavy. As someone who lived near the water, she referred to the white of buildings on the water and stated there was a lot of diesel particulate and it was dirty. She liked the roof overhangs but suggested that the blocking was chopping up the buildings in a weird way. She urged simplifying and referred to the Craneway Pavilion with the deep brick brown and the Oil House with the deep green, and suggested the proposed buildings were fighting with the City's history. She emphasized the use of simple materials and beautiful colors. She supported the public seating along the path and asked if there was a way to break up the concrete wall and mix it up with plates.

Ms. Vallier stated there was a board form wall that had been part of the old foundations, and along the Marina Way South frontage there were additional remnant walls and boulders.

Chair Rey noted the applicant's desire to avoid visual repetition and to avoid overshadowing the iconic design but stated in a new neighborhood there should be a sense of place and uniformity and she saw a smattering of homes that were all trying to be their own unique home, which she suggested was something that did not happen overnight and could not be forced. She broke down the proposed units by shape, material and color, and stated the effort to use shed roofs as a nod to

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the iconic buildings did not work and suggested a more traditional roof form like the gable. She also recommended picking a direction and pushing that forward, and suggested there was too much color and recommended visiting the area and taking inspiration from colors at the site to create a color palette from the area. While the same level of tone could still be used, she recommended working with the hues and desaturating them into something that was more a part of the landscape. With respect to housing styles, she appreciated that the balconies would be placed along the shoreline but recommended avoiding the modern balcony shown in some of the plans. Chair Rey recommended reducing the different housing styles and just pick one. As far as tone, she did not support the white and supported a darker tone near the bottom. She recommended a one-third/two-thirds and noted that three colors were too much. She suggested a wainscot with a solid base that would get lighter as it went up, and if using brick to keep it really low. She suggested the homes would then feel elevated and taller without being so big because of color. She further emphasized that the site was a highly public place and a very windy site. She suggested the development should identify itself as a particular area and create something unique and a stand-out piece.

With respect to the Marina Way South facades, Chair Rey stated that was another iconic view and some of the windows on the units looked small and did not look interesting from the side. She suggested there was an opportunity for a beautiful design and from that line of buildings along the street she suggested those units should be made unique, potentially with bigger, taller windows on that side. She recommended working from dark to light, breaking down the color one-third/two-thirds, and reiterated that some of the colors were top heavy.

Chair Rey referred to the final connecting point to the Rosie the Riveter Museum and recommended landscaping to soften the transition from the development to the museum. She added that each development along the waterfront was its own unique neighborhood and they could all harmonize. She wished the same for the subject development.

Ms. Vallier stated they had tried repeatedly to work with BCDC to address that area with the intent to create a walkway along the frontage for residents to create something both public and private. She could buffer the edge more.

Mr. Burton expressed his appreciation for the DRB's feedback.

Chair Rey noted that Boardmember Brian Carter could not make the meeting but had submitted written comments that Mr. Stark reported had been included in the packet as part of public comment and that Mr. Carter's comments were online. She read Mr. Carter's comments at this time.

Chair Rey closed the public hearing.

In response to Boardmember Kellman as to whether the project would advance with or without the DRB's approval, Mr. Stark stated the DRB had provided feedback to the development team and the DRB could continue the application to a date certain and allow the applicant to return with revised plans as a result of the suggested feedback, or the DRB could memorialize the suggestions as a condition of approval for suggestions and the project would move forward to the Planning Commission without returning to the DRB.

Senior Assistant City Attorney James Atencio confirmed that an additional meeting would be counted towards the five allowed public hearings.

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Mr. Riley reported that the applicant was open to returning to the DRB at a date certain in January 2026 and would work on some of the changes with the design team, and return with some refinements to address the concerns related to the architecture.

Mr. Burton explained that while not all of the housing plans could be revised by that date a representative sample could be provided.

Chair Rey asked about the fee contribution requested by TRAC, and Mr. Stark stated that the TRAC fee was not under the City's fee schedule and was not an impact fee nor a requirement from the City of Richmond as a required fee for development, although many other developers along the shoreline for various types of projects had opted to pay into that investment for the continuation and maintenance of the Bay Trail.

Chair Rey recommended that Mr. Beyaert of TRAC reach out to the applicant to discuss the voluntary fee.

<b>ACTION: It was M/S/C (Neel/Kellman) to continue PLN23-117, Marina Point Residential Project, to the DRB meeting set for January 14, 2026: approved by a Roll Call vote: 3-0 (Ayes: Kellman, Neel, and Rey; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Carter.)</b>
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### **Board Business**

#### **A. Staff Reports, Requests, or Announcements**

Mr. Stark reported there would be a special meeting on December 17, 2025, with one item to be considered and with a recommended change to the bylaws to reduce the required number of DRB meetings from two to one a month; the first Wednesday of the month.

Boardmember Neel advised that she would not be present at the next meeting but was in support of the change to the bylaws.

Mr. Stark responded to questions and explained that the one percent for public art fee remained in effect, and the Garrity project that would return to the DRB in the new year would pay the public art fee in lieu.

Boardmember Kellman questioned why the public art in lieu fee was not higher than the fee for the public art itself to encourage and support the City's art program. He preferred to see the actual art element on the site of a project.

Mr. Stark explained that the fees were part of an established fee schedule and were revisited every five to ten years to make sure they were in alignment with current costs.

#### **B. Board Member Reports, Requests, or Announcements: None**

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 P.M. to the special Design Review Board meeting on Wednesday, December 17, 2025.