

# 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

June 28, 2018

**TO:** Design Review Board Members

**FROM:** Lawrence J. Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653; [larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov](mailto:larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov))  
Andrea Gaffney, Bay Design Analyst (415/352-3643; [andrea.gaffney@bcdc.ca.gov](mailto:andrea.gaffney@bcdc.ca.gov))  
Rebecca Coates-Maldoon, Coastal Program Analyst (415/352-3634; [rebecca.coates-maldoon@bcdc.ca.gov](mailto:rebecca.coates-maldoon@bcdc.ca.gov))

**SUBJECT: Alameda Landing Waterfront Mixed-Use Development; First Pre-Application Review**  
(For Design Review Board consideration on July 9, 2018)

## Project Summary

**Project Proponents & Property Owners.** Community Improvement Commission of the City of Alameda (“CIC”) and Catellus Alameda Development, LLC (“Catellus”)

**Project Representatives.** Sean Whiskeman, Damir Priskich, Bill Kennedy and Lexie Lam (Catellus, Developer); Jason Victor (Ken Kay Associates, Landscape Architect); Gayle Johnson (Simpson Gumpertz and Heger, Wharf Structural Engineer); Nick Loizeaux (RPS Iris, Environmental Engineer); Dr. Juan Baez (Advanced Geosolutions Inc., Design/Build Deep Soil Mixed Column Soil Improvements); Haze Rogers and Richard Rodgers (Langan, Geotechnical Engineers)

**Project Site.** The project site is located at the north waterfront of the City of Alameda, in Alameda County. The site is located across the Alameda–Oakland Estuary from Oakland’s Jack London Square, along Mitchell Avenue and Marina Village Parkway, at the terminuses of 5th and Bette Streets. The project is bound by: Alameda–Oakland Estuary to the north; a wharf and warehouses facilities designated for commercial maritime-industrial use to the west; a residential neighborhood, the Posey Tube entrance and a Target department store to the south; and Mariner Square Dry Stack and Marina (boat storage and marina) and Pasta Pelican Restaurant to the east. Immediately southwest of the site is the City-owned Estuary Park and a large stormwater retention basin.

**Existing Conditions (Exhibit 5).** The 22.8-acre project site was developed as part of the northern portion of the U.S. Navy’s Fleet and Industrial Supply Center Annex in 1966. The Navy ceased use of the site in 1998 and subsequently transferred ownership of the property to the City of Alameda. The site includes a pile-supported, approximately 150-foot-wide concrete wharf which runs along the site’s approximately 1,400-foot-long shoreline, and an upland area extending approximately 650 feet between the wharf and the public road. The wharf at the project site is not in active use. The site contains two 72,000-square-foot warehouse buildings, which straddle the wharf deck and inland portions of the site. A portion of the site inland of the wharf is used to stockpile soil, and portions of that stockpile currently block views across the site to the estuary and Oakland Shoreline from Mitchell Avenue and Grand Marina Parkway. The site is paved, with no trees or developed planting, and is exposed to strong winds and sun.

A portion of the wharf directly west of the project site, owned by Bay Ship & Yacht, includes two large warehouse buildings which are actively in use by maritime-industrial businesses. In 2017, BCDC authorized removal of a narrow (5-foot-wide by 156-foot-long) portion of the wharf to create a structural separation between the project site and the adjacent Bay Ship & Yacht site. A stormwater outfall structure is located next to the wharf-cut, underneath the wharf deck.

An approximately 4,500-square-foot Alameda Municipal Power (AMP) electrical riser substation is located on the eastern side of the project site, near an existing public access path and waterfront park (the Mariner Square Waterfront Esplanade, authorized by BCDC Permit No. 1972.005.11). The shoreline path ends at its intersection with the project site. While the path is not a designated segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail (Bay Trail) because it is not part of a continuous trail network, it is anticipated to become the designated Bay Trail in the future as the shoreline is redeveloped (Exhibits 3-4).

**Proposed Project.** The Alameda Landing project described in this staff report is part of a multi-phased master plan for the closed 218-acre military site. Approximately 76 acres was developed as Alameda Bayport Neighborhood, 100 acres was developed as the Alameda Landing Shopping Center and TRI Pointe Homes neighborhood, and 17 acres was developed as the adjacent Bay Ship & Yacht facility (Exhibit 2). The proposed waterfront project would be constructed as the final phase of the masterplan. The original scope for the waterfront project included the entire 42-acre waterfront from the western edge of the Mariner Square dry stack boat storage facility to the west end of the wharf at the turning basin on the estuary. However, in the summer of 2017, the project proponents reached an agreement with the City of Alameda to maintain the western portion of the wharf for maritime-industrial uses, and thus revised the masterplan to limit redevelopment of the wharf for a mixed-use community on the portion of the site described above as the project site (Exhibits 6 - 9).

The proposed project would demolish two smaller warehouses on the western side of the site, and would construct a 15-acre mixed-use development with up to 400 residential units and a minimum of 5,000 square feet of ground-floor retail and/or restaurants. The development would also include a 35-space retail and public parking lot, and a 4.5-acre public waterfront park with promenade and plaza, including a roundabout for drop-off at 5th Street, a retail plaza with café seating, bike parking, and planted areas (Exhibits 8-9, 12-15.) The mixed-use development is anticipated to bring up to 800 residents and 15 employees to the area. The riser substation will remain in its existing location, and will be surrounded by a fence and planting, subject to AMP requirements for access.

A 59,800-square-foot inland section of the wharf deck would be removed and replaced with soil fill. The deck to remain varies from 68-feet to 88-feet-wide from the water's edge of the wharf and would have a distributed dead load limitation of 35 pounds per square foot, but would allow heavier point loads for trees and intensive planting areas. A sub-surface retaining wall would be installed along the wharf cut and reinforced upland with densified soil methods (Exhibits 10-11, 13, 16-18).

Within the Commission’s Bay and 100-foot shoreline band jurisdictions, and extending beyond the Commission’s jurisdiction, the proposed project would consist of the following public access components:<sup>1</sup>

1. **5th Street View Corridor (Exhibits 1, 12-14, 20).** A 75-foot-wide view corridor would be established for 5th Street from Mitchell Avenue to the Waterfront Plaza. This view corridor is designed to create an axial public view along 5th Street in Alameda to Jack London Square and up Broadway in Oakland. The 5th Street Corridor would establish a commercial and retail spine with residential uses on upper floors to connect the larger commercial areas inland to the waterfront, terminating at the Waterfront Plaza. A 35-space public parking lot restricted to park users would be located inland of the AMP riser substation to the east of the 5th Street Corridor.
2. **Waterfront Plaza (Exhibits 1, 12-14, 16).** A 2.08-acre public plaza would be constructed on the waterfront at the terminus of 5<sup>th</sup> Street, with approximately 1.31 acres within BCDC’s jurisdiction and 0.87 acres outside of BCDC’s jurisdiction. Proposed public access features include a large paved plaza surrounded by a pergola structure, a sculptural climbing structure, benches and lounge seating, bike parking, kayak storage, and planting areas. A water shuttle landing and kayak launch are proposed as part of the project, but would be designed and developed at a later project phase.
3. **Waterfront Wharf Promenade (Exhibits 1, 12-18, 21-26).** A 2.42-acre public promenade would be constructed along the waterfront on the existing wharf from the Waterfront Plaza at 5th Street to the Western Greenway at the extension of Bette Street. The entirety of the 100-foot-wide promenade would be within BCDC’s jurisdiction. The promenade would contain a 12-foot-wide waterfront promenade, a 5-foot-wide furnishing zone, and an 18-foot-wide trail that is intended to become a designated segment of the Bay Trail. Public access amenities proposed along the waterfront promenade include benches, a picnic area, vertical art elements, recreational games, wide planting areas, and a seven-foot-wide sidewalk between the promenade and the inland residential development.
4. **Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge to Oakland (Exhibit 3).** Although not proposed as part of this project, the City of Alameda is exploring a possible bicycle and pedestrian bridge crossing of the Alameda–Oakland Estuary launching from the promenade to connect to the Oakland shoreline. City of Alameda’s Staff Report notes, “The bridge would be approximately 18 feet wide and connect Alameda to the City of Oakland. Working with Oakland, the design team has identified three potential locations for the bridge: one of which would connect Alameda Landing to Jack London Square. If this location were ultimately selected, the bridge would begin at Mitchell Avenue near the intersection of Mitchell and Fifth, and slowly rise over the project site to and across the Estuary. At the point the bridge crosses the park, the bridge would be between 30 and 35 feet in the air above the park. After crossing the estuary, the bridge would descend to a landing between the Oakland Ferry Terminal and the foot of Broadway.”

---

<sup>1</sup> The wharf structure was constructed prior to the establishment of the Commission. For overwater structures that predate the Commission and that have not undergone significant structural repairs or a change of use, the Commission’s practice has been to review development on these overwater structures under the same policies that it would for development within the 100-foot shoreline band, but are distinguished as public access over water.

5. **Western Greenway View Corridor (Exhibits 8-9, 15, 19).** The amended Master Plan requires a minimum 50-foot-wide, approximately 590-foot-long greenway to be constructed along the western edge of the property, adjacent to the Bay Ship & Yacht-owned portion of the wharf (3,479 square feet in the Shoreline Band). This “land use green buffer”, sitting atop storm drain easements, provides a separation from the maritime commercial uses and provides for Bay Trail and public access from the waterfront park to Estuary Park and the sports fields on Mitchell Avenue and the Bette Street Class I bike path to Stargell Avenue. From Estuary Park, cyclists will be able to continue on Singleton Avenue to reach the Main Street Ferry Terminal and over five miles of future waterfront bicycle trails at Alameda Point. The greenway would consist of a 12-foot-wide public trail with 3-foot-wide shoulders on either side, as well as planting. A 7-foot-wide shoulder is proposed between the trail and a private roadway located in the 50-foot-wide greenway extending approximately 325 lineal feet from Mitchell Avenue to allow access to the proposed residential area. Outside of BCDC’s jurisdiction, the Western Greenway would include a view plaza with bollards, seating, and bike parking. The western edge of the site interfaces with the Bay Ship & Yacht facility, with a significant view up the estuary between the two warehouse buildings. At the intersection of the Waterfront Promenade and the Western Greenway, features may include a see-through grate or an extension of the wharf railing at the corner interface with the Bay Ship & Yacht property, and an emergency vehicle turnaround area.
  
6. **Mitchell Avenue Greenway (Exhibits 6, 8-9).** A 1.77-acre greenway would be located along the southern side of the project site, outside of BCDC’s jurisdiction. The proposed greenway would sit on top of a utility right-of-way that cannot be developed, but could provide additional open space connections to projects east of the proposed development and west to Estuary Park.

Within the Commission’s Shoreline Band jurisdiction and extending beyond the Commission’s jurisdiction, the proposed project would consist of the following development components:

**Residential Development.** Approximately 1.5 acres of residential development would be located within BCDC’s shoreline band jurisdiction, with the remaining 13.3 acres sitting outside of the Commission’s jurisdiction. No parcel-level detail has been provided to date about the proposed residential development, but could include up to 400 units, with up to 30 percent single-family detached residential units, and the remaining units a mix of 3-4 story buildings. Building heights limits are set at 60 feet tall. Other development restrictions include providing 10% of market-rate units with floorplans smaller than 1200 sf, and not exceeding the total vehicle trip generation allowed for the master plan. The remaining vehicle trip generation will be the primary limiting factor on the number and type of units. Several scale comparisons provide a sense of the range of possibilities for the waterfront park and the residential development density (Exhibit 7). The Alameda City Staff notes additional design review will be needed when the residential developer comes to the City for a building permit to ensure the appropriate design and transition from public to private space has been provided along the waterfront park.

1. **Retail & Commercial Development.** A minimum of 5,000 square feet of ground-floor retail and commercial development would be included in the project, all of which would be located outside of the Commission's jurisdiction along the 5th street corridor.

**Existing Approvals and Proposed Construction Timeline:** As noted above, the project is part of a master plan for the former military site, and a master plan amendment was approved in 2017 which allows for the currently proposed development. City of Alameda Recreation and Parks Department and Planning Board approvals will be needed for the design of the waterfront park, including the public plaza and promenade. Pending approvals, project construction is anticipated to take 14-16 months.

**Phasing:** As part of the development agreement with the City, the waterfront park, water shuttle and kayak launch would be completed in no more than two phases, and the phases should be completed prior to or concurrent with the completion of the adjacent residential neighborhood. The majority of the waterfront park elements would be required through the City's development agreement and the conditioned approvals from the City Planning board.

**Operations and Maintenance:** Catellus will develop the public access improvements, including the waterfront plaza and promenade, which the City of Alameda will own, operate, and maintain. The residential and commercial portions of the site will be built out by a vertical developer, and operated and maintained through a Municipal Services District (MSD). The MSD will contribute funds to the ongoing maintenance of the public access including the wharf structure.

**Resilience and Adaptation to Rising Sea Level (Exhibit 26).** According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA") current 100-year-flood elevation for the project site is +9.75' NAVD88. As proposed, the developed site elevations along this area of shoreline would be +13.0' NAVD88, for both the public wharf. If the geotechnical structure allows, the residential development would be elevated to +14.5' NAVD88 otherwise the residential would be developed at the same elevation as the park. For site planning purposes, the project proponents have used the following sea level rise estimates based on the 2018 State Guidance based on the Ocean Protection Council's findings: 23 inches by 2050 (BFE+1.9' SLR = +11.65' NAVD88) and a cumulative 68 inches for the end of the century risk assessment (BFE+5.7'SLR = +15.45' NAVD88).

The proposed public wharf, including plaza and promenade could be inundated by the end of the century during King Tides as well as a 100-year flood event, but would not flood at Mean Higher High Water. The proposed residential area within the shoreline band could be inundated by the end of the century during a 100-year flood event, but would not be flooded on a daily basis. The sea level rise adaptation strategy could include flood resilient materials, an extended curb at the water-side railing, an elevated walkway, an additional retaining wall under the wharf (to enable the grade to be raised for a portion of the wharf park,) and/or signage alerting the public to intermittent flooding (Exhibit 27.)

## Commission Findings, Policies & Guidelines

**San Francisco Bay Plan Policies.** The Bay Plan **Public Access** policies state, in part, that “...maximum feasible access to and along the waterfront and on any permitted fills should be provided in and through every new development in the Bay or on 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.” Further, these policies state, in part: “... improvements should be designed and built to encourage diverse Bay-related activities and movement to and along the shoreline, should permit barrier free access for persons with disabilities to the maximum feasible extent, should include an ongoing maintenance program, and should be identified with appropriate signs.” Additionally, the policies provide that “[p]ublic access should be sited, designed, managed, and maintained to avoid significant adverse impacts from sea level rise and shoreline flooding,” that “[a]ny public access provided as a condition of development should either be required to remain viable in the event of future sea level rise or flooding, or equivalent access consistent with the project should be provided nearby,” and that access should be designed consistent with the physical and natural environment.

The proposed project would develop a public plaza and promenade along the waterfront on an existing wharf structure, including a trail. The public plaza and pathways would be designed to be universally accessible.

The Bay Plan **Appearance, Design, and Scenic Views** policies state, in part, that “all bayfront development should be designed to enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay” and that “[m]aximum efforts should be made to provide, enhance, or preserve views of the Bay and shoreline, especially from public areas...” Furthermore, “[s]tructures and facilities that do not take advantage or complement the Bay should be located and designed so as not to impact visually on the shoreline. In particular, parking areas should be located away from the shoreline.”

The public plaza and promenade would be located along the shoreline, bayward of the proposed residential and commercial development. The waterfront plaza and promenade, the Western Greenway and 5th Street would provide views of the Estuary and Jack London Square. The public parking area is located inland of the riser substation and public access areas.

The Bay Plan policies on **Recreation** state: “Interpretive information describing the natural, historical, and cultural resources should be provided in waterfront parks where feasible.” The Commission’s Public Access Design Guidelines state, in part, that public access spaces should create a “sense of place” and should be designed in a manner that “feels public,” that is, “in a way that makes the shoreline enjoyable to the greatest number of people.”

The Bay Plan Recreation policies state, in part, that “[d]iverse and accessible water-oriented recreational facilities...should be provided to meet the needs of a growing and diversifying population and should be well distributed around the Bay and improved to accommodate a broad range of water-oriented recreational activities for people of all races, cultures, ages and income levels.” The policies state that waterfront parks should be “provided wherever possible,” and that they “should emphasize hiking, bicycling, riding trails, picnic facilities, swimming, environmental, historical and cultural education and interpretation, viewpoints, beaches, and fishing facilities.”

Where practicable, the policies state that “access facilities for non-motorized small boats should be incorporated into waterfront parks.” Additionally, parking that accommodates expected use should be provided, as well as “launching facilities, restrooms, rigging areas, equipment storage” and should be accessible to ensure boaters can easily launch their watercraft.

The Commission’s **Public Access Design Guidelines** state partly that public access should be designed “so that the user is not intimidated nor is the user’s appreciation diminished by large nearby building masses....” And “View opportunities, shoreline configuration and access points are factors that determine a site’s inherent public access opportunities.” Furthermore, “public access improvements should be designed for a wide range of users,” should “provide basic public amenities, such as trails, benches, play opportunities, trash containers, drinking fountains, lighting and restrooms that are designed for different ages, interests and physical abilities,” and should be designed for the weather of the site. The guidelines also state that viewing the Bay is the “most widely enjoyed ‘use’ and projects should be designed to “enhance and dramatize views of the Bay.”

### Board Questions

**The Board’s advice and recommendations are sought on the following issues regarding the design of the proposed public access:**

***Physical and Visual Access:***

1. Given the unknown configuration of the residential development adjacent to the waterfront promenade:
  - a. What are the key considerations for ensuring the waterfront promenade will be inviting to the public?
  - b. What are the key considerations to maximize physical and visual access to and along the waterfront from Mitchell Avenue and 5<sup>th</sup> Street?
2. Are the public access areas (Waterfront Plaza, the Waterfront Wharf Promenade, and the Western Greenway) designed in a manner that “feels public” and makes the shoreline enjoyable to the greatest number of people? Do the proposed designs provide waterfront activities for a wide variety of users, and create a “sense of place”??
3. Does the proposed project provide a variety of accessible opportunities for water-oriented public use?
  - a. If a kayak launch and water shuttle share a single float, what are the Board’s concerns or considerations?
4. Are the proposed public amenities designed appropriately for the microclimate of the site, considering sun and wind, in particular? Is the site designed appropriately for nighttime safety and visibility?
5. Does the proposed design enhance the public invitation to the site from the adjacent waterfront public access?

6. Is the design of the Waterfront Wharf Promenade compatible with plans under consideration to construct a touchdown for a bicycle and pedestrian bridge across the Estuary? If not, how could the space be designed to function whether or not the bridge is ultimately constructed?
7. Does the design of the Western Greenway maximize views and physical connections to the shoreline?
8. Does the proposed fence around the substation minimize potential adverse impacts to Bay views, and create a sense of public connection to the proposed public access, while maintaining public safety?

***Sea Level Rise Resiliency and Adaptation:***

9. Are the public areas and amenities appropriately designed to be resilient and adaptive to sea level rise?