

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEETING**  
**CIVIC CENTER MULTIPURPOSE ROOM, BASEMENT LEVEL**  
440 Civic Center Plazas, Richmond, CA  
July 13, 2011  
6:00 p.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Andrew Butt, Chair  
Otheree Christian  
Michael Woldemar

Raymond Welter, Vice Chair  
Eileen Whitty  
Don Woodrow

Chair Butt called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chair Butt, Vice Chair Welter, Boardmembers Whitty, and Woldemar

**Absent:** Boardmember Woodrow

**Staff Present:** Richard Mitchell, Jonelyn Whales, Hector Lopez, and Mary Renfro

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

April 27, 2011:

**ACTION: It was M/S (Woldemar/Whitty) to approve the minutes of April 27, 2011; unanimously approved.**

May 25, 2011:

**ACTION: It was M/S (Woldemar/Whitty) to approve the minutes of May 25, 2011; unanimously approved.**

June 8, 2011:

Boardmember Woldemar referred to Item 3 of the minutes, page 6; the Home Depot concession stand. He asked that the record reflect that the vote of 4-1 be changed to read that he cast the 'no' vote and not Boardmember Woodrow.

**ACTION: It was M/S (Woldemar/Whitty) to approve the minutes of June 8, 2011, as amended; unanimously approved.**

**CONSENT CALENDAR:**

Chair Butt reported the Consent Calendar consisted of Items 1 and 2. Boardmember Whitty requested removal of Item 1 from the Consent Calendar.

**ACTION: It was M/S (Woldemar/Whitty) to approve the Consent Calendar consisting of Item 2; unanimously approved.**

Item Approved:

<b>CC 2. PLN11-091</b>	<b>WESTERN DRIVE PLANNED RESIDENTIAL GROUP FOR TWO SINGLE-FAMILY UNITS</b>
Description	REQUEST FOR DESIGN REVIEW APPROVAL FOR A PLANNED RESIDENTIAL GROUP CONSISTING OF TWO SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCES, ±2,015 SQUARE FEET AND ±3,892 SQUARE FEET, ON A PROPERTY PREVIOUSLY SUBDIVIDED INTO THREE PARCELS.
Location	125-127 WESTERN DRIVE
APN	558-020-016-9, 558-020-017-7, & 558-020-018-5
Zoning	SFR-2 (SINGLE-FAMILY VERY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT)
Owner	JOHN KNOX
Applicant	KELTON DISSEL-JOHN MANISCALCO ARCHITECTS
Staff Contact	JONELYN WHALES
Recommendation:	<b>HOLD OVER TO 9/14/2011</b>

Chair Butt noted any decision approved may be appealed in writing to the City Clerk within ten (10) days, or by Monday, July 25, 2011 by 5:00 p.m.

## **AGENDA**

<b>ACTION: It was M/S (Woldemar/Welter) to move ahead and discuss Board Business Item A.2; unanimously approved.</b>
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### **Board Business**

#### **A. Staff reports, requests, or announcements**

1. Discuss public art projects and landscape bond procedures to possibly amend RMC 15.04.810.030 (Fencing and Landscaping Standards, Residential Properties) and RMC 15.04.820.010 (Fencing and Landscaping Standards, Commercial Properties) with the City's Parks and Landscaping Superintendent, and members of Redevelopment, Engineering, Arts and Culture Commission, and Planning.

Boardmember Woldemar stated several months ago when the BART parking garage came up, he was not in attendance and the Board asked for further discussion. Concerns included whether or not public art that comes forward as part of the Redevelopment Agency and City projects should be part of architecture and formal design of a building and structure, should it be part of the review of this Board, and/or should it be part of an Art Commission. He said every Redevelopment Agency project has a certain percentage devoted to public art and the Board has only seen this over the years on a cursory basis. In some cases, it becomes such an integral part of the architecture and the Board should look at it from that point of view.

Michele Seville, Arts and Culture Manager, echoed Boardmember Woldemar's comments. She said the crux of the issue is what is the jurisdiction of the DRB, the Arts and Culture Commission, the Public Art Advisory Committee, the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission, and the Planning Commission. She felt a meeting of the minds was needed where information could be shared, each group has oversight over specific work, which she briefly described.

Culture and Arts Commissioner Kate Sibley stated that 1.5% of each redevelopment project goes towards public art as per the City Ordinance. The Commission works specifically with the RDA because they have had more projects than any other department in the City and how they do this is described in the policies and procedures. The Public Art Advisory Committee gets involved in things like ADA, engineering, and design review of the proposed public art. They

vote as a body. They also accept votes by selection panels outside of their body and make recommendations to the Arts and Culture Commission who then make a recommendation to the City Council, and this is a fairly detailed process. A good example of where all of their oversights have converged is "The Plunge". The Plunge Trust selected the artists first and this was outside the normal process. If they had a better way to communicate and a better understanding of what the specific oversight is for each group, it would have saved them a lot of trouble.

Boardmember Woldemar said the question is what municipal projects does the DRB review and/or approve and which ones does it not, as this review has been inconsistent over the years. What this tells him is that there should be some inter-relationship between bodies so everybody knows what the rules are.

Mr. Mitchell stated that anything the City does that requires a structure needs to come to the Design Review Board. In the past, they have had projects that have missed that because people want to get projects done and they do not realize it must come before the Board. Currently, the Public Works Department has an RFP out to obtain professional services to assist with projects, and anything requiring an architect will have to come before the DRB.

Regarding public art, Mr. Mitchell said Ms. Seville has pointed out there are many portals through which art projects come into the City. Some will be art projects which will go through a process; however, all bodies work through the City Council who is the ultimate conflict resolution authority. He said not all projects that come to the Arts and Culture Commission relate to building or design review, but some are and there is a point at which time projects will need to be reviewed by the DRB because they expand beyond the mission and goal of the Commission. He thinks it is good to share information about things that are coming through, but it will be on a case-by-case basis as to where they end up. And, the City does not want to create an added and cumbersome situation for developers like some other cities. As things move through the system, staff will determine where they end up, but it is difficult to pinpoint how they are going to work because projects do vary.

Redevelopment Agency Director Wolken stated the way they have worked with the Arts and Culture Commission is to bring art projects to the DRB and during the discussion with the project architect, talk about locations on a structure that would support public art. For example, he said when they brought the BART garage to the DRB, they discussed locations for public art in the east and west elevations. The DRB reviews it and sees the locations where there will be an art component. At the same time, this allows for the development to continue moving forward from the various review processes, and it allows them to work with the Arts and Culture Commission to go through a detailed process which involves a call for artists, a review of the various art pieces, selection of the arts, and how the art will be located or installed. They bring it back to the DRB as an information item. He referred to the good feedback from the DRB on the BART garage art regarding lighting, whether or not the art would bleed onto the parking structure, and other information. They want to ensure that the DRB not get into critiquing the art.

Boardmember Woldemar noted that historically the City held joint study sessions, and he questioned if one person at the City could act as a bird dog to all projects. This person could then call out the need for a study session or joint session which he feels would open up communication and provide technical skills. Vice Chair Welter agreed and said there needs to be a gatekeeper that sees these projects and makes a recommendation for them to go to certain bodies.

Boardmember Woldemar cited an example of eastern Macdonald Avenue where there are light fixtures with cut-outs which the DRB never saw, yet it is a major component of the urban design

character of that part of Macdonald Avenue. To him, this is something that should have warranted a joint discussion.

Vice Chair Welter suggested that possibly each body or the Chair of each body assign a liaison that does this individually. Ms. Seville said she supported this suggestion. Chair Butt questioned if these were predominantly redevelopment agency projects. Ms. Seville said they are from all departments, but generally over the last number of years, capital improvement projects have come from redevelopment. She said if the site is able to have a public art piece, it is site specific. If it is a CIP for which there is no site, then it goes into a public art fund, which is also available for maintenance of public art. With the exception of the City Center, for several years and because of the economy and no CIP projects, there has been no money allocated and no public art fund. Mr. Wolken said he thinks that part of the challenge is that some art projects generally do not come before the DRB and are only forwarded as informational items.

Boardmember Woldemar said as the General Plan is updated there will be zoning changes and changes in the Municipal Code reflected. He hoped this will allow a re-working to codify such rules, as the only thing in place now is an enabling ordinance.

Boardmember Whitty asked if the Public Art Program was set in stone each year. Ms. Seville stated it depends on the budget; it is fluid depending on funds received. If there are no eligible CIP projects, there is no money available for the Public Art Fund. However, the major relationship with regard to public art has been between Redevelopment, the Public Art Advisory Committee, and the Arts and Culture Commission. The advisory committee is a subcommittee of the Arts and Culture Commission and it addresses the details and specifics of the art proposed for the project. This has been the strongest relationship thus far. She said that in the past Redevelopment had commissioned the very first piece of art in the 1970's at the East Bay Center. Another location needs to be found for the art piece due to renovation of the building, as the piece did not fit.

Commissioner Sibley stated they have a very comprehensive public art policies and procedures which outline exactly how a public art piece comes to being in the City. One of the things that the committee wants is to find an engineer for its membership, and there may be a way to collaborate with the DRB to communicate and address issues. She supported the need for greater clarification of roles and for more communication amongst groups. They have also worked for a number of years on a public art and private development percentage for art. Once this is in place, it is even more important. Because they are in the final stages of reviewing the public art policies and procedures as they have already been revised, she suggested they be further revised to include regular communication with any groups, as needed.

Mr. Wolken said artists do not necessarily think about the structural elements with the art they are creating, and an example is the BART garage art. If designed sooner, they could have had structure in-beds designed so art could have been ready to hang as opposed to having the work done afterwards. Ms. Sibley agreed they want art integrated into the entire process and this is another reason for more communication between boards.

Boardmember Woldemar said it seems that some of the discussion is purely an operational strategy or an administrative function. Ideally, all parties might be able to meet jointly and review it all at one time. Vice Chair Welter questioned the best way to codify the relationship, suggesting it be contained in the Municipal Code or in the public art policies and procedures document. Ms. Seville said the Commission is in the process of finalizing other changes to the policies and procedures that exist for CIP projects and it could be inserted there. They will also soon propose to the City Council that a percentage of art be included for private development.

Mr. Mitchell said he thinks it will end up as a modification to the Municipal Code because this is where all legislative bodies are defined, but he said often forgotten is electronic communication systems. Much of what the DRB reviews will not have a public art component to it, but when something does come up, staff needs to determine how it defines private development and whether there is a requirement for public art.

Boardmember Woldemar said if nothing else, the DRB could share minutes of meetings and Ms. Seville agreed and suggested exchanging agendas and minutes. If the DRB sees something on the Commission's agenda, a member could attend the meeting and vice versa. Boardmember Whitty confirmed the Committee's meetings are not posted on the website, but agendas and/or minutes could be emailed via staff for their meetings once a month. She clarified that the Committee meets the second Wednesday of the month and the Commission meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday.

Vice Chair Welter questioned how then is redevelopment folded into this. Mr. Wolken said staff attends the committee meeting to alert them there is a project coming so they can start thinking about the process. Chair Butt questioned if the Pogo Park went through the public art process, and Ms. Seville clarified it is Elm Play Lot, and Pogo Park is the non-profit organization that raised money and involved community design. The DRB stepped in and did a wonderful job. This is why the procedure was revised to include site design review.

Commissioner Sibley added that in addition to the Elm Play Lot, there is the Richmond Greenway. They completed the Proposition 84 grant application, and if granted, funds can be spent on the Greenway. Surveys were done of the community over several weeks and they voiced great interest in art on the Greenway as well as a stage and a community building. Ms. Seville said, in fact, they have been offered a project for the Greenway for which they will need engineering help.

Commissioner Sibley thanked the Board and agreed to share agendas and minutes with staff and invite DRB members to meetings, and vice versa.

Chair Butt confirmed the applicant was now present for Item 1.

### Public Hearing(s)

#### CC 1. PLN11-159 SACRAMENTO AVENUE RESIDENTIAL DECK PROJECT

Description	REQUEST FOR DESIGN REVIEW APPROVAL TO CONSTRUCT TWO MULTI-STORY DECKS CONSISTING OF A 3-STORY DECK AND A 2-STORY DECK IN THE REAR OF AN EXISTING RESIDENTIAL BUILDING.	
Location	5218 SACRAMENTO AVENUE	
APN	510-094-008	
Zoning	MFR-1 (MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT)	
Owner	EVEREST PROPERTIES	
Applicant	WILLIAM COBURN	
Staff Contact	HECTOR LOPEZ	Recommendation: <b>CONDITIONAL APPROVAL</b>

Hector Lopez gave the staff report, described the request for design review approval and staff's recommendation for conditional approval. He said the only issue of concern is replacement of the plywood wall with cement plaster in the rear next to the staircase for seismic reasons.

Boardmember Woldemar questioned if staff visited the site and asked if there were any privacy intrusion issues. Mr. Lopez said he visited the site; the adjacent building is an apartment building where there are secondary windows, and the rear property is located well below and away from the adjacent property.

Boardmember Woldemar referred to nexus and asked if the Board could discuss the front of the lot, extra parking, and landscaping. Ms. Renfro said the Board must make a logical connection with the project which is a deck. The Board could make findings that adding deck space increases the need for parking, then the nexus would be made. However, she did not see how a nexus could be made to the front of the house, as the request is on the rear and side of the house.

Chair Butt questioned and confirmed the applicant met with the neighborhood council and a copy of their assessment is in the packet.

The public hearing was opened.

William Coburn, applicant, explained the request, stating that the house sits on an unusual lot. Its interior has been modified over the years to modernize it which included all three floors of the property. When the house was built, there appears to be an alteration many years ago when the larger house was built. The westerly portion of the house is an older structure which was added onto. As part of the earlier development in the 1930's or 1940's, there were decks at the rear of the property. The house sits on top of a rise and there are 360 degree views from the property. The decks were removed at some point in time after deteriorating so in some respects, they are reconstructing what existed in the past. When the owner purchased the property and decided to do remodeling, given the prominent views, they decided to propose decks. He described the rooms in the three-story home, noting that on the middle floor off to the side, there was a previously built small, side deck which deteriorated over the years and was removed. The owner decided he wanted a stairway to go down to grade from the upper level. The seismic requirements trigger a sheer wall there, so the stair was discreetly placed so as not to impact the view.

Boardmember Whitty said the remodel will be great once completed, with wonderful views. She suggested matching awnings which would benefit the top floor decks, and felt they would protect the doors leading to the decks on the top floor and side door east elevation. Mr. Coburn said the side two decks already exist. He was amenable and appreciated comments about awnings, as weather protection on the south elevation is significant.

Boardmember Whitty questioned lighting outside on decks and encouraged Mr. Coburn to think about high quality LED outdoor lighting. Mr. Coburn said he is proposing wall-mounted lights and will consider higher LED lighting.

Boardmember Woldemar questioned and confirmed that Mr. Coburn was agreeable to conditions of approval. He asked for a description of materials and finishes for all deck work. Mr. Coburn replied that it will be redwood with an oil stain and natural coloring. If awnings are conditioned, Mr. Coburn suggested a Kelly green color for them.

Boardmember Woldemar questioned how Mr. Coburn felt about the neighborhood council's comment regarding an additional parking space on the front left side. Mr. Coburn said he has not discussed this with his client, but was sure he would be amenable if required. Mr. Coburn

said while he was ambivalent about it, he did speak with Mary Selva about it. With the placement of a driveway there, they would lose a parking space on the street, so he views this as a trade-off. Boardmember Woldemar questioned the ability for a tandem space, and Mr. Coburn said this could be achieved with some effort; however, the site drops off a bit and he could discuss this with the client.

Public Comments:

Mary Selva, Richmond Annex Neighborhood Council, said they have been reviewing projects in this neighborhood for years. There is only one person on the Southwest Neighborhood Council and has a record of all projects. She was in the home several years ago which was the home of George Johnson who lived to be 112, as the oldest man in California. He built the house and he and his wife never had children. She was not sure when the third floor addition was built, but he would entertain on the top floor with a panoramic view, which was fantastic. The issues over the years have been related to parking. She said David Spatz's 21-unit apartment building is located between Sacramento and Fresno which takes up the entire block and in the evenings, it is bumper to bumper parking. Even though all requirements have been met, they are requesting one additional off-street space for the benefit of the neighborhood. The zoning requires 2 parking spaces for single-family and while this is grandfathered in, the bottom area of about 700 square feet is used for storage and this could be made into a second unit. The owners are using it for a rental, and therefore, they are asking for the additional space on the east side of the building. She added that the driveway space which will be removed is currently used by neighbors.

Jerry Yoshida, Richmond Annex Neighborhood Council, said if the building becomes a duplex, it must meet parking requirements and he asked that a condition be put in that if it becomes multi-family, it provides the proper parking. Ms. Selva noted that when it comes to the larger homes, they look at the number of rooms and have always recommended additional parking be included as a condition.

Mr. Coburn commented that the lower floor was conditioned as developed space. The ceiling height is 7'4" which is not legal space, but it could be grandfathered in because it was already developed space and the owner chose to drop the floor down to increase the height to 8'.

Ms. Selva agreed that the house is beautiful and there is major remodeling going on with all new appliances and finishes. Mr. Yoshida stated that regardless of whether it was legal non-conforming, it is still zoned about 750 square feet and still not over 50% and certainly not required. There is still question as to whether it was legal space or not. The owners lowered the floor and made it 8' which is very comfortable. He could not find any building permits on this. Ms. Selva concurred and said they researched the building regulations department, and the old plans are missing. The records show it is 2,181 square feet living area, but this does not include the bottom area which is where the kitchen and dining room were located.

The public hearing was closed.

Boardmember Woldemar suggested additional conditions, stating he likes the idea of use of the redwood and natural stain, Kelly green awnings, and LED light fixtures compliant with dark sky issues. Regarding uses, it is difficult to anticipate something that may or may not happen. If the use was something other than a single family home, it applies with the ordinance at that time. But, on the other hand, if it was made into a duplex, by law the applicant would have needed a building permit and then would have to comply with the parking ordinance at that time. The only

issue is whether or not the City catches them or not. Therefore, he was not sure he was comfortable putting something in that repeats something the law says must be done anyway.

Ms. Renfro agreed and said the Board is to review the project and not speculate as to what might happen in the future.

Vice Chair Welter agreed and questioned how a deck addition affects parking. If there was an addition to the house the Board was reviewing, it would be different. Boardmember Woldemar stated that in reading the new residential code, he thinks they changed the ceiling height for habitable space. Vice Chair Welter noted it went down to 7' and only applies to single family homes; it is still 7'6" for multi-family.

Chair Butt said it seems like there is a likelihood that there may have been some additions or the creation of a space that was storage in the past. Ms. Selva interjected that the entire lower floor stepped down and is being remodeled to a brand new house. Chair Butt said it seems there has been some major exterior and interior work and modifications where this would be an opportunity to make these right.

Boardmember Whitty questioned if there was a permit for the interior remodeling and whether it includes the ground floor being dug out. Mr. Lopez said yes, but only 4 inches to accomplish the ceiling height. Chair Butt noted; however, the work does not trigger an additional parking space. He said a deck addition cannot trigger the addition of a parking space but it could be a recommendation. There is heavy vegetation, and Mr. Coburn clarified that some Acacia Black Woody Eyed trees have been cut in the rear, and views are very nice now.

Chair Butt said if the recommendation is for a stucco wall that vines be planted so as not to have a stark, stucco sheer wall.

Boardmember Woldemar suggested a trellis be installed to accommodate growth, and Chair Butt preferred a wire grid or green screen. Mr. Coburn said they would agree to a trellis, wire, or green screen to mitigate the wall's presence.

**ACTION: It was M/S (Woldemar/Whitty) to approve PLN11-159 based on the staff's recommended 4 findings as well as the staff's recommended 7 conditions, with the following additional conditions; 8) that the deck materials be stained in natural colors compatible with the existing stucco color; 9) that the 3 exterior doors, 2 of which are existing have fabric canvass awnings of a Kelly green-like color that would extend a minimum of 3 feet out from the face of the building; 10) that the lighting for the new decks and existing deck be with fixtures that are compatible with dark sky requirements and that LED lighting be considered; and 11) that a permanent plant structure be constructed on the recommended stucco sheer wall indicated on the south elevation to allow for future growth of vines to mitigate the height of the sheer wall; unanimously approved.**

Chair Butt noted any decision approved may be appealed in writing to the City Clerk within ten (10) days, or by Monday, July 25, 2011 by 5:00 p.m.

**3. PLN10-204 CENTRAL AVENUE AUTOMATED CARWASH FACILITY**

Description REQUEST FOR DESIGN REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A ±4,692 SQUARE FOOT AUTOMATED CAR WASH IN AN ENCLOSED FACILITY ON A ±81,668 SQUARE FOOT LOT.

Location 5620 CENTRAL AVENUE

APN 510-053-032

Zoning C-3 (REGIONAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT)

Owner GINO BARTALOTTI, JR

Applicant GINO BARTALOTTI, JR

Staff Contact JONELYN WHALES Recommendation: **NO ACTION – PROVIDE**

**COMMENTS**

Jonelyn Whales gave an overview of the recommendation, noting that the Planning Commission directed staff to request an Initial Study from the applicant to determine all potential or perceived environmental impacts prior to any planning entitlements. Therefore, the project will return to the DRB for review and approval. Last year, the DRB subcommittee had met on the project and recommended architectural designs of the building be designed, as follows:

- Change the roofing materials to a galvanized material;
- Reconfigure the ingress and egress from two driveways down to one on Central Avenue to help with vehicle stacking;
- Change the front façade materials from corrugated metal to brick veneer;
- Change the aisle distance from 19' to 25' to allow more vehicles to pass;
- Change the proposed bulbs for exterior lighting fixtures to metal or LED types

She said the applicant resubmitted the drawings with those changes incorporated into the design for their review.

Chair Butt questioned the status of the landscape design, and Ms. Whales stated the applicant was meeting with a former DRB member regarding landscaping and deferred the question to the applicant.

Boardmember Woldemar questioned and clarified that the checklist review was not done because staff was hoping for the scenario to be different and brought forth the re-design to the DRB. He clarified that the application went to the Planning Commission first due to determination of adequate environmental review and that an outside consultant will prepare the Initial Study.

Boardmember Woldemar referred to page 1, last paragraph of the staff report, 4<sup>th</sup> line, "...that staff address building and encroachment issue" and Ms. Whales noted the issue had expired. She said a stop work notice was placed on the applicant in 2004 because, according to the record, there was a second story structure that had been built. It looked fairly new and was out of the scope of the project at that time. However, she could not attest to it. She said there is a sanitary sewer placement under the building slab which will be further explored and all staff was looking for tonight were comments from the Board on design.

Boardmember Whitty referred to Belmont Avenue and the concrete drainage ditch and asked who owns it. Ms. Whales said staff will be working with the City of El Cerrito, and the applicant clarified this was part of his parcel and that he owns it.

Boardmember Whitty asked if there was any thought of creating a bridge across the ditch onto Belmont Avenue. Ms. Whales said no.

Boardmember Whitty questioned what would happen to the other side of the new chain link fence. Ms. Whales deferred this question to the applicant.

Boardmember Whitty confirmed that the entire parcel was owned by one owner who would partially develop the site. She asked where the drainage ditch drained, and Boardmember Woldemar noted that it drains into the Pacific East Mall creek area. Historically, it was an old creek and was channelized, going across Central Avenue and underneath the park.

Boardmember Whitty questioned why Central Avenue was being used as an access and not Belmont and San Mateo. Ms. Whales acknowledged this concern and said this was the way the project was presented to staff and we are focusing more on the environmental aspects of the project than the specifics of the design. However, during the environmental review process all of this will be explored.

Ms. Renfro clarified that because the Planning Commission has asked for further environmental review, these types of comments will be addressed. The traffic analysis should address what kind of impacts happen on Central Avenue and whether or not they could be mitigated by moving vehicular access to side streets.

Boardmember Whitty questioned the location of the sewer easements and water source for the project. Ms. Whales deferred this to the applicant. She confirmed there would be an on-site water reclamation system. She also confirmed that impervious pavement, signing and lighting will be discussed as part of the project.

Vice Chair Welter said when the subcommittee met with the applicant, it identified that the City of El Cerrito is re-doing traffic lights along the northwest corner area. He questioned if this would be considered in the new traffic study. Ms. Whales said staff is working with the City of El Cerrito and she confirmed with the applicant that this is in the traffic study and will be addressed in the future.

Chair Butt confirmed with Ms. Whales that the project will have additional environmental review, will return to the Commission and DRB, and the applicant and his attorney have argued for a CEQA exemption under Section 15301 for "existing facilities" and "infill" which the Commission did not believe fit because of noise and traffic impacts. The Commission aired on the side of caution and required an Initial Study to be prepared by an environmental consultant, to which the applicant agreed. She said staff anticipates that a mitigated negative declaration will be prepared and will need to determine the order by which approvals are undertaken. She clarified with Boardmember Woldemar that the project is a conditional use permit.

Chair Butt asked for comments by the applicant.

Gino Bartalotti, Jr., applicant/owner, said the subcommittee met on December 8, 2010 and he said he was available to answer questions of the Board.

Boardmember Whitty questioned how the Board could perform a site design review without the negative declaration. Ms. Renfro said the Board could make scoping comments such as consider moving the access from Central Avenue to San Mateo, amending the project description or project alternatives, and other suggestions relating to the El Cerrito traffic improvements, impervious pavement reduction, and access.

Boardmember Woldemar said if it could be determined that access from the site should come from both San Mateo and Belmont, it might be that the building on the site plan would flip over. However, he also recognized that the plan is to use a portion of the existing building. He believes the plan should require a new curb and gutter along San Mateo and include a grading

plan. He asked for the disposition of a power pole on the southwest corner of the service drive, asked to see a signage plan as part of the application to understand how graphics would work on the building and on freestanding signs, and because of the location of the project and its entrance to El Cerrito, a landscape plan is appropriate for the project. He would also like to see a lighting analysis. He surmised that the proposed site lighting is under lit for the site. There are two pole lights directly in front of the building and he suggested moving the eastern one over so they stand symmetrically to the shape of the building. Ultimately, he felt there should be an architect or engineer to prepare drawings because this is requirement of State law. He would also like to see how C3 is being dealt with in terms of runoff and drainage. He also believes there will need to be interior planting or soft scape areas, such as the island area. He said based on the subcommittee meeting in December, materials are coming off well and he suggested colored renderings be provided, stating this is why he asked staff about going through and reviewing the DRB checklist so, a complete application can be returned to the Board in the future.

Boardmember Whitty suggested the applicant also simplify the plant list and pointed out that a site using this philosophy is the Oakland City Center, which has been re-landscaped with sink and raised planters and 3 different species instead of 5 to 6 types.

Vice Chair Welter said as the drawings progress, he asked that the applicant be more specific about the orientation of the corrugation because there are both horizontal and vertical areas, and this will mitigate any confusion during construction. He was going to say something about the chain link fences along Belmont and San Mateo; however, the Salter noise study recommends something more solid there for noise attenuation. He commented that, while this may be mitigated through the traffic report, he is very confused looking at the circulation of the area and suggested that clear signage and vehicular way finding signs are needed for people to understand where to go. Other than this, he thanked the applicant for taking the Board's recommendations, materials and massing suggestions.

Chair Butt said he thinks the building itself has come a long way since they last met, but needs just a little more punctuation. He stated there is brick and galvanized steel and he thinks it would be nice to have beige- or tan-colored brick as a banding and/or split faced or block at the base of the masonry areas. He said he saw there is a proposed chain link fence along the back side and along the drainage ditch which need to be changed.

Boardmember Woldemar also noted to be discussed is what will happen south of the south fence because it does relate to the total impervious surface. Chair Butt said assuming the ingress and egress plan is approved, he questioned if something could be done to get some cars off of Central Avenue.

Vice Chair Welter referred to the three tall masses. In refining the design more, he asked the applicant to beef up the sides of the fascia to give them more substance. Boardmember Woldemar said one of the reasons for these particular set of three fascia has to do what is physically out there. In the real world, one might discover it is less expensive to tear out a piece. He offered that the center section could get a little wider, for a 1-2-1 rhythm.

Mr. Bartalotti said the Planning Commission did not have any problem with the mitigation measures as far as traffic and noise and they asked that hydrology and biological issues be studied further. The sewer easement encroachment is a dead Siege Sanitary sewer line and they have committed they will abandon that easement, as there is nothing running in it. Part of the plan is for them to fill it, but they will most likely end up splitting the cost of this. He clarified he has a resolution that they will quit claim the easement. Regarding Belmont and the concrete drainage ditch, it is on his property and it specifically picks up two catch basins on Central Avenue so the ground water on the street dumps directly in the drainage canal which heads

south at the edge of the property. It then heads west and goes by the Sanchez property and then into the drainage canal at Pacific East Mall. It is not a creek. The north branch of Cerrito creek is up against Albany hill and farther south from them.

Mr. Bartalotti said regarding what will happen on the other side of the chain link fence, they are talking with some senior housing developers and they may do a lot line adjustment at a later date. Regarding the water source on site, he said the property is served by heavy power, large sewer capacity and large water capacity. There is an 8-inch water main on Central Avenue, and a 1 inch domestic water main on San Mateo Street and very close to the water service on San Mateo is a 15 inch sewer pipe. Regarding paving, the site is now 100% impervious and it is all paved and they are adding close to 12,000 square feet of landscaping. He said the entire site slopes west to east and all site water runs to the drainage canal. They are not modifying very much of the site itself and do not have to prepare a storm water control plan given what they are doing with the site. However, voluntarily, they thought it would make good sense to treat the surface water in a bio-swale.

Vice Chair Welter said he sees spot elevations but no grades and said Boardmember Woldemar had talked about ultimately getting a topographic survey to identify new grades. Boardmember Woldemar said the part he was specifically referring to was on the western side where the proposed driveway comes around and goes into the car wash. There is about a 4 foot differential between new paved driveway and street grade, and he thinks there will need to be a retaining wall there. Vice Chair Welter reiterated his point that ultimately there will need to be a grading plan.

Mr. Bartalotti said there is considerable debate as to the timing and extent of the Central Avenue Improvement project. One plan is that the City will signalize the Central Avenue and San Mateo Street corner. They deliberately allowed this large landscaped area because if they had to widen it, they could take it out of the landscape area. He agreed that a signage plan will be developed and the telephone pole on San Mateo Street will stay in the same place. If they need to re-work a driveway, they will. He said former Boardmember, Diane Bloom, will do the landscape plan for them. They will look into the lighting analysis and he understands the symmetrical point made by Boardmember Woldemar. There is a fair amount of interior planning up against the building. There is landscape planting in front of the brick veneers and planting areas are generally 8 to 9 feet. He agreed to point out how the corrugated metal is specified.

Regarding traffic circulation, many Express Exterior Car Washes will be on lot sizes of 20,000 to 25,000 square feet. He described the suggestion of consolidating the driveways to get it away from the corner and said the neighborhood council suggested the same thing. Instead of being able to queue 10 cars, they had the ability to put 19 cars and widen it to allow for 25 cars. Interestingly, to get the vehicle through the car wash is about a 3 minute process, and so the idea of proposing the location of an entrance and exit only shortens the length for vehicle queuing.

Mr. Bartalotti referred to the site plan and staging area and said the bypass lane is very important in case there is a problem at the entrance with vehicles. This area ended up being the best place, given traffic circulation. He noted that most of the traffic backup on Central is in the westbound direction, and it never backs up going eastbound.

Jerry Yoshida, Richmond Annex Neighborhood Council, said there are adjacent residential neighbors, both single and multi-family as well as view corridors to take into consideration. There are also obstacles in the mounding, as it is difficult to swing into the station just over the hill. They came up with a plan to get as many cars off of Central as fast as possible, with the ability to stack all on site, and they worked with the applicant on revisions. He said the applicant wants an exemption to say they will block the left-hand turn lane going south on I-880 and have

trucks U-turn at Costco, which is not right. He looked at the car wash in Albany and they have to have workers directing 2-3 lanes inside their site, given that people are trying to get out by vacuum cleaner areas. The neighborhood council asked that the glare from lights be shielded which was agreed to, and most all of their issues have been addressed. When the project was presented, the council reviewed it and voiced support for the request.

Mr. Bartalotti added that they have more queuing space than Albany's business; their tunnel is 90 feet long and this tunnel is 135 feet long, so the longer the tunnel the more cars can be processed without problems. He said car washes, especially an Express Car Wash, are not a destination and they are not adding to the traffic. The industry standard is that they should be on the "going home" side of the street and this is that side.

Mr. Bartalotti said Salter Associates reviewed the noise levels, they were asked to look at site specific information and they took samples, and they meet the City of Richmond and El Cerrito's noise ordinance. He discussed the solid 6' fence to alleviate noise from within the car wash, and said an awning will also be used to absorb some of the sound.

Mary Selva, Richmond Annex Neighborhood Council, said original concerns were noise standards due to residential surrounding the site. She asked for clarification that the mitigation measures 1 through 5 as outlined on page 8 get incorporated into the project. Regarding traffic, the council is simply trying to lessen impacts from cars visiting the car wash 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, getting traffic off of Central Avenue, and getting cars to stack on site.

Mr. Yoshida said also discussed were street trees being incorporated into the project, and he noted that Diane Bloom had suggested doing something of an urban orchard and coordinating this with the agriculture programs in both high schools. He supports this idea, but said it is about how this gets coordinated with the schools. He noted they are doing the bio-swale voluntarily, and doing a serious reclamation system which will recycle 60% to 80% of the water which is a \$60,000 cost. They are discussing LED lighting and talking about solar, and the project is very green.

Boardmember Woldemar referred to the west side driveway up against San Mateo and said there is no room for landscaping which he said needs to be adjusted. What is also clear about tonight's discussion is the surrounding residential. There is an obligation to buffer commercial uses from residential uses and landscaping is a way to do this. He suggested a retaining wall because of the grade difference. More importantly, there are zoning ordinance requirements for this kind of project relating to landscaping; 10% of the site area and 10% of the parking area. He also noted that if the site is being split and a separate project is planned for the south side, he wanted to see the numbers relating to both areas. Regarding solar, the ordinance states that all mechanical equipment shall be screened from public view, and Ms. Renfro noted there is an exemption for solar.

Ms. Selva said given all of the changes and having the applicant address traffic and noise, the neighborhood council can support it. Mr. Yoshida thanked the Board for their comments on the elevations and site plan. He commented there was a road for maintenance, and it is possible to have access from San Mateo, if needed.

Chair Butt thanked the applicant for being amenable to changes and for working with the neighborhood.

2. Review and discuss possible amendments to RMC 15.04.930 (Design Review) to include DRB jurisdiction over City projects – Planning staff and the Legal Department are researching the City's charter to review past procedure.

Boardmember Woldemar questioned and confirmed some headway was being made on this item.

**B. Board member reports, requests, or announcements**

Boardmember Woldemar asked Ms. Renfro to cite a section on solar being exempt from requirements that mechanical equipment be screened. Ms. Renfro said this is cited in the Civil Code and the State Building Code. If people are doing solar, certain restrictions are suspended. She also noted that solar panels are not mechanical equipment like HVAC.

Vice Chair Welter indicated that his wife is a landscape architect and has applied for the vacant landscape position on the Board.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. to the July 27, 2011 Design Review Board meeting.