

**PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, RICHMOND CITY HALL**  
450 Civic Center Drive, Richmond, CA  
February 21, 2019  
6:30 p.m.

**COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Marilyn Langlois, Chair  
Nancy Baer  
Claudia Garcia  
David Tucker  
Andrew Butt, Vice Chair  
Jen Loy  
Michael Huang

The regular meeting was called to order by Commissioner Baer at 6:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Commissioner Nancy Baer, Claudia Garcia, David Tucker and Yu-Hsiang (Michael) Huang

**Absent:** Chair Marilyn Langlois; Vice Chair Andrew Butt and Commissioner Jen Loy

**INTRODUCTIONS**

**Staff Present:** Planning Staff: Lina Velasco, Director of Planning and Building Services, Roberta Feliciano, Planner II, and James Atencio, Assistant City Attorney

Commissioner Baer provided an overview of meeting procedures for speaker registration, public comment, and public hearing functions. She said items approved by the Commission may be appealed in writing to the City Clerk by Monday, March 4th, 2019, by 5:00 p.m. and she announced the appeal process after each affected item, as needed.

**MINUTES –**

January 17, 2019

**ACTION: It was M/S/C (Tucker, Huang) to approve the Minutes of January 17, 2019; which carried by the following vote: 4-0-3 (Ayes: Baer, Garcia, Huang, Tucker; Noes: None; Absent: Langlois, Butt, Loy).**

**AGENDA**

Director Velasco requested that Item Number two be added to the Consent Calendar.

**CONSENT CALENDAR –**

**2. PLN18-173: The Cascade on Central Avenue Residential Development PUBLIC HEARING** to consider a recommendation to the City Council regarding the previously adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

and a Rezone to PA, Planned Area District from CR, Regional Commercial, a Tentative Map 9505, and Design Review Permit to construct 46 residential units, consisting of four stacked flats and 42 townhomes on a vacant 2.58 acre site located at 5620 Central Avenue (APN: 510-053-025, -032, and 033). CR, Regional Commercial (City of Richmond) and Multi-Family Residential District (City of El Cerrito). REA Partners LP, owner; Gene Broussard, applicant Planner: Jonelyn Whales Tentative Recommendation: Recommend Conditional Approval to City Council

- 3. PLN18-345: Barret Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing PUBLIC HEARING** to consider a Conditional Use Permit, including a management plan, and Design Review Permit for a 19-unit SRO multi-unit dwelling at the southeast corner of 21<sup>st</sup> Street and Barrett Avenue (APN: 514-110-001). CM-5, Commercial Mixed Use, Activity Center District/IS-1, Form-Based Code Interim Study Overlay Zone. Majid Kolahdooz, owner; Bacilia Macias, applicant Planner: Jonelyn Whales Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval

**ACTION: It was M/S/C (Garcia, Tucker) to approve the Consent Calendar with the addition of Item Number Two; which carried by the following vote: 4-0-3 (Ayes: Baer, Garcia, Huang, Tucker; Noes: None; Absent: Langlois, Butt, Loy).**

### **BROWN ACT – Public Forum**

LIZ BITTNER, member of the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee, explained that the purpose and function of the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee was to create plans for urban forestry, to expand the City's tree canopy, and to recommend programs, policies, and ordinance to promote the City's Urban Greening Master Plan and the General Plan. She gave a brief background of members who were on the Committee and she hoped that in the future the Planning Commission and the Committee could have a discussion about future plans for the City of Richmond.

Commissioner Baer suggested having a study session with the Planning Commission and the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee.

### **HOLD OVER ITEM**

- 1. PLN18-053: Mini-Storage and Artist Studios PUBLIC HEARING** to consider a Conditional Use Permit And Design Review Permit to operate and construct a mini-storage facility with artist studios at 205 Cutting Blvd. (APN: 550-102-022). IL, Light Industrial District. Louis A Windhurst III, owner; Nolan Borden (Baranof Holdings), applicant Planner: Roberta Feliciano Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval

Ms. Feliciano gave a brief description of the site and where it was located within the City. The proposed project was to be a 3-story, 82,325-square foot storage facility.

On November 27, 2017 the City Council established a temporary moratorium on self-storage facilities due to inconsistent regulations that weren't adequately addressed. Since the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance update in 2016, mini-storage now requires a Conditional Use Permit.

Additional conditions were noted in the staff report that pertained to design standards and crime prevention for the proposed project.

Mr. Andrew Aiken, Baranof Holdings, applicant, gave a brief history of Baranof Holdings and articulated that the company owned seven operating self-storage facilities across the county.

Along with self-storage, the project was to hold 5,000-square feet of retail, including artist studios on the ground floor. The proposed art studios were to be fronting on Cutting Boulevard.

Mr. Nolan Borden, Baranof Holdings, applicant, started off by stating that the limitations for the site included contaminated soil, groundwater on the site, and shallow groundwater.

The proposed project was reviewed by the Design Review Board and the project was approved on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The project would bring in more local jobs to the City of Richmond.

Mr. Aiken explained that the reason for the company to build a storage facility in Richmond was that Richmond was expanding and there was a large need for storage facilities since additional dwelling units were being built. The proposed project was to be completely enclosed, secure, and climate controlled.

Commissioner Garcia requested where the bike shop and café would be located on the site. Mr. Borden answered that the bike shop would be located in the café area next to the art studios.

Commissioner Tucker inquired what the safety features were for the proposed project. Mr. Borden noted that there was a desire to have a gate in the parking lot, ample landscaping and lighting on the site, lighting on the building, keypad access, and access hours would be from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm.

Commissioner Tucker asked staff if gating the parking lot was part of the conditions. Ms. Feliciano announced that it was not but it could be added.

Commissioner Huang voiced that he was concerned that the artist studios were too small in terms of square footage and that those spaces would not be able to house any other uses other than studios because of their size. Mr. Aiken explained that the City pushed for art studios and said that the art community was underserved but there was flexibility to make those spaces workable for other uses as needed.

Commissioner Baer wanted an explanation as to why a café was allowed on the site when the site was contaminated. Mr. Borden clarified that with the use of a vapor barrier there would be no risk to the café. Ms. Feliciano confirmed that a limited restaurant was allowed on site without a CUP.

Commissioner Baer asked staff if there was anything in the Zoning Code about the proximity of storage units to one another. Ms. Feliciano announced that there were no limitations.

Commissioner Garcia questioned what the Commission was approving in terms of the CUP. Ms. Feliciano stated that the Commission was approving the storage facility in the CUP and the art studios were permitted by right.

Public Comment:

PHILIP ROSENTHAL, resident of Point Richmond, disclosed that he was in support of the project.

BUZZ BAYLIS, resident of Point Richmond, was supportive of the project.

REGINALD H. KNIGHTEN, Vice President of the Richmond Road Runners MC, was very excited about the art studios and was in support of the project.

BILLY ZEIER, Richmond resident, announced that he owned a business in the area and owned land in the surrounding vicinity of the proposed project. He represented the group New Life Movement and announced that they found the proposed project to be a proper use for the space.

LOUIS WINBHURST, owner of Whale Point Hardware, stated that he loved the proposed project. He announced that his hardware store would still stay in business if the proposed project was approved and that his business would be relocated to Point Richmond.

DANIEL WHITE voiced that he wanted to see more art studios to be included in the project. He wanted to know how artists would be chosen to use the site, what the costs were, if there would be running water to the studios, and natural light in the studios.

LYN SON M. BEAULIEU disclosed that she was one of the real estate agents working on the proposed project. She was in support of the project.

LINDA KALIN, Richmond resident, confirmed that the art community was underserved in Richmond and she was in support of the project because it provided art studios. She liked the exterior design of the building and noted that it would be visually attractive for the surrounding community.

DEBORAH MOSS, Richmond resident, stated that she was a business owner located near the proposed project. She was particularly in support of the café and art studios that were being proposed on the site.

DAVID SCHOENTHAL disclosed that he was a consultant for the proposed project. He articulated that Baranof Holdings had made several proposals to the community and had integrated amenities that the community had requested into the project. He emphasized that per the conditions, the space dedicated to the art studios and café could not be turned back into storage. He supported the project.

JERRY FEAGLEY, Point Richmond resident, disclosed that his real estate company was the one partaking in the sale of the site and he was in support of the project. He articulated that the surrounding area was industrial and the proposed project would help beautify the area.

ERIC WHANN was a partner of Point Richmond Self-Storage which was located near the proposed project. He reported that the ratio of storage to art space should be more half and half. He emphasized that having storage and art space mixed in one building was not a new concept. Several self-storage facilities in the City accommodated those types of mixed uses. He noted that the facility itself would not be operated by Baranof but by ExtraSpace, a non-local business. He cited several General Plan goals and stated that the proposed project did not meet any of them. He was not in support of the project.

AVI ATID stated that he was the neighbor to the east and he opposed the project.

JEFF WRIGHT, owner of Bridge Self Storage, commented that the proposed project did not comply with the General Plan vision.

BRUNO TEIXEIRA, Richmond resident, agreed that the project did not fit into the vision of the General Plan. He was concerned that Baranof had no experience with running art studios.

HEIDI HEADAPOHL, the owner of the business across the street from the proposed project, opposed the project and believed that the proposed project would be an eyesore in the neighborhood.

JOHN ELLIS, Richmond resident, opposed the project and was concerned about parking for the storage component and mixed uses.

JEFF LEE requested that the Commission deny the project because it was not consistent with the General Plan or that the Commission requires the project to have a more 50/50 ratio with art studios and storage.

PHILLIP MITCHELL, owner of R&R Coffee, articulated that he did not support the project because it was not a good representation of the fabric of Richmond. Mr. Mitchell answered Commissioner Garcia's question in that he had about a 250-square foot space at Bridge Self Storage for his coffee shop but he also had access to the other mixed use spaces to hold events in.

ELLEN PEDMAN believed that the proposed project did not fit within the vision of the General Plan. She agreed with the previous speakers that there needed to be more art spaces. She was not in support of the project.

CORDELL HINDLER articulated that the building was too large and needed more art spaces.

LINDA WHITMORE, executive for the Santa Fe Neighborhood Board, stated that the Santa Fe Neighborhood Council was not taking a position on the project due to new information that had been released about potential benefits that were being proposed for the neighborhood.

GILDA HARRELL, resident of the Santa Fe neighborhood, suggested that Baranof buy the adjacent parcel to the proposed project. She was concerned that the building was too large and that there would be a lot of foot traffic to and from the building.

Mr. Aiken commented that the public speakers never stated what specifically about the project did not fit within the vision of the General Plan. He confirmed that Extra Space would operate the business but Baranof would own the land. He stated that Baranof would oversee any commitments that were promised to the community.

Commissioner Tucker inquired of Mr. Feagley more clarification on the other companies that were interested in the property. Mr. Feagley answered that the other two companies interested in the property were construction and heavy equipment companies.

Commissioner Garcia asked if the art studios included plumbing and who would be in charge of coordinating with the artists. Mr. Borden confirmed sinks, drywall, full height walls among other

things was being proposed in the art studios. Mr. Aiken answered that Extra Space would run the storage component but Baranof would oversee the art studios and café.

In terms of Commissioner Garcia's question, Director Velasco stated that the Commission was approving a Conditional Use Permit and, in that permit, the Commission could innumerate what uses were allowed. Any plumbing or amenities for the art studios would be addressed during the Building Permit phase.

Mr. Whann reiterated that in the letter he submitted to the Commission, it outlined several areas where the proposed project did not fit in with the vision that the General Plan had set. He emphasized that the proposed project would only bring four new jobs to the area.

The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Baer asked for clarification on the parking for the proposed project and if the project conformed to the vision of the General Plan. Director Velasco stated that there was no parking allowed on Cutting Boulevard but parking was available on adjacent streets. In terms of the General Plan, Director Velasco stated that the project did meet the General Plan land use and zoning, and that there is no perfect project that meets every single goal articulated in the General Plan.

Commissioner Garcia liked the overall design of the project but wished that there was a more even ratio between artist space and storage units.

Commissioner Tucker advised that Baranof Holdings work with the community and to make the proposed project a gateway into the Santa Fe Neighborhood.

Commissioner Baer believed that there were already too many self-storage facilities in the area. She agreed with Commissioner Garcia's comments that there should be more art studios. She suggested expanding the commercial space along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

**ACTION: It was M/S/C (Tucker, Huang) to adopt Resolution Number 19-03 in Attachment 1 adopting the findings therein and approving Conditional Use Permit and Design Review Permit PLN18-053 for a mini storage facility with artist work studios subject to conditions which included 1. Gated parking, 2. The café space could not be converted back into anything other than art studios or a café use, 3. Baranof Holdings to provide a community benefit grant to the Santa Fe Neighborhood Council, 4. Baranof Holdings would work with the Santa Fe Neighborhood Council in creating gateway signage, 5. Increase the commercial/retail space to front on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street; which carried by the following vote: 4-0-3 (Ayes: Baer, Garcia, Huang, Tucker; Noes: None; Absent: Langlois, Butt, Loy).**

## **NEW ITEMS**

- 2. PLN18-173: The Cascade on Central Avenue Residential Development PUBLIC HEARING** to consider a recommendation to the City Council regarding the previously adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and a Rezone to PA, Planned Area District from CR, Regional Commercial, a Tentative Map 9505, and Design Review Permit to construct 46 residential units, consisting of four stacked flats and 42 townhomes on a vacant 2.58 acre site located at 5620 Central Avenue (APN: 510-053-025, -032, and 033). CR, Regional Commercial

(City of Richmond) and Multi-Family Residential District (City of El Cerrito). REA Partners LP, owner; Gene Broussard, applicant Planner: Jonelyn Whales Tentative Recommendation: Recommend Conditional Approval to City Council

[This item was moved to the Consent Calendar per the request of City Staff]

**COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**7. Reports of Officers, Commissioners and Staff –**

Director Velasco reminded the Commission that the March 7<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting was canceled.

Commissioner Tucker announced that he was appointed by the Governor of California to be a Regional Program Manager for the California Complete Count Census 2020.

Commissioner Baer raised a concern that all the Commissioner's terms were ending on the same date. Director Velasco confirmed that she would follow up with the City Clerk's Office to see if any adjustments were to be made. Commissioner Garcia noted that the current Commissioner's had not been reappointed for the current term.

**8. Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m. to the next regular meeting on March 21, 2019.