

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 10600, San Francisco, California 94102 tel 415 352 3600 fax 415 352 3606

December 23, 2014

TO: All Design Review Board Members

FROM: Bob Batha, Chief of Permits [415/352-3612; bobb@bcdca.gov]
Rosa Schneider, Coastal Program Analyst [415/352-3622; rosa.schneider@bcdca.gov]

SUBJECT: Alameda Boatworks, City and County of Alameda County; First Review
(For Board consideration on January 5, 2015)

Project Summary

Project Sponsors. Francis Collins, Boatworks LLC and William Lyon Homes

Project Representatives. Philip Banta, Boatworks LLC; Scott Hilk and Scott Roylance, William Lyon Homes

Project Site. The proposed project is located at 2235 Clement Street on a 9.48-acre parcel west of the Park Street Bridge in the City and County of Alameda. The site is bounded by Clement Avenue on the south, Oak Street on the east, Elm Street on the West, and the Oakland Estuary to the north. Approximately 1.26 acres of the site is located within BCDC's shoreline band jurisdiction, and approximately 0.02 acres (1000 square feet) is within BCDC's Bay jurisdiction.

The site was previously used for industrial manufacturing and warehousing uses. All structures associated with these former uses have been demolished and the property is currently vacant. In 2013, contaminated debris and dilapidated docks were removed from the shoreline through a U.S. EPA sponsored CERCLA clean-up, and the shoreline was straightened and stabilized with fill and riprap.

Project Description. The proposed project consists of 182 two-, three-, and four-bedroom housing units (including 21 affordable housing units) and public access improvements. Portions of 19 units would be within the 100-foot shoreline band. The development would be constructed in two phases based on separate property ownership of the component parcels.

1. **Housing Development.** All buildings would be two or three stories and up to 38 feet high, with rectangular floor plans. In Phase A, 134 housing units would be built on the larger (eastern) parcel and would consist of six-plex, nine-plex and 10-plex townhome buildings with a contemporary design. Most units would face onto common open space and pedestrian walkways, with vehicular access via alleys behind the buildings. All required moderate and very low-income units would be interspersed among market-rate units within Phase A of the project. In Phase B, 48 housing units would be built on the smaller (western) parcel.



2. **Estuary Open Space.** An approximately 1.32-acre public open space area (“Estuary Open Space”) would be created along the northern side of the property along the waterfront (approximately 800 feet long and varying in width from 55 feet to 135 feet), and landscaping and amenities would be provided throughout this area.

A ten-foot-wide concrete trail with an adjacent four-foot decomposed granite shoulder would run along the waterfront as part of the Bay Trail. On the eastern edge of the site, the trail would connect to the Bay Trail on the adjoining property at the extension of Oak Street, and would be lighted with bollard lights. Benches would be provided along the trail and at two overlooks. Inland of the trail, approximately 25 feet from the top of bank, a 9,000-square-foot bioretention basin would be planted with grasses and sedges. A tree-lined promenade would be constructed in front of the waterfront-facing residences, and would be connected to the trail by several raised walkways over the bioretention basin.

The existing pier would be enhanced to provide public access with seating, lighting, and interpretive signs. An ADA ramp would provide access to the upper level of the pier, and an overlook area with picnic tables and barbeque pits would be constructed adjacent to the pier. A tot lot play area and mowed grass area would be constructed on the northwestern portion of the open space. Two standard public shore parking spaces and two ADA-accessible public shore parking spaces are proposed at the end of A Street adjacent to the open space. An entry plaza with seat walls is proposed between the parking area and the trail.

3. **Access to Estuary Open Space.** Two sidewalks would be created and dedicated as public access easements: a 12-foot-wide sidewalk on the east side of A Street, connecting Clement Avenue to the Estuary Open Space, and a 10-foot-wide sidewalk along the west side of Oak Street, connecting Blanding Avenue to the Estuary Open Space. Within the interior of the project, pedestrian paths would traverse the common spaces between the units, and would serve as the meeting and circulation areas for the residents. Crosswalks with stamped or colored asphalt would be installed at four intersections.
4. **Water Access.** The BCDC staff is in discussions with the applicant regarding an in-water kayak float for human-powered water craft. Currently, no water access is being proposed.

Design Review Issues. The Board’s comments are sought on the proposed public access improvements, and the Board should consider the following applicable policies and guidelines during this initial review. Specifically, the Board’s recommendations are sought on the following:

1. **Physical Access:** does the project provide attractive, obvious, and usable connections to the shoreline and promote movement along the shoreline? The Bay Plan policies on Public Access state, in part, that:

“Improvements should be designed and built to encourage... movement to and along the shoreline...” and that “[a]ccess to and along the waterfront should be provided by walkways, trails, or other appropriate means and connect to the nearest public thoroughfare where convenient parking or public transportation may be available.”

The Public Access Design Guidelines state, in part, that a shoreline development should:

“provide a clear and continuous transition to adjacent developments”, “use local public street networks to inform shoreline site design and to extend the public realm to the Bay,” and “provide connections perpendicular to the shoreline.”

At the eastern edge of the site, the proposed trail would connect to the existing Bay Trail at the extension of Oak Street. On the adjoining property to the west, the project would provide a connection to a future trail when new development occurs at the adjacent site. Two sidewalks connecting city streets to the development and the Estuary Open Space would be created and dedicated as public access easements through the residential development.

The Board’s advice is sought on whether the proposed project provides adequate connections to adjacent and future public access shoreline areas. Is access to the proposed shoreline area and trails obvious and attractive? Do the trails, connecting paths, and sidewalks read as public? Is access to the water direct and obvious? Is the potential future connection to the Bay Trail to the west appropriately located, and how can it be finished now to provide attractive public space in the interim?

2. **Does the project provide adequate, usable, and attractive public access spaces appropriate to the development and the site?** BCDC’s *Public Access Design Guidelines* state, in part, that:

“Shoreline access [should be] designed and built to encourage diverse, Bay-related activities along the shoreline... to create a “sense of place”, and be “designed for a wide range of users,” and that “[v]iew opportunities, shoreline configuration and access points are factors that determine a site’s inherent public access opportunities.”

Within the Estuary Open Space, the proposed project would provide a split level pier with seating and interpretive signs, an approximately 800-foot-long portion of the Bay Trail, a tot lot, lawn area, waterfront overlooks, picnic tables and barbeque pits, four parking spaces, and an entry plaza.

The Board’s advice is sought on whether the proposed public access is sufficient to accommodate the expected level of use, takes advantage of site characteristics, and includes the appropriate site amenities. Does the public access area have a clear program, and are the anticipated uses provided for in the design? Do the pier, trails, overlooks, and picnic areas provide adequate opportunities for the public to view and experience the Bay? Are the proposed public uses integrated with and differentiated from the access to the residences? The Board should also evaluate whether there is some way to provide access to the water within the property owned by the project proponents.

3. **Sea Level Rise.** The Bay Plan policies on Public Access state, in part, that:

“public access should be sited, designed, managed and maintained to avoid significant adverse impacts from sea level rise and shoreline flooding.”

Nearly all of the site is above the 100 year flood level predicted for the year 2100. With 36 inches of sea level rise, the lower section of pier would be a few inches above mean higher high water; with 36 inches of sea level rise during a 100 year flood, the lower section of the pier would experience nearly two feet of inundation. The project representatives have stated that the proposed pier could be raised to accommodate sea level rise.

The Board's advice is sought on whether the proposed public access areas have been sited and designed to adequately avoid significant adverse impacts from sea level rise and shoreline flooding for the life of the project, which is expected to be beyond 2100. The Board should consider the elevation, configuration, and materials used in the design of the proposed public access features as they relate to future sea level rise.