

MINUTES APPROVED AT THE DRB MEETING ON MAY 23, 2018

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD REGULAR MEETING
Multi-Purpose Room, Community Services Building, Basement Level
440 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond CA 94804**

April 25, 2018
6:00 P.M.

BOARD MEMBERS

Meredith Benz
Michael Hannah
Tom Leader
Karlyn Neel

Kimberly Butt
Bhavin Khatri
Jonathan Livingston

Chair Livingston called the meeting to order at 6:10 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Jonathan Livingston, and Boardmembers Meredith Benz, Kimberly Butt, Michael Hannah, Bhavin Khatri, and Karlyn Neel*

Absent: Vice Chair Tom Leader
*Arrived after Roll Call

INTRODUCTIONS

Staff Present: Planners Roberta Feliciano and Hector Lopez

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 28, 2018 and April 11, 2018

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Hannah/Benz) to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2018 and April 11, 2018 meetings, as submitted; approved by voice vote: 5-0 (Ayes: Benz, Butt, Hannah, Khatri, and Livingston; Noes: None; Absent: Leader and Neel).
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APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Livingston modified the agenda to consider Item 2 prior to Item 1.

Public Forum

CORDELL HINDLER, Richmond, requested a correction to his comments as shown in the minutes of the March 28, 2018 meeting, as follows:

CORDELL HINDLER, Richmond, expressed concern with the traffic on 23rd Street when traffic was always backed up at 5:00 P.M. While he liked the design elements, he noted that people loitered around the property and suggested it created blight, especially in the morning, particularly since the McDonald's was located next door to a liquor store, and he had spoken with the 23rd Street Merchants Association, which had similar concerns.

Mr. Hindler also noted that the applicant [PLN 18-023, McDonald's Façade Renovation] had not reached out to the 23rd Street Merchants Association or to the North and East Neighborhood Councils to get their input, and as a future agenda item when the architect returned to the DRB, he urged that the input from the Neighborhood Councils and the 23rd Street Merchants Association be presented. He also requested again that a traffic analysis be prepared for PLN17-436, Valmar Laundromat, given the congestion that occurred between 9:00 A.M. and

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5:00 P.M. on Barrett Avenue.

City Council Liaison Report – Mayor Butt was not present.

CONSENT CALENDAR: None

Chair Livingston announced that any decision approved may be appealed in writing to the City Clerk within ten (10) days, or by Monday, May 7, 2018 by 5:00 P.M. and he announced it after each affected item.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

2. PLN 18-053 SELF-STORAGE AND ARTIST STUDIOS BUILDING

Description	STUDY SESSION TO PROVIDE AND RECEIVE COMMENTS ON THE DESIGN OF A NEW 81,044 SQUARE FOOT BUILDING FOR SELF-STORAGE AND ARTIST STUDIOS.	
Location	205 CUTTING BOULEVARD	
APN	550-102-022	
Zoning	IL, INDUSTRIAL LIGHT	
Owner	LOUIS A WINDHURST III	
Applicant	NOLAN BORDEN	
Staff Contact	ROBERTA FELICIANO	Recommendation: PROVIDE AND RECEIVE COMMENTS

Roberta Feliciano presented the staff report dated April 25, 2018, for a three-story 81,000 square foot self-storage facility with studios on the ground floor, on property at 205 Cutting Boulevard with an existing building utilized by Whale Point Marine & Hardware, which building would be demolished. The self-storage facility was a conditionally allowed use that would also require a Conditional Use Permit from the Planning Commission.

In response to the DRB, Ms. Feliciano reported that staff had requested more detail on the artist studios and how the area would be partitioned; clarified the parking ratio for the studio; and identified the public notices that had been distributed.

ANDREW AIKEN, Managing Partner of Baranof Holdings; Nolan Borden, Vice President of Baranof Holdings; Dennis Edgett of Ware Malcomb, the Architect; and Zico Saryeddean of Kier & Wright Civil Engineers, presented the application to the DRB.

Mr. Aiken described Baranof Holdings as self-storage developers throughout the country who built Class A totally enclosed, climate-controlled self-storage facilities in a multi-story configuration, and combined mixed-use as part of the self-storage facility. Since the company held its assets long-term, he explained it was incentivized to be a part of the community. He reported the studio area would represent approximately 4,500 square feet of the 81,000 square foot project and there would be no economic gain in the studio operation.

DENNIS EDGETT, Ware Malcomb, highlighted the design of the three-story concrete block building with a smooth concrete finish on the upper levels and with the lower level a fluted concrete block, with the elements for the self-storage portion providing recessed panels for false doors offering an illusion of the self-storage facility itself. He described the aluminum composite green metal panels and corrugated metal elements along with the storefront for the artist studios, and reported the height of the structure at 38 feet for the bulk of the building and 40 feet at the highest end.

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Mr. Aiken stated that storage was the lowest traffic generator of all the real estate asset classes, had low impact, there would be two bathrooms, little generation of water use, and little trash along with limited hours of operation in that the office would be open from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 or 6:00 P.M., and would be accessible by key code from 6:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. He added that self-storage facilities were good neighbors given low noise, low traffic, and using property that might not be suited for some other commercial use. Given that there would be some illumination, it was also a crime deterrent. The property would be managed by a third party, Extra Space, the largest managers of self-storage in the country. Solar and photovoltaic opportunities were also being pursued. When asked, the location and configuration of the rooftop equipment was noted and the DRB requested that the screening design be provided as part of the package to be submitted for project approval.

Boardmember Benz referred to a big expanse of cement on the Cutting Boulevard face and recommended some way to break up that expanse. She liked the west elevation and suggested the color was okay, but suggested a less harsh green should be considered.

In response to the concern for the green, Mr. Aiken noted some alternatives that could be considered with a shade other than the Wasabi green that had been Extra Space's preferred color since it was part of its branding.

Public Comments:

DARYL HENLINE, Richmond, representing Bridge Storage & Art Space, one of five storage facilities within a half mile of the proposed storage unit. He understood the City had a moratorium on additional storage units being built in the vicinity and referred to Storage Pro on Cutting Boulevard 400 yards from the application, Interstate Storage on Canal, a Payless Storage directly across Canal from Interstate Storage, Bridge Storage & Art Space, and Point Richmond Self Storage on Ohio Avenue in between Canal Boulevard and South First. The City had told Bridge Storage & Art Space about the moratorium when the business had approached the city about a Conditional Use Permit to modify the space for an adaptive reuse of the old style single floor storage facilities to create artist studios. He did not think the application was appropriate given the other storage facilities in the area.

VERNON WHITMORE, Richmond, President of the Santa Fe Neighborhood Council, stated the Council had not been contacted. He questioned the need for another storage facility in the neighborhood and sought more input into the application to see if it was viable for the community.

Boardmember Butt clarified with Mr. Henline that the artists were back to Bridge Storage & Art Space where the 66,000 square foot facility included 7,000 square feet of art space with another 10,000 square feet ready to be transformed through a separate permit.

In response to Chair Livingston as to the possibility of having another mixed use on the street, Mr. Aiken explained that the artist studios had been recommended by the City, although other mixed uses could be considered such as a café, a food store, a fresh market, or whatever the community would support, to be placed along Cutting Boulevard.

Boardmember Hannah suggested an artist studio made sense. He suggested the biggest issue was Cutting Boulevard and the need to break up the big expanse of concrete and suggested techniques that would be useful to address that concern. While he did not have an issue with the green color and suggested the color was valid to add interest to the building, he recommended more relief and articulation to the building, suggested the office and entry be kept

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in the back but that the artists' spaces be redistributed to the front at Cutting Boulevard, which he suggested would not make a big difference to the storage. He also sought information on the egress in and out of the studio area and recommended more opportunities for the artists to be able to personalize their space along Cutting Boulevard to attract more artists and to create a way to show off their wares

The DRB offered the following comments and suggestions:

- Create a higher plate on the street to allow more glass and exposure and more visual connection with the public. (Livingston)
- Activate the storefront along Cutting Boulevard, create individual studio spaces, and start creating an art culture to activate the street. Look at the Ford Building nearby. (Butt)
- Distinguish the two uses in terms of purpose and intent and accommodate events where the artists could sell their art. The big wall could incorporate welding or something to identify the history of the area in the hardscape, and while the amount of green was a bit too much for her, some of the gray could be adjusted tonally to be mindful of the use; mimic the natural lighting on the windows which would be important to artists; the fake recessed doors could include featured art in the recesses or nighttime illumination; and the placement of the bathroom in the studio area needed to be more appropriately situated. (Neel)
- Communicate with neighborhood councils, community members, and local merchants; suggested the idea could take off and recommended going with the industrial in the raw for the artist studios, with the manicured, generic, climate control, clean, clinical for the storage. He urged the applicants to look at architect Tom Kundig's work as an example of how to treat that portion of the project. (Hannah)

Mr. Whitmore added to the importance of the applicant meeting with the community by explaining that the community was working on a gateway given that when the ferry became operational the site, the building, and its uses would be highly visible to significant passing traffic.

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Boardmember Hannah recused himself from the next item, stepped down from the dais, and left the room.

1. **PLN 17-556 NEW SCHOOL FACILITY**

Description	STUDY SESSION TO PROVIDE AND RECEIVE COMMENTS ON THE DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT OF A NEW MULTI-PURPOSE SCHOOL FACILITY AT ASPIRE RICHMOND TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY
Location	3170 HILLTOP MALL DRIVE
APN	405-290-016
Zoning	CR, REGIONAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
Owner:	3170 HILLTOP MALL ROAD LLC
Applicant	DOUG GIFFIN, CHAMBERLINE ASSOCIATES
Staff Contact	HECTOR LOPEZ
Recommendation:	PROVIDE AND RECEIVE COMMENTS

Hector Lopez presented the staff report dated April 25, 2018 for an application for the former site of Mechanics Bank with an existing building of 40,000 square feet that had been built in 1980. The building interior had been renovated in 2017 for a public charter school for Grades

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K-12, with a current enrollment of 341 students and with a maximum capacity of 640 students. The proposed project was for a new 15,300 square foot multi-purpose building that would include multi-purpose rooms, administrative offices, art room, restrooms, and support spaces, proposed to be built along the eastern side of the property along Blume Drive with parking located to the south.

The style of the proposed building would have a hip tile roof element at the corner of Klose Way and Blume Drive, with a flat roof for the rest of the building and a perimeter parapet wall. Beyond the parapet, a mechanical screen had been proposed. The highest part of the building would be 35 feet at the top of the hip roof and the rest of the building would be 20 feet from the top of the parapet to the ground.

In response to the DRB, Mr. Lopez clarified that there was no setback requirement for the site given that there were no residential areas nearby, the site was surrounded by commercial, and the site was in the CR Zoning District.

DOUG GIFFIN, Chamberline Associates, reported that they had done a number of school projects in Richmond over the last several years with Studio Bondy Architecture. Due to the timing for the Aspire Richmond Technology Academy (RTA) to open, they had originally pursued interior improvements only and were now coming back with site amenities. Aspire RTA was the school currently operating on campus; there were two temporary play yards; the parking lot towards the mall was very small and it would be graded to create a play area with a mix of artificial turf and asphalt play; there would be a large light well on the west side to bring natural light into the lower level of the building, and on the east side a multi-purpose building would be added to provide more play space.

THOMAS LUMIKKO, Studio Bondy Architecture, explained the three components involved including site improvements and play yards, improvements to the existing building, and the new building to provide all the amenities the school needed to function properly at the site; creating play areas of different sizes that were separated by age and activity, all visually connected for good supervision. He described the height variation of the site and the transition from the existing building to the new multi-purpose building. Part of the interior renovations brought light into the lower floor that had been dug into the hillside, and he explained where the light well would be placed to enable the downstairs space to be well lit with natural light.

Chair Livingston asked how it had been determined to place the multi-purpose building where it had been proposed, and Mr. Lumikko described the challenges of the site to provide the appropriate interior and exterior space for the school with enough volume to provide play space during inclement weather.

Chair Livingston stated that the bank building was one of the most beautiful buildings in Richmond and suggested the new building would obliterate a gem.

Mr. Lumikko explained that the proportions, pitches, materials of the hip roof of the bank were being used and they were not creating an addition to the bank, but attempting to introduce elements such as color that made it a school building and offered a clue as to what was going on inside. The existing building had a hip roof with a portion with a parapet and mechanical screening.

In response to the DRB, the entrance to the site was clarified with the main entry off of the courtyard. There was not a separate reception in the multi-purpose building and access to the multi-purpose building would be from the lower level of the main building. When asked, the

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applicant indicated that there had been no exterior connection proposed to the multi-purpose building.

Chair Livingston asked about the siting of the building and whether other options had been considered. He and other members of the DRB expressed concern for a balance of the site, and he presented a drawing he had prepared where a CMU building could be placed elsewhere on the site to avoid competing with the existing building.

Mr. Lumikko explained that one of the challenges to the Chair's exhibit was outside circulation and queuing on the site, and reported that as requested by the City after its peer review of the traffic study, three separate dismissal times had been proposed. It was clarified that during the day some of the flex play area was taken up by pick-up activities where double stacking of vehicles was required.

The applicant stated they would look into the drawing proposed by the Chair to see if it might work.

The DRB offered the following comments and suggestions:

- Wanted the buildings to be more symmetrical or more axial in their connections, with a clearer indication of the entrance, front and back; the roof on the new building did not relate well to the existing building; liked what had been done with the landscaping to deal with the challenging grade, and suggested the grade could be used if able to break the buildings apart. (Butt)
- Supported the light well; the use of the color in the new building; wanted the rhythm of the main building in the new building; recommended a clerestory window although that would reportedly be difficult in the existing building given the structure, and suggested it would not be difficult in the new building. (DRB)
- Suggested raising the building to provide parking, although the applicant explained that the project would not then make economic sense; did not support mimicking any parts of the existing architecture to avoid competition. Also suggested larger overhangs to match the bank. (Livingston)
- Recommended an attempt to go more to the existing architecture in terms of the rhythm and verticality. Suggested breaking the building apart adding a trellis to span the buildings. Also suggested lowering the new building height and terracing up. (Butt)

Mr. Lumikko advised that he would consider the DRB's comments and provide options, acknowledging the desire to bring up the roofline and consider different proportions for the windows. On the question of signage, it was clarified that signage was not part of the existing application and had previously been approved and redone.

Mr. Aiken invited members of the DRB to take a tour of the site.

A. Staff reports, requests, or announcements: None

B. Boardmember reports, requests, or announcements: None

Adjournment

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 P.M. to the next regular Design Review Board meeting on Wednesday, May 9, 2018.