



ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
MINUTES: July 18, 2019  
City Hall/City Council Chambers  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
8:30 AM

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

Present: Chair Wynne Furth, Vice Chair Baltay, Board Members Alexander Lew, David Hirsch and Osma Thompson.

Absent: None

Chair Furth: Good morning. Welcome to the regular meeting of the Architectural Review Board of the City of Palo Alto, for July 18, 2019. Would you please call the roll?

[Roll Call]

**Oral Communications**

Chair Furth: The first item on our agenda, as always, is oral communications. This is the time for anybody who wishes to do so to speak to the Board on a matter not on today's agenda. Do we have any speaker cards for this item? We have no speaker cards. Seeing no volunteers, we'll go on.

**Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions**

Chair Furth: Staff, are there any agenda changes, additions or deletions?

Jodie Gerhardt, Current Planning Manager: No changes.

Chair Furth: Thank you.

**City Official Reports**

1. Transmittal of 1) the ARB Meeting Schedule and Attendance Record, and 2) Tentative Future Agenda items.

Chair Furth: City official reports.

Ms. Gerhardt: Yes. Board Member Thompson, we weren't sure if you were going to be here, so we had you as absent. We'll fix that on the agenda, because you are here. Thank you.

Board Member Thompson: I almost wasn't here.

Ms. Gerhardt: Yes, after a late flight, so, we appreciate that. Or an early flight, really, right? As far as future agenda items, we will be hearing the 702 Clara Drive, which is a three-unit project, and the 788 San Antonio has been moved off to the next hearing. And then, 486 Hamilton is a prelim that we'll hear, and then there is a subcommittee for 3265 El Camino. That will be on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Chair Furth: I have one question. Has the Council appointed a new ARB member? To replace me?

Ms. Gerhardt: Unfortunately not. We are going to be, given this is your last meeting, and we'll do a little something at the end, we will be a four-member board for a little bit, until Council comes back from recess and is able to do the interviews and take a vote.

Chair Furth: Recent project decisions. Alex, you went to represent the Board before the City Council on the Mercedes-Benz project. Could you report to us on that?

Board Member Lew: Sure. This is the – let me get the address – this was in June. On June 24<sup>th</sup>, for 1730 Embarcadero Road, which is the Mercedes and Audi dealers, the City Council approved the project on an 8-1 vote. The outstanding items that the Board had identified will come back as a separate project, so we'll only be reviewing that, just those items as a new project. In general, they supported the project.

Chair Furth: Just to be clear, we did not recommend approval, we continued it. Staff and City Council elected instead to review the project. They looked at it and said the open items that were still concerning us, they were sent back to us as a separate...?

Board Member Lew: Right, but the project is approved.

Chair Furth: But the project itself is approved.

Board Member Lew: Yes.

Chair Furth: Okay. Anything more from staff on that?

Ms. Gerhardt: Just the main, the massing of the building, the zone change, those sorts of things are what's approved. And then, as Alex said, the details that you wanted to still review will come back to you.

Chair Furth: They've made it clear that this is a project that they want in this location, in this general form.

Ms. Gerhardt: In the general form, yes.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Anything else on that before we go on? Thank you, Alex, for being there, and reporting, to them and from them.

## **Action Items**

2. PUBLIC HEARING / QUASI-JUDICIAL. 565 Hamilton Avenue [18PLN-00313]: Recommendation on Applicant's Request for Approval of a Major Architectural Review to Allow the Demolition of Existing Structures and the Construction of a Mixed-Use Building Containing 19 Rental Apartments and up to 7,450 Square Feet of Office Space. Three Existing Parcels will be Merged. A Variance is Requested to Allow Protrusion of Roof Eaves, Fin Wall and First Floor Canopy Into the Hamilton Avenue Special Setback. Environmental Assessment: Categorical Exempt from the Provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Guideline Section 15332. Zoning District: CD-C(P) and RM-40 (Downtown Commercial and Residential Multi-Family). For More Information Contact the Project Planner Sheldon S. Ah Sing at sahsing@m-group.us

Chair Furth: I believe that takes us to our first action item, which is a public hearing. It's quasi-judicial. It concerns 565 Hamilton Avenue. It's a recommendation on the applicant's request for approval of a major architectural review to allow the demolition of existing structures and construction of a mixed-use building with 19 rental apartments, and up to 7,500 square feet of office space. Three existing parcels would be merged. A variance is requested to allow protrusion of the roof eaves, a fin wall, and a first-floor canopy into the Hamilton Avenue special setback. There's been an environmental assessment, finding that this particular project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. This is infill housing, is that right? Yes. Sheldon, I forgot to make a note of who the applicant is.

Mr. Sing: The applicant is Brandy Bridges.

Chair Furth: Thank you. My first question to my fellow board members is, has everybody seen the site?

Board Member Thompson: Yes.

Vice Chair Baltay: Yes, I visited the site.

Board Member Lew: Not since the last hearing.

Chair Furth: Right, but we're all familiar with the site. We have inspected it. Some of us more recently than others. My next question is, does anybody have any conversations or other research to report that pertains to what we're hearing today?

Board Member Thompson: No.

Chair Furth: Nobody does. Okay. Thank you. Well, having established that, could we hear the staff report, please?

Sheldon Ah Sing, Consultant Planner: The applicant is also here with their presentation. To start off, I understand, Madam Chair, this is your last meeting with us, and just wanted to thank you for your guidance and levity on the issues. You are going to be missed.

Chair Furth: Thank you.

Mr. Sing: This project is at the corner of Hamilton Avenue and Webster street. It's an area of transition from the commercial area to residential area. What's proposed are 19 rental dwelling units and about 7,500 square feet of office space. The site does include right now three properties in two different building districts. The properties will be merged. The office component will be confined to the CD portion, while the residential units will be on all levels of the site. The project as introduced includes a major architectural review, joint use parking, as well as a variance. The project did go before the Board previously on April 18<sup>th</sup>, a few months ago, and there were a number of items the Board wanted to see the applicant try to address and come back with. A lot of those have to do with the privacy and some of the daylight for these spaces on the interior. That had to do with residences that are along Webster, as well as the interface with the unit and the Redwood Terrace space at the back, which is solely for the use of the office space. And then, some of the other interior layouts for the upper level of Units 15 and 16. Also, it wanted to see some bicycle parking added at the grade where possible. Also, to review the overall height of the building in relation to some of the floor to ceiling heights, to consider adding an accessible ramp at Webster Street, and to finally review some of the lighting throughout the project. The applicant has a pretty extensive presentation on how they addressed each of those issues, but in summary, we believe that they have addressed those. A couple of them where – the height, for instance – there's some constraints that the applicant has mentioned about the elevator, so maybe we could seek some other comments about that, how to further address that, or maybe it's okay as is. In summary, the project is a three-story mixed-use project. There is an offset in the floor area ratio. That's for efficiency of the project, that some of the utility spaces are, trash spaces are included more on the larger parcels, more access to Webster Street, versus having that on a smaller parcel. Trying to get access on Hamilton. Thought it was a good idea to do that. For a better project, there's some offset in the FAR on the site that way. The project is proposed rental units, so, therefore, the project would pay just the impact fee for affordable housing. The project does include a level of basement parking, and it does include a lot of those in the mechanical types of lift spaces, and those are allowed by the code. The code does require 60 spaces; the project does provide 55. But with the project's joint use parking request and their company transit demand management plan, we believe that the reduction is okay. This diagram shows what I mentioned previously about the FAR distribution. The shaded areas are the utility and trash rooms, so they're accommodating both the office and the retail on that space. That just makes sense. There is access straight to Webster there. Otherwise, there is a courtyard in the middle of the project for open

space, and as I mentioned, there is the terrace area in the back that preserves some of the on-site mature trees. That is for the sole use of the office space. There are a couple areas for the variance application. There's a 17-foot setback, special setback along Hamilton. Any protrusion in there would require a variance of some kind if they want to do it. In this case, we believe that these are warranted, they are okay, there are canopies, as well as a fin wall that is designed, that can be detached if for some reason the City needs to use the space within that special setback area. The canopy, of course, is above ground, so we believe this variance is warranted given the restrictions in the area. This just provides a cross-section of the project and some of the floor plates that we were trying to describe. They are a bit generous, but I think the idea is to have a clean aesthetic for the roofline, as well as there's some limitations with the elevator that shows it. It does have a low profile amongst other types of elevators, but again, the applicant can describe that. I'll show one rendering here. This is along Webster and the changes that were proposed. They did add more landscaping there to add more privacy. The rendering above is the previous version that was shown in April, and below is the new one. In conclusion, the project does respond to the ARB's comments, and the variance request is acceptable. The revisions proposed and implemented increase the consistency with the required findings. With that, we do recommend approval of the project to the Director, based on the findings and subject to conditions of approval. That concludes my presentation; I'll be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Any questions of Sheldon before we hear from the applicant?

Board Member Thompson: Is it possible to pass the material board up?

[Staff hands materials board to Board Member Thompson.]

Chair Furth: May be hear from the applicant? You'll have 10 minutes once you have everything set up. And if you could, as always, spell your name for our transcriber.

Roslyn Cole, Aidlin Darling Design: Yes. My name is Roslyn Cole [spells name].

Chair Furth: I'm afraid you need to speak even more closely to the mic.

Ms. Cole: Okay. Is this better?

Chair Furth: Yes.

Ms. Cole: All right. Okay. I'm Roslyn Cole, Principle at Aidlin Darling Design, and I'm pleased to be here again with you today. We have looked at all of your comments and would like to run through that quickly, so I remember them. Also with me today is Lauren Ewald with Fletcher Studio; she can answer any landscape questions you might have. As Sheldon mentioned, we had a good deal of feedback from you, which is really helpful, and we'd like to walk through that one by one. The first item is the suggestion that we increase the privacy to the ground floor residences at Webster Street. We looked at this carefully. The image that you see up here is different from the one in your package. It was very hard for us to actually render it within the rendering we had. It got very muddy in the background, so we thought it better to start fresh with an image that would show you more of what it would look like. What we're doing is we're proposing a revised planting, which would provide a greater height and privacy for those residences, while still providing an openness. As you might recall, we started this project a year or so ago, providing fences along those units to provide privacy. At your suggestion, we pulled them away to really provide a more urban context. And I think we went a little too far by making it too low. In the last go-around we feel like we've achieved a balance here that allows for the privacy for the unit, as well as the openness that we would like to keep. One of your other items you suggested we look at relates to this. This is looking at those two units for the daylight and privacy from within the space. We have provided some images of what that looks like when you're looking from the living out to that terrace area, and then, back to the courtyard. We recognize that there are different people, and people who look for very different things in the apartments that they choose. We think these are apartments that would be very applicable for the urban dweller who wants a direct connection to the outside, and more of a

direct connection to the street. With that said, we have provided translucent glazing at the door, as well as shades at the windows for privacy, should that be desired. That is typical in all of the units. For Unit 3, which is the corner unit by the Redwood Garden, we have also shown you here a typical kitchen casework elevation. I think there was a comment on how the casework and the window might work together, so we've designed the casework to sit above the window at this location, which provides space for a shade pocket, to provide a direct connection to the exterior. At this unit, the kitchen – which is located here – has a landscape buffer of six to seven feet before the terrace starts. That landscape buffer provides a distance and some height of planting, and there's also two magnolia trees there to allow for a little more privacy for that unit. For Units 16 and 15, we thought it was really helpful to actually re-look at this in terms of the privacy of the unit. We have relocated the window for Unit 16, and then, reoriented the planters to provide more privacy between Units 16 and 17. In addition, we've changed the landscape material to a taller chain fern, which basically will grow three to five feet, to provide additional privacy between those terraces and the walkway. We have taken your suggestion to add more parking at grade by adding two more spaces at the corner entry. This brings our short-term parking count up to six from four, and four is our required minimum. I'd like to spend a little more time on this one, so I'm trying to rush through some of these other ones, because obviously, looking at the height was something we did very carefully. It's a little bit of a complicated issue.

Chair Furth: We're happy to give you a couple more minutes if you need it to make it clear to us what you're doing.

Ms. Cole: Okay, all right. I'll slow down. There are a couple driving factors in setting the building height at its 40 feet. The first is that our first floor is set by being one foot above the base flood. We then have two elevators in the buildings, each with their overruns, and that sets the height of the third floor at the residential unit, and then the second floor where the office elevator comes up. Now, what we're specifying is a Schindler elevator, which has a 12-foot-7 overrun, and it's the lowest that we've been able to find. Most are in the 13-2- or 14-5-foot height range. And even with these, we're not bringing our typical floor plate over. We're having a very special acoustical separation at that location, where we have a residential unit. And then, at our roof, we're popping up just a little bit but still where you're not able to see it from the street. The last floor basically in this sandwich is our first floor, and that right now has a clear space of 10-foot-4 in the office, but that is before the mechanical ductwork. That mechanical ductwork will add at least 12 inches to that, to lower down in those locations. We feel that's as really low as we can go with an office space. For these reasons, we are asking to keep the height where it is. We've also taken a step back and looked at the project. We haven't looked at these images for a while. They're in your package, but they have not been part of your presentation. Just to look at this building in the context of its neighbors. And it is truly, as Sheldon said, a transition building. It transitions from these taller buildings. All of the neighbors are taller than it. Obviously, the church is 70 feet, but our adjacent neighbors and the neighbor across Hamilton. And then, we have our lower residential neighbors. We're addressing that by opening the building at the top floor, creating a glazed corner, and then, bringing that third-floor line to align with that roofline of that building. We feel like the building, with this 40-foot height, still really deals with the transition at this corner. You suggested that we look at adding an accessible ramp to the Webster Street entry, and we think this is a very good suggestion. We have added this in. It's a straight ramp, a 1:12 ramp, but added it in by adding another planter and layering it in, so we still have the cascading steps that come to that corner. We think that is an improvement to this corner, for many reasons. Accessibility, of course, being the primary one. Here, you asked us to look at the central terrace and the light levels. We think that this space is going to be quite nice. It's 30 feet by 32 feet. We have two analogous spaces that we'd like to show you. Here is the Stanford Central Energy facility, and that space is scaled very smoothly. You can see the courtyard through the center of the space here. And then, the Oakland Museum and it's front entry canopy. This is much longer, but daylight appears along the side, and then in the back, and in a similar proportion for this space here. I think both show that this space can feel light and not dark. At the third floor, we looked at the lighting, and thought it was actually very helpful. We went back and looked at finding a new fixture for this, and this fixture has brought down the lighting level significantly, but it still provides an even level. We haven't changed the number of fixtures, but the lighting level is even. In looking at the controllability, we're proposing to provide that through both a photocell, and then, through the ability to have it dimmer for occupant use.

The intention is to keep it low, and then, if an occupant needs to use it higher, then it would be set higher. We were concerned about the on-off occupancy sensor and the flickering of that through time. We have also looked at the landscape buffer going north, and after meeting with our neighbor, we have added two additional trees along this boundary property. We have a utility line that runs into our utility space here, so we're unable to add any more trees along this area. But the coffeeberry shrub that is located and proposed here can grow up to 15 feet, so we think that it itself will also be a good buffer along that northern neighbor. There are a couple of planning requested changes. As Sheldon has mentioned, we now have updated things to show how we meet the new ordinance, between lowering the stall count from 67 to 60. Then, increasing the open area. The increase for the RM-40 parcels includes from 1,300 to 1,950 square feet, but I think it's important to note that we have 2 ½ times that amount for this project, so we're well within that. Lastly, we have pulled the building back a foot from the property line. Originally, the building itself sat at the property line and we had window projections, as well as eaves, moving into that to provide depth of the building. We've worked with Planning. We feel like that depth is really important to the façade, so we have taken a foot out of the courtyard and a couple inches out of the units to pull the building back, so those windows are no longer in the setback. We have also worked very closely with Planning to allow for the fin to extend, but basically have separate rebar cages, and be able to be cut off if it needed to be in the future and still be structurally sound. The remaining images are just the elevations. Here is the street elevation; the elevation with the new ramp. The Webster Street elevation. And that elevation with the new ramp. And planting. And then, a view from Hamilton; a view from Webster; the central terrace; and then the corner. With that, I look forward to hearing your comments.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Are there any questions of the applicant's architect before we go on? Do we have any speaker cards? Yes. Just one? John Carl **Fredrick**, [phonetic] please. You have three minutes, Mr. **Fredrick**.

John Carl **Fredrick**: Thank you. John Carl **Fredrick**. I live in Barron Park, but in the last 50 years that I've lived in Palo Alto, I've lived about half of that time on the north side. I'm here to speak in opposition to this project, and a denial of the approval for demolition, for a number of reasons. Number one, I think the work to this point by City staff is inadequate in describing the historical character of the building and the attending landscaping. I think this project is way too invasive. I think there's no reason to grant a variance for the 17-foot setback on Hamilton. I also don't think that the inventory of the trees is adequate, and I'm sort of surprised it's not contained in this report. Especially Tree #4 next to the existing building to the west, which is unique in Palo Alto. And even in the elevations, I did not see evidence of what the problem of removing all the magnolias on the street will be. And then, the fruit trees that are going – three orange trees, a fig tree – many bulb plants, and even the redwoods, which this report claims to protect, I would doubt that finding given what's happened to the redwoods at the corner of Ravenswood and El Camino in Menlo Park. And to build unground parking, in truth, that closely the property line or the public parking area, it's going to create problems in the future there. I also think that the character of the building itself on the corner, if you had elevation pictures of it, you would see that this is a remarkable change. It's a magnificent building. I have an affection for quads because I grew up in one, back in Milwaukee. This might be the only one left in town, and it's beautiful inside. Clear hard redwood, hardwood floors, a foyer... I mean, I don't think any of you maybe even went inside the building there on the corner. And the loss then of nine units of affordable housing – and I would put it at higher than that because of the little brown shingle house that is scheduled for demotion if this permit is granted easily holds two people, two families. The garages alone are substantial pieces of property. What I think was lacking in this plan, and your review of it, is the fact that this property has a large amount of space without demolishing the corner building, in which 16 units of housing could go in there. Now, I don't know how you could find, given the environmental problems, a negative CEQA finding that there's no impingement of the general welfare of the people of Palo Alto if this demolition permit goes forward, and I would recommend that you continue or deny. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you, Mr. **Fredrick**. Just to be clear, Tree #4...

Mr. **Fredrick**: It's a unique pine. It's right up against the building there, behind the brown-shingle house. It's the only tree other than the redwoods on the property line.

Chair Furth: Any questions of Mr. **Fredrick** before we...?

Mr. **Fredrick**: And the other tree is the big avocado. Go over there and sit in the back yard and see how much open space is going to be lost by the granting of demolition here.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Does anybody else wish to speak? The applicant has 10 minutes to respond.

Brandy Bridges: Good morning. My name is Brandy Bridges [spells name]. I'd like to say thank you to the Board for hearing our project today, and thank you to members of the public who came to comment, and others we have heard from in preceding hearings. I understand the concerns that were just voiced. I think, though, that there's a lot to like about the project that we're proposing. The existing site holds nine units of housing. That's true. They are in a state of disrepair, and we've had a property condition report done, and they're not appropriate for long-term, ongoing occupancy. Our project proposes to replace those with 19 units of new housing, code compliant, energy efficient, and safe for occupancy. We have had the property also studied in terms of looking at the historic nature of the property. It's been analyzed by multiple parties. In fact, the City's historic planner looked at the project. A third-party historian was hired by the City to review the project, and the landowner also hired a consultant to review the project. All three of the reviewing entities agreed that the three properties were ineligible for listing on the registers, and also ineligible for listing not only on the California register, but the City's register. So, they're not considered historic resources for the purpose of CEQA or for permitting. All of this information was reflected in the minutes from the hearing that we attended on a voluntary basis with a historic review board back in 2018. I don't disagree that the buildings, they are quite lovely. I also have an affection for the nature and character of particularly the yellow building. But, I think that we have to acknowledge that there's an existing life span for structures, and I think what we have to look at with these is that we have an opportunity to increase the housing supply, which, in a fashion that increases supply, I think is part of the equation to improving our housing crisis here in the Bay area. The landscaping that we proposed, that was another topic that was raised. The existing landscaping on the site, the front yard is primarily grass, which takes a lot of water consumption. Our project that we're proposing will have primarily native and drought-tolerant planting. We actually are proposing to remove the trees. When we met with the City arborist, we looked at it in terms of asking them, "What is it that you think we should do?" We had an arborist who looked at it, the City's arborist looked at it. The existing magnolias are in a state of decline, so their preference was for us to remove the trees. With the replacements that we're proposing, we'll actually have a net increase in the urban canopy, a significant net increase that's reflected in the plan sets that you have before you today. I think replacing the water-hungry grass with some native plantings is, on balance, a good thing. I'm not sure about the numbering of that particular tree that was brought up in the comment, but I do have here before me the arborist's report. I believe that the tree in question might be the Japanese black pine because that's the only pine that I see listed. That tree was noted by the arborist as poor retention suitability due to poor structure, so that's not one that we focused on much before because the arborist has already commented on that. The redwoods, preserving those redwoods is very important to us. We've made great effort to ensure that our building will not damage the redwoods. By pulling back the full garage, and then, we have in that area, the landscape plan shows wood planking. That's to let the air reach the roots of the redwoods, and also to let the water kind of go down and reach the roots of those redwoods. We really want to protect those. We think it provides a great buffer between this project and the large city garage that's next door, and does kind of a nice screening job, but also, they're redwoods, and we just want to protect them because they are gorgeous. Other comments. I think I've addressed... Oh, the variance. The variance request, really, what we're trying to achieve with that is getting some depth in the reading of the façade. This property does have some unusual characteristics that make a variance appropriate. Namely, we have the historic neighbor next door at 530 Webster, so, we wanted to make sure that we set our building back far enough that we'll stay in alignment with 530 Webster, instead of stepping too far forward. We've compressed our building back along that Webster frontage more than is required by the City's setbacks. And then, on the other corner of the building, we've pulled in to kind of get away

from those redwood trees. So, with being pushed in on the Webster side, and then, also being pulled in on the redwood side, it just creates a condition where it's hard for us to push the building any further back without getting closer to 530 Webster, which is something we don't want to do. With the variance, we can let the roof eaves, and kind of extend out. And also, we can do a nice canopy over the commercial space, and I think that's a good trade-off to make. With that, I guess I would close by saying that, you know, we first visited with the Board, I think it might have been just over a year ago, and I feel really good about the project that we have before you today. I think it's very different than the project we originally presented. The feedback, the loop of the process has been great in terms of receiving the feedback. Each bit of feedback has helped us make this project better, so I'd just like to take this one last opportunity to say thank you. I think it's been a good collaboration with the public, with the Board. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Any questions of the applicant before we bring it back to the Board? David? Seeing none, any comments from staff before we start discussing this project? Who would like to begin? Okay, we'll skip Osma. David?

Board Member Hirsch: Generally speaking, I do like the project, but I do have some reservations. A minor one was the suggestion I made last time, was to use the Hamilton side to provide a skylight, or possible light down to the parking lot, but I don't see that that's included in any way in the presentation right now. I just find that underground parking isn't really pleasant. It's a personal issue for me, to add as much light as you can get in. Now, I know, of course, the entryway is well lit because of the break in the platform of the deck, etc., allows the light to come through, but it was a suggestion that I thought would enhance the parking facility. But it's a minor concern. My major concern here is that in order to maintain your parapet and your cornice look to the building, and because of the elevator, as you mentioned, it has to have an override. You have a humongous height to the top floor of this building. I frankly just don't understand. I think if I were looking at this as a developer, I would think that somehow we're spending an extra three feet all around the entire building in order to allow for that elevator override being within the frame of the box of the building itself. It doesn't seem logical to me, and actually, it makes some of those apartments uncomfortably high. Kitchens, bathrooms with ceilings quite that high don't make any sense at all. And that's a major concern, I think, for me, that the height of that floor is really ridiculously high. That's speaking from the point of a person who owned a brownstone and had an 11-foot ceiling and thought that was quite adequate for a brownstone, but when you exceed that in a new building like this, I don't think it's sensible. Last time, I also mentioned Unit 14 and the ones above it, where the kitchen faces the courtyard in the rear. I simply don't understand why, when you put a kitchen in most of your units closer to the front door, in this case, the kitchen is on the perimeter wall, where you could simply have windows, but you choose not to do so. If I understand the plan, that's the plan I'm looking at, unless you've changed it and there is a new plan. That unit, those units, all of them that face the rear court have the kitchen misplaced on the outside wall. If I'm wrong, correct me, please.

Ms. Bridge: Unit 14 has the kitchen on the outside wall, but it does also have windows. We could show an image of a similar condition if that would be helpful.

Board Member Hirsch: No, I.... [crosstalk]

Chair Furth: Why don't we hold that until we hear from everybody, if we need further enlightenment.

Board Member Hirsch: All right. My personal objection is that the light that you get into the kitchen directly really isn't the same as if you had a living room with a larger amount of window, and that the windows that you do have in the area of the living room, which are on the corridor, simply are not private windows, and you have to diffuse the glazing at that point. Let's address it later on. In all other respects, I think you've answered the questions that we had at previous hearings. But those three issues, with a minor one being a skylight, have been well addressed here. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Board Member Thompson.



Board Member Thompson: Thank you for this project. I am struggling a little bit with the renderings. I'm looking here at the material palette, and Metal 1 in the material palette is this sort of dark metal color. And in the renderings – I'm looking at Page A5.3E – it's sort of the main fascia at the top and bottom, and it just looks brown. I think that's actually kind of important, to not show it that way, because it's not going to be brown, it's going to be black according to this. And even your main panel boards, fiber cement board color 1, in the renderings are showing very brown. This is more of a taupe. It doesn't have the warmth that I think that brown color would have when I'm looking at this material board. In terms of all the other items that you've addressed – the privacy on the ground floor, and the slew of other things you went through – I feel pretty good about that in terms of the revisions that you've made. But, just looking at this again, you know, the renderings look really nice, but I don't buy that, with these materials that you've chosen, that it will actually look like this in real life. I kind of want to alert the rest of the Board to my concern on that because, you know, otherwise this project seems to otherwise be looking pretty good. I think this is an important item that we would actually have to look at later, just because, you know, the wood soffit batches, the renderings, the main panel board, which is the heart and soul of your project right now, that's what everybody is going to look at, is this material that seems otherwise a lot like the concrete, and I don't know that that's the design intent. It sounds like you want that differentiation between your concrete at the base to kind of you give you that grounding, and then, something warmer and lighter above. And I don't think this material is the right choice. That's my only note right now. Otherwise, I think you guys have done a pretty good job in this package. I'll leave it there.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Alex?

Board Member Lew: I can recommend approval today. Thank you for the revisions. I think they look good. I think, on previous Board member comments, I think the, with regard to the height, I do understand the comment. I do think there's a balance we have to strike because this is mixed use. You're talking about, you know, that it's too high for residential, but they have office on Hamilton, so there has to be some sort of middle ground. And the heights that they are proposing are a little bit low, they're on the low side for office. I think the architect has it correct, that if you look at the context-based street elevations, the building looks fine in context with the church and the office building across the street. I think that's the main thing. And however many floors, or whatever, the height, and the interior configurations, interior elements relative to the windows and stuff, that's all sort of internal, and to me, that's not really part of the Board's findings. I mean, I don't disagree with you about all that, but it seems to me that that's the architect's problem. On the skylight to the garage, I think that's all very nice. I think we've commented on that kind of thing before on other projects, on commercial projects, and I think that's all desirable. I don't know if it's feasible on this particular project. And then, I think to Osma's comments about the materials, I didn't sort of pick that up until you brought it up. I think that the rendering... yeah. I get that. I was thinking that, when I look at the renderings, it seemed to me that the color that's shown on the renderings looks like the church across the street, to me. I haven't matched anything, but this one, I think you're, I mean, when you point it out, I think the material here doesn't really quite do that. Maybe if we come back to subcommittee, maybe there's a different way of doing this. I don't know. There may not be a lot of options of this as an integral color material. I would think having an integral color material is better than painting it. If you want to do one more rounds to subcommittee, I would be okay with that, but I would imagine that that's... I mean, I do trust architects generally to pick the best color of the ones that are available, and I don't have any better suggestion. Seems like this is better than, like, Hardie [inaudible] options, and the Hardie panel range. Anyway. And then, my last comments are clean-ups on the findings. For staff, on page 15, on item L3.1, it says, "second floor," and I think you meant third floor. On page 19... skip that. Page 21, item number 6 mentions "Cambridge area," and I think you mean Webster, or Hamilton. I think that was just a cut and paste issue. I can support the variance findings, although that's really the purview of the planning director.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Vice Chair Baltay.

Vice Chair Baltay: Thank you for the excellent presentation, and thanks to my colleagues for their insightful comments. I'd like to focus on two things, I think. One is Osma's comment about the materials, and the second one is about the height of the building, which I agree with David. I think what Osma was driving at is that the elevations don't really depict the way these materials will play out on the building. And I think she's right, that this fibrous cement has almost a pinkish-reddish tone to it. Which, you're right, Alex. It's like the church is now, but they just painted it. And unfortunately, they just painted away the beautiful textured, aged concrete, and now it's got this pinkish hue I suspect they regret.

Chair Furth: We know that you do, in any event.

Vice Chair Baltay: I certainly do. The building was lovely for years and years with this aging character to it, and probably was leaking, so they had to do something. But it's got this industrial-looking, pinkish concrete coating on it now. And I'd hate to see that happen to this building. Osma is correct that these side panels are large, and they would be very visible. I think what Alex is suggesting is right, that it might come back to a subcommittee to review that, and perhaps the architects may want to consider that. When you correct the coloring on your elevations, you may realize it's a bit too pink, in my opinion. The same with the brown crim band. That's the one color in this palette I find is not that rich-looking. It's not typical of one of your buildings in your firm. The bigger issue for me is the height. You're quite correct, Alex. I agree that it's not for us to lay out the interior of the building or select the plate height. It is important for us to make sure the building is contextually compatible, and I find it really is not with 530 Webster. All the other buildings in town, it works great. It's not too tall for Palo Alto; it's not that the building is too massive. But perhaps you could pull up for me, someone, one of the elevations, the view from Webster. Is that possible to get that on the screen?

[Staff looking for slide.]

Vice Chair Baltay: Hold on a second. If you look at this image here, and look at the right-hand side of the building, compared to 530 Webster... Alex is holding up the actual architect's rendering from the corner of 530 Webster, but if you also look at this one that's on the screen now, very small, you can 530 Webster in the background. And I think you can see that this building is substantially larger than 530 Webster. Visually, it really seems to overpower that building. And that building in particular to me has a real sense of presence on the street, a real character to it. And I think the building next to it is just a little bit too big. And then, when I hear the reason it's a little bit too big is really to do with the technical thing about elevators, and it strikes me that it is possible to configure so that the elevator overrun goes through the roof, and you have a bump-out somehow. I would rather see a small bump-out on the roof, with the roof plate being lower, than I would see the entire building be substantially taller. To me, it seems that the building should come down maybe a foot from each of the two residential floors. And we can ask the architect to revise the way the elevator overrun on the roof works through the roof, and then, in the third floor, you have to find a way for your residential unit to accommodate that overrun somehow, if you can't find a different elevator. But, to me, the building is just too tall vis-e-vie its relation to 530 Webster, and that is very much our province to solve that. I'd like to see us request that building get pushed down. I think we can still recommend approval with that condition. I can support the variance findings. I think it makes good sense, and the design itself is wonderful, I think. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Thank you to the applicant for an interesting, attractive project, and for really clear documentation, which has perhaps made us more focused in our critique than we might be in less-clear work. Both have been an advantage and disadvantage for you, but we, of course, think it's an advantage, because we think the truth will set us free, eventually. Thanks also to the members of the public who have spoken to us, both today and earlier. I wanted to talk briefly about Mr. **Frederick's** comments. I took notes on them. And of course, we don't disagree with you, that lovely gardens and existing buildings are lost with this project. Relatively affordable housing is lost with this project. We don't have power to address those things. That's beyond the scope of what we do. The City used to have ordinances that made it uneconomic to destroy existing rental units – although in this case, we're actually getting new rental units rather than condos – and the State of California took away the authority that we were using. The City Council adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance, and the Palo Alto electorate

repealed it. Efforts to have more tree protection than we do have also failed, so we need to work within the context that we have. Our question really is: How is this building, in this context, as an aesthetic object itself, as a place to live, as a place to walk by? And I would say that I think, particularly if it's designed to look like its elevations, it's a very attractive building, and it will be a good place to live, and it will be a good place to walk by. Which is no small item here. I have been to a lot... I have heard Emma Kirkby sing in that cathedral-like church – for a Methodist church, it's pretty cathedral-like – across the street. It's a heavily traveled corridor, on foot and otherwise. I think this is a good building and a good use to put here. We've been very concerned about the effect that it will have on the buildings to its right on Webster. I do think that you've done a good job of addressing our concerns, which come up a lot in new residential projects, of how you have ground floor units that relate to the street, but yet have an adequate sense of privacy. I think you've done that well. I like your increased parking. I like that your parking is underground. I agree with David that some natural light in underground parking is great. We have some good examples, I'm thinking, at the corner of Lytton and Emerson, for example. And there are some counter examples on Everett. And I am concerned about minimizing the height while maintaining attractive uses. And I very much appreciate... I realize I'm easily seduced by beautiful drawings, and I appreciate Osma's commentary on the materials board. I think this project is ready to... Oh, and I do find the variance findings compelling. You mentioned that the fin wall would be removable in the future if the City needed it to be. Is that a condition of approval of the variance? It needs to be?

Ms. Gerhardt: Yes. We'll ensure that that is a condition.

Chair Furth: You can't just say we're taking it back unless the applicant has agreed to leave that right with the City.

Ms. Gerhardt: Yes. The point is that it is going into a special setback, and should the City ever need to use that property...[crosstalk]

Chair Furth: You will be sure that the approval documents, that the property owner needs to have a covenant that they will do so that runs with the land.

Ms. Gerhardt: Yes, thank you.

Chair Furth: Okay. The applicant is indicating they are fine with that. I would suggest referring three items to a subcommittee. The first would be the materials, and as I understand it, we like the elevations more than the materials submitted, so the goal would be to come up with something that works. But, the guidance towards to the subcommittee from us would be that we... How would you phrase it?

Board Member Thompson: I think mainly the design intent – and please correct me if I'm wrong – the design intent does seem that there's kind of a cool base and a warm, you know, middle-upper. And at the moment, the materials palette, you know, it doesn't seem to reflect that design intent. I don't want to necessarily stipulate what that material should be, but it should be something warmer to reflect that design intent.

Chair Furth: You're describing the upper floors which, to me, look brownish, pale brown.

Board Member Thompson: Yeah.

Chair Furth: And the bottom floor looks creamy?

Board Member Thompson: Well, the bottom floor is all that board-form concrete.

Chair Furth: Right, but when I'm looking at the elevation, that's not what you see at all.

Board Member Thompson: Yeah, it looks white. But in their precedent imagery, they're showing a lot of wood for the wall panels. I remember first seeing this project and kind of believing that this would be a

really heavy wood project, you know, because wood has that warmth. I don't know. I think that was the contrast they were trying to make between the wood and the concrete, the heavy and the light, the warm and the cold.

Chair Furth: Are you saying that one of the things you'd be looking for is contrast between the upper and lower floors?

Board Member Thompson: Yeah. But I would say I don't have a problem with the board form concrete. I think that's good for the base for the cold [crosstalk].

Chair Furth: My only concern, one thing I know for sure is I know I'm not going to be on this subcommittee. But I think it would be useful for the... Maybe you can just decide that any two of you, working with a very skilled architect, have the capacity to do what needs to be done here and just say, "nothing further," that we'll just review the colors. It looks like you're happy with that. Okay. For the subcommittee to review the materials, in light of the comments today; to review the height, with the goal to reducing that by a couple of feet, if possible, even with a preference for having an elevator that pokes through the basic form, if necessary. How would you say that?

Vice Chair Baltay: Well, to get my vote, I'd like to say not review the height. We already asked them to do that and that didn't get us anything. I'd like them to reduce the height by at least a foot on each floor of the upper two floors. It's two feet total.

Chair Furth: By two feet.

Vice Chair Baltay: And again, I hate to be prescriptive on this, but we did... [crosstalk]...

Chair Furth: Two feet or more.

Vice Chair Baltay: ... and we didn't get much result.

Chair Furth: Okay. And then, to review the garage lighting. And I put it that way because I agree with David, that daylight is wonderful if you can do it. I've been really impressed in the last few years with the great basement-level, parking-level lighting that can be achieved with LED fixtures. I think the Medico... Is it the Medico-Dental building? Whatever. The building across the street from City Hall has a beautifully lit garage. Best I've ever seen. And that's done without natural light except from the driveway. I don't know what the solution is. I agree with David. It needs to be, basically shadow less. But garage lighting would be the third item for referral.

Board Member Lew: No, that's not a... I think that's beyond our purview.

Chair Furth: Well, if we can require exterior lighting.

Vice Chair Baltay: I believe David was referring to skylights, natural lighting in the garage.

Chair Furth: Right. I agree.

Vice Chair Baltay: And that's a rather large change for the architects to try and incorporate right now, I think.

Chair Furth: Okay, so, what's the consensus of the Board on that point?

Vice Chair Baltay: And whether they brightly light it with electric lights or not...

Chair Furth: None of our business.

Vice Chair Baltay: I think David's recommendation is wise, but maybe...

Chair Furth: You don't support it.

Vice Chair Baltay: No, I just think it's not reasonable to ask the architects to change something like that at this point.

Chair Furth: I would call that not supporting it.

Vice Chair Baltay: Not supporting it.

Ms. Gerhardt: From a findings standpoint, we do have Finding #4, which is the design is functional, allowing for ease and safety of pedestrian and bicycle traffic, providing for elements that support the building's necessary operation.

Chair Furth: Yeah, if I thought, I mean, we often comment on the interior design of garages if we don't think they're functional. I think I'm hearing from everybody but David that they think it's good enough for the findings. I'm seeing some nods here.

Vice Chair Baltay: Yeah, it meets the same standard we've applied to other similar buildings.

Chair Furth: Okay. Would somebody like to make a motion? Or comment?

Ms. Bridges: Commissioner Furth, may I make a quick comment regarding the height?

Chair Furth: Yes. You need to be a little closer to the mic, however.

Ms. Bridges: Okay, I apologize. With regard to the height, the recommendation in terms of what the committee would be looking for, I was wondering if we could make it a bit less specific than saying one foot per floor. Because what's challenging for us on the residential floors is that that middle floor. When the office elevator comes up, we kind of have to maintain that height, because we have looked at every elevator out there, all the major manufacturers, and we selected one with the lowest overrun. That middle floor, we really can't play with that height much. If we need to reduce height, the place to do it is, as you were mentioning, would have to be at that top floor, by doing a bump-out. I think if we could leave it a bit more flexible in terms of how we look at that when we're in committee, that might be helpful to... [crosstalk]

Chair Furth: I think we were saying two feet overall.

Ms. Bridges: I'm sorry, I'm just looking to the architect for direction in terms of...

Board Member Lew: You can't be demanding. They have to engineer the building. They have to work out...

Chair Furth: I understand they do. One of your colleagues suggested a two-foot requirement. You don't support it, right?

Ms. Bridges: If we might say a goal of two feet and leave it to the folks in the subcommittee, and perhaps the people most concerned, maybe one of those could sit on the subcommittee. Just a suggestion. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you.

Vice Chair Baltay: To my colleagues. By the time this gets to subcommittee, it's pretty well fixed. I think we need to decide now. It is possible to eliminate a closet in that apartment and let the bump-out take

the place of a closet. It's possible to shift the four-story elevator slightly further into the building so it gets picked up with the mechanical screening. And I understand the architect is frustrated by that, but understand our frustration. We brought this issue to your attention, and it didn't seem like we got more than just a bunch of elevator specifications on it. We understand and appreciate that. It's technically complicated. I completely agree with Alex. The last thing we want to do is tell you specifically what to do. Our concern, my concern – and I believe the Board, the majority – is the relationship to 530 Webster. And the building now is just a little bit too tall to relate to that building. I think you can't take two feet off the top floor and leave the middle floor that height. It will look wrong. We're not the architects. Your architect needs to address this situation.

Chair Furth: I think what we need to do is have somebody make a motion and see what the Board supports.

**Mr. Frederick:** Excuse me, Madam Chair. As a point of information, could you clarify that, in fact, part of this is, in the approval for demolition, that the 17-foot variance is acceptable under CEQA?

Chair Furth: Yes, we have said that. Thank you.

**Mr. Frederick:** Thank you.

Chair Furth: Did you have a comment, Osma?

Board Member Thompson: Yeah...

Board Member Lew: I think we should also comment, we're not approving the demolition permit.

Chair Furth: Right.

Board Member Lew: This is ARB.

Chair Furth: We're just approving the design of the new building.

Board Member Lew: Demolition is a separate...

Chair Furth: And we're asked to review the environmental documentation.

Board Member Thompson: Do we know if the height...

Chair Furth: I mean, one of the things that's confusing to the public is that what the caption says is that we're asked to approve a project which involves the demolition of buildings, but we don't actually issue demolition permits. Go ahead, Osma. Did you have something?

Board Member Thompson: Yeah, sorry.

Chair Furth: I still want one of you to make a motion.

Board Member Thompson: I'm not ready yet. Sorry.

Chair Furth: Go ahead.

Board Member Thompson: I'm looking at A5.2C.

Chair Furth: Could you put that up?

Board Member Thompson: This is 530 Webster, right? This one? Do we know the height? Oh, it says it right here. Sorry. It's 69 feet, .6, versus 85.1. Are you saying that lowering the height by two feet will make a difference in terms of how it relates to that building?

Vice Chair Baltay: I believe so, yes, Osma. I think right now, the third-floor plate line itself is above the height of 530 Webster. And there's that trim band that relates those two. Usually what we're looking for is let the neighbor building go up a floor, but this one seems, to me, sort of aggressively more than a floor. The 13-foot floor on the second floor is a little bit too tall, and then, the whole thing pops up another 13 feet.

Board Member Thompson: Your issue is not with the 85 total, it's just where the datum for the top of the second floor is?

Vice Chair Baltay: No, it's both. I think the datum should line up better with 530 Webster, and then, the roof itself, having these very tall plates, I think sort of accentuates the situation. If we reduce the request from two feet to one foot, would that be more palatable to you?

Board Member Thompson: I'm kind of in a place where it seems like the height difference is so much that I don't know that it would make that much of a difference, whether it's one foot, or two feet, or zero feet at that point. Because it's so much further lower, it looks like it's at least 15 feet lower. That whether it's 14 feet or 13 feet, I think the main context that we're seeing, like the bigger street, I guess... I don't know. It seems that... I guess I just kind of accept that it will be a change. But I guess my bigger question was, I think in your original comments, you mentioned a change in massing, where it would step down. Or was that...? No?

Vice Chair Baltay: No, absolutely not. No, no.

Board Member Thompson: Okay, good, because I would not agree with that.

## **MOTION**

Vice Chair Baltay: Okay. I'll make a motion that we recommend approval of this project, including recommendations regarding approval of the variance, with two conditions. One, that the materials be returned to subcommittee, in particular the fiber cement siding selection. Two, that the overall height of the building be reduced by a minimum of one foot. With no stipulation how that gets done.

Chair Furth: Is there a second?

Board Member Lew: I will second.

Chair Furth: Would you like to speak to your motion?

Vice Chair Baltay: No, I think we've said everything about it.

Chair Furth: Any further discussion?

Board Member Hirsch: Yes. My concern is that one foot really isn't significant enough. I think that the second floor as well needs to be reduced more than that. When we actually see this building in construction, we're going to regret the fact that we have been lenient about the heights here, and that they really are quite excessive in each of the floors. And that what's ruling this whole decision is that the elevator overrun is an issue. As Mr. Baltay pointed out, planning could take care of the elevator for the office space, and a bump-out on the roof could take care of the elevator on the third floor. I think that actually we're going to regret the look of this building, quite so massive, and that reducing it will not affect materially the exterior, the good image that the exterior has on the street.

## **AMENDED MOTION**

Vice Chair Baltay: Very well. I'd like to amend that motion and say the building height be reduced by two feet. I'll need a new second, I think. Actually, am I allowed to...? The motion was made and seconded.

Ms. Gerhardt: It would need to be seconded.

Chair Furth: Feel free. You would like to amend your motion.

Vice Chair Baltay: Let's try for two feet and see if it flies.

Chair Furth: I'll second it for the purposes of debate. My question is, I agree with David, that this frontage on Webster shows a building which is much higher than its neighbor. And it's the neighbor, incidentally, that I'm most concerned about its interaction with. I'm not concerned about what it's going to do to the parking garage, the large office building, or the very large church. And it is true that generally when we add an additional floor, you can see the horizontal continuity between the top of the second floor and the adjacent second-floor building. One of the findings we're required to make is about context. One of the biggest critiques we get from the general public – which don't spend quite as much time thinking about this as we do; at least not individually – is that we don't pay enough attention to context. I don't know if two feet is enough to accomplish a sense of not looming. I also understand that whether this building makes 530 Webster look comfortable, or if it makes it look like the building that's next scheduled for demolition, has a lot to do with the design of the edges. I would appreciate some guidance from my colleagues.

Board Member Thompson: I was going to mention, I know we're spending a lot of time on this, but...

Chair Furth: It's a big building.

Board Member Thompson: ... how do we know that that smaller building won't be up for demolition and for a higher building height anyway? We're spending all this time...

Board Member Lew: That's actually irrelevant. We have to...

Chair Furth: Our job is to make it work.

Board Member Lew: ...make it work as-is.

Board Member Thompson: Right.

Board Member Lew: The context is what it is today. And what happens tomorrow is absolutely irrelevant.

Chair Furth: Way beyond our control and not what we design for.

Board Member Thompson: Sure.

Chair Furth: Or review for.

Ms. Gerhardt: However, the building is historic, so more likely to remain. I also, just from a factual standpoint, the parapet of the adjacent building is 69.6 feet. The finished floor for the third level would be 72 feet. That's the finished floor versus the parapet.

Board Member Thompson: That's, I guess, above the metal panel fascia that we're looking at?

Chair Furth: When we look at that elevation A5.2C, could you point out what you're talking about on the proposed building?



Ms. Gerhardt: There's an elevation on A5.4, and that's where I'm getting those numbers from.

Chair Furth: Right, but if you look at A5.2C, the lower drawing, there's windows, there's a horizontal element. Where's the finished floor that you're referencing?

Ms. Gerhardt: The architect could probably help us with that.

Vice Chair Baltay: This is the finished floor, at the top of the brown trim.

Chair Furth: The top of the brown trim?

Ms. Cole: The top of the trim is the floor height.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Okay.

Board Member Thompson: Do we know the depth of the trim? Like, what's the bottom of that trim? I'm only asking because in the elevation on A5.4, it looks like it lines up with that parapet.

Chair Furth: Yeah.

Ms. Cole: It's 1 foot, 8 1/2.

Chair Furth: One foot, 8.5 inches? Thank you. To confirm, the adjacent building is 69.64 feet high?

Ms. Gerhardt: Correct. The parapet of the adjacent building.

Chair Furth: Sorry, above sea level. That would be a pretty high three-story building.

Vice Chair Baltay: [inaudible].

Chair Furth: If you have a question of the architect...

Board Member Thompson: That would make the bottom of that fascia at 70 foot, four. It would be about...

Chair Furth: Could we have further clarification from the architect? Peter, why don't you ask your question?

Vice Chair Baltay: To the architect. You're a very strong, design-oriented architecture firm, and we feel very resistant in telling you what to do. Do you have a response to how make the building integrate just a bit better with 530 Webster?

Ms. Cole: I think that we have looked at that a lot, and I'm not trying to be defensive about it. I do think it's an important condition, and I agree that that is what makes a project. I don't know... We can look at it further as to what we could do to try to integrate more at that corner. The height, my fear of lowering the building and exposing the elevator is it has a much greater negative effect on the other elevation in terms of the feeling of the building and the consistency of it. I'm not saying I know what the solution would be, because I don't think it's really to bring that pop-up so close to the front edge, and then it's constrained by the garage. I mean, this has been a puzzle of a building, so we're trying to piece all these pieces together. I don't have a solution for you here, so, if you'd like us to look at how to make this better contextually with 530, we can do that.

Ms. Bridges: If I may just add to what Roslyn was commenting on. When they presented the images to us, one of the things that they kept emphasizing was the metal panel that you all were just asking about the dimension on, and pointing out how important that was to try to keep that, kind of close in line with

the top of the 530 Webster building, because that kind of draws it together and helps it sit more contextually. I think that that's pretty important, so, I think if we're trying to look to a dimension, making sure that we don't offset too much to lose that relationship. Another thing that, as we were playing with it and trying to flex on the issue over the last few months, one of the things that we were realizing is that, we felt it was pretty important to try to keep the relationship of the windows equal on the second and the third floor if at all possible, because the proportions matter. We were struggling with that a bit because as we, we actually did look at possibly having the office elevator run into, up into a closet, and kind of modifying that unit. If we bring that level down, then it changes the proportion of the windows. So, I think to keep it contextual, those are the things that we'll have to play with as we work with the subcommittee, to make sure that we don't lose the elegance of the architecture, and to make sure that we kind of keep that alignment of that metal panel somewhere near the top of the 530 Webster building.

Chair Furth: I have a question for you. How high is the landscaping supposed to be between those two buildings? How tall?

Ms. Bridges: Are you speaking of the landscaping kind of along the privacy fence?

Chair Furth: Uh-huh.

Ms. Bridges: The coffeeberry can grow to 15 feet. And then, I'm going to look back to our landscape architect for the height on the...

[crosstalk]

Chair Furth: ...how many feet above sea level? Since that's the data [crosstalk].

Ms. Bridges: Oh, my gosh. [Laughs]

Chair Furth: Where I'm going is, my solution is also plant it out, which is not very respectful of architecture. But what's driving us are conflicting desires to have your building look well proportioned, have it respectful of the building next to it so that it doesn't diminish that building as its experience, and I'm curious as to how high. I mean, I have coffeeberries, not very big ones, so I'm really asking you, is that landscaping intended to get as high as 530 Webster, or not?

Ms. Bridges: The height on the 530 Webster building, again, is...? Roslyn, can you help me? Twenty-four feet. So, no, it would not be as tall as 530 Webster because we would only be 15 feet tall in the front area. In the back, we do have trees which would grow higher. It does bring up an interesting issue about privacy. One of the things that I liked about where the building landed in relation to 530 Webster is that at the... We've got the landscaping at the ground level hiding those windows. Then, we carefully placed the windows in the mid-tier. And then, where we have the top level, we've studied those angles, and if you look at those angles, because it's high enough up, you don't see down into the units at 530 Webster. And that's something, I met with the 530 Webster owner, and we reviewed that in detail, and I think that they were quite happy with how that was turning out.

Chair Furth: Thank you. We appreciate that.

Ms. Bridges: Thank you.

Chair Furth: These are all drawings and plans. Any consensus?

Vice Chair Baltay: I was going to, with permission of the Chair, offer to the applicants, I think the votes are here to reduce the building by two feet, if not more. Or, I'm open to continuing the project, and you guys go back and work your magic and show us something that aligns better, height notwithstanding. Which would you rather do? Through the Chair.

Chair Furth: At this point, would you like to come back to us one more time, or go to a subcommittee? With a condition of reducing the project height.

Ms. Bridges: I think our preference would be to advance to the subcommittee and work through the issue there. I think that we can find a way to... We will find a way to reduce the height by the two feet.

Chair Furth: Thank you.

Ms. Bridges: Thank you.

Vice Chair Baltay: So then, I'd like to add to that motion one additional statement, which is to say that the trim band at the top of the second floor on the new building better align with 530 Webster. That is direction to the subcommittee.

Chair Furth: Could you take me through your motion at this point?

### **AMENDED MOTION**

Vice Chair Baltay: The motion is to recommend approval, with the condition that (a) the material selection come back to subcommittee, specifically the selection of fiber cement siding; and (2) that the overall height of the building be reduced by two feet, with the additional caveat that the trim band at the middle of the new building better align with 530 Webster.

Chair Furth: Is there a second?

Ms. Gerhardt: Chair Furth, you seconded last. Unless we're starting over.

Chair Furth: Right. I'll second for the purposes of... Well, not for the purposes of discussion. Okay. Why don't we vote on that one, and if that doesn't pass, we'll have another vote? All those in favor?

Vice Chair Baltay: Aye.

Board Member Lew: Aye.

Chair Furth: Aye.

Board Member Thompson: Aye.

Board Member Hirsch: Nay.

Chair Furth: Well, what do you know? Four to one.

### **MOTION PASSES 4-1**

Chair Furth: Okay. Congratulations. Your project is referred to subcommittee. Thank you for all the hard work. Thank you for all the good design. Thank you for all the neighborhood participation. Look forward to seeing it. We're going to take a five-minute break, till 10:05.

[The Board took a short break.]

3. PUBLIC HEARING/QUASI-JUDICIAL Newell Road Bridge Replacement Project [19PLN-00130]: Review the Environmental Impact Report, Allow for Public Comment, and Consider a Major Architectural Review Application to Allow for Demolition of an Existing Two-Way Bridge On Newell Road Between Woodland Avenue in East Palo Alto and Edgewood Drive in Palo Alto and Construction of a New Bridge Along the Same Alignment That Meets Caltrans Standards for MultiModal Access. Environmental Assessment: An Environmental Impact Report

(EIR)/Environmental Assessment (EA) was Circulated on May 31, 2019 for a 60 Day Comment Period That Will End on July 30, 2019 in Accordance With the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Zoning District: Not Applicable (Public Right-of-Way) Adjacent Single-Family Residential (R-1[10,000]). For More Information Contact the Project Planner Claire Hodgkins at [Claire.Hodgkins@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Claire.Hodgkins@cityofpaloalto.org).

Chair Furth: Item #3, a public hearing on a Newell Road bridge replacement project. We are asked to review the environmental impact report, allow for public comment on that impact report, so, essentially, we're holding the public hearing for the environmental impact report on this project. And, consider a major architectural review application to allow for demolition of an existing two-way bridge on Newell Road between Woodland Avenue and Edgewood Drive, and construction of a new multimodal bridge on the same alignment that meets Caltrans standards for multimodal access. The public comment period on the environmental assessment – this is a combined federal and state environmental review document, incidentally, so everybody uses slightly different words. But the public review period ends on July 30, 2019, so those who wish to comment should do so before that. The adjacent property – in the city, at least – is R-1[10,000]. Could we hear from the project planner, please?

Claire Hodgkins, Project Planner: Good morning, Board members. Claire Hodgkins, Project Planner on this project. The project before you today, as you noted, is a Newell Road Bridge replacement project. Newell Road Bridge crosses San Francisquito Creek at Newell Road, between Edgewood Drive in Palo Alto and Woodland Avenue in East Palo Alto. To avoid repetition, I'm going to just give a brief overview of the project description, and then let Public Works Engineering speak to more detail about the purpose and objectives of the project. The City is required to identify a proposed project for the purposes of CEQA. After thorough review, Alternative 2 in the environmental analysis was selected as the proposed project. That was done in coordination with other responsible agencies for the project, as well. The plans before you today reflect that alternative, which includes replacement of an existing two-lane bridge with a two-lane bridge along the same alignment. The new lanes would be wide enough to meet Caltrans standards for "sharrows," which are shared bicycle and vehicle lanes. And also includes a sidewalk on each side of the bridge. The existing bridge is being razed to allow better flow capacity beneath the bridge. The project also raises a portion of Woodland Avenue and Newell Road Bridge, and it includes some retaining walls to support that road being razed. For informational purposes, we've also included a site plan in the plan set for the other three build alternatives, so if you look in your plan sets and you see Alternative 1, 3 and 4, those are the other potential alternatives being considered. Public Works Engineering is also going to provide a bit more information on each alternative that was evaluated in the draft EIR/EA [Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment], and the staff report also provides a little bit more information on those alternatives as well. This is just a quick view of the bridge from Newell Road in Palo Alto. This is a view of the proposed bridge from East Palo Alto, on Newell Road, again, looking over Woodland Avenue. Part of the purpose of this meeting is to provide another opportunity for public comment on this project. As you noted, the circulation period for the draft EIR/EA is ongoing right now and ends on July 30<sup>th</sup>. This is the fourth and final public hearing during that review period. But we're also here to request that the ARB provide comments on the design of the proposed project. Any thoughts you guys have on the bridge, the railings, the retaining walls, the landscaping in particular, would be very helpful. And then, any comments you may have on the draft EIR/EA are also welcomed. I also want to note that to the extent that you have comments relating to the NEPA [National Environmental Policy Act], Caltrans is here today to answer any questions as the lead agency for NEPA. In terms of next steps, as noted, the draft EIR/EA comment period ends on July 30<sup>th</sup>, and then we'll prepare responses to all of those comments. We'll be returning to the ARB for a formal recommendation on the project, and then, going to the Council for Council decision. With that, I will turn it back to you, and recommend that you hear from Public Works.

Chair Furth: Thank you. I had one question. The other responsible agencies in this case are...?

Ms. Hodgkins: There are several other responsible agencies. City of East Palo Alto is a responsible agency. Santa Clara Valley Water District is a responsible agency. Regional Water Quality Control Board would be a responsible agency. There are a number of different responsible agencies involved.

Chair Furth: This is like landing on an aircraft carrier. Okay.

[crosstalk]

Chair Furth: And you said this is the fourth public hearing. What are the hearings on the environmental document, what have the other hearings been for?

Ms. Hodgkins: There was a Planning and Transportation Commission hearing on June 12<sup>th</sup>. And then, we had a community information meeting on June 18<sup>th</sup>. What was the next one? I'm sorry?

Michel Jeremias, Public Works Department: Hi, Michel Jeremias, City of Palo Alto, Department of Public Works. I'm a senior engineer, working on this project. A third meeting was scheduled for June 19<sup>th</sup>, and it was a Public Works Transportation Commission meeting in East Palo Alto. We also gave a brief presentation at the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority Board, and we've had a separate community meeting for the City Council of East Palo Alto that was done earlier in the week, on July 16<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Furth: Thank you. First, to my fellow Board members, has everybody seen the site?

Vice Chair Baltay: Yes.

Board Member Lew: Yes.

Board Member Hirsch: Yes.

Board Member Thompson: I have not. But I looked at it on [crosstalk].

Chair Furth: All right, everybody but Board Member Thompson has been able to be there in person. Does anybody have any conversations they wish to disclose before we hear from this...? No. Thank you. Would you like to go ahead with your report? And spell your name for the transcriber.

Ms. Jeremias: Thank you. My name is Michel Jeremias [spells name]. As we change our presentation here, bear with us a minute. Thank you.

Chair Furth: We run your clock from when you're ready to go.

Ms. Jeremias: All right, thank you. The purpose and need. The project has been inspected over time by Caltrans, and Caltrans has determined that the bridge is functionally obsolete, meaning it does not meet the current Caltrans standards for either the upper travel lanes, or provide access for pedestrians through sidewalks. It also, it's not providing any accommodations for cyclists crossing the bridge. In addition to that, the bridge has a couple of issues that are a concern. There is a stopping sight distance that's obscured by having – as you can see on this photo – by having the trees and landscaping block the line of site. In addition to that, there is a vertical profile as you approach the bridge, crossing into Woodland, and that increase slope creates a visibility issue with the intersection of Woodland and Newell on the East Palo Alto side. Primarily, one of the bigger concerns on this project and how this is tied to an upstream project is that the bridge has a limited capacity. It can only allow 6,600 cubic feet per second to flow underneath it. The Pope-Chaucer project, as some of you may know, had flooding issues in the past. In 1998, one of the storm events that occurred. Pope-Chaucer has only capacity to allow 5,400 CFS. Santa Clara Valley Water District, in conjunction with the JPA, are working on a project to replace that bridge. However, that project cannot commence until this project is replaced. Commencing that project would transfer the flooding issue downstream to any residence affected adjacent to Newell, so there is an urgent need to replace this project so that we can proceed with the upstream project. And, it would benefit the community by reducing the flooding risk that affects our neighborhoods. Project objectives. As we have described our need, we also tried to identify, what are the objectives? How do we identify which

are the options to be considered for the EIR? Several items were considered. The first one primarily was vehicles maintaining a connection between both jurisdictions, allowing not only vehicles to pass through, but creating sidewalks and providing for multimodal. With those, there is, in line, looking into, let's not increase traffic in either direction, and let's not increase speeds. Those are items that were considered. The project before you is something that takes into account that should not increase speeds, or traffic, or divert traffic to other intersections. We also looked at increasing the capacity of this bridge. Increasing the capacity to something that is inline with the upstream project, and also, based on the largest storm of record, which is the 1998 storm. We're proposing to bring this up to 7,500 CFS. That's the capacity of the creek, as well. So, if you were to eliminate any constraints in the creek, that's how much flow could get carried just through this creek, from upstream all the way out to, now the Bay. Recent improvements also downstream have allowed us to increase these capacities. As you're aware of, there's a project that took place to widen the levies. With these purpose and needs, we also – excuse me, objectives – we were able to narrow down – and this is following several community meetings that have occurred in the last seven years – to identify five alternatives. The fifth alternative, not shown here, is to leave the bridge in place. But the alternatives that were considered was, the first was a – in my next slide, I will be able to show you a depiction of what these entail. But for the purposes of the public, the first alternative considered was a bidirectional one-lane bridge. The second was a two-lane bridge on the existing alignment. The existing alignment maintains the center line. We would replace the bridge using the center line as a control line, so the bridge would widen from the current bridge dimensions. I think I forgot to mention earlier, the current existing bridge is 22 feet wide. That's from outside of the barrier to outside of the barrier. The travel lane is only 18 feet wide, so we would replace the existing bridge on the current alignment as Alternative 2. Alternative 3 looks at the same bridge, but a partial realignment, shifting the center line over 30 feet for closer alignment to the Newell Road and East Palo Alto. Alternative 4 is two-lane alignment with a full realignment, a 90-foot change. Alternative 1, a little bit more detail for you guys to look at. This depiction shows what Alternative 1 would include. Alternative 1 is a bidirectional bridge. It's only 60 feet wide; it provides five-foot-wide sidewalks that would accommodate the multimodal for pedestrians. But, in order to accommodate 16-foot, traffic in two directions, 16 feet wide, we need to install traffic signals. A total of 15 traffic signals would be needed. A majority of them would be located in East Palo Alto. The traffic signals would allow traffic to flow in one direction at a time. One traffic signal is needed on the Palo Alto side, and that's to accommodate this driveway approach right here. Vehicles would only be able to travel in one direction at a time. There would be long-term operation maintenance cost associated with this alternative for the fiber and for the power that's needed to run the traffic signals. The area of disturbance for purposes of comparison, it's 45,000 square feet. Alternative 2. Here is a site plan that shows Alternative 2 and where it's in relation to the existing bridge. It's really difficult to tell, but you can see, here are the foundations of the existing bridge. This is, again, two 14-foot-wide lanes, two five-foot-wide sidewalks. It would be stop controlled. The area of disturbance, again, is 45,000 square feet. This is similar to Alternative 1, but in this alternative, one of the items that I want to, as we proceed through the slide, I want to make note of. We were looking at the bike lane terminating at the end of the driveway approach here. We would then stripe within the 14 foot wide, four feet off from the curb. We would stripe a shoulder line. That would create a 10-foot travel lane. The shoulder lane would act as a bike lane. I know we've had a number of comments through the ongoing meetings that we received regarding adding measures, so this is a little bit of a change. We've added more information on these slides for your purposes, to show that the travel lanes in both directions still maintain at 14 feet wide, but four of those would be shoulders, and that could be used for cyclists. Another thing to make note of, as Claire stated, we are raising this bridge by 1 ½ feet, which also requires raising the approaches on both sides – on the Palo Alto side and the East Palo Alto side – by a total of four feet. That would reduce the vertical profile that currently creates a problem as people are driving over the bridge. Alternative 3. This is, again, two 14-foot-wide lanes, 5-foot sidewalks, partially realignment with 30 feet shifting. Again, stop-controlled, and the area of disturbance increases. As you can see on the site plan, you can see where the existing bridge is in relation to the proposed bridge. Alternative 4 is a full realignment. Similar to the previous alternatives,

we're looking at two 14-foot-wide lanes, two 5-foot-wide sidewalks, with a full realignment. The area of disturbance is higher, 55,000 square feet, so as part of the EIR, analyze anything we have to mitigate at a later date. For the purpose of the meeting, we've added a few slides to kind of clarify the trees that are to be removed. On the slide, the items circled in red are the trees that are to be removed. Of those nine trees that are located within Palo Alto, I've identified the variety. We've got four eucalyptus trees that are right adjacent to these corners; a buckeye that I know a lot of people are in favor of; and of course, live oaks. These are the trees to be removed. Several trees to be removed also as part of this alignment would be located on the East Palo Alto side. The proposed project, again, this is showing you, we've made a few changes over the course of our presentation. We have an existing streetlight in place. That streetlight would need to be replaced because we are lifting the road. The proposed retaining walls that are needed would be located behind the sidewalk, so those retaining walls would not be visible from the public. But, for the most part, they would be visible on the East Palo Alto side by the residents of those areas. On our side, what we intend to do is also provide some screening. This area does not create the line of sight concerns. The concern with line of sight is located on Newell, on Woodland. That's the area we try to avoid to add more trees. We're proposing right now to provide a California buckeye, a blue oak, and Western redbud in this area. If you have opinions as far as what we would want to place, please provide us any comments and let us know. I thought there was a need of placing another buckeye, and we're providing two buckeyes in this location. Proposed project, also we talked about the concrete retaining walls. As stated, the concrete retaining walls are located behind the sidewalk. This shows where the retaining walls are shown, in red. The retaining walls on the Palo Alto side would again be located behind the sidewalk, as we're raising the road. The location of the trees are shown in green in this proximity. And apologies; this isn't a landscape plan, this is an engineering plan that has been added with a few details to depict where the trees are to be located. We also would look at guardrails to be installed. Guardrails are required to be installed per the CBC [phonetic] where the separation between the adjacent grade is 30 inches or higher, so we would try to provide those. For the purposes of the project, I think we are assuming retaining walls would be needed along this stretch, about 100 linear feet of retaining walls. We probably wouldn't need guardrails the entire stretch. We'd probably only need, as we conform to the existing grade, the guardrails would be eliminated. A little more detail as far as the bridge itself. As you stated, this project is funded by Caltrans and they are reviewing it. We've got to comply with Caltrans' requirements. Their standards for the bridge barrier is a Type 80SW for the sidewalk width on this. This is an area of what the guardrail would look like. The full height is over three feet. There are openings in the middle of the guardrail which would allow also for vehicles to be seen as people are driving across from Woodland. This would allow us to improve the line of sight concerns that we have. Other areas we're looking at on the Palo Alto side, where the picture of the guardrails would be installed. The guardrail would be located in the retaining walls, any areas that are taller than 30 inches. That wraps up my presentation. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Any questions of staff before we go on? Before we go on to the public? Yes?

Vice Chair Baltay: Two questions, please. As I understand it, you want to increase the flow of the creek under the bridge to 7,500 cubic feet per second. Is it possible to do that by somehow widening the channel, rather than raising the bridge?

Ms. Jeremias: Unfortunately, it is not. Widening the channel, we have to remove the two barricades, the foundations that support the existing bridge. We'd have to remove those foundations to do the widening of the creek. So, there is no way of us to widen the creek in that vicinity and allow the flow to pass.

Vice Chair Baltay: I'm sorry, you said if you remove the foundations of the existing bridge, then you could?

Ms. Jeremias: If we remove the foundations of the existing creek, that would increase the capacity, but we'd also have to raise the bridge to allow that 7,500...

Vice Chair Baltay: There's no way to not raise the bridge and increase the width.

Ms. Jeremias: No.

Vice Chair Baltay: Second question. Have you or anybody researched the actual statistics of traffic incidents, accidents, pedestrian, bicycle problems, at this bridge right now? I understand it's considered to be a dangerous intersection as you come over the bridge into East Palo Alto because it drops and you don't have good sight lines. Is there a record of actual accidents occurring there?

Ms. Jeremias: We do have a record. I want to say it was minimal, the number of accidents. I want to say it's negligible. I don't know offhand, though, but I think it was... We did not only information from the City of Palo Police Department, also East Palo Alto and Menlo Park, and I think we received, maybe a total of two or three, offhand.

Vice Chair Baltay: Two or three over...? The past year? Or total of recorded...?

Ms. Jeremias: For the period of the last couple of years.

Vice Chair Baltay: And is that a lot, is that many, or few accidents for this type of situation, location?

Ms. Jeremias: I think it was negligible.

Vice Chair Baltay: Okay, thank you.

Chair Furth: Board Member Thompson.

Board Member Thompson: I had a question on the concrete barrier detail section. There's a black square kind of underneath the big concrete box, and.... I'm on Alternative 2, Cross Section. I think we did see it in your presentation, as well.

Ms. Jeremias: Let me go back to that slide.

[Locating slide.]

Board Member Thompson: There you go. In the top right-hand corner, there's that little black box that's underneath...

Ms. Jeremias: Right.

Board Member Thompson: ... measured at three inches. I don't see that in the elevation. What is that?

Ms. Jeremias: That little block is another steel, it's still part of the bridge itself. The guardrail. It's a steel metal barrier that goes across the intersection. One of the things that we have to comply in this project [inaudible] there's a lot of difficulties involved, and a lot of things that need to be measured out. In this circumstance, we need to meet Caltrans' mash test, meaning that if there is an accident and anyone hits the guardrail, this will prevent the guardrail from falling. It has to comply. This is one of the guardrails that has passed that mash test, so we're installing a guardrail, a barrier, that meets Caltrans' standards. That small circle is part of their standard barrier. It's a small square. It's steel.

Board Member Thompson: It's the steel bar that goes across the whole thing, and it's not being shown on the elevation.

Ms. Jeremias: Right. I think it has been inadvertently omitted on the elevation right below.

Board Member Thompson: Got it. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Any other questions? I have a question. I'm looking at page 2.1.5-17 in the Environmental Assessment, which is a drawing, a photograph and photo simulations of the existing and future view from...

Female??: Two-point-what?



Chair Furth: Two-point-one-point-five-dash-seventeen. Key view #1, existing view and build-out [phonetic] submitted; #2, simulated conditions from Newell Road looking towards East Palo Alto? And one shows a heavily wooded, you know, big eucalyptus, dappled sunlight, as it keeps saying in the aesthetic section. And one shows a wide-open, no shade, new bridge. In the environmental discussion, it talks about there would be some additional greenery and landscape softening, and what-not. Is this picture down below the initial state, or is this what it looks like with the grown landscaping?

Ms. Hodgkins: This would be the initial state. At the time that this was prepared, we just didn't know the landscape design yet. In the visuals today, we were adding in some of the trees that would be added on the Palo Alto side. I will note also that there is going to be additional landscaping. A lot of the landscaping that we can do on the East Palo Alto side is on private properties, so we are working with the private property owners to resolve which trees are going to have to be removed, and how they want...

Chair Furth: This is not what the project is intended to look like when it's done.

Ms. Hodgkins: Correct.

Chair Furth: Thank you. All right, we have a number of people who wish to talk to us today, we'd like to hear from. The first one is Richard Yankwich, to be followed by Kevin Fisher.

Richard Yankwich: Of course, I would be the first one. I wanted to hear everybody else.

Chair Furth: We can put you in the back of the stack if you want.

Mr. Yankwich: No, that's okay. My name is Richard Yankwich [spells name]. I live at 1490 Edgewood, for the past 28 years. I'm about 150 feet away from the bridge. I'm the second house in.

Chair Furth: I'm sorry, I forgot to tell you, you have three minutes.

Mr. Yankwich: I understand. I understand this Newell Bridge must be replaced to improve water flows and flood control, but to limit and calm traffic, it should be as small as possible. On the line, narrow, and short. I'm not sure this project complies with that. I'm making this comment because the staff report and the EIR underestimate both the traffic impact of the designs and the extent to which East Palo Alto and Palo Alto have conflicting cross-purposes. I have been attending these meetings for the last seven or eight years and have gone through all the designs. I've also gone to East Palo Alto's 2035 EPA general plan meetings. The west side is intended to be the most densely populated part of East Palo Alto, and they are intending to add hundreds of units, commercial mixed use, and raise building heights up to 75 feet, while the city of Palo Alto notes in this report that Crescent Park is a low-density residential neighborhood. This bridge literally is what's between those conflicting views of the neighborhoods. High-density mixed use, low density residential. I think the bridge needs to be realistic about what's really going to happen over the next hundred years, because that's how long the last bridge was in place. The Palo Alto staff report does not acknowledge any possibility of a traffic increase. I would just direct your attention to where it says, "However, the improvement would be so marginal, it is not anticipated to cause an increase in traffic through the area." No change in the TIR. That is incomprehensible to me, that you can look at what is planned by both cities and think that there will be no change in the traffic. The size of the bridge is going from 18 feet wide to 45 feet wide. What I'm most concerned about is that right now, you can do sharrows and sidewalks and plan it so that people will use it in a nice, low-volume way, but when you've nearly tripled the size of the bridge, the pressure that's going to be on that bridge in the future, to do away with the sidewalks, to increase traffic, do whatever we can to increase flow, because it's one of only three points where that whole neighborhood in East Palo Alto has access, to Stanford, to the hospitals, to Palo Alto, to shopping centers. That's what East Palo Alto talks about all the time. And on the Palo Alto side, we act as if it's just going to be a bucolic residential, low-density community. My concern is that the traffic has not been taken seriously. And I don't disagree that it isn't the best alternative, but maybe one lane with a traffic signal would be better. Because I don't know how

to analyze this traffic, but I'm pretty sure that the EIR and the staff report really have not done so. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Kevin Fisher, please, to be followed by Clare Elliot.

Kevin Fisher: Good morning, folks. My name is Kevin Fisher. I live at 728 Alester Avenue. I've been in Palo Alto for 35 years now, 34. Twenty years ago, my family was a victim of a manmade disaster, which is the floods of February 2-3 of 1998. I evacuated my small children in the middle of the night, carrying them through thigh-deep, poison oak-laden waters. It's really a miracle there was no loss of life in that timeframe. It's truly a miracle. I could go on and on, but I don't need to. My children are now in their 20's, and finally we are on the cusp of a solution that will reduce the chance of flooding. 101 to the Bay has been largely solved, and Pope-Chaucer Bridge replacement is on the fast track. The main thing standing in the way is completion of a solution for the Newell Road Bridge. This Newell Road project has been bumping along for the better part of a decade. It was ahead; now it's behind. And I'm very frustrated by our City's inability to get something done. Now is the time to act. Pick a project. I don't care which one. Other people have opinions about the particular project. I want a project. So, this manmade obstruction will be removed, and the risk of flooding will be diminished. If my City cannot find a consensus and get a solution to this, literally the water will be on your hands. Not you personally, but the City overall. I realize you're just one part of this larger complex project, but please, find a solution. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Clare Elliott, to be followed by Hamilton Hitchings.

Clare Elliott: Hello. My name is Clare Elliott, and I'm a resident of the Ventura neighborhood, but I have ridden my bicycle over this bridge, and driven over it. I also was a past City employee who helped get the permits for the water quality monitoring station that was underneath it, and would love to see at least a slow gauge at that location, if not continued water quality monitoring. I'm currently a senior ecologist with Grassroots Ecology, and for over 20 years we've been involved in stewarding San Francisquito Creek and various entities, like Peninsula Conservation Center, Bay Area Action, [inaudible] stewardship, and now, we're Grassroots Ecology. My primary concerns are about the natural resources element. I have commented in the past about concerns about the hardening of the creek banks, and that we minimize the amount of hardening that we do, and find ecologically-friendly ways to protect the creek from erosion. My other concerns are related to the natural resources in the form of the vegetation. Unfortunately, I haven't seen the design. I've looked on the City website but didn't find a preferred design, so I'm just going on what it said in the EIR as far as possibilities and what the mitigation would be. But I hear from Michel that the buckeye tree is slated for removal, and that tree has been one that I have had my eye on for years and have wished to have nominated for Heritage Tree status. I brought a picture that I took in the spring a few years ago. I see an earlier picture that Michel had up was of the tree, and below, it's got an amazing canopy. In the spring, the scent of those flowers, it's like you're in Hawaii. And it's a venerable old tree that's been there, I guess for over 100 years. I discovered that of our eight heritage trees in Palo Alto, only three of them are native trees, two redwoods and one oak. This tree is not only aesthetically amazing... And I was really concerned that the EIR said – and I quote – “Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, such as trees?” Well, that's paraphrased. The answer was no. Scenic resources aren't visible because the trees block the view. Again, I paraphrase, but that's what it said. You can't see the forest for the trees. So, the impact on the aesthetics. And it said there was no forest land damage. Well, this is a riparian forest. I'm glad to see that the EIR says that the native trees should be replaced 3-to-1 and the non-native trees should be replaced 1-to-1 with native trees, so that's a step in the right direction. The EIR lists invasive species but does not list eucalyptus as one, even though it's on the Cal-IPC list of invasive species. The blue gum. And I believe that people are not aware of the value of these native species in habitat. This is like taking out an apartment building and replacing it with three single-family homes for the amount of habitat it's providing. Or, like a roommate of mine who ran over a Stradivarius. Well, that's okay, we'll just buy three new Stradivarius. Stradivari-I? I

really would like to see a design adjustment that allows us to maintain that bridge. In the past, Palo Alto has been very good about maintaining oaks, the old roads that go around trees...

Chair Furth: I need to ask you to wind up.

Ms. Elliott: To sum up, yes. I'd love to see maybe a hybrid between 1 and 4, so that the bridge is narrower and realigned to be able to protect that tree species.

Chair Furth: Thank you.

Ms. Elliott: I will also provide comments to the EIR in writing.

Chair Furth: Thank you. I have a question for you. What's the view of your group on the Himalayan blackberry in there?

Ms. Elliott: We remove...

[crosstalk]

Chair Furth: ... good habitat.

Ms. Elliott: It is not good habitat because it replaces a lot of native species that are used more by our native wildlife, and it's very invasive.

Chair Furth: Thank you.

Ms. Elliott: We are removing it in a lot of places and replacing it with a native blackberry.

Chair Furth: Thank you.

Hamilton Hitchings: Good morning. I'm Hamilton Hitchings, I live in the Duveneck-St. Francis neighborhood, like Kevin. What Kevin didn't tell you is that after that night, he and his family, with his children, had to move out for nine months while they remodeled the house because his house was one of 400 that had over-the-floor flooding. In De Soto, a lot of people stepped out of their bed into over a foot of water, and in places it was six feet deep. There are thousands of houses in the flood zone, and when I woke up at three in the morning, Channing was a river. It's really hard for us to imagine, but it was a river, and it continued to rise, and by the morning, it was within an inch of coming in my front door. We really want this bridge. The average flood capacity is, on average, it will over-top the banks every 22 years. It's been about 21 years. Now, it doesn't mean that next year, it's going to happen. This is a one in every 22 years. But the flood capacity is fairly low, and the reason is because in the 1940s, a city engineer filled in the sides of under the Newell Bridge with concrete. That significantly reduced the capacity. Now, as they said, to get to 7,500, you have to actually replace the bridge and raise it. But a city engineer made it a lot worse. We really need this project to increase flood protection for our neighborhood, for Duveneck-St. Francis and Crescent Park. It's also dangerous to walk and bike across the bridge, which a lot of people do every day. And while Alternatives 1 through 4 all dramatically increase pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle safety over the bridge, 3 and 4 would realign it, so, in theory, it would increase speed and the amount of traffic. And it's also important to keep in mind that many school children use Newell Road for their safe routes to school, for the Greene Middle School. It's packed with kids on bikes in rush hour. For those reasons, I oppose options 3 and 4. In terms of funding, 85 percent of the \$8.5 million is covered by Caltrans for Alternatives 2 or greater. I heard they were in the room today. I'd like them to speak to whether they would support Option 1, or not, because I think that's an important decision criteria. It would be nice to not have to pay the 85 percent of the \$8.5 million. For these reasons, I believe that, based on what I know right now, the preferred Alternative #2, selected cooperatively by the City of Palo Alto and East Palo Alto, is clearly the best overall trade-off. Please proceed with haste before another flood like the 1998 flood significantly damages hundreds of homes in

Palo Alto. Thank you again for your time, and also for the staff for doing a nice job on the EIR. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Thomas Rindfleisch, to be followed by Xenia Hammer.

Thomas Rindfleisch: Good morning. I'm Tom Rindfleisch. I live on Tevis Place, which is across from Eleanor Pardee Park. I had a foot and a half of water in my yard in 1998, and we're 21 years out from that date and have finally a plan for getting the creek up to a level that would handle the 1998 flood. Pope-Chaucer Bridge is basically the dam, but it can't be replaced until Newell Bridge is replaced. I believe that we absolutely have to move forward. There was \$28 million in damage in 1998 from that flood, and we cannot have another one. We've had three very near cause in the intervening years. I manage the Crescent Park Neighborhood Association email list. Every winter, during the rainy season, I get lots of messages about, should we sandbag, should we evacuate, what should we do? It is absolutely imperative that we move forward. I believe that Option 2 that has been proposed by the City is a middle-of-the-road, absolutely defensible option. The two extremes, and the arguments for the two extremes, have been going on now for nearly 10 years, and we've made no progress forward. I believe we need a compromise. I believe that Option 2 provides a way to satisfy Caltrans requirements. I believe it can also be modified as necessary to control traffic in terms of volume and speed. It accommodates pedestrians; it accommodates bicyclists. And as was mentioned, we are fortunate to have Caltrans supporting this replacement project, and if the funding that is available for that is something that facilitates what is going to be, probably a \$50 million project to increase the flow capacity of San Francisquito Creek. If that comes away, we have another problem of, how do we get the funding in place? And I think it's silly not to take advantage of the opportunity that Caltrans has afforded us. So, please, please, help us get this bridge replaced. I believe Alternative 2 is a perfectly good plan for doing it. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Thank you. Xenia Hammer.

Xenia Hammer: Hello. I'm Xenia Hammer, and I live on Sharon Court in Palo Alto, and that's close to the intersection of Channing and Newell. A few of the earlier speakers spoke of the urgency of this project, and this project is truly urgent. The flood happened more than 20 years ago. This project has been in discussion for the past eight years. It's time to get it done. This project is necessary for flood control on San Francisquito Creek, as Ms. Jeremias and prior speakers talked about. In terms of the alternatives proposed, the four build alternatives would all meet the flood control criteria equally well. Alternative 2, build-out Alternative 2, which is the proposed alternative, when a few minutes ago you compared it to landing on aircraft carrier. Alternative 2 lands on the aircraft carrier. Both the City of Palo Alto and East Palo Alto have to agree to this project. Alternative 2 meets that criteria. Alternative 1, I've heard East Palo Alto officials saying that that would not be acceptable. Alternative 2 provides increased pedestrian and bicycle safety. It can incorporate traffic calming measures that would ensure traffic safety for all involved. Another thing to keep in mind in evaluating various public comments is that the folks on the Palo Alto side who live close to Newell Road Bridge are currently not in the flood zone. They are just fine with the status quo, and that's because of the specifics of this creek. The ground level next to the creek is actually higher than farther away from the creek, and because currently Pope-Chaucer Bridge would divert the water currently, the way it is right now. In evaluating those comments, it's important to realize that the folks on the Palo Alto side who live close to the Newell Road Bridge are just fine with the status quo. Thousands of folks in Palo Alto who are in the flood zone are not okay with the status quo. So, it is important to move forward with these projects as quickly as possible. I urge you to move forward with this project, and especially with the locally preferred alternative, build Alternative 2, because it lands on the aircraft carrier. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you. And it does not look like it fell off the spaceship. Okay. We've been asked to do several things. There's nobody else. We have no further speaker cards. We've been asked to do several things. One of the things is that we had a question from a member, one of the commentators asked for a

statement from Caltrans, and maybe you can answer this, about whether they would participate in funding of Alternative 1.

Ms. Jeremias: They will not participate. Staff is here from Caltrans today, is here to answer [inaudible] related questions.

Chair Furth: Go ahead, Claire.

Ms. Hodgkins: [inaudible]

Ms. Jeremias: I just wanted to clarify. The first person that spoke had a comment regarding the width of this bridge, 45 feet wide. It's not. It's actually 42 feet wide. It's also not...

Chair Furth: I'm sorry, if you could speak a little more slowly.

Ms. Jeremias: Also, the locally preferred alternative is not aligned, so just a point of reference.

Chair Furth: And that's Option 2.

Ms. Jeremias: That's Option 2.

Chair Furth: Which keeps the, sort of existing extreme traffic calming.

Ms. Jeremias: Exactly.

Ms. Hodgkins: If I could also add to that. I think a lot of people are kind of saying, well, it's double the size, and then, there's some concern that that would increase traffic. I want to clarify that it is wider; however, we're looking at a curb to curb width of 18 feet, and it's supposed to be a bidirectional bridge, so, that's about nine feet per lane, which is not really enough room for two cars to safely pass each other. With the new design, we'd be looking at 14-foot sharrows, but as we noted, the shoulder would be drawn at four feet. We're talking about 10-foot-wide vehicle lanes versus nine-foot-wide vehicle lanes. A four-foot area for bicyclists who could also share the road, and five feet on either side for pedestrians. Really, most of that width is coming from additional bicycle lane area and additional pedestrian area.

Chair Furth: I have one question. The 10 feet that's dedicated to pedestrian use, is that at a different elevation? Is that a raised sidewalk?

Ms. Hodgkins: It's slightly raised, yes.

Chair Furth: It's not intended to be an extra space for bicycles or...?

Ms. Jeremias: No, currently, it's not. The design ahead of us shows the shoulders adjacent to the travel lane. The sidewalk is raised by six inches, a typical standard sidewalk.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Anything else staff wants to add in your ten minutes? Any further questions of staff before we bring this back to us? We've been asked to do two things here. One is comment on the environmental assessment; the other one is, I guess, comment on the proposal, is comment on the proposal. That's the request of staff. Any comments on the environmental assessment, first? Peter?

Vice Chair Baltay: Yes, great, thank you. Overall, it's a very impressive impact report, at least as far as the ones I've seen. It seems to me, however, there's two things that it's lacking on addressing properly. I think that the project will raise to grade between one and four feet over a fairly significant amount of distance in the side roads, especially on the East Palo Alto side. And I don't see it addressing secondary things, like how much more dangerous does that make riding along the sidewalk? Or, if you have a traffic accident and you go over this four-foot embankment? Or, if you live just on the other side of this four-foot retaining wall? I think it's a significant impact, and I don't see that addressed in your report. The second thing I think one of the members of the public mentioned is that, I think it is likely that this new bridge will increase the traffic flow between East Palo Alto and Palo Alto. Let me rephrase that. I think

the traffic across this bridge will increase between East Palo Alto and Palo Alto, maybe not because of the bridge, but traffic is going to increase, and I don't see much of a mention of what that does to the Palo Alto side, at least. The people who live along this road are going to be impacted. Traffic is going to increase, I think, because of development in East Palo Alto. The bridge perhaps facilitates that. In any case, all of that, I think, should be at least discussed in the impact report. Those are my two comments on that. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Anybody else have comments on the impact report? In that case, I have one. This is an environmental assessment, right? It's not the federal equivalent of a negative dec; this is a full-blown environmental document, so you can find adverse impacts as long as you deal with them. You have more freedom of action here. I think it's a really sophisticated discussion of the aesthetics. It's a very thoughtful discussion of what's there, of how people perceive it, of how it will change. I don't think that this document makes the case for no impact, primarily with respect to the replacement of heavily wooded, rich, riparian habitat, even if it needs to have some trees and bushes removed. As opposed to what we see in the lower figure at 2.1.5-17. You may be able to make that case if you better explain to us how it's intended to work when you do that landscaping and that replacement planting, and you do the maximum tree conservation. But I don't think you've done it yet. I think it understates the value of the, that great, you know, overgrown bramble patch, which is quite lovely in its own way, and is quite important as riparian habitat, which is a rare commodity here. I think that section needs to be reworked and beefed up. And perhaps we acknowledge that there is a permanent loss. I don't know. But as it stands now, if I was reviewing this from the outside, I would think you haven't made your case that there is no adverse impact. And having done that, you fail to address how to make it better. I mean, if you have to do a statement of overriding considerations, so be it. All right. Any comments on the other area where Claire asked for comments, which was the proposed alternatives themselves? Particularly Alternative 2. Alex?

Board Member Lew: I'm fine with Alternative 2.

Chair Furth: Peter?

Vice Chair Baltay: I think Alternative 2 is the preferred solution. It's certainly okay with me. I have two design ideas, I guess, to throw out, and now seems to be the time to do that. One is that, be careful with your 30-inch grade separation requiring a railing. That's a code minimum, and it may be appropriate inside a residence or something like that, where people are very familiar with the project, but I think, on the side of a sidewalk, if you have a 30-foot drop-off, that's a dangerous situation. You should have guardrails to a much less grade change. Just consider not just a code requirement. Secondly, maybe it's a folly, but when I drive down El Camino and go over the bridge, over the same creek, between the two counties, there's a small cast in place memento, saying you're going from San Mateo into Santa Clara. This is a 100-year bridge. Why don't we leave our children with something on the bridge, cast into it somehow? Just a memento that says this is the county line, or this is the date it was built. It's an easy thing, it doesn't take much to do, but it would be nice to see some detail like that added to the project. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Osma.

Board Member Thompson: I'm also fine with Option 2. My only concerns, which I think have already been discussed, are the impact to the landscape, the foliage. I'm sure everyone is doing what they can to retain as much as possible. The replacement trees do seem a lot less than what's getting removed, so that's a concern. And then, the actual design of the barrier, the mash...? What was it called? Mash test-rated barrier. I don't have too much experience in what all the particular formations are with that. Not absolutely in love with the design chosen in terms of that, but again, we have to meet a criteria, and there aren't many designs that meet that. It just is what it is. But if you're asking for our comments on it, I think it could be better. But it is what it is.

Chair Furth: David?

Board Member Hirsch: I also agree that number 2 is the best solution. I also agree with my cohorts here who say that the landscape plan is very important. We see excellent engineering drawings here, but we don't really see the aesthetics of what you see in the environment above it completed yet, and I would hope that that would be added to this study. The shape of the bridge seems to be shape based on engineering, again, to prevent the car from destroying the perimeter there, but it isn't particularly aesthetic. But I think you could go along with protections, and it's very important, of course, crossing the bridge. I wouldn't look to anything too much different than this. It's sort of a functional situation. It doesn't really, and it isn't really a major crossing all the time, so I think it's okay to be functional rather than extremely aesthetic. But some delightful items could happen here as well with a little more creative thinking somehow. I'm really pleased, I happen to live on San Francisquito Creek, a little further up, and I'm glad the water will be flowing better down this way, and hoping for improvements to our area as well, which would follow, I'm assuming. I happen to be in a non-flood zone but feel a little sorry for my neighbors who aren't, and who, in fact, are lower than they ought to be relative to the creek. I'm wondering about the bicycle lane. Does it continue around...? I'm going south on Woodland, or where, but it seems to stop abruptly. Is it a continuation on Woodland?

Ms. Jeremias: On Woodland and on Newell on the East Palo Alto side, they have sharrows, so the bike lane would end at the return on, on the return of the bridge.

Board Member Hirsch: And I think that meeting the level changes relative to the height of the street seem to be trickier in the East Palo Alto area than they are in Palo Alto itself. But there is one property there, and that's going to be raised, their roadway is raised significantly to create access to the road? That's been negotiated with the owner of that property?

Ms. Jeremias: We have met with all the property owners, and the one property that you're referencing is 475 Newell, and we have been talking with them. They are aware of what's going to happen, and what we'll need in order to adjust their driveway approach.

Board Member Hirsch: Okay. I think that's pretty much it. I think the landscaping, it will be really nice to see a more advanced design drawing for the landscaping throughout.

Chair Furth: I arrived here in 1998, right after the flood, which is why the house I've lived in for the past 20 years is not in the flood zone. Being in the City Attorney's office, dealing with some of the flood aftermaths, and talking to traumatized new friends and co-workers was, it was quite the event. It was very hard on many people. It looks to me that the choice of Option 2 is a good one. I do think that... I do support Vice Chair Baltay's suggestion that, think about incorporating some element of commemoration and beauty here. It's true that our bridge into Menlo Park has interest of that kind, and our bridge into East Palo Alto should as well. What's on the other side of Chaucer Street? I forget. More Menlo Park?

Ms. Hodgkins: Yes.

Chair Furth: Thanks. A notorious phrase, at this point. I do remember spending lots of time, looking at those gauges, watching the water levels rise. It's nice to not do that. I do think that these creek banks are some of the most beautiful places in Palo Alto. This is a very rare creek, as we all know, one that still flows to the Bay, and I think the work has been careful in this environmental review, but I don't think it's been thorough enough in terms of that aspect of what's precious about this particular landscape. I think it undervalues it. Thank you for all your hard work. I think we have nothing further to say. You don't need any motion from us at this point, do you? All set?

## **MOTION**

Board Member Lew: I think the staff report recommends continuing it. Right?

Chair Furth: Continue this to a date uncertain? Could I have a motion to that effect?

Board Member Thompson: I move to continue this to a date uncertain.

Chair Furth: Is there a second?

Board Member Lew: I will second.

Chair Furth: Motion by Thompson, second by Lew, to continue this to a date uncertain. All those in favor say aye. Opposed? None. Passes 5-0. Everybody present.

### **MOTION PASSES 5-0.**

Chair Furth: Thank you so much for coming to speak to us. Thank you for your continued interest in the project. Thank you for your continued work on the project.

Ms. Jeremias: Thank you.

### **Study Session**

Chair Furth: We do not have a study session.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Furth: We have two sets of minutes that are actually in our packet.

4. Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for June 6, 2019.

Chair Furth: The first is for June 6, 2019. Have people had a chance to review them, or is there a motion?

Vice Chair Baltay: I'll move to approve the minutes of June 6<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Furth: Is there a second?

Board Member Lew: The minutes are missing the subcommittee action.

Chair Furth: I beg your pardon, Alex?

Board Member Lew: It's the same comment that I always have.

Chair Furth: Somewhere I thought I saw subcommittee minutes.

Board Member Lew: It's a discussion that we have up here on the dais...

Chair Furth: About the need for them.

Board Member Lew: ... that the subcommittee is coming, but it is not the action that the subcommittee took.

Chair Furth: Okay. Staff? Subcommittee minutes?

Ms. Gerhardt: Yes. We've added those certainly to some; it looks like we missed that on these, so we will add those in.

Chair Furth: You can bring them back to the ARB for further review, then?

Ms. Gerhardt: We can bring them back, yes.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Okay. Subject to the note that... Which one are we on? Sorry. I completely lost track. We didn't just vote on that? Okay. Motion from whom?



Vice Chair Baltay: I made the motion. Alex is making a friendly amendment, that we request staff to include the conversation about the subcommittee.

Board Member Lew: And that's the Pacific Catch restaurant.

Chair Furth: Yes. Big project.

Vice Chair Baltay: That friendly amendment is acceptable by me.

Chair Furth: All those in favor say aye? All those opposed say nay? Passes 5-0.

**MOTION PASSES 5-0.**

Chair Furth: Staff will note that we're missing the minutes for the subcommittee on Pacific Catch.

5. Draft Architectural Review Board Meeting Minutes for June 20, 2019.

Chair Furth: The next set of minutes is for June 20, 2019.

Board Member Lew: Same comment. Seven-forty-four San Antonio Road, which is the Marriott Courtyard and AC Hotel. There's a subcommittee item that reviewed the window mullion color with respect to the building color palate, and it was approved.

Chair Furth: All right. Is there a motion to approve the minutes of June 20, 2019, with additional directive to staff to return at a future date with the minutes of the subcommittee on 777...? Is that the address? San Antonio?

Board Member Lew: Seven-forty-four San Antonio.

Chair Furth: Sorry, 744 San Antonio, i.e. the hotel project. Is there a motion to that effect?

Board Member Lew: With the last set of minutes, I think we just approved it, and that staff can amend it. Right? And it wasn't coming back to us.

Chair Furth: I beg your pardon. We have not yet voted on the June 20<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes, is that correct? I don't even have a motion on them, right?

Vice Chair Baltay: I wasn't there.

Chair Furth: Okay, so, Baltay and Hirsch were missing, so that leaves it to the three of us. I move we approve the minutes of June 20, 2019. Is there a second?

Board Member Thompson: I'll second.

Chair Furth: Comments? All those in favor? Passes 3-0, only three of us having been present. That's Furth, Lew and Thompson in favor, Baltay and Hirsch abstaining.

**MOTION PASSES 3-0-2, WITH BALTAY AND HIRSCH ABSTAINING FROM THE VOTE.**

Chair Furth: And again, noting that we are missing the subcommittee meeting minutes for that day.

**Board Member Questions, Comments or Announcements**

**North of Ventura Coordinated Area plan – Board Member Lew**

Chair Furth: North Ventura Report. Alex.

Board Member Lew: It's on hold until it comes back to the Council.

Chair Furth: Okay. I have an item just of general interest. Speaking of the linguistic landscape, there is a book in press, coming out shortly – I have just misplaced the names of the authors – but it's a study of

the changes in signage in [inaudible]. The authors are Edward Snajdr and Shonna Trinch, forthcoming from Vanderbilt Press, and it's a historical and [inaudible] graphic analysis of signs and gentrification in Brooklyn from 1995 to the present. And it's really interesting in thinking about our notions of what signs could and should say. And the movement from signs that say things like, "Scissors sharpened," and another 15 specific items at the hardware store. Two signs that say, "Bump," conveying that it is close for pregnant women. You might find it interesting in thinking about the reviews we do of signage.

### **Architectural Review Board Annual Report to Council: Review Draft Letter**

Chair Furth: The last item is, I sent to you – late, as usual – a draft annual report based on previous commentary from us at our joint meetings, and from Alex aside from it. I don't know when you would like to take action on that. It certainly does not need to be today.

Vice Chair Baltay: Wynne, is this drafted as a letter? We can send to Council as it is?

Chair Furth: Mm-hmm.

Board Member Thompson: I haven't had a chance to really read through this.

Chair Furth: Why don't we continue it to the next regular meeting?

Board Member Thompson: I'm okay with that.

Chair Furth: And I will say that I was not looking for editing; what I was looking for are the concepts generally acceptable, but that's going to be up to you all, what you want to do.

Vice Chair Baltay: I just think it would be better to put something out, than not. It's been a while, we've been talking about it. The guts of it, without even reading it in detail, seem about right. We did talk about it twice previously, didn't we?

Chair Furth: We did.

Board Member Thompson: We should still read it, though, before we...

Vice Chair Baltay: You should still read it, of course. Okay.

Board Member Thompson: Let's just do that. Let's talk about it at the next meeting. Hopefully we can all get a chance to read it before then.

Vice Chair Baltay: Okay.

Chair Furth: Okay, so, staff, if you would put this draft on the next regular meeting. My excuse this time is bronchitis, but actually, it's terminal procrastination.

Ms. Gerhardt: And a little bit of moving your house.

Chair Furth: Well, yes. Disrupting my life. Okay.

### **Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Chair Furth: I hereby resign as chair of the board. That makes Peter automatically become...? Vice Chair becomes Chair?

Ms. Gerhardt: Not automatically. I mean, maybe for this portion of the hearing, but we would need to vote if he's to become the permanent chair.

Chair Furth: I did not review the rules again. Ordinarily, in the absence of a chair, the vice chair chairs it, so you need to look for nominations and vote on...

Vice Chair Baltay: Very well. I propose that we have a vote to elect a new chairperson, and a new vice chair. I can't nominate myself, so I'll look for someone to do so.

Board Member Hirsch: I'd be happy to nominate you then, Peter.

Vice Chair Baltay: Okay.

Board Member Lew: I will second.

Vice Chair Baltay: Thank you very much. I'll accept the nomination. I will then nominate Osma Thompson to be the Vice Chair of the Board.

Board Member Lew: I will second that.

Board Member Hirsch: I can second that, too.

Vice Chair Baltay: Okay, so, we have a motion on the table for a new Chair and Vice Chair. All those in favor? All those opposed? Okay, motion carries 4-0.

**MOTION TO ELECT PETER BALTAY AS CHAIRMAN AND OSMA THOMPSON AS VICE CHAIR PASSES 4-0.**

Ms. Gerhardt: Who was the second on Vice Chair?

Chair Furth: I was. I'm still a member of the Board. Just not chair.

Vice Chair Baltay: You're right, you're right. Okay. So, 5-0.

**CORRECTION: MOTION PASSES 5-0.**

Chair Baltay: Before the meeting is closed, we have one last presentation to make, too. Former Chair Wynne Furth, on behalf of the entire Architectural Review Board, the City planning staff, and the entire City...

Board Member Hirsch: Who have signed a card for you.

Vice Chair Baltay: That you might remember us by your benches, Wynne.

[Applause]

Board Member Furth: Thank you very, very, very much. I will treasure this.

Chair Baltay: Any last words before we close the meeting?

Board Member Hirsch: Just be a little careful.

Board Member Furth: I'll be very careful. That's wonderful, thank you.

Ms. Gerhardt: We really wanted to thank you for your dedication to the City. You know, you were here formerly as the City Attorney, and now as a board member for four years, at least. We really appreciate your dedication to this City, and especially your dedication to our modes of transportation, as noted by the bench.

Board Member Furth: Walking.

Ms. Gerhardt: We appreciate that you have really ground that in our minds, that that's definitely very important to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles and things of that nature. I have a whole laundry list of projects that you have been here for, probably way too long. I think you were probably here for all, maybe 10 hearings of the 429 University project.

Board Member Furth: Unfortunately, I had a conflict. Actually, I was accused of bias, [crosstalk]

Ms. Gerhardt: That's true. You did have a conflict. But there's a lot of public projects: The 101 pedestrian bridge, the Avenidas project, fire station, downtown garage, the Public Safety Building, many projects in the Research Park, in the shopping center. You were here for all of the wireless hearings, including the wireless standards. The comp plan EIR that we've done. Both versions of Mercedes, and several downtown projects. We just appreciate your help on all of those. As staff, we also have a plaque for you, as well, commemorating your years on the board. Thank you.

Board Member Furth: Well, thank you. Actually, the one that really left scars was SOFA 1 and 2. But I think the results were excellent. I've already thanked support staff earlier, as they, once again, provided great food. I always feel we should share with an entire audience... Oh, how pretty. One nice thing about being thanked by design professionals is that they look really good. Thank you. I did arrive here in 1998 and was assigned to the fifth floor staff as my principal responsibility, along with the famous underground utilities – water, gas and wastewater. It was an enormous education and an enormous privilege. It was fascinating to work in this town full of creative people who do interesting projects, who think both on a very tiny scale and a very large scale. It's an honor to work in a city where you think, "Gee, that's a serious problem," and you look it up on the website and, what do you know? We wrote a report. And we probably are implementing it, too. It's great to work in a city where people show up at public hearings and tell you important and interesting things, and it's been most fun of all to work with my colleagues on the dais. To hang out with a bunch of really talented, funny, engaged architects has been great. Not to mention superb planning staff who will never, ever use the term "verbiage" to refer to text because they know to respect words, as well as drawings. So, thank you.

Chair Baltay: With that, the meeting is adjourned.

### **Subcommittee Items**

6. 250 Sherman Avenue [17PLN-00256]: Subcommittee Review of Brick Sample(s) and Bollard Lighting for the Council Approved Public Safety Building. Zoning District: Public Facilities. For More Information Contact Amy French at amy.french@cityofpaloalto.org
7. 3000 El Camino Real [18PLN-00277]: Subcommittee Review of a Previously Approved Project That was Conditioned to Return With Project Changes Related to Installation of Pedestrian Signage at the Pedestrian Access Route. Environmental Assessment: Exempt from the Provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Guideline Section 15301 (Existing Facilities). Zoning District: PC-4637 (Planned Community). For More Information Contact the Project Planner Danielle Condit at Danielle.Condit@cityofpaloalto.org.

Board Member Thompson: Really quick question. Who is on subcommittee?

Chair Baltay: I believe I am, and Alex Lew.

Board Member Thompson: Okay. Just checking.

### **Adjournment**