



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: 1/13/2025
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: Zoom.us/join – ID# 846 9472 6242 and
City Council Chambers
751 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

A. Call To Order

Chair Jennifer Schindler called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Jennifer Schindler (Chair), Andrew Ehrich (Vice Chair), Katie Behroozi, Linh Dan Do (departed meeting at 8:30 p.m.), Katie Ferrick, Misha Silin, Ross Silverstein

Staff: Connor Hochleitner, Assistant Planner; Leila Moshref-Danesh, City Attorney’s Office; Kyle Perata, Assistant Community Development Director; Chris Turner, Senior Planner

C. Reports and Announcements

Assistant Community Development Director Kyle Perata said the City Council at its January 14, 2025 meeting would consider adopting a resolution regarding the downtown parking plazas declaring plazas 1, 2, and 3 as exempt surplus land and consideration of feedback and authorization to staff to release a request for qualifications for development including affordable housing and parking development on those plazas.

D. Public Comment

None

E. Consent Calendar

Chair Schindler opened for public comment and closed public comment as no persons requested to speak.

- E1. Approval of minutes from the November 18, 2024 Planning Commission meeting (Attachment)
- E2. Approval of minutes from the December 2, 2024 Planning Commission meeting (Attachment)
- E3. Architectural Control Revision/St. Raymond Catholic Church/1100 Santa Cruz Ave.: Consider and adopt a resolution to approve an architectural control revision to modify the glass curtain wall and add entrance doors on the southern building facade and modify the hardscapes and landscapes of plazas for an existing church in the R-E (Residential Estate) zoning district; determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301’s Class 1 exemption for existing facilities. (Staff Report #25-001-PC)



ACTION: Motion and second (Ferrick/Behroozi) to approve the consent calendar consisting of minutes from the November 18 and December 2, 2024 Planning Commission meetings and a resolution to approve an architectural control revision for St. Raymond Catholic Church at 1100 Santa Cruz Avenue as submitted; passes 7-0.

F. Public Hearing

- F1. Use Permit, Architectural Control, Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Agreement, Environmental Review/Alliant Communities LLC/320 Sheridan Dr.:
- Consider and adopt a resolution to approve a use permit, architectural control permit, and BMR housing agreement to construct three new three-story residential buildings with a total of 88 multi-family dwelling units, with 87 BMR units and one on-site manager's unit, a community room of approximately 2,217 square feet, and associated site improvements including a barbeque area and children's play area, on a vacant lot in the R-3 (Apartment) zoning district; determine this action is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15332's Class 32 exemption for infill development. The application is being reviewed subject to the State Density Bonus Law, Government Code Section 65915 and relevant amendments, which permits exceptions to the City's Zoning Ordinance requirements. The applicant is requesting waivers from development standards to increase the maximum floor area ratio (FAR), height, maximum fence height in the front setback, and paving area for driveways and parking. The applicant is requesting waivers to reduce the required front and rear setbacks, land area required per dwelling unit, parking lot tree island requirements, and required bicycle parking spaces. The applicant is requesting waivers to remove the building profile requirement and façade modulation requirements. The proposed project includes incentives to not underground utilities along the project frontage, remove the window inset design standard, not require the buildings to be dual plumbed for future internal use of recycled water, remove the requirement to certify the project as LEED silver, and use an alternate method to comply with transit pass requirements. The proposed project includes two development-related heritage tree removals which were reviewed and conditionally approved by the City Arborist. (Staff Report #25-002-PC)

Commissioner Do said she would need to leave the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Senior Planner Chris Turner said the site at 320 Sheridan Drive was identified as a housing opportunity site in the 2023-2031 Housing Element update for affordable housing. He said the property was subsequently zoned R-3. He said the proposed project was three new multifamily buildings with 88 units that were 100% affordable except for one onsite manager's unit. He said it would include a community room and onsite improvements including a barbecue area, children's play areas, landscaping, and surface parking. He said the City Arborist approved the removal of two heritage trees with the total value of those trees to be replaced onsite with other landscaping improvements.

Planner Turner said the project was submitted under the state bonus density law where the applicant was entitled to unlimited waivers from development standards that would physically preclude the project from being built. He said as a 100% affordable project, it was also entitled to five incentives that would lead to identifiable cost savings for the project as noted in the staff report. He said the waivers requested were increases to floor area ratio, height, pavement, and fence height in the front yard and decreases to front and rear setbacks, land area per dwelling, long term bicycle parking, and removal of building modulation and parking lot tree island requirements. He said the applicant was claiming five incentives: no window inset, no

undergrounding of frontage utilities, no LEED certification, alternate transit pass compliance, and no dual plumbing.

Planner Turner said the City's Housing Commission reviewed the draft Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Agreement and unanimously recommended approval. He said the BMR Housing Agreement would restrict 87 of the 88 units to BMR low and very low income units. He said if allowed by state law, the applicant could lease up to 20% of the units as moderate rate units. He said the agreement clarified that eight of the units would be subject to the preference criteria in the City's BMR guidelines and the other 79 affordable units would be the applicant's discretion as to how they wanted to fill those units. He said the City Council was in the process of entering into a funding agreement to provide the project with \$1 million from the City's BMR Fund where there might be opportunity to have a second preference on the units not subject to the City's guidelines, which was still being discussed. He said the Housing Commission also urged the applicant to work with staff to identify a management company whose policies would not preclude otherwise qualified households from occupying the units.

Planner Turner said the recommendation was to determine that the project was exempt from CEQA and to approve the use permit, architectural control permit, and the BMR Housing Agreement subject to some minor text edits in the resolution. He read into the record those recommended edits.

Recital 3 - WHEREAS, the maximum allowed density in the R-3 zone is 20 dwelling units per acre and the maximum number of units allowed by the zoning ordinance on the Project site is 49 50 units; and

Recital 9 - WHEREAS, the Applicant proposes to increase the Project density by ~~80%~~ 76% for a total of 88 units; and

Recital 10 - WHEREAS, the Project would consist of 49 50 affordable units and ~~39~~ 38 bonus units, ~~38~~ 37 of which would be affordable; and

Section 2.1.a - Consideration and due regard were given to the nature and condition of all adjacent uses and structures, and to general plans for the area in question and surrounding areas, and impact of the application hereon; in that, the proposed use permit is consistent with the R-3 zoning district and the General Plan because multi-family residential developments of three or more units are allowed to be constructed on R-3 lots subject to granting of a use permit and ~~provided that the proposed Project conforms to applicable zoning standards, including, but not limited to, minimum setbacks, minimum landscaping, and maximum building coverage~~ that are not altered by waivers and incentives provided by State law. The proposed Project advances the General Plan, specifically the 2023-2031 Housing Element update, by creating additional housing opportunities for lower income residents. The Property is included in the Housing Element as a housing opportunity site, and development of the proposed Project would help the City meet its RHNA.

Add Section 6.1.f - In addition, none of the exceptions in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 to the categorical exemption apply to the Project.

Planner Turner said additional correspondence was received after publication of the staff report. He said the majority of those emails were sent directly to the Planning Commission, but he had sent a consolidated list to the Commissioners this afternoon. He said the comments were a mix of

support and opposition to the project with the supporters generally mentioning the need to provide Ravenswood City School District teachers with housing options and to move the project forward as an important implementation measure for the Housing Element. He said others expressed concerns regarding access to the site and traffic, and advocated for a second entrance or to reduce the scope of the project. He said further commenters expressed concerns with adding a second entrance citing existing cut through traffic in the Flood Triangle neighborhood and the potential for additional traffic in that neighborhood.

Commission Ehrich asked regarding the BMR Housing Agreement what it meant for the City to have second preference. Planner Turner noted a caveat that this was still being discussed with the City Council through the finalization of the Funding Agreement. He said though generally the BMR Guidelines included a list of preference criteria so people who currently lived or worked in Menlo Park were eligible for the BMR requirement for BMR households. He said the City could only require 15% of the base units on the project to comply with the City's preference, which equaled eight units. He said regarding second preference that the original intent of the project was to provide housing for employees of the Ravenswood City School District. He said assuming they would have first preference for the units there was potential that the City for any unfilled units could have a second or next preference.

Commissioner Behroozi asked about any conversations staff had had with Life Moves Caltrans and San Mateo County about various possible access routes to or through the proposed development. Planner Turner asked if they could hold off on that question until after the applicant's presentation and for it to be a topic for Commission discussion.

Steven Spielberg, Senior Vice President of Affordable Housing for Alliant Communities, presented the proposed project. He said the site was owned by the Ravenswood City School District and they would continue as the owners and his company would ground lease the site from them. He said the City Council had committed \$1 million to the project. He said if their project was approved, their next step would be to apply for low income housing tax credits and hopefully get an award and start construction by the end of the year. He said when he joined the organization a year ago that the plan was for a four-story building but with community feedback, they were now proposing three, three-story buildings, which they tried to use architecture like the neighborhood.

Lance Crannell, principal architect, SDG Architects, showed slides of architecture in the area around the project site that inspired their design coupled with feedback from community outreach. He said the project used traditional and farmhouse style architecture with elevated detailing, contrasting and decorative trim and window framing. He said the landscaping was plentiful and would preserve heritage trees. He referred to the use of a combination of massing and articulation to break down the size of the buildings, shed down the roofs on the long planes and that the base was a slightly different element than the top two floors. He said they worked with a LEED consultant to meet the LEED Silver equivalency. He said they included the purple pipe irrigation for future irrigation needs. He said the design included solar ready panels and sound mitigation from Highway 101 noise to the north. He said bicycle parking was provided in a variety of places for short and long term parking. He said the project would provide 42, one-bedroom homes, 23, two-bedroom homes, and 23, three-bedroom homes.

Mr. Spielberg said the site was planned for 100% affordable housing with an income mix of 30% to 80% of the area median income and a preference for people who lived and/or worked in Menlo Park. He said if Ravenswood City School District had first preference but not enough people from

the District on their wait list then it would go to the City's wait list for BMR housing. He said affordable housing developers were also long term owners. He said one of the requirements of the tax credit programs was to hold the properties for the next 15 years. He said as long term owners they wanted to maintain the buildings and support the tenants as best as possible. He said they were amenable and planned to see how things shaped up as the project leased. He said if people had a need, then they would provide more bicycle parking.

Chair Schindler asked if any Commissioner had clarifying questions.

Commissioner Behroozi asked if the storage units were large enough for an e-bike. She said it appeared that the larger a unit was the smaller its storage unit was. She also asked if there were outlets nearby for people to charge bikes.

Mr. Crannell said once the development was established, they would react to what residents would provide and what they would need. He said storage units with electrical outlets were very expensive. Commissioner Behroozi clarified she was talking about the storage units for each unit and not bicycle storage. Mr. Crannell said that the patio and balcony areas were where those storage units were located and those would have a waterproof outlet.

Commissioner Behroozi asked if there was a plan to provide access between the development and Flood Park during park open hours. Mr. Crannell said that there would be a planned access point to the Park on their project site and they would work on open hours and methodology with the County.

Commissioner Behroozi clarified with the applicant that the fire access structure was gatelike and for emergency vehicle access and use. She asked if tenants would be discouraged from walking or biking out that way. Mr. Crannell said he did not know.

Commissioner Ehrich asked what the January 27 deadline for the City was and the status of that, and how the actions tonight might impact that.

Planner Turner said AB 1633 placed a time limit for the City to make a determination on whether the project was exempt from CEQA review. He said that required the applicant to provide the City with substantial evidence that the project was exempt from CEQA. He said that was one of the recommended actions for the Commission and doing that would meet the City's deadline.

Commissioner Ehrich asked what the consequences to the City would be if the Commission did not make that determination or made it, but it was appealed to the City Council.

Leila Moshref-Danesh, City Attorney's Office, said January 27, 2025 was the deadline for AB1633 compliance and that meant the City would need to make the CEQA determination by that date. She said consequences otherwise would be potential litigation or efforts to enforce that provision of state law.

Commissioner Silin asked what analysis was used as a basis for exemption from CEQA and how the Housing Element Update EIR related to this project.

Planner Turner said the EIR that was certified for the Housing Element was a program level EIR and was a subsequent EIR to the ConnectMenlo General Plan Update EIR. He said it was a

higher level view of the environmental impacts of the overall program that took into account the potential impacts of implementing the Housing Element, which included thousands of units. He said every time a project went through discretionary review that it was subject to CEQA review in some way. He said in some cases there were statutory and categorical exemptions that applied that said no more review was needed. He said in other instances where there were potentially significant impacts that a specific project could have that were not studied to that level of specificity in the overall program EIR then something like a mitigated negative declaration or tiered EIR were required. He said for this project the applicants provided some technical documentation, and the City had a consultant peer review that documentation and the justification for an infill exemption. He said they found that the infill exemption applied and there were not any exceptions to the exemption that would apply to this project requiring greater CEQA review.

Commissioner Silin asked if the use permit and architectural control had similar deadlines as the CEQA determination. Planner Turner said not a date per se but there was a limit on the number of public hearings the housing project could go through. He said under SB330 that housing projects were limited to five hearings. He said this project had had one public hearing and this evening was the second. He said a continuance if directed would be the third, and a potential appeal would be a fourth. He said if the project were appealed then the City would need to redo the CEQA determination findings. He said if the project started getting pushed out further and further, they could potentially run afoul of AB 1633.

Ms. Moshref-Danesh said cities were required to approve or disapprove a project within 60 days of determining that the project was exempt under government code 65950. She said they typically recommended for that reason that the CEQA determination and project approval or denial be made at the same meeting.

Commissioner Silverstein said the report indicated that the requested bicycle parking waiver including the full amount of long term spaces, such as a bicycle storage room, was needed to preclude the project from being able to accommodate the proposed density. He asked what the analysis was for that and whether it involved expense or space.

Mr. Crannell said it was a balance of things. He said they received a great deal of feedback to have a balance of open space common to all residents and space for bicycle parking. He said they tried to strike that balance and noted the provision of a tot lot and play area. He said they wanted a distributive network of bicycle parking throughout the site so people could be somewhat near their units and their bicycle overnight or through extended periods of time. He said through that analysis they arrived at a balance between cost, proximity, convenience, and open space.

Commissioner Silverstein asked what the cost would be for a storage facility that would accommodate long term bicycle parking. Mr. Crannell said it would be about \$2400 per locker that could accommodate two bicycles or \$1200 for each bicycle space. He said e-bikes were taller and a utility requirement like electrical outlets would increase cost dramatically. He asked staff to review the number of public hearings the project had had as he thought tonight was the 4th public hearing.

Mr. Perata said the notice of funding availability request and the Council review of that would not be a public hearing for purposes of SB330. He said they would look at the numbers again but from the date of deeming the project complete it had had a public hearing at the Housing Commission meeting and the second at tonight's hearing.

Commissioner Silverstein referred to Exhibit Q on the draft project conditions that stated the project was subject to the California Green Building Code and asked if that was still expected to be the case. Staff indicated assent. He referred to the traffic impact analysis on page 338 of the agenda packet and Hexagon's recommendation that the project provide enough vehicle parking spaces to meet the City's requirement. He asked if that recommendation was data driven based on the analysis or a blanket recommendation to adhere to the City specific zoning ordinance.

Planner Turner said that recommendation was based off the standard R-3 parking requirements, which required two parking spaces per unit, one of which needed to be covered. He said as a state density bonus project the state law included a separate parking standard.

Chair Schindler opened the public hearing.

Public Comment:

- Nels Delander, representative of Carpenters Local 217, emphasized the importance of a responsible general contractor that utilized apprenticeships, either provided or required healthcare for workers, and provided construction workers with a living wage. He emphasized the importance of safe working conditions to support the project development.
- Rob Silano said he was speaking as a resident of Menlo Park and not a Fire Board member, and emphasized the importance of critical infrastructure and waterpower and the impact of fire disasters on insurance rates. He said he supported the approval of the funding and the project if it included a low cost second ingress and egress. He said the staff report on page 85 that talked about a second ingress and egress did not include that the Fire Chief stated a second ingress and egress would be safer nor did it speak to the 50 emails and the petition of 300 residents to the Fire Board and City to have a second ingress and egress. He said the developer stated at a Council meeting in November that they would have no problem adding a second ingress and egress. He said additionally Atherton had placed a high density project within a few blocks of this project without consideration of the added traffic response times on Bay Road and Ringwood Avenue.
- Skip Hilton expressed concerns regarding traffic, noting the recently adopted Environmental Justice Element and that this area had the highest traffic burden in the City. He said the proposal was an ideal below market rate housing project, but the site itself was not well served by public transit. He expressed support for a second public access into the site.
- Ken Chan, Senior Organizer with the Housing Leadership Council (HLC), San Mateo County, said on behalf of HLC that he was expressing support of the project, noting the importance of housing close to employment for teachers and staff of the Ravenswood City School District.
- Gina Sudaria, Ravenswood City School District Superintendent, spoke in support of the project noting the inequity in funding for that district per pupil and that over 85% of their staff had expressed interest in living in the development. She emphasized the importance of community relationships with educators.

- Kim Avila, CSEA President and Operations Coordinator at the new Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School, spoke in support of the project noting the importance of teachers to youth development. She said many experienced financial struggles due to the high cost of living in this area, which pushed them to live further away and commute great distances. She also noted the struggles of students and their families, often living in rented rooms, RVs, and some in shelters even though parents were working and often working two jobs.
- Nicole Sullivan, President, Ravenswood Teachers Association, spoke in support of the project noting she worked in Ravenswood, but she and her family lived in San Francisco. She said one of the critical factors contributing to teacher turnover was the difficulty of securing affordable housing close to the workplace. She said over half of their teachers had expressed interest in the proposed housing development.
- Louis Mirante, Bay Area Council, spoke in support of the project noting the Council represented 400 of the area's largest employers.
- Katherine Dumont, Linfield Oaks, spoke in support of the project and emphasized being more forward looking about driving and transportation alternatives; she emphasized the need for safe, secure, and weather protected storage for bicycles, scooters, and e-bikes. She expressed concerns about the lack of the proposed bicycle parking.
- Sarah Zollweg, Menlo Park resident, said she was a nurse and a public health researcher and in her practice and research she saw every day the impact that access to affordable housing and education had on people's health. She said she supported the project but also supported a second entrance for safety and offering more larger units and less one-bedroom units.
- Carolyn Ordonez spoke in opposition to a second public access into the project site noting that would plow through the Haven Family House Homeless Shelter but expressed support for the project otherwise.
- Karen Grove said she was speaking on behalf of the group Menlo Together and urged support of the project.
- Kevin Rennie, Willows, spoke in support of the project and expressed concerns about the lack of bicycle parking, noting it did not seem feasible as something to add later. He suggested vegetation barriers such as trees to block noise and improve air quality and having more larger units.
- Wendy Shindler, Flood Triangle, said she supported the project and spoke in opposition to a second public access into the site noting its impact on the Haven Family House.

There were 14 commenters.

Chair Schindler closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Behroozi said she wanted to address the access question. She said in 2022 she wrote to county and local officials asking about the different options as she thought then it seemed fair and preferable to have as many access routes as possible and in particular was keen on

exploring the idea of an access route through Flood Park to Iris. She said it did not make sense to route traffic past Haven Family House. She said the response was that the County was not interested in that as they had just completed extensive planning processes to redevelop Flood Park and did not want delay. She asked what others thought as she was sensitive to the desire for another access point but to also move forward with the project. She said it did not seem hopeful that Caltrans was not responding to residents' requests to explore other access. She said it seemed that it was not feasible. She said for that reason she wanted to talk about the bicycle amenities. She said she lived near and bicycled frequently in this area and knew the destinations people went to. She said it was important to have secure, weatherproof bicycle storage at ground level and accessible ideally for lots of residents. She said outdoor bicycle parking like that in the downtown area was not what people needed for their homes as it did not protect the bicycles during inclement weather nor keep them from being stolen.

Commissioner Behroozi said she saw two things that were needed and that was to create more flexible bicycle storage, recognizing that people would probably have e-bikes and at the least those needed covered spaces. She referred to the shared community space and whether that might be flexibly reused in the future if it happened that many residents had bicycles, they needed to store and/or to charge. She said the other thing was in the transportation demand management (TDM) analysis. She said it looked like there was a route onto Van Buren for bicycles to get to the train station, but she understood that would not be an official route as a locked fire gate would be there. She emphasized the importance of having an access point through Flood Park during its open hours noting that would be a significant quality of life improvement for the residents. She said it did not make sense for bicyclists to have to ride all the way out through Suburban Park and then make a left on Bay Road during peak traffic times. She said many of the destinations that would be most appealing for residents would be their children's schools in the Belle Haven district, or the new Belle Haven Community Center and the workplaces that residents would be going to which were Ravenswood District schools all of which were over the bicycle bridge. She urged the applicant to get something confirmed with the County about the Park access and to get it in writing. She said as a Flood Park neighbor she could access it from Iris Street, but it seemed a shame that Suburban Park residents could not access it from anywhere in their neighborhood. She said what would be good would be for the access point that eventually happened in this development to also be accessible to people who lived on Hedge Road, Greenwood and on other neighborhood streets so children did not have to travel on a busy road to get to the Park. She said she thought that would foster a bit more integration into the neighborhood and probably be a safer route again for children to the Belle Haven Community Center for swim lessons. She said those were her requests. She said she thought it was a great development, and she appreciated the collaboration that had gone into the work with the different communities.

Commissioner Silverstein said he strongly supported the housing the project would provide, and while he wanted it to move forward, he was concerned about the lack of any real bicycle parking. He said many of the concerns residents had with these projects were related to increased traffic, which was a heavy burden on close neighbors, and it seemed a significant part of the reason many of these types of projects had controversy. He said encouraging people to use alternative forms of transportation was the only way to reduce traffic impact. He said given the close proximity to the Highway 101 pedestrian and bicycle bridge it was faster to bicycle to Belle Haven than to drive from this location especially during commute hours. He said the project proposed 88 long term bicycle parking spaces but he did not think the proposal would actually provide any. He said Calgreen's specific building standards for bicycle parking stated that it must be at street level, not up three flights of stairs, not through an apartment, and not locked away on a balcony. He said this

lack had been discussed or mentioned to the developer, yet the proposal was for only four bicycle storage lockers for 88 units. He referred to the added expense and noted the overall project cost was expected to be \$63.77 million so the incremental cost to provide crucial bicycle storage was maybe .1%. He said the project was currently proposing to have five more parking spaces than the minimum requirement, which theoretically could be less, yet it was 128 bicycle parking spaces less than that minimum requirement. He said although he was very supportive of the project, he wanted to insist on including a formal contingency to provide long term bicycle storage for future residents. He noted that the developer indicated they would be reactive to the needs of the community, but he thought that was insufficient as once vehicle spaces were there and used it would be harder to remove them and install bicycle storage then rather than at the same time the project was constructed. He said also they were introducing a selection bias where people who had bicycles or wanted to e-bike and bike to work or school might not want to live there in the first place because they would not have the parking and storage for it. He said then it might be just a self-fulfilling prophecy of enabling a community whose residents did not bicycle anywhere.

Commissioner Ferrick asked why the most impacted traffic intersection that the project would add traffic to, namely Bay Road at Ringwood Avenue was not studied. She said the study looked at other intersections that were not as consequential to the function of the overall traffic patterns of this most impacted neighborhood.

Planner Turner said the Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) was part of the CEQA analysis that had to comply with the City's TIA Guidelines. He said the intersections were vetted by the Transportation Division, which determined those intersections needed to be studied for this project and that was the direction to Hexagon.

Commissioner Ferrick said that was unfortunate as Bay Road at Ringwood Avenue was the most concerning intersection and it was not studied. She said as was pointed out she agreed that having people take a very circuitous route out along the long way that then contributed to an already five to ten minute delay at that intersection at peak traffic times was unreasonable, yet it was not studied. She asked why the report listed names, addresses and phone numbers of some of the residents of that neighborhood in the technical appendices, noting hers on page 787 of the TIA.

Chair Schindler said it was Exhibit N to Attachment A in the staff report, the Phase One Environmental Site Assessment.

Mr. Spielberg said Phase One was the environmental site assessment for which they paid a third party organization to ensure there were no environmental issues. He said it was essentially a desk assessment in which they went through all history. He said he did not know why addresses appeared there, but he imagined they wanted to include the entire report including all the appendices.

Commissioner Ferrick asked if the Ravenswood City School District was the property owner, why the District Superintendent had to speak as a public commenter. Mr. Spielberg said that his group was the applicant and the long term lessee of the site. He said his organization would be the owners of the building and would be in all agreements, but the District owned the land. He said the District was not part of the entity actually applying for entitlements or anything.

Commissioner Ferrick said that the applicants were emphasizing they would meet LEED Silver but that in fact was the state's green building standard and was not an exceptional effort.

Mr. Spielberg said they would likely meet a minimum of LEED Silver, but they were requesting a waiver from the actual certification of that as it would add about \$60,000 to the project cost. He said as a California Tax Credit project they were generally subject to many things on top of local building code such that almost all their projects tended to be at least LEED Gold.

Commissioner Ferrick asked about the request to waive the two-inch recessed windows as the architectural inspiration she understood was the vertical batten board. She said without some of that style's details it might not age well noting the vertical siding of the 1970s. She said that would make it different from neighboring homes and suggested the added cost would not be that significant.

Mr. Crannell said every window would have trim around it to make a reveal there. He said the design guidelines in the municipal code indicated wall pane recess of two inches. He said the trim would ensure that they did not have that aluminum window kind of clean stucco look from the 60s and 70s. He said the list of addresses related to a list of residents within a certain radius of the site. Mr. Spielberg said he just heard from an associate and those addresses where those who were required to be noticed at that time of that assessment.

Commissioner Ferrick referred to the parking requirements and the lack of bicycle parking and said it would probably increase parking demand because residents would need to drive everywhere. She said the study found the project would be under parked by about 40 to 50 cars and asked if the current prohibition on overnight street parking would continue.

Planner Turner said that ordinance was something the City Council would have to amend if that was what the Council wanted to do but under existing code it would remain applicable.

Mr. Perata said amending that code was not part of the discussion or deliberation and the project would have to accommodate its parking onsite. He said it certainly was a consideration for the developer and operator of the site to make sure they had enough parking spaces on site.

Commissioner Ferrick asked the applicant if it was their understanding that if the 88 units drove more cars than the 116 spaces, they would need to manage that somehow.

Mr. Crannell said part of the vetting process for project tenancy would be to resolve all parking onsite, both bicycle and vehicle.

Commissioner Ferrick asked about visitor or guest parking. Mr. Crannell said it was baked into the allocations. He said where they had discrepancies between municipal code and what they required from an operational standpoint they would apply for a waiver.

Commissioner Ferrick said she understood that when the Ravenswood City School District explored uses for this site in the 2014-2020 time period that they were not allowed to use the site for a school due to air quality concerns as it was located right against the freeway. She asked if that was accurate.

William Eger, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations for the District, said the District would not have been able to purchase the site due to its proximity to the highway but because it was currently a site and was formerly a school site that a school could be rebuilt there. He said sometime between when the District acquired the site and the early 1900s and 2014 when the District closed the school, the state imposed additional rules around site acquisition and proximity to highways and other areas. He said they could have built a school there but chose not to for other reasons. Replying further to Commissioner Ferrick, he said the school district employed about 300 staff members.

Commissioner Ferrick said she was a board member for an affordable housing nonprofit Housing Trust Silicon Valley and represented her employer as a member of the Bay Area Council. She said she also belonged to Menlo Spark's advisory board. She said as a housing champion she welcomed the concept of the project to the City. She said they needed to ensure that adding a significant amount of housing worked for everyone with thoughtful planning requirements so that more future projects could also be accommodated. She said there was much to like with this project and in particular that it would support Ravenswood District teachers, its adjacency to Flood Park and the improvements being made there. She said in general she liked the site plan and the architectural inspiration and had already discussed her now mitigated concerns about the window recessing details. She said the lack of providing a second ingress and egress to Van Buren demonstrated a lack of understanding of where the traffic patterns and impacts came from as even the data table and staff report did not mention it. She said the intersection that would be most challenged had to be mitigated. She said they had to weigh what would be a better condition and not just for either neighborhood on adjacent sides but what would be better for the residents of the new community. She said that was accessibility and safety; being able to get where they were going whether by car, bike or on foot as efficiently as possible.

Commissioner Ferrick said she could support the BMR Housing Agreement but currently could not make the CEQA determination. She said given that there was room for more hearings if done in a timely way that she hoped they would consider continuing the project to further work on access points, vehicle transportation and nonvehicular transportation circulation. She said they had 60 days beyond the CEQA determination to approve the use permit. She said she looked forward to approving the project when they could be assured of a timeline for a second access point through the Caltrans right of way to Van Buren. She said it was a right of way and was not owned by Life Moves. She said there were no residential driveways other than Life Moves that faced Van Buren and it provided direct access much closer to 101 without impacting all the residential streets that were between the project and almost down to the VA where Van Buren meets with Bay Road closer to the Oil Changer site. She said she lived in Suburban Park and commuted to Santa Clara on Bay Road every day and half of that commute was waiting to get past Ringwood, She said she wanted this project to work well for everybody and in particular the residents.

Commissioner Silin said it was great the District decided to use their land in this way. He noted that generally the commenters were in favor of the project besides some details. He said he shared some of the concerns about transportation and parking. He said he sent an email earlier to staff asking about adding conditions to the approval within the context of the deadlines and other strictures. He asked since the applicant had access to unlimited waivers what ability the Commission have to add any new conditions or adjust details of the project such as bicycle parking or access.

Ms. Moshref-Danesh said generally in terms of conditions of approval for this project that what they were looking at was reasonable. She said generally they would want to first take a look at any conditions that would impact or make infeasible the waivers or incentives the applicant had requested. She said specifically to the waivers that they wanted to be very careful about any conditions of approval that might prevent the project from being constructed as designed or at the density proposed. She said one of the waivers requested was for long term bicycle parking and the applicant's assertion that provision of long term bicycle parking through storage facilities would preclude the development of the project. She said generally any potential conditions of approval beyond the general nexus and proportionality requirements that they wanted to have always they need to consider specifically the applicability of density bonus law to the project and whether or not a condition of approval might impact the feasibility of the project, might conflict with a requested incentive or waiver, or otherwise impact the project as designed and at the density proposed.

Commissioner Silin asked since there was a waiver requested from long term bicycle parking if that meant any conditions of approval in that realm were unlikely to be acceptable because that would conflict with the waiver request. He asked also since the applicant had access to unlimited waivers if the Planning Commission were to add a new condition that was not within the waiver requests already made whether the applicant could then ask for a waiver of that.

Ms. Moshref-Danesh said the key thing to keep in mind was whether or not the condition would impact the feasibility of the project as it was currently designed. She said any condition that would require the redesign of the project would potentially run afoul of that requirement. She said specific conditions related to how the bicycles were stored or where the bicycle storage was located certainly was a request the Commission could make of the applicant, who then could provide information as to whether or not that would be feasible for them to implement.

Commissioner Silin said that was confusing as he believed she had said anything requiring a redesign would run afoul of the requirement but then he heard her saying, for example, changing how the bicycles were stored could potentially be workable. He said he thought that in fact would require a redesign.

Ms. Moshref-Danesh said there was kind of gradation between what required a redesign of the project versus what could be a condition of approval as to how, for instance the bicycles were stored or storage located. She said the applicant would need to let them know whether that was feasible or would require a redesign of the project and most importantly whether or not that condition would impact the project density as designed.

Commissioner Silin said the applicant was requesting waivers for elements that if required would preclude the project at the provided density. He asked whether they were taking the applicant's word that all those were necessary or if it was within the Planning Commission's purview to question those.

Ms. Moshref-Danesh said generally to challenge the request for such a waiver, the City would have to be able to establish that the project would be possible without it. She said however that most likely would require a redesign of the project which recent case law has indicated was not allowed. She said the applicant was establishing that this was how they designed the project and the density they proposed; these were the waivers they needed to get it done. She said it was really about the physical sites and whether or not things could be made to fit, where they could be

made to fit and generally that went back to how the project had been designed to fit all of the components.

Commissioner Silin said given where the project was located and that most of the expected residents would work for Ravenswood City School District on the other side of Highway 101, it seemed like a great opportunity with the pedestrian overpass next to the project to encourage either walking to a bus, which was what he saw in the traffic analysis. He said he thought it should ideally be emphasized to incentive residents to either walk and take the bus, or bicycle to commute to work and to reduce traffic on local streets. He said in terms of access to Flood Park that a Google map of the Park's parking lot clearly showed an access from the former school to Flood Park. He said that access should remain as it would make it easier for residents to get into Flood Park to take the bicycle path out to Van Buren. He said ideally it would be nice to have access to Van Buren directly from the Fire Gate area but that might be an issue with the Haven Family House next door. He said he thought he saw the applicant was planning to offer Caltrans Go passes but since most of the people living there would be working on the other side of 101 that did not seem helpful whereas SamTrans seemed very helpful, specifically buses, and he would like to see more focus on that. He said in terms of parking that the site plan in general looked like a big concrete parking lot, which would encourage those who would live there to park their cars and drive. He said it was great to have the open space with the playground and green space and noted its proximity to Flood Park as well. He said he did not want to do anything that would cause a large redesign, but he thought that something to incentivize people to use alternate transportation should be the focus such as charging for parking. He said more sheltered bicycle storage on the first floor would be very good. He said he did not have any other major concerns about the project.

Commissioner Ehrich said much of what he wanted to say had been said and that his questions had been answered. He said the importance of housing was demonstrable and noted the speakers' comments. He said he was in favor of whatever additional bicycle parking could be added to the site as it was clear that would help with traffic mitigation. He encouraged as much pedestrian and bicycle access as possible to Van Buren. He said the reasons for access to Flood Park as stated were very important. He said the project held critical importance for the City and because of the legal risk in anything they did that would delay the project that he was loath to ask anything else of the developer but was interested in other Commissioners' thoughts. He said good points were made about access, bicycle parking and traffic. He said he felt it incumbent for him to support the project because of the acute need for housing.

Chair Schindler said the project would provide much needed affordable housing, especially for teachers and noted the powerful public comments speaking to that. She said she was particularly heartened that they had not heard commentary that explicitly opposed the entire project, noting greater opposition earlier in the project's development. She said the waivers and reasons for them were generally clear to her and those that had been somewhat vague for her had been addressed by clarifying questions and information from the applicant and staff. She said from her perspective that under the state density bonus law the waivers and incentives were essentially nonnegotiable, and the waivers were unlimited. She said great points had been made to try to get creative with encouraging bicycle use specifically through parking and storage, access through Flood Park and potentially at some point access through the emergency access point onto van Buren by Haven Family House. She said it was not clear if one could walk through that exit but hopefully that would evolve. She said she hoped the applicant would take all of the feedback into consideration, but she was not comfortable adding those as requirements. She noted the importance of delivering affordable housing in a meaningful timeframe for the City as well as the alignment of financing and

tax credit application and what sources of funding were available and when for the project. She said a small misstep even for the best of reasons ran the great risk of derailing an important project. She said building this was really important right now as a critical part of their Housing Element. She said for those reasons she was not supportive of any additional explicit requirements to the approval other than the text changes to the resolution that Planner Turner laid out in his presentation.

Commissioner Ferrick said the applicant had expressed a reactive, wait and see, position for transportation management. She said she thought that project residents would ask that the fire gate be opened during peak morning and evening travel times so they could save time. She asked if the applicant was willing to work toward that as a solution and if so, what the process would be.

Mr. Spielberg said they would be applying to the Housing Trust on which Commissioner Ferrick was a board member. He said he did not know how that relationship affected what was happening now.

Commissioner Ferrick said as a board member that she did not get involved in transaction decisions. She said she wanted to disclose her experience to demonstrate she had knowledge about affordable housing financing, which the applicant had talked a great deal about.

Mr. Spielberg said they were not reactive regarding parking and access. He said those things were part of the overall plan and what they believed was appropriate and needed for the units. He said there was no expectation that any of their residents would ever park in the neighborhood. He said they felt that they had an appropriate number of parking spaces on the site and the part about reacting to the needs was directly in relation to bicycle storage. He said once the site was designed and operational if they were to continue to have conversations with Caltrans, he did not even know what the outcome would be.

Mr. Crannell said they were frustrated in their efforts to get a dialogue with Caltrans about this. He said it was private property on the other side of the emergency vehicle access gate and there was an agreement between the two landowners to allow that emergency vehicle access. He said it was not a public right of way.

Mr. Spielberg said they were open to the idea, but their immediate goal was to get the project built noting the timing of funding cycles.

Mr. Crannell showed a slide that showed the access point going right into a parking lot on a private property. He said north of there that was where the Caltrans' area was to which they were not showing access. He said Caltrans had not yet been open to dialogue to find a solution, but they were open to keep working to find a solution with them.

Commissioner Ferrick asked if the idea was to go out the right side of the property at the top. Mr. Crannell said they did not have an agreement with Caltrans, but it was potentially feasible in the future. He said there were hurdles but to date they had not been able to get a dialogue with Caltrans to start the hurdle process. Commissioner Ferrick suggested reaching out to a state representative to help make that connection. She said this solution would not only mitigate traffic the project would drive but also help mitigate the most traffic impacted neighborhood in the City.

Mr. Eger said the District, through a state representative, had a zoom discussion with Caltrans two to three years ago before the Alliant team was fully on board. He said the Caltrans process indicated to them would be a multiyear process that would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to include a study, removing and rebuilding the sound wall, and close down Highway 101.

Commissioner Ferrick said she did not think it would involve the sound wall as it was too small of an area. Mr. Eger said it was not too small of an area according to the Fire District and he could only reiterate what Caltrans had said on the zoom call three years ago. He said he thought it was a multi-stage conversation and needed the City's involvement too. He said the site plan as designed would allow for that evolution.

Commissioner Behroozi said it was Caltrans' land and any discussion with them about its use could take years while during that time the project would become financially unfeasible. She said she studied transportation demand management and adding more places for people to drive their cars out and making it faster for them to drive places was the wrong approach if the goal was to reduce traffic. She suggested icing the Caltrans idea for now. She said she had advocated for a second exit too and in a very public way previously, but now she thought that having an inconvenient vehicle route through Suburban Park, the wait to make a left turn on Bay Road, then a complicated intersection at Ringwood Avenue, then the Willow Road intersection to get over to East Palo Alto or Belle Haven would lead her to choose to bicycle as it would take her 10 minutes rather than 20 minutes to do. She said she wanted to make it feasible for people to make that choice not just because it was a better choice for them but for everyone, the environment and traffic congestion.

Commissioner Behroozi said she did not think the project was under parked, noting the prohibition on overnight street parking. She suggested unbundling the parking from the units so those who did not have a car got a discount or perhaps the parking spaces could be rented. She said they might find then that fewer parking spaces were needed and those could be dedicated to more secure safe bicycle storage. She said they needed to start thinking about this if they were going to address the climate crisis. She said she watched the Fire Board meeting where they discussed the second exit. She said she was encouraged to hear the Fire Chief say the site team had worked really well with them and although current fire code did not require a second emergency exit that the applicants had added it in response to feedback. She said also that it would not just be a viable route for emergency vehicles to get into the site but could be used as an evacuation route.

Replying to Commissioner Silverstein's question about the state density bonus law language and waivers, Ms. Moshref-Danesh said it was not just that language about the waivers but the case law since that had added "as designed" to the phrase "that would prevent construction of the project." She said that was why they wanted to be careful about any additional conditions or restrictions, considerations of the requested waivers, and whether or not those conditions would require the project to undergo a redesign.

Mr. Perata said staff planners evaluated the waivers and concessions thoroughly and asked many questions of the applicant team to vet the requests before bringing them forward to the Commission. He said sometimes they were able to work with applicants for modification. He said for example the applicant asked to not pre- or dual plumb the building for future recycled water and they worked with the applicant to clarify that the irrigation would be purple pipe ready for recycled water but to exempt for the building.

Mr. Silverstein referred to language in the report that formally declared the site would provide 88 long term bicycle parking spaces. He said the Calgreen standards currently stated that the proposed balcony solution for long term bicycle storage was insufficient. He said he did not think it was reasonable to state to the community, prospective tenants and to themselves that they were championing bicycle commuting.

Replying to Chair Schindler, Commissioner Silverstein said that if the Commission were to approve the use permit as stated in the staff report he suggested that language around the project providing 88 long term bicycle parking spaces and then in parentheses, one per unit, should be removed. He said the waiver request was to eliminate and not require the bicycle parking requirements per city municipal code or one and a half spaces per unit. He said the waiver requested was that the applicant was not providing long term bicycle parking. He said if a tenant wanted to put their bicycle on their balcony that would be acceptable but that it was not an official long term bicycle parking solution. He said the project should not be advertised or formally declared in the use permit approval as providing that solution.

Replying to the Chair, Commissioner Silverstein said the staff report stated on page 269 that the project adhered to the Calgreen standard for Class 1 bicycle storage but as a matter of accuracy it did not. He said Chapter 5.1064 of Calgreen stated what the actual standards were.

Chair Schindler referred to the draft resolution page 93 in the staff report and that it stated the waiver was for the required bicycle parking spaces, but the resolution did not indicate what bicycle parking was being provided.

Commissioner Silverstein asked for a refinement in the minutes to indicate how he felt but it was fine if it was not stated in the formal resolution.

Chair Schindler clarified with him that he was not proposing a specific change to the approval but that the clarification about the Calgreen standards for Class 1 bicycle standards might be called out in the meeting minutes. She said the summary of the Commission's discussion points would hopefully highlight that.

Commissioner Ferrick asked where the Commission could provide guidance to provide more onsite parking bicycles and amplify residents' feedback to explore a second vehicular access, but not as conditions.

Planner Turner said through this process it was possible to amend the resolution to add recitals such as whereas the Commission values bicycle parking it urges the developer to add as much bicycle parking infrastructure as possible. He said those would not be conditions of approval.

Ms. Moshref-Danesh said the Commission comments were included as part of the record of the proceedings on this project. She said the Commission could convey, urge, and encourage the applicant to take the measures the Commission had set out and those would be included as part of the record which the applicant would be hearing.

Mr. Perata said for most projects that action minutes or a high level of recording without going into detail were usually done. He said based on the Commission's discussion that if the Commission wanted more detailed summary minutes could be prepared to record the items raised without the potential need to craft additional language in the resolution.

Replying to Commissioner Behroozi's question about a TDM plan, Planner Turner said in this site's particular zoning district the municipal code did not require formal trip monitoring. He said it was subject to C/CAG's trip monitoring, which was a little less quantitative and more qualitative in nature. He said the applicant had to enroll in the commute.org program with C/CAG and then show how they were meeting their TDM measures. He said C/CAG monitored that way, but the City would not have the authority to do those driveway counts.

Ms. Moshref-Danesh said the project was a Class 32 CEQA exemption based on infill and studies had been done to support that exemption. She said there would be less monitoring that would occur after the fact, but the project would still be subject to the mitigation and monitoring measures in the General Plan EIR and Housing Element EIR.

Commissioner Silin said in the TDM plan on page 289 of the pdf document, there would be an annual driveway hose count study required with the hoses placed for one week to track all peak hour trips and that trip data would be provided to the City annually. He asked for confirmation and how the data would be used.

Planner Turner said since that was not a City requirement that they would not necessarily collect this data. He said the developer could send it to the City, but it was part of the C/CAG monitoring, and it would be sent to C/CAG to make sure their goals were being met.

Commissioner Ferrick asked if the project would use union labor. Mr. Spielberg said it would not.

Commissioner Ehrich moved to approve as presented in the staff report with the modifications stated by staff this evening that staff prepare summary meeting minutes and that those minutes note that the Planning Commission did not agree with the applicant's classification of Class 1 bicycle parking based on Calgreen's definition of bicycle parking. Chair Schindler seconded the motion.

Commissioner Ferrick asked if they could disaggregate the approvals as there were certain things she would support and others she would not. Commissioner Ehrich said he would be happy to disaggregate the approvals.

Mr. Perata said doing that might prove problematic as staff's recommendation was set up as a single resolution in attachment A where staff's recommendation was to make the determination regarding the California Environmental Quality Act that the project was exempt under Class 32 and then make the findings and approve the entitlements of the use permit, architectural control, and BMR Housing Agreement. He said staff's recommendation would be to make a motion and second to vote on the resolution with any amendments the Commission wanted to add as well as the staff recommended changes stated at the start of tonight's meeting.

Commissioner Ehrich said since it sounded like it would be to challenging to disaggregate the approvals that he would keep his motion as stated. Chair Schindler restated her second of the motion, which was to adopt the resolution to approve the use permit, architectural control, and the Below Market Rate Housing Agreement.

Commissioner Ferrick said she would like to support the action but asked if in addition to asking that the minutes include a note about the Calgreen bicycle parking standards to also include

encouraging the applicant to work further with Caltrans to determine the feasibility of making the emergency access point a more accessible exit leveraging Caltrans' right of way.

Chair Schindler asked if the two notes for the summary minutes needed to be in the motion or provided to staff now.

Planner Turner said the guidance on the summary minutes was clear and he did not think that it had to be part of the official motion adopting the resolution to approve.

Commissioner Behroozi said she felt less strongly about the technical designation of the bicycle parking spaces and whether they were certifying LEED or not and more about the practical implications of not having bicycle parking nor a sure access bicycle route. She said the thing she did not want to get buried in the minutes was what one person said and that was for the access point to Flood Park be available to everybody in the community, noting that would help people find their way around without having to drive. She said if they were elevating anything she wanted to elevate an extra potential driving route.

Commissioner Ehrich said theoretically that access to the public could be guaranteed without redesigning the project. He asked if Commissioner Behroozi wanted to add that as a condition of approval that in theory would not violate waivers, or if that was a suggestion in terms of the summary minutes.

Commissioner Behroozi said she had seen in the minutes that the applicant was talking about having it accessible only to people who lived within the development. She said she understood the rationale but would prefer they had less lock and key stuff especially when talking about access to public spaces shared by all.

Chair Schindler suggested they check in with the applicant as she thought this might not be the applicant's prerogative but the County's purview. She asked if it was within the applicant's jurisdiction to determine who had access to that gate and egress and ingress of the park.

Mr. Spielberg said the access determination would have to be through an agreement with the County. He said their project was private property, however. He said this was similar to allowing people to walk through a homeowner's backyard to get to a park. He said there were liability concerns for them to do that. He said it sounded really nice, but he did not think they could entertain it.

Commissioner Behroozi said they had just had the conversation about how Life Moves was allowing the applicant to use their private property as a potential emergency access point, and she thought it would be a gesture of good faith for the community. She said they might have some legal or liability issues to resolve. She said Felton Gables had a neighborhood access point to a really nice park in Atherton and Felton Gables residents had keys for the access gate. She said children needed to be able to bike safely to school. She encouraged the applicant to work out the liability as it would be an extraordinary continuation of the good faith conversations they already had been having with the community. She said she understood they did not have to do this but for all kinds of reasons it was the right choice.

Mr. Spielberg said he was not sure how that could be accomplished and whether they would have to provide an easement. He said he had been developing affordable housing for a long time and

had never seen that. He said they typically try to provide as much security for both their residents and surrounding neighbors rather than making a wide open property.

Commissioner Ehrich asked if Commissioner Behroozi's vision of the access point from the property to the park would be controlled by a fob so residents would be able to access in and out and the public therefore would not. Commissioner Ehrich said thank you. (It seemed to indicate Commissioner Behroozi agreed with his statement.)

Chair Schindler said based on the nature of the conversation that they just had as well as earlier in the evening, she felt reasonably confident that at the least this would show up in the meeting minutes. She asked Commissioner Behroozi when they had a chance to review the summary minutes and essentially highlight points, language, and perspectives including the two that had been raised explicitly about bicycles and a second access point whether she would be comfortable using that mechanism to highlight this third point of park access.

Commissioner Behroozi said it would be nice for people to know she tried but she did not think it would have any impact.

Chair Schindler confirmed with Commissioner Behroozi that she was not seeking a modification to the proposed resolution.

Commissioner Ferrick commented that she was concerned that relying on notes in meeting minutes would not be an effective mechanism to address any of these issues. She asked why organized labor and skilled tradesmen with health insurance, would not be used for the project. She said she was increasingly not feeling right about using minutes as a mechanism for complying response by the applicant.

Mr. Spielberg said he had been candid about what they were open and willing to look at and what they were not. He said definitely the Caltrans area and the bicycle parking were things they would respond to. He said having the public walk through their property to the park was something he had not heard about until tonight. He said he welcomed suggestions but for this one they would need to check with their insurance company and legal counsel. He thought it was unlikely that it could happen, but they were open to the other two suggestions.

Commissioner Ferrick said her take was the park access would be the easiest and cheapest of the three suggested items to do as the public walking through would just be people from adjacent neighborhoods. She said it is a very pinned in project site between Flood Park, the freeway, and two single family residential neighborhoods.

Mr. Spielberg said he was open to looking at it more. He said a lot of his own background came from developing infill buildings for formerly homeless people in Los Angeles. He said typically a lot of those buildings were trying to create literally one access point for the building to maintain security and integrity for the residents. He said he realized this was a very different type of neighborhood so he was willing to look at park access and what it would mean.

Replying further to Commissioner Ferrick, Mr. Spielberg said they would not use union labor due to cost. He said this would be probably the first affordable housing project he had built without prevailing wage, but when the cost of this project compared with other Bay Area projects was significantly cheaper. He said they were desperately trying to compile all the money to make the

project a reality. He said they had asked the City Council for \$2.4 million which was nowhere near enough and Council authorized \$1 million. He said to add prevailing wage would add 15% to 30% to the cost.

Commissioner Ferrick asked if they had considered or analyzed the risk of using unskilled labor or those not trained through the trades, workers who were not as skilled, experienced, not as safe, not as able to do the needed work in a safe and timely fashion.

Mr. Spielberg said he did not think that correlated. He said one thing they studied in their industry because this was happening a lot at the state level, noting new assembly bills and things that focused specifically on affordable housing requiring skilled and trained labor. He said it narrowed the pool of contractors which also increased prices and decreased diversity. He said requiring specific skilled and trained labor from union shops typically meant a less diverse and fewer set of contractors. Replying further to Commissioner Ferrick, he said some funders might require prevailing wage.

Commissioner Silin referred to the park access question and said he could sympathize with the applicant's concern with people walking through the development. He said an example of public access was from Roble Avenue to Nealon Park which had a public easement he believed went close to some apartment buildings. He said looking at the site map perhaps an easement could go through the setback, which he thought was 10 feet wide, between the property line and building two. He said that would mean people walking from Sheridan right past those buildings so he was not sure how feasible that would be. He said a large event at Flood Park could mean overflow parking and people might use such a path if it were open so it could possibly be people other than local residents. He said he sympathized with Commissioner Behroozi too and this should have been considered earlier as it would be a very nice thing to have.

Commissioner Silin said he believed that the City had a program for an annual parking permit to park on the street overnight if the apartment in which you lived did not have enough parking. He said the City's website indicated qualifying addresses for the parking permits were limited to those apartment buildings lacking adequate off street parking spaces, or less than two spaces per unit and zoned R-3. He said this project had less than two spaces per unit and was zoned R-3. He said he wanted to clarify for the public if the tenants of this project would have that option, but he did not want to add a new condition of approval.

Mr. Perata said they could certainly follow up more thoroughly but just because an address might be located in an R-3 zoning district did not mean it qualified for this parking permit. He said a lot of those were issued for older buildings that were in place prior to the overnight parking prohibition. He said their understanding was that a new development in an R-3 zoning district would be expected to manage parking onsite and not be eligible for those overnight parking permits.

Commissioner Silin said public commenters raised the ratios of the one-, two-, and three-bedroom units. He asked how those were determined.

Mr. Spielberg said it was density and that they wanted to provide as many low income units as they possibly could. He said a requirement for a family affordable project was to have at least 25% two-bedroom units and 25% three-bedroom units. He said the one-bedroom units provided additional density and housing for additional families.

Commissioner Silin said he shared concern about the mechanism of using comments in the minutes to direct the applicant on things the Commission wanted to see addressed. He noted Commission concerns about car parking and bicycle parking and asked the applicant to comment on what they had heard and whether they were considering any changes as a result or how they were considering approaching the next few years after construction was done to see what changes they might make to the bicycle and car parking situation.

Mr. Spielberg said his primary concern was getting the project built. He said they really did not want to make changes right now so they could apply for financing and start building. He said he thought they had parked it appropriately such that people would not park in the surrounding streets. He said as far as bicycle parking that they were open to seeing what bicycles the tenants would bring. He said affordable housing tenants wanted the housing and shorter commutes and lower rent were greater considerations than their bicycles. He said they wanted the project to look nice, wanted the residents to enjoy where they lived and if more long term bicycle parking was needed, they would want to accommodate that. Replying further to Commissioner Silin as to how they would pay for that, Mr. Spielberg said it was part of maintenance. He said Mr. Crannell mentioned the cost of \$2,400 for a bicycle storage facility for two bikes. He said cost wise it was a lot different to gradually add those kinds of things than to put 88 of those in right now at \$250,000.

Chair Schindler called for the vote on the motion on the table.

Commissioner Ferrick said she could not vote approval as no study or mitigation was identified for the most impacted intersections of the project. She said she did not feel the Commission had been able to sufficiently do its job to ensure the project was planned well and future projects could be accommodated. She said she could not approve also because of the inability to require a pursuit of some of the things mentioned including a second ingress and egress. She said she appreciated the applicant expressing willingness but there was no mechanism to require without either continuing or denying the project. She said the reactive nature of managing active transportation for bicycle amenities felt insufficient as people would not buy bicycles if they had nowhere to store them. She said the lack of willingness to reconsider using trades people from construction trades locally was surprising and disappointing. She said as it was only the second public hearing of the five allowed, there was time to continue and work on things, and it was the first time the Commission had seen the project. She said the applicant had indicated the tax credit round was in May which seemed to provide ample time to revisit the three primary loose ends that surfaced tonight and for the project to come back addressing those. She said with that she could have enthusiastically supported the project but could not now.

Commissioner Silin commented that no project was perfect and although he was not 100% comfortable with this one, he appreciated the transparency of the developer and the community's supportive comments. He said through all their planning documents and processes he thought they should have been more targeted to talk with the developer ahead of time on things such as park access. He said the City championed itself as a community that valued climate change resiliency, and they should plan for things like that ahead of time. He said the most important thing were people working in their community, especially with children that were commuting from far away and wanted to be able to live here. He said for that reason that he would not want to stall the project, but he urged the developer to embrace encouraging pedestrian and bicycle transportation alternatives rather than driving. He voted yes.

Commissioner Silverstein expressed appreciation to the developer and applicant for addressing questions tonight and going through the overall process. He said he thought they were all very much in favor of a project such as this. He said he wanted to express broader disappointment over the evolution of the questions around bicycle parking as he thought two of their three official priorities were around their climate action plan and zero emission plan so how they promoted active transportation, how they reduced car dependency and so many of the little decisions they made along the way allowed them to move in that direction. He said he did not see that supported with this project. He voted yes on the project.

ACTION: Motion and second (Ehrich/Schindler) to adopt a resolution to approve the item with the following text modifications to the resolution (Attachment A); passes 5-1 with Commissioner Ferrick opposed and Commissioner Do absent.

Recital 3 - WHEREAS, the maximum allowed density in the R-3 zone is 20 dwelling units per acre and the maximum number of units allowed by the zoning ordinance on the Project site is ~~49~~ 50 units; and

Recital 9 - WHEREAS, the Applicant proposes to increase the Project density by ~~80%~~ 76% for a total of 88 units; and

Recital 10 - WHEREAS, the Project would consist of ~~49~~ 50 affordable units and ~~39~~ 38 bonus units, ~~38~~ 37 of which would be affordable; and

Section 2.1.a - Consideration and due regard were given to the nature and condition of all adjacent uses and structures, and to general plans for the area in question and surrounding areas, and impact of the application hereon; in that, the proposed use permit is consistent with the R-3 zoning district and the General Plan because multi-family residential developments of three or more units are allowed to be constructed on R-3 lots subject to granting of a use permit and ~~provided that the proposed Project conforms to applicable zoning standards, including, but not limited to, minimum setbacks, minimum landscaping, and maximum building coverage that are not altered by waivers and incentives provided by State law.~~ The proposed Project advances the General Plan, specifically the 2023-2031 Housing Element update, by creating additional housing opportunities for lower income residents. The Property is included in the Housing Element as a housing opportunity site, and development of the proposed Project would help the City meet its RHNA.

Add Section 6.1.f - In addition, none of the exceptions in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 to the categorical exemption apply to the Project.

G. Informational Items

G1. Future Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

- Regular Meeting: January 27, 2025

Mr. Perata said the January 27 agenda would have four single-family use permit request projects.

H. Adjournment

Chair Schindler adjourned the meeting at 10:45 p.m.

Staff Liaison: Kyle Perata, Assistant Community Development Director

Recording Secretary: Brenda Bennett

Approved by the Planning Commission on January 27, 2025



320 SHERIDAN DRIVE

January 13, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting



PROJECT LOCATION

- Located between Flood Triangle and Suburban Park neighborhoods
- Housing Element opportunity site
 - Site rezoned to R-3
 - Enables BMR housing opportunities



Project site



PROPOSED PROJECT

- 88 new housing units
- 100% affordable
 - 87 affordable units
 - One on-site manager's unit
 - Community room
- Three buildings and on-site improvements
 - BBQ area
 - Play area
 - Other landscaping improvements
 - Surface parking
- HTR Permits approved by City Arborist
 - Redwood and Oak
 - Project would fully replace value of removed trees



WAIVERS AND INCENTIVES

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Waivers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAR • Height • Pavement • Fence height in front yard – Decrease <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front and rear setbacks • Land area per dwelling • Long-term bike parking – Remove <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building profile • Modulations • Parking lot tree island | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incentives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No window inset – No undergrounding frontage utilities – No LEED certification – Alternate transit pass compliance – No dual plumbing |
|---|---|

BMR AGREEMENT

- 87 of the 88 units deed restricted
- 8 of the units follow City preferences
- Other 79 affordable units subject to applicant preferences
 - City may have second preference subject to NOFA funding agreement
- Housing Commission recommended approval
 - Urge applicant to work with Staff on selection of management company

RECOMMENDATION

- Determine project is exempt from CEQA
- Approve (subject to Resolution text edits)
 - Use permit
 - Architectural control permit
 - BMR agreement

EDITS TO RESOLUTION

- WHEREAS, the maximum allowed density in the R-3 zone is 20 dwelling units per acre and the maximum number of units allowed by the zoning ordinance on the Project site is ~~49~~ 50 units; and
- WHEREAS, the Applicant proposes to increase the Project density by ~~80%~~ 76% for a total of 88 units; and
- WHEREAS, the Project would consist of ~~49~~ 50 affordable units and ~~39~~ 38 bonus units, ~~38~~ 37 of which would be affordable; and

EDITS TO RESOLUTION (CONT.)

- Consideration and due regard were given to the nature and condition of all adjacent uses and structures, and to general plans for the area in question and surrounding areas, and impact of the application hereon; in that, the proposed use permit is consistent with the R-3 zoning district and the General Plan because multi-family residential developments of three or more units are allowed to be constructed on R-3 lots subject to granting of a use permit and ~~provided that the proposed Project conforms to applicable zoning standards, including, but not limited to, minimum setbacks, minimum landscaping, and maximum building coverage that are not altered by waivers and incentives provided by State law.~~ The proposed Project advances the General Plan, specifically the 2023-2031 Housing Element update, by creating additional housing opportunities for lower income residents. The Property is included in the Housing Element as a housing opportunity site, and development of the proposed Project would help the City meet its RHNA.



EDITS TO RESOLUTION (CONT.)

- In addition, none of the exceptions in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 to the categorical exemption apply to the Project.



THANK YOU

Sheridan Drive Apartments 320 Sheridan Drive, Menlo Park Planning Commission



Project Team



Owner Ravenswood City School District
Developer Alliant Communities
Project Architect SDG Architects
Landscape Architect R3 Studios
Civil Engineering KPFF
MEP Engineering SY Lee
LEED/Energy Modeling Partner Energy
Legal Counsel Cox Castle
Entitlement Consulting Kamangar Consulting, LLC
Communications LT & Associates
Resident Services LifeSteps



COX CASTLE



Kamangar Consulting, LLC



Who We Are



Experienced Team

of socially conscious, results-oriented multifamily real estate professionals

Core Focus

on providing the right housing in the right place, including Affordable, Workforce, Mixed-Income, and Attainable

High-Quality Execution

that ensures the successful completion of a project, no matter what challenges arise

Executive Team Track Record



Project Location



Background



The Site is owned by the Ravenswood City School District

- Former James Flood Magnet School Site
 - School closed in 2011, Demolished 2014; Site has sat vacant for a decade
- District explored multiple options:
 - A Bus Yard
 - District Office Space
 - Leasing to a Private School, and more
- District Goals:
 - Help address regional housing crisis (~40% of Ravenswood families are classified as 'homeless')
 - Increase Teacher & Staff Retention: 43% of staff are considering leaving the District because of the cost of housing or length of commute
 - Provides access to safe, decent, affordable homes for Ravenswood Teachers and Staff
- Fall 2021 RFP: Ravenswood selected Alliant through a competitive RFP process to Develop the site



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Community Engagement & Timeline



- ✓ *School District surveys teachers & staff – May 2022*
- ✓ *Preliminary application – Summer 2023*
- ✓ *Community outreach meeting – December 2023*
- ✓ *Website launch – February 2024 www.homesforeducators.org*
- ✓ *Formal application – March 2024*
- ✓ *Community Open House – May 20 & May 21*
- ✓ *Housing Commission study session – August 2024*
- ✓ *Housing Commission funding request – November 2024*
- ✓ *City Council funding approval – November 2024*
- ***Planning Commission for entitlements – tonight***
- *Tax Credit Application – Spring 2025*
- *Start Construction – End of 2025*
- *Start Leasing – Fall 2027*

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The Project



3 Buildings - 88 Affordable Housing Units
Priority for District Teachers & Staff
Menlo Park Live/Work Preference
On-site Resident Manager



Neighborhood Context



Architectural Design



- Traditional & Farmhouse Style
- Elevated Detailing – roof materials, contrasting & decorative trim, window framing
- Overall Size & Scale (**reduced from 4 to 3 stories**)
- Lush Landscaping, including preservation of Heritage Trees



Design Features & Elevations



Materiality

- Lap Siding
- Board & Batten
- Plaster
- Metal rail
- Shingled Roofing
- Color Variation



Massing & Articulation

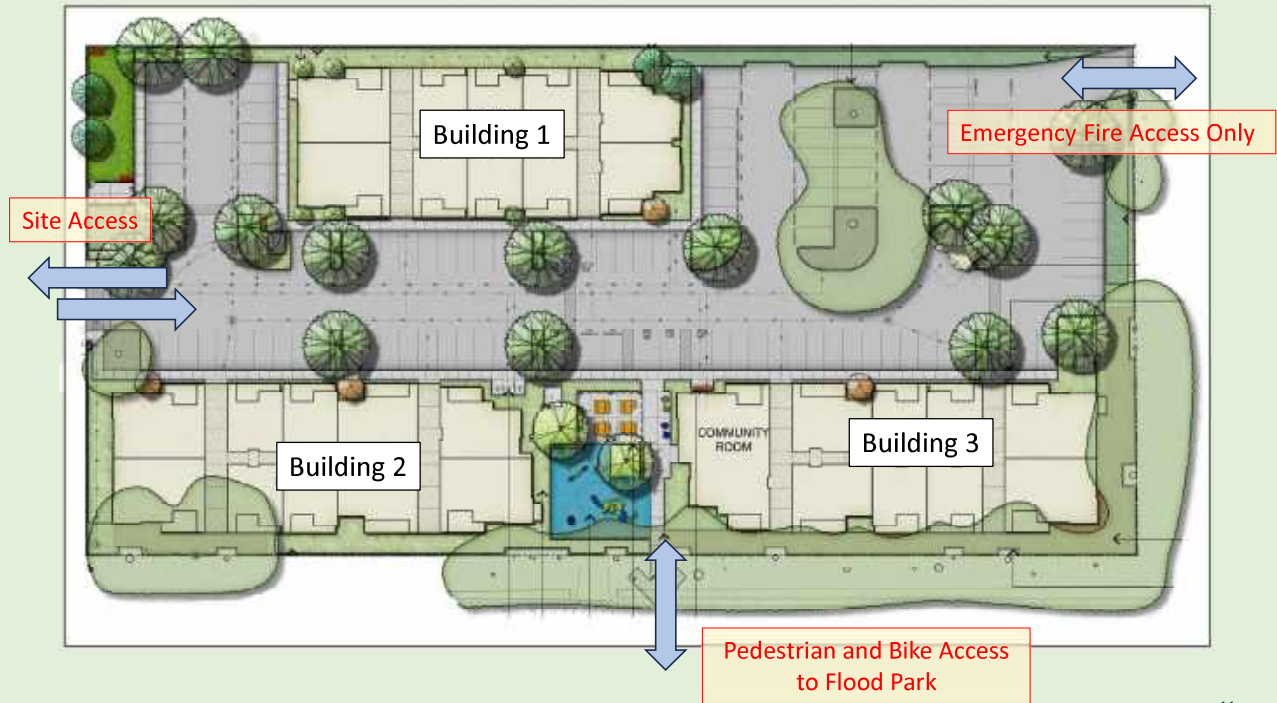
- Gabled Roofs
- Inset Facades
- Recessed Balconies



Sustainability

- LEED Silver Design
- Purple Pipe Irrigation
- Solar Power
- All-Electric Utilities
- Acoustic-Rated Window Glazing

Site Plan & Access



Community Amenities



Community Room
Children's Play Area
Laundry Room

Computer Lab
On-Site Management
& Maintenance

Fitness Room
On-Site Parking
Outdoor Gathering Space



Bicycle Facilities



In addition to secure balcony storage in each unit, the site provides multiple bike storage locations, a bike repair station, and new bike sharrows from Bay Rd. to project entry.



Unit Details



Unit Mix

- 42 – One Bedroom Homes
- 23 – Two Bedroom Homes
- 23 – Three Bedroom Homes
- 88 – Affordable Homes (incl mgr.)

Income Mix

30% - 80% of the Area Median Income

Unit Amenities

- Private Balcony or Patio
- Laundry hookups
- Ample Living, Dining and Storage Space



THANK YOU

