

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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Agenda Item #8

May 19, 2023

Application Summary

557 East Bayshore

(For Commission consideration on June 1, 2023)

- BCDC Permit Application Number:** 2023.004.00
- Applicant:** Redwood Crossing LLC
- Project Description:** Construct an approximately 2-acre portion of a new 14-acre mixed-use commercial and residential development, including public access areas and amenities and a portion of a residential building, within the 100-foot shoreline band.
- Location:** Within the 100-foot shoreline band, at 557 East Bayshore Road in the City of Redwood City, San Mateo County.
- Application Filed Complete:** May 3, 2023
- Deadline for Commission Action:** August 1, 2023
- Staff Contact:** Katharine Pan (415/352-3650; katharine.pan@bcdc.ca.gov)



Proposed Mixed-Use Commercial and Residential Development, in the City of Redwood City

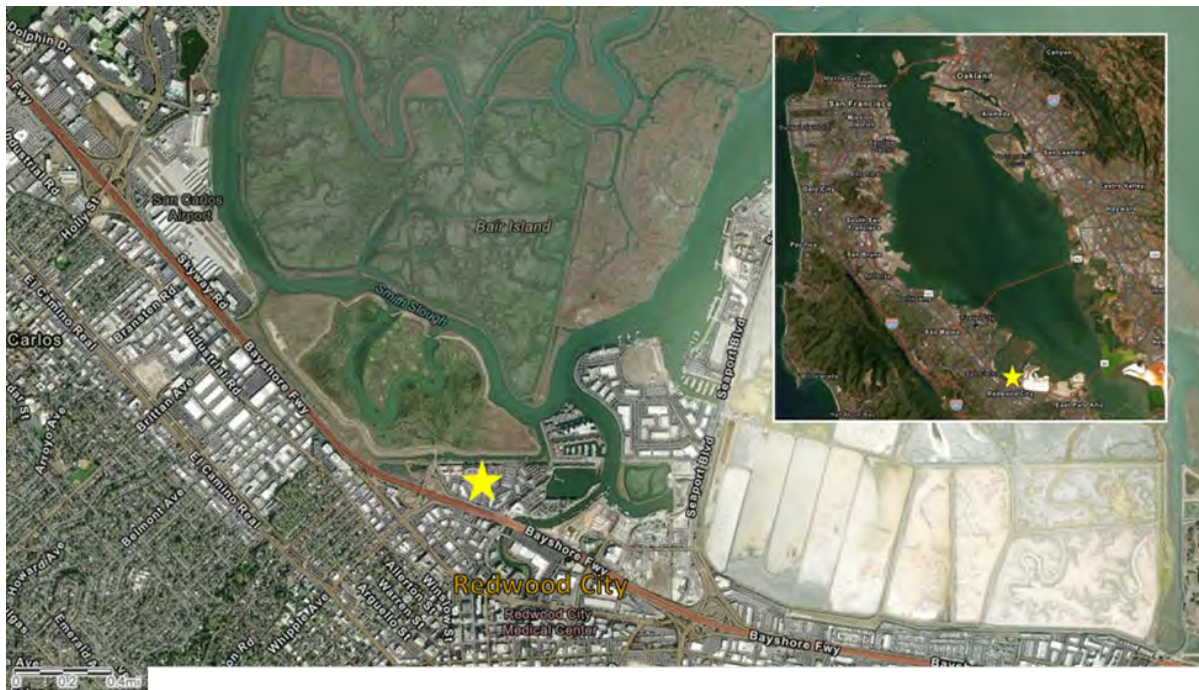


Project Overview

Project Description

Redwood Crossing LLC proposes to redevelop the approximately 14-acre property at 557 East Bayshore Road in Redwood City with a new mixed-use project consisting of two residential apartment buildings, an athletic club and spa, and a shoreline public access area. Approximately 2 acres of the development would take place within the Commission's 100-foot shoreline band permitting jurisdiction. The project site is currently covered by BCDC Permit No. M1998.016.02, which authorized a movie theater complex, an 88-foot gravel pathway, shoreline protection, and a storm drain. The site is located along a tidally influenced ditch, with East Bayshore Road to the south and Smith Slough and Bair Island to the north.

Figure 1. Project Location.



Within the shoreline band, the project would involve the demolition of the existing gravel pathway, parking spaces (including 4 public shore spaces), and the approximately 5,000-square-foot portion of the existing theater structure within the Commission's jurisdiction; the construction of a portion of a 5-story residential building on a footprint of approximately 418 square feet; the development of an approximately 71,140-square-foot dedicated public access area consisting of a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian pathway, lawns, plazas with a pétanque court, wooden overlooks and decking with views of the Bay shoreline, landscaping, sidewalks, and an approximately 2,419-square-foot portion of a central paseo; and the construction of portions of at-grade parking lots, including an approximately 7,341-square-foot lot on the west side of the project with 14 unassigned parking spaces and an approximately 8,010-square-foot lot on the east side with 7 designated public shore parking spaces and 15 unassigned spaces.

In addition, the project includes a 26-foot-wide, 900-foot-long public right of way and approximately 4,418 square feet of pedestrian access to be dedicated outside of the shoreline band along the eastern edge of the site, and approximately 9,282 square feet of the central paseo to be made available as public access and designated as a view corridor.

Figure 2. Site plan of shoreline area.



Bay Fill

The proposed project will not result in any new Bay fill.

Public Access

There is currently an approximately 41,000-square-foot dedicated public access area at the project site, with improvements including an 88-foot-long, 3-foot-wide gravel pathway, landscaping, signage, and four public shore parking spaces, as required by BCDC Permit No. M1998.016.02. The project would increase the dedicated public access area by approximately 34,558 square feet, to a total of approximately 75,558 square feet, including approximately 30,140 square feet of new dedicated public access along the northern edge of the project within the shoreline band and approximately 4,418 square feet of dedicated pedestrian access along the eastern edge of the site outside of the Commission's jurisdiction.

Within the dedicated public access area in the shoreline band, the project will provide the following improvements:

1. A 12-foot-wide approximately 554-foot-long, multi-use asphalt pathway with intermittent 3-foot-wide shoulders on either side;
2. An approximately 2,419-square-foot portion of the paved central paseo;
3. Three lawn activity areas, totaling approximately 4,952 square feet;
4. Two decomposed granite plazas, totaling approximately 4,731 square feet, with a 13-foot by 50-foot pétanque court;
5. Two wooden deck overlooks, totaling approximately 2,999 square feet, with concrete seat walls and views of the slough;
6. Six- to eight-foot-wide wooden deck walkways, totaling approximately 3,774 square feet, with seven seating areas;
7. Approximately 9,843 linear feet of concrete sidewalks;
8. Seven bicycle racks;
9. Seven designated public shore parking spaces, including one ADA-accessible space, on the eastern edge of the shoreline public access area, to be accessed via a public right-of-way connecting to East Bayshore Road; and
10. Approximately 47,300 square feet of native plant landscaping.

Outside of the Commission's jurisdiction, the project would dedicate an easement for a 4- to 6-foot-wide sidewalk on the eastern side of the site, connecting East Bayshore Road with the shoreline access area.

The project would also provide approximately 9,282 square feet of non-dedicated publicly accessible area within the paseo connecting East Bayshore Road to the shoreline through the center of the development. A view corridor would be designated through the paseo from East Bayshore Road to the shoreline.

Figure 3. Rendering of shoreline public access and paseo.



Figure 4. Rendering of shoreline public access area from the west.



Figure 5. Rendering of paseo view corridor.



Flooding and Sea Level Rise

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the current Base Flood Elevation (BFE) for the project site is +10.00 feet NAVD88. For site planning purposes, the applicant has used the following sea level rise estimates based on the 2018 Ocean Protection Council's State Guidance for the high emissions, medium-to-high risk aversion scenario: +1.9 feet by 2050 for a total BFE of +11.9 feet NAVD88, and +6.9 feet by 2100 for a total BFE of +16.9 feet NAVD88. The current Mean Higher High Water Level (MHHW) is +7.4 feet NAVD88 with the increases set forth above to raise MHHW to +9.3 feet NAVD88 by 2050 and to +14.3 feet NAVD88 by 2100.

As proposed, project elevations along the shoreline would range from +12 to +13 feet NAVD88. The design life of the project, including the shoreline improvements and the commercial and residential buildings, is estimated to be approximately 50 years. The project is anticipated to be resilient to mid-century BFE, and would undertake a monitoring and adaptation planning process to implement appropriate adaptation measures prior to any impairment of the public access area. The applicant has noted that potential adaptation solutions could include a 4- to 6-foot seawall or the elevation of the multi-use path into a levee.

Environmental Justice and Social Equity

According to the Commission's Community Vulnerability Mapping Tool, the project site is located within a 2020 Census block group (estimated population of 3,257 people by the 2014-2018 American Community Survey) identified as having "highest contamination vulnerability" and "moderate social vulnerability." It is across East Bayshore Road from a block group (estimated population of 3,151) identified as having "high social vulnerability" and "lower contamination vulnerability. Social vulnerability in the area is associated with indicators for

households with very low income, a single parent, renter occupancy, individuals over 65 living alone, or no vehicle; non-U.S. citizens; limited English proficiency; and individuals without a high school degree. Contamination vulnerability in the area is associated with nearby hazardous cleanup activities, groundwater threats, hazardous waste facilities, solid waste facilities, and impaired water bodies.

During the development of the project design, the applicant conducted outreach to a number of community groups to identify any environmental or social equity concerns. Groups the applicant met with include Casa Circulo, the Redwood City Educational Foundation, and the Redwood City Police Athletics League. Issues identified through outreach included a desire for more affordable housing in the community, jobs, and improved and more active shoreline access. To address these issues, the applicant is proposing public shoreline access with a variety of different uses and activity areas. The project also includes a proportion of affordable rental units and a plan to host job fairs in the project's buildings.

Schedule and Cost

Construction would begin as early as February 2024 and is planned to take place over four years. The estimated total project cost is approximately \$173,580,000.

Issues Raised

The staff believes the primary issues raised by the proposed project are:

- (1) Whether the proposed public access is the maximum feasible consistent with the project, and otherwise consistent with the Commission's policies related to public access, recreation, and scenic views; and
- (2) Whether the project will continue to provide maximum feasible public access in the future given anticipated sea level rise.

Staff Notes

The staff notes the following consideration for the Commission.

Design Review Board. The Commission's Design Review Board reviewed the project on August 5, 2019. The Board's discussion focused on ensuring visual access to the site and a sense of invitation for the public to access the site, carefully considering the variety of activities available to the public and the programming of the site to attract more visitors, providing connectivity between the shoreline and the surrounding area, creating visual distinction between public and private areas, addressing wildlife compatibility, providing opportunities for adjacent habitats to adapt to rising sea levels, and evaluating the appropriateness of the project's proposed adaptation strategy.

Since the Design Review Board meeting, the applicant has modified the project to further define the boundaries between the public access and private areas by creating patios for the private residences along the paseo, identified the range of activities and programming to take



place at the site, adopted mitigation measures specified in the Environmental Impact Report to mitigate any potential impacts on special status species and sensitive habitats, improved the project's signage program along the paseo and in the shoreline band, and reviewed the proposed sea level rise adaptation. In reviewing other potential adaptation strategies, the applicant determined that the originally proposed strategy of a 4- to 6-foot seawall is their preference, but that they will conduct a future review of adaptation alternatives as part of an adaptation planning process that would allow for the consideration of changing site conditions, best available science, and best practices.

Applicable Laws and Policies

The following laws and policies are applicable in the Commission's review of the proposed project:

- McAteer-Petris Act: Sections 66602 (Water-Oriented Land Uses and Public Access), 66605 (Allowable Bay Fill), and 66632.4 (Maximum Feasible Public Access)
- San Francisco Bay Plan policies on: Fish, Other Aquatic Organisms, and Wildlife; Water Quality; Tidal Marshes and Tidal Flats; Environmental Justice and Social Equity; Climate Change; Recreation; Public Access; Appearance, Design, and Scenic Views; and Other Uses of the Bay and Shoreline