

**CITY OF UNION CITY
MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
OF OCTOBER 2, 2008, 7:00 P.M.
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL
34009 ALVARADO-NILES ROAD, UNION CITY, CALIFORNIA**

I. ROLL CALL: Commissioners Phillip Crosby, Jo Ann Lew, Gurnam (Gary) Singh, and Chairperson Tikisa Anderson

Absent: Commissioners Raymond Gonzales Jr., Froilan (Roy) Panlilio

STAFF: Joan Malloy (Planning Manager); Mike Rodriquez (Assistant City Attorney); Farooq Azim (Principle Civil Engineer); Kris Fitzgerald (Administrative Assistant).

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The regular Planning Commission Minutes of September 4, 2008 were approved as submitted.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Barry Ferrier, 32212 Allison Way, Union City, announced that there would be a Transportation Forum on October 16, 2008 at the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority office, 1333 Broadway, Suite 300, Oakland, CA, starting at 5:30 p.m. Mr. Ferrier stated that this is where the ½ cent sales tax money goes for transportation projects.

IV. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: None.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. CONTINUED HEARINGS: None.

B. NEW HEARINGS:

VI. SUPPLEMENTAL STAFF REPORTS:

A. CONTINUED REPORTS: None.

B. NEW REPORTS:

- 1. Interpretation of AvalonBay Patio Design – AvalonBay is seeking a design interpretation regarding the patio stoop design on Union Square and the central drive. This project is currently under construction and is located at 34-44 Union Square.**

Joan Malloy, Planning Manager, presented the staff report.

Commissioner Lew stated that she thought that the purpose of the stairs was to break up the monotony and asked how will the monotony be broken up if the stairs are removed.

Ms. Malloy replied that was the original intent of the stairs and also to pick up grade from the street. Ms. Malloy stated that due to how the site graded out and ADA requirements the stairs are no longer needed. Ms. Malloy stated that the building overall is well articulated and will carry some consistency through the design.

Chairperson Anderson asked if there would be access to the street with the redesign.

Ms. Malloy replied that there would be access to the street.

Chairperson Anderson asked if there would be gates on all the patios.

Ms. Malloy replied that there would be gates.

Derek Pater, AvalonBay, San Jose, stated that he was here representing the applicant.

Chairperson Anderson asked if the patios would have gates.

Rob Takei, Togawa Smith Martin, San Jose, stated that is correct.

Commissioner Lew stated that her understanding was that the stairs were to break up the monotony so that every unit looked alike going down the road. Commissioner Lew asked how they plan to break up the monotony without the stairs.

Mr. Takei stated that Building A and Building B are different types of buildings. Mr. Takei stated that Building B has the fingers with courtyards and terrace planters in between those fingers. Mr. Takei stated that the base treatment of Building B is different from Building A because the first through fifth floors stack up whereas Building B's base is treated differently by varying the window and door placements.

Commissioner Lew referred to exhibit A and stated that without the stoops the elevation looks exactly the same all the way down the road.

Mr. Takei stated that even with the stoops they would still have a uniform look to each other. Mr. Takei stated that by removing the stoops it provides more usable patio for the residents.

Commissioner Lew stated that she does not object to the removal of the stairs, however, she wants some differentiation to the entrances so they don't all look alike.

Ms. Malloy pointed out that while the units will have a similar entry with the same low wall and gate there is a fair amount of variation in the building overall. Ms. Malloy stated that the stacked terraces are landscaped and go up and breakup the building massing between. Ms. Malloy stated that the building elements are broken up into several different pieces and this would just be at the ground floor level.

Commissioner Lew asked if the terraces will be landscaped.

Ms. Malloy replied that they will be mostly with shrubs. Ms. Malloy stated that the terraces are for aesthetics and not places for people to hang out.

Commissioner Lew asked if the terraces will be landscaped exactly alike.

Ms. Malloy replied that she had not seen the plan.

Commissioner Lew stated that would be one way to differentiate between the buildings by varying the landscaping but not to a great amount. Commissioner Lew stated that the buildings look so much alike and she would like to see the units differentiated in some way with either paint or landscaping.

Mr. Pater stated that they would be willing to make sure that the landscaping in those four terraced planters in the courtyards is not exactly alike from one courtyard to the next.

Commissioner Lew asked how that would be accomplished.

Mr. Pater stated that there landscape architect could work out two or more different approaches that would be appropriate to that location and alternate them.

Commissioner Lew asked what types of plants were planned for that area.

Mr. Pater stated that it will be mostly low shrubs and perhaps some small trees.

Commissioner Lew stated that because they are huge buildings the appearances need to be differentiated either with the landscaping or the paint palette. Commissioner Lew stated that she is in agreement about removing the stairs.

Chairperson Anderson asked what phase the project is in.

Mr. Pater stated that the project is under construction and one building is framed and they are working on the exterior.

Chairperson Anderson noted that it would be difficult to make any design changes at this point.

Mr. Pater agreed.

Commissioner Singh asked if moving the handrail would cause access problems.

Mr. Takei replied that it would not and the removal would make it easier to access the patio from the interior of the unit.

Commissioner Singh asked if the area across the creek would have a gate.

Ms. Malloy replied that there will be a fence along that area and no access through to the residential area.

Chairperson Anderson stated that the commission is agreeable to removing the stoops and stairs as requested.

Commissioner Lew noted that the landscaping on the terraces should be varied.

Ms. Malloy stated that they staff will work with AvalonBay to vary the landscaping on the terraces.

2. Station District Review and Update.

This report was continued to November 6, 2008.

VII. REDEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORTS:

VIII. COMMISSION MATTERS:

- A.** Follow-up on Planning Commission referrals to the City Council.
- B.** Upcoming applications for the Regular Planning Commission meeting for October 16, 2008.

IX. GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Commissioner Lew read in the Argus that Costco and 24 hour Fitness are opening stores on Industrial in Hayward and asked if Costco had ever approached Union City about opening a store up here.

Ms. Malloy replied that staff spoke with Costco several times over the last several years but were unable to find a site that was suitable for the development.

X. ADJOURNMENT: 7:32 p.m.


TIKISA ANDERSON, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:


MARK LEONARD, SECRETARY