



CITY OF VALLEJO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Anthea M. Hartig, PhD, Director
FROM: Michelle Hightower, Senior Planner, City of Vallejo
Dina Tasini, Lennar Mare Island, LLC
SUBJECT: Response to Consolidated Preservation Comments on Mare Island Specific
Plan and accompanying Historic Project Guidelines
DATE: March 20, 2007

The following are responses to comments made in your December 22, 2006 memo regarding the Mare Island SPA II and the Historic Project Guidelines.

- The word “Guidelines” is used interchangeably to mean both the Design Guidelines and the Historic Project Guidelines--perhaps they should be recognized with different, consistent titles from the outset of each document that remain consistent.

The intent is not to use the word “ Guidelines” interchangeably. The Historic Project Guidelines are referenced as such in both the subject document and Chapter 2 of the Specific Plan document, and the Design Guidelines are referenced as such in both documents.

- Following up on this point about confusion between the Guidelines, it seems that at the introductory portion of the Historic Project Guidelines, at page 7 under section 1.3, the applicability and use and scope of the Design Guidelines should be referenced, perhaps even with a chart, showing applicable locations (e.g., NHL area 12).

The document has been reformatted to define the Design Guidelines for the Historic District in Section 1.3.5.

- The HP Guidelines should be referenced as applicable to eligible as well as listed historic resources (e.g., section 2.4.2.).

The classification system established for resources on Mare Island involved an extensive process that included the identification of all of the “Contributing Resources” to the Mare Island Historic District, as listed in the National Register, and the classification of each of these resources as provided in the Specific Plan. The reformatted Historic Project Guidelines provides the process to reclassify the resources in Section 2.3.1; however, we do not believe it was the City’s nor Lennar’s intent to readdress any of the buildings on Mare Island whereby additional buildings would be added as eligible

resources. *In addition, the Settlement Agreement does not require the suggested revision.*

- There is also a document-wide confusion about the use of the words “structures” and “buildings” and those should be defined and used appropriately.

The document has been revised to provide this distinction.

- The applicability of the California State Historic Building Code to all projects affecting historic resources on Mare Island should be referenced throughout the documents in appropriate sections. (Again, we are willing to provide a red-lined document that includes suggested reference points. The section discussing the SHBC should refer to the California Building Code definitions, which may change over time. The section should reference structures, sites, and buildings rather than just structures. (Page 17, 2.4.2.) Thus, the first sentence should read “Structures, sites, and buildings...”.

The reformatted document provides a discussion of the California State Historic Building Code in Chapter 4, the Development Plan and Review Process, Section 4.7 explaining how the Building Code would apply to projects within the Historic District.

- There are also confusing references to a single “Historic District” when in fact there are three districts: a National Historic Landmark District, a National Register of Historic Places District, and a City District. While the latter two districts share boundaries, the NHL is smaller. At page 21, this should be discussed in section 3.3. (which title should be plural Districts). It would be helpful if each district should be listed and explained, and then referenced with the appropriate title throughout.

While the distinction between the three districts is important background information, with the exception of the NHL District Areas, the review process is the same. To eliminate confusion to the average user of this document, Chapter 2 Definitions in the revised document has been modified to include that the National Register and City Districts are referred to as the “Mare Island Historic District”, which also includes the National Historic Landmark District Areas.

- The demolition criteria need an additional section explaining that the NHL “features” (trees, sidewalks, roads, structures [cranes, fences, cultural landscape features) require oversight pursuant to the MOA which transferred authority to the Landmarks Commission from the Keeper of the Register. Our understanding is that City staff reviews proposed alterations to see how important the issue is, whether landscape designated, etc. As provided in the Design Guidelines, a proposed minor change of a character-defining feature within the NHL can be approved over the counter, with notice to the Commission; other proposed changes go to the Commission for approval. This should be explained in the HP Guidelines.

This request was not addressed as part of the Settlement Agreement. However, to clarify, the MOA transferred the oversight authority to the AHLC of the City of Vallejo as the keeper of the NHL, and was amended to include all of the Mare Island Historic District, listing the Contributing Resources to the District as an Attachment. In our review of the document, it did not specifically call out any provisions for the “character defining features within the NHL”. Section 4.1 of the reformatted Project Guidelines has been revised to include “Alteration of a project within a NHL District Area requires a COA from the AHLC”. If it is determined that the features mentioned in your comment are “character defining features”, then the Secretary of Interior Standards will be applied.

- As an addition to the HP Guidelines, we propose that they provide that notice of any proposed COA for Mare Island shall be posted on the City website and emailed to the VAHF and members of the Landmark Commission within two days of filing.

This request was not addressed as part of the Settlement Agreement. In addition, public notices are only required for projects considered by the AHLC and are prepared and distributed one-week prior to the meeting. Notices are not posted on the City’s web site for any Commission or for the City Council, nor are notices emailed to Commissioners or Council members. With limited staff, we do not believe this is a reasonable request.

Where appropriate and required by the Settlement Agreement, we have incorporated various changes proposed by the NHTP and VAHF in Chapter 6.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.