



Courtesy photo

Artist rendering of the Encinal Terminals plan that was approved in 2018. The existing Fortman Marina is on the right, but the berths on the left side of the site would be the city's responsibility to construct.

Waterfront Housing Proposal Returns Again

By Irene Dieter

The Encinal Terminals project is coming back before the City Council for the third time on Jan. 4, 2022. The proposed project would be located on an old shipping site along the Oakland Estuary, behind the historic Del Monte building. But part of the project site sits on state public tidelands controlled by the city, which cannot be used for residential development. So a land swap that would allow the developer to build housing on these public tidelands is being considered, again.

In 2017, the City Council approved the project's environmental impact report, but balked at approving the land swap until information showing the valuation of the land if the city upzoned it for residential via the land swap. Instead of providing the requested valuation, the developer, North Waterfront LLC, dropped the tidelands swap idea and came back with a plan to build the entire project on land it already owns, which was approved in 2018.

As for the city-owned tidelands, the city was to advance a commercial plan that would complement the adjacent Fortman Marina, saying the tidelands parcel has "the potential to become a major

maritime commercial center with space for marina land side facilities, boat and paddle boat sales and rentals, maritime and 'blue tech' leased space, restaurants and other visitor-serving commercial services." But the city has not yet moved forward with this planning.

Now, three years later, the developer is saying the no-swap plan they had proposed, and that the city had approved, is not financially feasible. They are returning with a request that the City Council approve what is essentially the same tidelands swap originally proposed. But they still have not addressed the valuation of the state tidelands, leaving the city again not knowing if it is getting shortchanged.

"What makes us think that this is going to be any different than the last time it went before council unless it is made more attractive?" asked former City Council member Jim Oddie at a Planning Board meeting in March 2021. "First, there needs to be more transparency on the financial numbers."

The current proposal is basically the same as the first one with 589 housing units and public shoreline access. The only difference in the current plan is that the developer will remove about half of the aging wharf on the western edge of the property because it allegedly is too costly to retrofit to new public access safety standards. The area is in an earthquake liquefaction zone.

This change substantially reduces the developer's costs as wharf demolition is less expensive than retrofitting.

In addition, gas lines will no longer be needed for the housing because those buildings will be all electric, saving the developer millions of dollars in gas-line infrastructure.

The Sierra Club raised concerns about the land-swap deal in the 2017 proposal and is again asking whether the public will be getting the best possible deal in exchange for giving public tidelands to a for-profit developer. Noting the developer's cost savings, the club wants a financial

"We have to do something different, otherwise we'll end up with more delays and fallow land..."

— Jim Oddie
former City Council Member

City Council Extends Slow Streets For At Least One More Year

Karin Jensen

On December 21st, Alameda City Council voted to extend the City's Slow Streets program for 18 months or until the City's Active Transportation Plan is complete, whichever comes sooner. The Slow Streets Program comprises sections of Orion Street, Pacific, San Jose, Santa Clara, and Versailles Avenues.

The City of Alameda created Slow Streets to create space for safer, socially distanced walking, running, biking, scootering, and other ways of spending time outdoors during the pandemic. Barricades, cones, and signage limit traffic on these streets to emergency and delivery vehicles and local residential traffic.

Since their creation, advo-

cates have praised the program as a way for pedestrians and cyclists to traverse the island more safely and for residents to be neighborly outdoors. In contrast, critics have complained that the barricades and cones are a nuisance and create a safety hazard as traffic diverts to other streets.

Anticipating the program's scheduled end in October 2021, staff analyzed traffic and collision data. They found that vehicle volumes, speeds, and crashes decreased on the Slow Streets, making them safer.

Additionally, staff engaged the public with virtual open houses, in-person events, and a community survey. Almost 2,000 residents responded. While this number is not statistically significant, 59% of respondents

supported continuing the program while 35% wanted it to end.

Findings

Staff recommended continuing the Slow Streets program based on:

COVID-19. In Alameda County, people must still wear masks in indoor public settings regardless of vaccination status.

Public Safety. The Slow Streets program has reduced traffic speeds, volumes, and collisions on its five streets, making them safer.

Parallel Streets. Data collected on streets parallel to the Slow Streets indicates that traffic volumes increased slightly.

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2021 Year-in-Review



Maurice Ramirez

Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft shares an elbow bump with Gov. Gavin Newsom at Ruby Bridges Elementary School on Tuesday, March 16.

Ekene Ikeme - Part I

Glimpses of normalcy returned to the Island City in 2021. However, Alameda still dealt with many of the challenges that gripped the city and the rest of the world in 2020. From more COVID-related death to continued hostile interactions with the police, the small city still faced big world problems in 2021. But it wasn't all bad. There were plenty of happy memories this year. Here's a look back at 2021 through the pages of the Alameda Sun.

January

The city launched the "Feed Alameda" campaign to feed the most vulnerable Alameda residents while supporting local restaurants impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Feed Alameda paid local restaurants to provide 90 meals per week to Alameda's homeless individuals, women and children at Midway Shelter, residents of the FEMA trailers and those who use the safe overnight parking areas at Alameda Point.

An armed man disrupted a peaceful protest on Jan. 18, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, on Mosley Avenue. Jonathan Gee was holding what appeared to be an assault

rifle, but later turned out to be an airsoft gun, when he threatened and yelled profanities at members of a peaceful protest when they arrived in his neighborhood. Gee was eventually arrested. The protest was part of the Anti-Police-Terror Project. The protest consisted of more than 100 vehicles. They used vehicles due to the pandemic.

A teenage girl was shot while at the Park Street Business District on Jan. 24. The victim was walking along Park Street with two

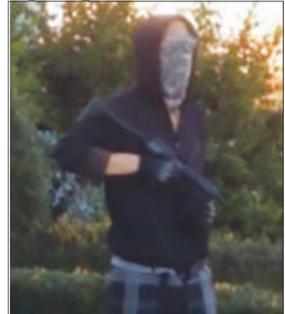


Photo by Dave Id/Indybay.org

other individuals when someone fired multiple rounds. The shooting took place at 3:40 p.m. while many other patrons were walking along Park Street. It was unknown if the victim was the intended target. The suspect, a male juvenile, was arrested several months later in the City of Berkeley. His name was withheld. He was also alleged to be responsible for a shooting on Jan. 13 on Santa Clara Avenue.

February

Shell Oil finished demolition of all the buildings and above-ground tanks at the 4.1-acre Pennzoil plant on Grand Street in early February. The plant had been in operation since 1951, when Pennzoil began blending and packaging petroleum-based products at the site. From 1995 to August of 2021, the property served Pennzoil as a distribution center. The site is bounded by

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Date	Rise	Set
Today	7:24	16:59
Dec. 31	7:24	17:00
Jan. 1	7:24	17:01
Jan. 2	7:25	17:01
Jan. 3	7:25	17:02
Jan. 4	7:25	17:03
Jan. 5	7:25	17:04



Gonzalez Vigil

Several vigils and demonstrations were held after the death of Mario Gonzalez after an altercation with Alameda police officers on April 19. City leaders and youth activists attended. Read the rest of our year-in-review on page 3

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