

Alameda Sun

Locally Owned, Community Oriented



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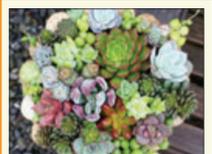
Sharpen your pencils for
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Alameda Sun
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Date	Rise	Set
Today	06:40	18:03
Mar. 3	06:38	18:04
Mar. 4	06:37	18:05
Mar. 5	06:35	18:06
Mar. 6	06:34	18:07
Mar. 7	06:32	18:08
Mar. 8	06:31	18:09

State Commission Nixes Harbor Bay Hotel Plan

Irene Dieter

On Feb. 16, the state's Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) — tasked with overseeing San Francisco Bay waterfront development — denied Mina Patel a permit to build a 98-room hotel at 2530 Harbor Bay Parkway, about one-half mile south of the Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal. The commission's vote was 11 in favor, six opposed and one abstention. This fell two short of the 13 votes needed for approval of any permit. It is rare for BCDC to deny a permit.

The hotel plan had returned to the commission after Patel tried to address BCDC's previous concerns regarding lack of public access and benefits. The developer proposed removing one story by shifting rooms onto the parking garage, improving bicycle access, moving the structure 10 feet further back from the shoreline and reducing the footprint by 5 percent. The revised hotel design was four stories on 1.17 acres. The change in design also required a new review by the city's Planning Board.

The project "obstructs views of the Bay and inhibits public access," noted Commissioner and Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan. After pointing out various reasons why it did not meet the commission's guidelines, Chan concluded, "There's nothing that can be done to make it right. It cannot be mitigated."

I on Alameda

"The proposal is rather lazy," said Commissioner and San Francisco Supervisor Jane Kim. "There's nothing on this hotel that is a public amenity that provides greater access or even greater attraction or interest to the Bay."

Many of the commissioners who voted in favor of the permit said that, while the project met BCDC requirements, they themselves would never have approved it at the city level. They did not think it was the best design or location but believed the developer had made an effort to address previous BCDC concerns.

"There's nothing for the public here," said Commissioner and Richmond Mayor Tom Butt. "It's a strange place to put a hotel. It's isolated with no amenities near it." The site plan offered no terrace for public viewing, and no restaurant, café or bar as BCDC's design review board had requested. "Normally there's a symbiotic relationship between the Bay and the project. But with this, there is none," said Butt.

An organized opposition effort by the neighboring Cantamar and Headlands Homeowners Associations, the Sierra Club, Golden Gate Audubon Society, UNITE HERE Local 2850 and local residents produced dozens of letters

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"It's a strange place to put a hotel. It's isolated with no amenities near it."

— BCDC Commissioner Tom Butt



City of Alameda

Nestled among barrels of aging wine at the Rock Wall Winery on Alameda Point, City Manager Jill Keimach spoke to a group of Chamber of Commerce members and their guests last Friday about the current state of the city of Alameda.

City Manager Gives 'State of City' Talk

Chamber of commerce hosts official event on the Point

Dennis Evanosky

City Manager Jill Keimach delivered her second annual report to the Chamber of Commerce on Friday, Feb. 24. She began her talk by asking members of the audience to choose their favorite colors. She introduced a high-tech, real-time method to vote by way of Smartphones. The audience

watched as their choices appeared on the screen behind Keimach, finally settling on the color blue.

Keimach then told her audience her favorite color is purple. She explained that her choice perfectly blended the colors blue and red that represent the Democratic and Republican parties. Purple, she explained, best represented her role as a public servant: nonpartisan and apolitical.

She looked back on 2016 and said that — despite her vision and goals — life got in the way. She pointed to uncertainty that today is stronger than ever. "Economic uncertainty is forcing our business owners, investors and developers to pause as they try to predict the future," she said. This uncertainty, Keimach said, includes changes to the tax structure, which has impacted housing tax credits and the construction of affordable housing.

Keimach also expressed her fear that the federal government could step in and deport some 70 percent of undocumented restaurant workers. She pointed to the anxiety this uncertainty places on employees and their families, as well as on restaurant and other business owners and the entire fabric of the local economy.

"Our community has come together for positive action," she said. She pointed to the volatility and anger around the country and said that she was "so proud that our community is becoming much more involved in a positive way."

Applause interrupted her speech as she recalled Alameda's high school students marching to City Hall and the compassion the community expressed for the Islamic Center of Alameda.

Keimach reminded her audience of the City Council's call for making Alameda a sanctuary city and the school district echoing the Council with a "safe harbor" resolution. Both come with a price tag. She asked her audience to turn to their Smartphones and let her know how concerned they were about the loss of federal funding: 43 percent of the audience said that they were somewhat concerned, while 35 percent said that they were very concerned, and 22 percent said they were not concerned.

Keimach told her audience that the City Council and staff joined a conversation with other sanctuary cities in Alameda County. During that discussion, hosted by Congresswoman Barbara Lee's office, Keimach said that she learned that the U.S. Constitution's 10th Amendment protects us. The 10th Amendment states that all powers, except those explicitly stated in the Constitution, lie with the states and the people. The 10th Amendment prohibits the federal government from coercing state and local officials. The threat of eliminating federal funds amounts to coercion.

She also pointed to court cases strengthening the requirement that an action must connect with the

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Firefighters Rescue Residents Trapped by Blaze on Lafayette

Sun Staff Reports

Members of the Alameda Fire Department (AFD) rescued two people from a burning single-story residence on the 1000 block of Lafayette Street just after 2 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 25.

Firefighters arrived at the scene at 2:02 a.m. Arriving crews were met with smoke emanating from the housing structure. They located two trapped residents and rescued them by helping them through a bedroom window, according to AFD Fire Captain James Colburn. Personnel from the Alameda Police Department helped with the rescue.

Paramedics treated both people at the scene. One of the victims was transported to a local hospital to treat non-life-threatening injuries, while the

Crews were able to quickly knock down the fire and search for any additional trapped occupants.

other was released.

The cause of the fire was determined to be combustible items — believed to be loose paper — placed near a floor furnace, according to a fire investigator. The flames caused heat and smoke damage throughout the house.

Colburn said damage to the house was not too bad. Fire damage was limited to the interior entry way along with the

attic and basement. Crews were able to quickly knock down the fire and search for any additional trapped occupants. The fire was extinguished at 2:32 a.m. AFD left the scene at 4:41 a.m., according to Colburn.

There were no other reported injuries. A total of 24 firefighters responded to the scene. Colburn was unsure who reported the fire to authorities. The displaced occupants are staying with family members.

Oakland Fire provided mutual aid to cover vacant Alameda fire stations. Other assisting agencies include the Alameda Building Department, Alameda Municipal Power and Pacific Gas & Electric Co.

Contact Sun staff at editor@alamedasun.com.

News in Brief

Council to Meet on FAAS in Closed Session

The City of Alameda recently announced a change to the discussion regarding the budget for Friends of the Alameda Animal Shelter (FAAS). A closed session discussion will take place among the Councilmembers and representatives from FAAS prior to the Council meeting Tuesday, March 7.

Closed sessions are not open to public comment. Mayor Trish Spencer had requested in a Feb. 21 referral that the discussion be held in open session at the March 7 meeting, but the referral failed to pass.

Any decision made on the FAAS budget is expected to be announced at the following council meeting set for Tuesday, March 21.

Take Survey Online for City's Strategic Plan

The City of Alameda asks that local residents and business owners take an online survey about the future of economic development in the city. The survey is an essential step in the process of developing an Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP).

The EDSP will serve as a long-term roadmap to business attraction, retention and workforce development activities, while also improving the quality of life for Alameda residents and the people

who work here.

The public can access the survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/AlamedaEDSP.

The city has held two community workshops and is now asking for additional input from community members and businesses. The online survey focuses on proposed economic development strategies. It begins with information about the EDSP, followed by specific background content and questions related to proposed broad strategies.

Completed surveys will be accepted until Friday, March 10.

For more information, contact Eric Fonstein, development manager, at 747-6895 or email efonstei@alamedaca.gov.

Island City Listed among Top Places to Live Forever

Alameda has recently been ranked as a prime area in the U.S. to invest in a home for a lifetime in the "2017 Best Places to Buy a Forever Home" report by the personal finance website, goodcall.com.

GoodCall analyzed 509 cities nationwide. Alameda was ranked No. 43 in the U.S. and within the top 10 percent for its affordability, low crime and unemployment rate, growing population and strong educational values.

Read the full report at www.goodcall.com.



The Oscars in Alameda Theater hosts red carpet affair for 'Hollywood's Super Bowl'

Photo and story by Douglas Despres

Marlene Sironi of San Leandro, Jenene Curtis of Alameda, Lara Hoeber of Alameda, Dayna Chambers of Daly City and Valerie Simon of Emeryville, pose on the red carpet before a live "simulcast" of the Academy Awards at the Alameda Theatre and Cineplex last Sunday, Feb. 26. Patrons who came through this red-carpeted Cinema Grill entrance were able to have food and drinks served directly to their seats.