

**PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, RICHMOND CITY HALL**

450 Civic Center Drive, Richmond, CA
August 2, 2012
6:30 p.m.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Sheryl Lane, Chair
Roberto Reyes, Secretary
Ben Choi

Andrés Soto, Vice Chair
Andrew Butt
Carol Teltschick-Fall

The regular meeting was called to order by Chair Lane at 6:30 p.m.

Chair Lane led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Lane, Vice Chair Soto, Secretary Reyes, and Commissioner Butt

Absent: Commissioners Choi and Teltschick-Fall

INTRODUCTIONS

Staff Present: Hector Lopez, Carlos Privat, and Lina Velasco

Chair Lane and Commissioners welcomed Commissioner Andrew Butt to the Planning Commission, noting this is his first meeting.

MINUTES

June 21, 2012 Minutes

Vice Chair Soto referred to page 22, under his comments under Reports of Officers, it stated “. He stated this Saturday, June 23, 2012 is the Annual Richmond Pow Wow” will take place at the City.”

ACTION: It was M/S (Reyes/Soto) to approve the Minutes of June 21, 2012, as amended; unanimously carried (Choi, Reyes, Lane, Teltschick-Fall absent; Butt abstained).

Chair Lane 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, August 13, 2012, by 5:00 p.m. and as needed, announced the appeal process after each affected item.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Chair Lane reported there were three new items on the Consent Calendar. She asked if any members of the Commission, staff or public wished to pull any item. Vice Chair Soto asked and

confirmed with Ms. Velasco that all speakers wishing to speak are in favor of Item 2, and there is at least one opposed position for Item 3.

Vice Chair Soto requested removal of Item 3. Commissioner Reyes requested removal of Item 2.

ACTION: It was M/S (Soto/Choi) to approve the Consent Calendar consisting of Item 1; unanimously carried.

Consent Calendar Items Approved:

1. **PLN12-164: Elm Park Renovation** - PUBLIC HEARING to consider a Conditional Use Permit, Variance, and Design Review Permit to renovate Elm Park to include new play structures, landscaping, fencing, and signage, and convert the existing residence located at 720 Elm Avenue into a community building in support of the Elm Park Play lot (APNs: 534-192-005 & 534-192-004). CRR, Community and Regional Recreational District. City of Richmond, owner; City of Richmond Park & Landscape Division, applicant; Planner: Lina Velasco; Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval

BROWN ACT – PUBLIC FORUM

Cordell Hindler, Richmond, asked for the City to build a play land for adults and children with arcade games, pinball games, and arm wrestling competition. He also asked to place a hotel on the shores of Richmond which will bring in more tourism, people and business. He also asked to get Richmond involved and hold more outdoor concerts to get out of financial debt.

Consent Calendar Items Removed:

2. **PLN12-130: Planet Fitness** - PUBLIC HEARING to consider a Conditional Use Permit to operate and establish a fitness center at the former Safeway Store site located at 4925 Macdonald Ave. (APN:519-300-015). C-2, General Commercial District. Kadish Lawrence, owner; Joseph Freschi, applicant; Planner: Hector Lopez; Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval

Chair Lane confirmed there were 14 speakers in favor and signed up to speak on the item. She said they will each be given 2 minutes to speak.

Hector Lopez gave the staff report and an overview of the request for a conditional use permit for a 24 hour fitness center. Its operations, zoning, surroundings were also described. Staff recommends more restricted hours of operation than requested, be approved and expansion up to 24-hours a day seven days a week be considered after six months of operation, subject to a new public hearing. He spoke about parking restrictions, interior site improvements, lighting, landscaping, sidewalk repair, signage and new paint. He said the item is categorically exempt as an infill development and will have no environmental impacts. The use will enhance activity on a property that was vacated by a supermarket and staff recommends approval.

Chair Lane asked for the applicant's presentation.

Joseph Freschi, applicant, Planet Fitness, thanked the Commission and neighborhood groups he has worked with over the year. The project is very straightforward and will mostly have

interior renovations and improvements. He noted Planet Fitness staff from their Vallejo location are present to speak and said Planet Fitness is the opposite of Gold's Gym, a gym for everybody. They make it comfortable for casual fitness users so everyone has an opportunity to work out. They have a \$10 basic membership rate and their franchises are managed by individual franchisors that provide an atmosphere and facility where people can work out and are not bothered by ancillary products, personal training, or sales. They also have an upgraded membership at \$19.99. They want to be part of the community and centers tend to be clubs for their communities.

Vice Chair Soto asked and confirmed that for this franchise group, Vallejo is the only other location. The hours are a 24/7 operation in Vallejo.

Commissioner Reyes said Mr. Freschi mentioned his contact with Richmond Works and the Men and Women of Valor and he asked and confirmed those were the only two groups thus far. Commissioner Reyes suggested broadening his outreach which will improve things further.

Public Comments:

Willie Darden, Richmond, voiced his support for Planet Fitness.

Mike Thomas, Richmond, voiced his support and said the only 24 hour businesses are gas stations and given his schedule, it will bring the City into a more modern atmosphere. Planet Fitness is perfect for him; it is a state-of-the-art facility and something Richmond needs.

David Neal, Richmond, thinks the business is a nice opportunity for the City and voiced his support for staying in shape, being focused, bettering health, and is interested in membership.

Wanda Walker, Richmond, thinks a 24 hour Planet Fitness will be great for the City and being able to go anytime of the day or night and is excited about getting started.

Francisco Magponfay, Jr., Richmond, said he is a fitness trainer in Vallejo and working there brought a lot of positive reinforcement to that city. Many people cannot pay high membership fees and they provide free fitness training based on goals.

Commissioner Reyes clarified that they are located off Sonoma Boulevard in Vallejo and have Spanish-speaking employees.

Vice Chair Soto asked for the ratio of male/female participants and Mr. Magponfay replied it is currently 2:1 (males to females).

Efran Gonzalez, Vallejo, said they are 48% male and the rest is female. They actually have 2% undecided. The location they opened in Vallejo was in a shopping center that was going downhill. There is a Starbucks, Togo's, and a Dee Dee's Discount which have all now gone up in revenue. Their membership is larger than he thought as he sees people at stores in town who thank him for bringing Planet Fitness to the town. They want to expand for the planet.

Commissioner Reyes said on a 24 hour location, he asked what type of security is provided for members. Mr. Gonzalez said in Vallejo, they have security guards at the shopping center, and crime has gone down thanks to the foot traffic, and even with the absence of the police force in Vallejo.

Gina Swirsding, Richmond Heights, said she is disabled and was assaulted 20 years ago and was shot at in 2006, so walking the streets of Richmond are not safe for her. She goes to 24 Hour Fitness in the middle of the night. She does not like it crowded and likes going late at night because it is quiet and she would like the gym open 24/7 because it is close to her neighborhood. Going to Hilltop is difficult for her because she cannot drive and taking the bus is even more difficult. She thinks this would be of great benefit for people near the area that are disabled and on behalf of them and seniors they are very supportive of the gym. She noted San Pablo Avenue is not safe because of the many empty buildings, so she is very supportive of a 24/7 operation.

Teri James, Richmond, said she thinks Planet Fitness would be a great opportunity for Richmond because they have nothing like it. It would create jobs and asked that the Commission support it and approve it.

Pam Saucyr Bilbo, Richmond, Parks and Recreation Commission, said she has spoken with several community members in Richmond Heights who support the center and who also would like to see if open 24 hours. It is a safe haven and many people work late and would like to have access to a 24 hour facility. The price and location are right and the operation would be great for Richmond.

Vice Chair Soto hoped Ms. Bilbo will also be supporting the soda tax, and Ms. Bilbo spoke regarding her work to promote better health in the City of Richmond.

Maeve Katherine Bergman, Richmond, said she and her sister bought a house on 36th Street and are school teachers. She has not been to a gym in 18 months and her sister travels to Emeryville to a gym and would very much appreciate approval of the Planet Fitness here. They looked at a house on Prather above the grocery stores and chose not to purchase it because of the pending closure and fear of what would happen with two empty stores, so she very much supports filling the two properties with things that will benefit the entire community.

Jan Mignone, Richmond, President of the North and East Neighborhood Council, said she sent a letter regarding their overwhelming support of the project. They cannot wait for the gym to open. She has colleagues in El Cerrito who cannot wait for the gym to open as well because it will bring members. She will gladly give away her 24 Hour Fitness membership to join this one, as there are many more machines to use.

Vice Chair Soto thanked Ms. Mignone for bringing the positions of the North and East Neighborhood Council's position and asked if there were concerns and dialogue. Ms. Mignone said they had one abstention from a member who normally does.

Rock Brown, Richmond, confirmed that the proposal is for a 24/7 operation and he said he is for the project, thinks that the applicant has done a great job and appreciates the Planning Commission in their patience with this. Richmond needs this, given the location of BART and the redevelopment area. He went to the facility and their management is great, but at the time it was not a 24/7 operation. By being able to compromise and work together with neighbors, he would like it to go through as a 24/7 operation.

Cordell Hindler, Richmond, supports Planet Fitness because it is close to his house and Hilltop is inconvenient, it is for women and men and children, there should be a juice bar in the facility, and they also need a Zumba class inside.

Meindy Swirsding, Richmond, voiced her support for Planet Fitness, said there are many low income residents who will be able to afford going to Planet Fitness, some people get off late, and thinks the 24/7 hours of operation will be great. She also likes the fact that the facility provides areas for weight training for men and women.

Mr. Lopez gave staff's summary, stating the project is in compliance with development standards, meets the objective of the General Plan and staff recommends approval.

Commissioner Reyes asked and confirmed that the applicant wishes to operate 24/7, but because issues had arisen, the applicant agreed to open for 24 hours, 5 days a week Monday through Friday. However, they would much rather prefer the 7 days a week operation, given there are 24 Hour Fitness facilities in Hilltop and one going in El Cerrito.

Vice Chair Soto said he appreciates the applicant's ability to work with the community. The operation would be subject to review in six months and the applicant can ask for extended hours through the weekends if there are no problems during the first six months.

Commissioner Butt said this is a commendable project. He thinks it is a good use of an existing building and it seems to be much needed in terms of fitness. Begin an architect, he could not tell in the plan if there were bike racks in the plan, and Mr. Freschi said his architect is not present. While he did not think there are any on the plan, he sees no problem with adding them and being able to paint them their brand color purple/yellow.

Commissioner Butt said it looks as though some of the landscaping is being redone for the interior of the parking lot, but he asked that more landscaping be replaced around the perimeter. Mr. Freschi said he was not sure what was on the plans and wished the architect was present, but they want it to look nice and are amenable to do something to improve it. Commissioner Butt noted the application is not subject to design review. He also noted there is an area on the eastern side of the building where there is a trapezoidal area with benches along Key Boulevard. The area looks bad and he asked for a condition to replace the benches with new benches and possibly add the bike racks there, which users would appreciate. Mr. Freschi said he was amenable but would look at the area as far as safety for putting in bike racks there.

Commissioner Butt said new parking lot lighting is being replaced with new LED down lit lighting. Mr. Freschi confirmed they will have new and increased special down lit lighting.

Commissioner Butt said lastly, there is a wall that varies in height around $\frac{3}{4}$ of the site. Somewhere there was a provision to lower it in an area down to 3'6". He asked if it could be removed entirely or if retained, to put a nice mural on it. Mr. Freschi said the wall along Key Boulevard should probably be kept because of the neighbors on the side.

Commissioner Butt said the sidewalk along Macdonald Avenue is in bad shape from Eucalyptus trees. He asked if this would be repaired as part of the project, and Mr. Lopez said yes; this is included in one of the conditions.

Commissioner Butt said he fully supports the project, thinks it is a good use of the existing building, but he was part of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Committee many years ago and one of their tasks as Planning Commissioners is to support findings, one of which is that this project is consistent with the zoning and General Plan. In the staff report, this was vague and says it is consistent because it is community use, recreation center, which he was not sure it actually is like the General Plan intends. He has a hard time finding it is consistent with the

current General Plan zoning; however, he realizes they are in a transitional period where the zoning has not been upgraded to correspond with the General Plan.

Ms. Velasco said the site is part of the Livable Corridors project and certain uses will continue to be allowed and fitness centers will be one of those uses they anticipate carrying forward. In terms of this, they see it as consistent. Ideally, in the future, they want to see more mixed-use development, but as the economy improves and new developments come forward, they may have to wait to see this transition. They are focusing on nodes and areas in between nodes may have more flexible uses.

Commissioner Butt recognized this as a placeholder and that it is much more driven by the economy as a long term vision to have dense use and a gateway type of development, and this is a good interim use of that site.

The public hearing was closed.

Vice Chair Soto supported Commissioner Butt's request to add a condition for installation of bike racks in the front of the facility.

Chair Lane commented that she thinks the project is great. It is great to see people come out and voice their support for it. She is familiar with the San Francisco Planet Fitness and thinks it offers a great price for what it offers and knows some projects do not necessarily align with the full build-out and vision of the General Plan, but until the economy changes, she thinks this project is a great fit for the site. She also thanked the applicant for thinking Richmond first in terms of employment.

Commissioner Reyes said when looking into the bike racks, he suggested visiting the Richmond Spokes on Harbour Way which is a local Richmond vendor.

ACTION: It was M/S (Soto/Reyes) to adopt Resolution 12-11, approving PLN12-130, a conditional use permit for a proposed fitness center at 4925 Macdonald Avenue, subject to conditions with the addition of the bike racks, and as amended by Commissioner Butt, to replace the three (3) deteriorated benches in the landscaped area to the east of the building along Key Boulevard; which carried unanimously (Choi & Teltschick-Fall absent).

- 3. PLN12-148: Coffee Establishment** - PUBLIC HEARING to consider a Conditional Use Permit to establish a new coffee establishment with a drive-through at an existing retail center located at 4261 Hilltop Dr. (APN: 426-292-025). C-1, Neighborhood Commercial District. Hari Kalra, owner; Johnson Lyman Architects, applicant; Planner: Hector Lopez; Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval

Hector Lopez gave the staff report, an overview of the request for a conditional use permit for a new coffee establishment with a drive-through. The applicant has indicated they would like to lease the building to Starbucks or a similar business. He described the zoning, surrounding development. He said on July 17, 2012, staff met with the applicant, Councilmember Bates and a member of the Hilltop Greens Association. The applicant agreed to upgrade the existing fence along the drive-through to further reduce any noise and impact to abutting residential properties. In response to the homeowner associations' concerns regarding traffic, Councilmember Bates recommended installing a four-way stop at the corner of Hilltop and Park Central Road. The

volume of traffic and ability to make turns is already overwhelming. Further analysis is required to determine whether a signal or stop sign is warranted. Staff believes that the applicant should contribute a fair share towards traffic improvement on Hilltop and Park Central Road and recommends approval of the use permit for the new coffee establishment with drive-through.

Hari Kalra, Pinole, said they have owned and operated a convenience store and gas station on the parcel since 1988 and believe they run a healthy operation. The project has been something they have wanted to do for a long time and many retail spaces have been left empty so they could improve the building and provide back to the community as a good neighbor, be accessible for walkability and also allow residents to relax with neighbors and have coffee. They have received good feedback from a major coffee company and ask that the Commission approve the request. He referred to before and after photos stating improvements are significant. The memorial park representatives across the street support the business and feel the location will be great for families will be able to meet. They have met with neighbors and have taken their feedback, have come to an agreement with some concerns, agree with the staff report, but he asked that one item regarding them paying for a stop light or sign, and he asked for the definition of "fair share". He thinks it will occur over time and has not yet been determined, and if it occurs sometime in the future, he would like to understand it better.

Ms. Velasco said at this point a dollar amount has not been determined since the improvements are unknown. Typically, fair-share contribution equates to the road trips generating by the use, and this is no different than any other application. She referred to the subdivision ordinance which has the definition contained in it.

Vice Chair Soto asked what the stop signs would be trying to mitigate. Ms. Velasco said it is her understanding from neighbors that there are schools east of the left turn off of Park Central onto Hilltop Drive generate people from the subdivision going east. They now have to wait because there is no stop sign or signal for traffic going west. They are concerned with the added trips that the stop time for them to make the left turn safely would increase.

Vice Chair Soto encouraged children to walk to school, stating the school is not far away.

Commissioner Butt asked if the fair share is a share of the stop sign cost. Ms. Velasco said at this time, staff has not determined what the improvements would be. They could do a traffic study that looks at all trips and not just trips generated by the coffee establishment. Therefore, what they need to work out with the Traffic Engineer is whether any additional improvements would be warranted if so the fair-share would be applied to the cost of the total improvements.

Mr. Kalra noted they also had a traffic study done which is also in the staff packet, and there is no significant impact from a traffic perspective from the drive-through.

Chair Lane asked for the timeline of the determination regarding requesting a fair share amount. Ms. Velasco said staff would work with Engineering and determine whether with the addition of the new business they think it is something the City should fund and research. She does not know what the exact timing is. She would assume that the City would also need to coordinate the traffic studies with the County.

Vice Chair Soto said it sounds like the applicant has had conversations with Starbucks and said he personally boycotts Starbucks because of their refusal to prohibit persons from entering into their stores openly carrying firearms when requested. Starbucks also has a less than stellar record of fair trade options, and as an occasional coffee consumer, he suggested another coffee

purveyor. Mr. Kalra said they have had discussions with drive-thru tenants in terms of working in the neighborhood since 1988 and there has been food interest. Having their own business on the parcel, they do not want to encroach on their own business and do not want to impact other businesses. They have not secured any lease with Starbucks, but they are the one their broker has reached out to because of relationships, but they are open to anyone. Vice Chair Soto commented that he has seen a Caffino drive-thru.

Commissioner Reyes asked if the school district is exempt from fair share. Planning and Building Services Director Mitchell said he spoke with the Engineering Department about it and what they have on the street are difficulties with traffic on Hilltop Drive. These have existed for some time and involve the County, the City, this property owner and surrounding property owners. At some point, the Engineering departments of the City and County will determine what they want to do and at that time, they will approach the property owners and assess them for some portion of the cost of solving the problem. When that happens, the cemetery, church, and other businesses will also be subject to whatever outcome they develop. In the meantime, staff makes it clear that they cannot burden this particular property owner who has an existing facility where he is just trying to get tenants in with a disproportionate amount of the cost for solving a problem that has been there for some time. They do not know when or how much or what the outcome would be. Councilmember Bates suggested they implement a four-way stop sign. This suggestion was made to the Engineering Department and needs to be studied.

Chair Lane called for public comments.

Public Comments:

Larry Crosby, El Sobrante, said Mr. Kalra runs an extremely efficient and effective operation and takes care of the business and his customers. He will be a good neighbor and supported approval.

Commissioner Reyes said many stores in the area have signs that say "one student at a time" and he hopes that if the business goes through it will not have to put up similar signage for the students. Mr. Crosby said he has never seen any problems with young people there.

Cordell Hindler, Richmond said he supports the new coffee shop, but not a Starbucks and hopes for a different purveyor, and hoped the coffee has Wi-Fi.

Ralph Vaca, Hilltop Green Homeowners Association, said there are 521 homes with an over 2,000 population. They do not have a problem with the project and thinks what the current business owner wants to do is a splendid idea, but as a natural consequence of a drive-through, they voice concerns with increases in traffic. They have one entrance into and one exit out of their subdivision and it is difficult to make a left hand turn going east. There is a school at the Jewish Temple, parents driving children to school, there is a work commute and it is a raceway along Hilltop Road. He appealed to the Commission to do something about the traffic situation.

Vice Chair Soto asked if Mr. Vaca sees the answer as a traffic signal or four-way stop signs. Mr. Vaca said he would prefer a light and thanked Mr. Lopez and Mitchell for meeting with them.

Vice Chair Soto asked and confirmed that the Jewish School would also be included in the fair share amount. He said if the project moves forward, he asked if it was foreseeable that resolution to the traffic condition would occur prior to the business opening. Mr. Mitchell said no, it would not because there is an existing center and existing center that is able to handle any

additional traffic impacts on site. While they acknowledge there is a problem, the Commission could direct staff to ask the Engineering Department to move faster towards resolving this, but he noted that the site itself is fully adequate to support any of the uses proposed without generating significant traffic impacts. He noted there would have to be 12 cars at the drive-through before they would actually start lining up on the street.

Vice Chair Soto asked what the difference in price is of a four-way light and a four-way stop sign. Mr. Mitchell said the stop signs are insignificant. The Engineering department would oversee a study prior to doing any complex lighting system, but they start at \$250,000 and up.

Commissioner Reyes said he has watched the traffic, as he lived in the area at one time. He hoped to compel the engineering department to move forward to allay fears. Mr. Mitchell said the Planning Commission or City Council could make such a request, and staff will continue to push this towards some sort of resolution.

Mr. Lopez summarized the proposal and recommendation for approval.

The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Butt voiced support for the project, stating it is a significant improvement to the building. He hoped for a fair solution for the traffic signal/stop signs, applauded the applicant for the design work, confirmed the project will go to the DRB, and said he is troubled by the intent to leave the narrow existing landscaping strip along Hilltop Drive between the sidewalk and parking lot. He said the DRB suggested that the planter strip be widened at the initial approval and he thinks there is an opportunity to make the landscaping there nicer for pedestrians and bicyclists. There were also concerns about light and noise from the project at the time, and he would entertain an additional condition to widen the landscaping strip with trees to buffer the sound and add to the visual amenities of the site. He also asked for bike racks in the project and supported the project with those conditions.

Vice Chair Soto agreed with the additional conditions and hoped the Commission could urge Engineering to expedite the traffic study.

Commissioner Reyes voiced support and made a motion for approval.

Ms. Velasco confirmed that those additional conditions that are design related should indicate to state that when the DRB is reviewing the project, that they consider installation and location of bike racks and for the planter strip to be widened for additional landscaping. She noted that the Planning Commission reviews use and staff can provide information to the DRB that when the CUP was considered by the Planning Commission, it wanted these additional items to be reviewed by the DRB.

ACTION: It was M/S (Reyes/Soto) to approve PLN12-148 with the recommended conditions, with the additional condition to compel Planning staff to work with the Engineering Department to make a determination regarding traffic issues; and that specific design-related conditions (the planter strip be widened for additional landscape and trees and that bike racks be installed) be referred to the DRB; unanimously carried (Choi and Teltschick-Fall absent).

COMMISSION BUSINESS

4. Reports of Officers, Commissioners and Staff

Ms. Velasco announced that the City will hold an additional Housing Element Update Workshop on August 9th in the Multi-Purpose Room, on the basement level of 440 Civic Center Plaza, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. In addition, she advised that on June 27th, the MTC awarded the City of Richmond a \$496,000 grant to do a Specific Plan for the South Shoreline, which will be planning regulations for the area around the potential future site of the LBNL second campus.

Mr. Mitchell noted that on June 26th, representatives from LBNL and UC Berkeley held a public workshop at the Auditorium that was very well attended and presented some architectural themes and requested community input on the design. Another workshop will be held on September 6th at which time, scientists who will be conducting research will be discussing the nature of the research. These workshops are being organized by the Laboratory and UC Berkeley.

Vice Chair Soto stated he attended the stakeholder's meeting across the plaza and a question he raised about public meetings was whether they would be doing any workshops in Spanish, and Mr. Mitchell noted that staff will determine whether this has been set up and put forward that request. Chair Lane noted she attended that meeting, saw there were headsets and saw translators in the back of the room.

Commissioner Reyes welcomed Commissioner Butt to the Commission. He spent the last three weeks walking and talking to people in the Richmond Heights Neighborhood and the Lower Richmond Heights Neighborhood. Much discussion evolved over the 24 hour supermarket. He feels there will be more discussion and is happy Planet Fitness was approved. He also noted that on August 11th, the Solano Play Lot will re-open as well.

Vice Chair Soto said he was glad to hear part of the Settlement of the Costco Bussan incident was money received to the City to re-open Pt. Molate Park and to rehab and fill in parts of the Bay Trail which is a positive development from a very negative experience. He appreciates Mr. Mitchell's report on the LBNL meeting and hoped for staff follow-up from the Housing Element update workshop. He announced on October 6th from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., the North Richmond Shoreline Festival will occur at Pt. Pinole Park. They fed over 1,000 people last year with a free BBQ last year.

Commissioner Butt said he appreciates the warm welcome and looks forward to serving on the Commission. This is an exciting time for Richmond with many projects coming with the new General Plan taking shape. He noted that the Elm Play Lot is a great project he was happy to see come to this point and move in a good direction. It is a coming together of a community and taking a park and putting life into it. He was able to participate in this early on and was able to convince them to rehab it for historic preservation and use the old building. He also thanked the City for his plaque for his 3-year service on the DRB.

Chair Lane echoed Ms. Velasco's comments on the Housing Element and encouraged residents to attend the meeting on August 9th. If people are not able to attend, they can send comments to Hector Rojas in the Planning Department. She noted their September Planning Commission meeting is canceled and postponed to September 20th when planning staff will present the Richmond Livable Corridors Project charette and potentially the Draft Housing Element Update.

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.