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**From:** Jim McCarty <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 19, 2021 11:09 AM  
**To:** City Clerk  
**Cc:** Elizabeth Pabon; Rita Xavier; Abel Pineda; Patricia Ponce; Arturo Cruz  
**Subject:** PUBLIC COMMENTS – AGENDA ITEM #PC21-048

**Subject: Closed Session Conference with Real Property Negotiators  
13831 San Pablo Avenue, San Pablo, CA 94806 (Former City Hall)**

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, and City Council Members:

The matter to be considered in closed session addresses the proposed disposition of City owned parcels identified as APNs 411-330-037, 411-330-038, and 411-330-039. Two of these three parcels contain historic structures; the Blume House, the Bunkhouse, the Alvarado Adobe and the Texiera Home, as identified in the General Plan [see Table 7.5-1 - Buildings of Historic Significance], as well as in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. The Alvarado Adobe site is a listed California State Historic Landmark (#512). Three of these buildings are used as museums open to the public and house historical artifacts that not only pertain to history of San Pablo, but to the SF Bay Area as well. These museums have provided educational and entertainment value to the citizens of City of San Pablo for nearly 50 years.

The establishment of the buildings as historic resources on the former City Hall site was spearheaded by the citizens of San Pablo to preserve the local history. As the elected representatives of the citizens of San Pablo, it is incumbent upon you to continue to protect these valuable historic resources.

On November 24, 2020, the Planning Commission found that the proposed disposition of the three former City Hall parcels was in conformance with the City of San Pablo General Plan, San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, and the Addendum to the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. This finding was arrived at without any details being provided by City Staff of the proposed distribution agreement. It is appalling to me that the City Attorney, who's duty is to represent the citizens of San Pablo, allowed this process to proceed. Without any details it impossible to determine whether the proposed disposition is in conformance with the General Plan or not. General Plan guiding policy LU-G-10 is to "Protect civic and institutional areas from incompatible uses that could affect their vitality and contributions to the City. Selling these three parcels to a private developer without separating out the historic buildings does not seem to be in conformance with the aforementioned guiding policy.

In San Pablo, like many communities, most historic old homes like those of the Emerics and Tewksburys have disintegrated or been demolished. In the late 1960s and early '70s, word came out that Standard Oil was sealing a deal to build a large regional shopping center on the Blume ranch; the Blume house, one of the best examples of old San Pablo standing at the time, was slated for demolition. Several groups of concerned citizens, including the San Pablo Historical Society and a group led by parents and staff at Bayview Elementary School, began having meetings to determine how to save the house. Gloria Whitsitt was a Bayview teacher married to George Blume's nephew Allen Whitsitt, so City Parks Director John Hunt enlisted her help in turning the house into a museum celebrating the ranch's history and lifestyle. On March 13, 1974, the house, which weighed 80 tons and could only be moved at a rate of 3 or 4 miles an hour was moved to its present location.

Around 1906, Guillermo "William" Texeira, one of the many citizens of Portuguese ancestry, acquired a wood frame house and he moved it downtown to a land parcel that became 2032 Van Ness Street. William died in 1958, five years before son Manuel succeeded Manny Mello as Fire Chief, a post the son held for eleven years. In the early 1970s, the City's downtown redevelopment plan called for a retail outlet on the parcel the house occupied and the City, recognizing the historical value, moved the house to the new civic center. The historic Texeira home represents a unique place in San Pablo history and is located on one of the parcels slated for sale.

The Alvarado Adobe Museum is a monument to San Pablo's Spanish heritage and the history of the Bay Area and California. Governor Alvarado was the Governor of Alta California after Mexico's independence from Spain and oversaw much of the secularization of the Spanish Mission properties throughout California. Just last year, the Museum was the

site of a performance by musical group Los Arribeños. The Alvarado Adobe Museum was also under consideration for inclusion as the film site for the San Francisco Symphony's four part series on music from different cultures to include Bay Area musical ensemble Los Cenzontles, and San Francisco Symphony musicians; however, this use was not allowed due to the current Covid-19 pandemic. Over the years, the Alvarado Adobe Museum and Blume House have provided tours the hundreds of children from the local schools, providing education and helping to instill pride in their community.

Note that the Open Space & Conservation element of the General Plan, the following implementing policy statements are found:

**Implementing Policy OSC-G-6**

Identify and preserve the cultural resources that are found within the City of San Pablo.

**Implementing Policy OSC-I-14**

Preserve and build upon the historic and multicultural identity of Alvarado District as a defining element of the city.

**Implementing Policy OSC-I-15**

Help to ensure that new development analyzes and avoids potential impacts to historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources by:

- Requiring a records review for development proposed in areas that are considered archaeologically or paleontologically sensitive;
- Requiring pre-construction surveys and monitoring during any ground disturbance for all development in areas of historic or archaeological sensitivity;
- Implementing appropriate measures as a condition of project approval – measures such as avoidance, preservation in place, excavation, documentation, and/or data recovery- in order to avoid any identified cultural resource impact.

The Amendments to the San Pablo Specific Area Plan (Resolution 2018-025) lists two additional policies to address the new land use designation Mixed Use Center City Hall Site:

2-I-17 Encourage redevelopment of the Mixed Use Center City Hall Site, **excluding the portion occupied by the historic Alvarado Adobe site, the Blume House and Bunk House, and the Teixeira Home**, as a mixed-use project with commercial uses and high density residential. Although a mixed-use project is encouraged, a high-density residential only project is allowed with Design Review.

Policy 2-I-18: Site planning for the Mixed Use Center City Hall Site shall incorporate the following elements in order to create a sense of place and to respect the site for its historic identity:

1. Provide a public plaza/civic space in the vicinity of the Alvarado Adobe Museum.
2. Provide connections between the historic structures, in particular along Wildcat Creek.
3. Incorporate the opportunity for outdoor gathering places along Wildcat Creek such as outdoor eateries for retail uses and outdoor passive amenities for residential uses in the Mixed Use Center City Hall Site.

It is not clear to me as a resident and homeowner in San Pablo, how the City will enforce these policies should the three aforementioned parcels be sold to a private entity without subdividing the parcels and maintaining City of San Pablo control. It is my concern that the City Staff, in their zeal to successfully comply with State mandated low-income house goals, is ignoring the value of these historic resources. As I pointed out in my comments to the Council on December 21, 2020, City Staff determined that the Parcel E was not suitable for low-income housing because they failed to arrive at an agreement with a developer for low-income senior housing. This seems rather self-serving as a failure on their part does not make the site "unsuitable" for low-income housing. Note that the vast majority of City Staff are not residents of San

Pablo and we looked to you, the City Council, to protect our valuable historic resources. It is my hope that the City Council consider the preservation and continued use of these historic structures for the benefit of the citizens of San Pablo.

Sincerely,  
James McCarty  
San Pablo Resident and Homeowner