
Community Engagement Facilities Phase II Work “Historic Alameda High School” Education & Fact Finding Meeting

April 11, 2013

Introductions

- **Facilitators:** Jeff Cambra, Alice Lai-Bitker
- **Stakeholders:** Alameda Architectural Preservation Society, Alameda Association of Realtors, Alameda Education Association, Alameda High School Teachers, City of Alameda, Legacy Committee – Ed Kofman, At Large Stakeholder Alice Lai-Bitker
- **Advisors:**
 - Historians Honora Murphy, Kate Quick
 - Peer Architects Dick Rutter AIA, Greg Klein AIA

The Community Engagement Process

- **Agreements:**

- Civility

- Respect

- No Interruptions (facilitator exception)

- **Public Comment Versus Community Engagement**

- Maximize public input

- Develop common pool of relevant “agreed to” facts

- Identify & attempt to resolve factual differences

- Recognize and acknowledge all interests

- Collaboration to satisfy all interests

The Community Engagement Process *cont'd*

- **Subject Matter and Objectives:**

Limited to Historic Alameda High School

Other Topics – Parking Lot

- **Stakeholders:**

Defined

Tiers – 1st, 2nd, 3rd – at any time, add to and move within tiers

Role of At Large Stakeholder Alice Lai-Bitker

Brief History of Alameda High School

History Part 1: prepared by Michele Ellson

1925: The Carl Werner-designed campus now known as Historic Alameda High School is built.

1933: In the wake of a massive Long Beach earthquake that damaged or destroyed more than 200 Southern California schools, California lawmakers pass the Field Act, which sets earthquake safety standards for schools.

1935-1937: Following passage of the Field Act, plans are made for a structural rehabilitation of the main classroom building. The gym and auditorium are retrofitted, but other parts of the campus are not; since the buildings are all connected, the state department charged with overseeing school construction refuses to certify the work as complete, and the work on the gym and auditorium will later be determined to be inadequate.

1939: A retrofit of the school's science wing is proposed but never carried out.

1948: A long-range building program notes that Alameda High's six-acre campus is much smaller than "present-day standards" of 25-30 acres for a large high school; it calls expansion of the high school one of the school district's "urgent needs" and contemplates methods for doing so, including expanding onto the former three-acre Porter School site to the south of the high school. At the time, the district is contemplating a third high school campus on Bay Farm Island.

Brief History of Alameda High School *cont'd*

1958-1959: The West Wing of high school, originally constructed in 1902, is rebuilt; a long-range plan document for 1963-1970 notes that it provides “adequate and modern” facilities for fine arts but that the school’s science wing is lacking.

1963: The long-range plan for 1963-1970 deems the school’s science wing “inadequate for teaching modern science,” and recommends a remodel at a cost of \$225,000. The building is remodeled in 1965 to meet fire-life safety standards, but no retrofit work is done.

1967: State lawmakers pass a bill requiring school districts to bring their schools up to Field Act standards by 1983 (rolled back to 1975 the following year). A structural engineering firm examines buildings on the Alameda High campus that don’t comply with state seismic requirements and writes a letter calling them “unsafe.” According to a separate report, the firm is apparently unaware that the auditorium and gym are technically not compliant with the requirements. (Haight and Porter elementary schools and Lincoln Middle School are also determined to be unsafe.)

Brief History of Alameda High School *cont'd*

1968: Voters reject a ballot measure to fund the replacement of “unsafe” schools.

1972: Facing a June 1, 1975 deadline for fixing or vacating school buildings that aren’t earthquake-safe, a pair of school district committees looks into moving Alameda High onto the 17-acre Wood Middle School campus or onto 25 acres on Bay Farm Island, ultimately recommending the school be moved to Bay Farm, where 40 percent of the school’s students are expected to live after the area is developed. A separate committee looks at creating a single, large high school for Alameda but rejects the idea, saying it would be too costly and impactful to do so.

1973: Voters reject a \$7.9 million bond measure and a complementary funding measure to replace Porter and Haight schools and to build a new Alameda High School on Bay Farm Island.

1974: In a report, a trio of architectural and structural engineering firms recommends the school district replace Alameda High, saying rehabilitation of the old facilities “is not the answer” to meeting the current educational needs of the school’s students and that operating and maintaining the existing buildings would be “difficult to justify as a continuing expense.” The firms, which determine that three-quarters of the 195,000-square-foot campus is “inadequate” (everything but the West Wing) put the cost of rehabilitating Alameda High at \$7.2 million and rebuilding it at \$7.7 million. Separately, a planning committee set to conduct a feasibility study for the school opts not to take a position on whether the school should be rehabilitated or replaced.

Brief History of Alameda High School *cont'd*

1974: The state loans Alameda \$6.8 million to expand Alameda High School from six to 12 acres and to build 117,000 square feet of new facilities, including classrooms and industrial arts facilities; the school board plans to tear down the old school buildings. But the state loan isn't enough to cover the total cost of the plan, so schools leaders seek a bond. (A later communication from the school district and a news clipping place the loan amount at more than \$8 million.)

1974-1976: Voters reject a trio of bond measures of “approximately \$5 million” to complete the campus by building a gym and fine arts facilities.

1975-1978: Alameda wins a series of extensions on the 1975 deadline to fix or vacate seismically unsafe buildings on the Alameda High School campus as new facilities are planned for and built; the Alameda Adult School is moved into the former main classroom building.

1977: Alameda voters elect a trio of new school board members who vow to save Old Alameda High School; they cancel a demolition contract approved by board members months earlier and hire a superintendent, Clarence R. Kline, who pledges to save the school. The campus is declared an historic monument by the City Council and is placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

January 1978: Students are moved out of non-earthquake safe buildings and into the newly constructed facilities that line Encinal Avenue.

Brief History of Alameda High School *cont'd*

February 1978: A fact-finding committee presents a report on other potential school and community uses for the old buildings.

June 1978: Kline requests and wins another extension on the deadline for determining the fate of the unretrofitted buildings, to January 1979. According to a district communication, the school's 1,550 students are without gymnasium and fine arts facilities. After voters reject a fresh pair of ballot measures designed to fix the school's gym and auditorium, a committee headed by Alameda Times-Star publisher Abe Kofman seeks to form a nonprofit to raise money to buy the buildings, which cost the district \$169,690 to maintain over the 1978-1979 school year, according to a news article; the Historic Alameda High School Foundation is formed in 1979 and begins raising money to fix up the auditorium, which it leases from the school district for \$1 a year for the next two decades.

September-October 1978: Kline plans to move the district office into Old Alameda High and looks into options for reopening the gym.

1989: Alameda voters pass a \$47.7 million school bond that includes money to retrofit Historic Alameda High School and to build a new gym there; the school district runs out of money before completing all the fixes the bond was supposed to cover, so only the central portion of the campus, which includes the auditorium, is retrofitted. Additional renovations – but not seismic retrofits – are paid for by the nonprofit foundation.

Brief History of Alameda High School *cont'd*

1995: A retrofit of Kofman Auditorium is completed, and the project is certified by the state in 1998, district documents show; the work, which includes insertion of “seismic joints” between the auditorium walls and connected campus buildings, make the auditorium building – which is topped by classrooms – safe for student use.

1998: Alameda’s Main Library is moved to Historic Alameda High from its old Carnegie Building digs after they are determined to need retrofitting; the library remains at the old school facilities until a new library opens in 2006.

2004: Alameda voters pass the Measure C bond, which promises to fund seismic repairs at Historic Alameda High. The plans are scaled back as construction costs outpace the funding that’s available and are ultimately unfunded.

February 2011: School district officials temporarily close Patton Gym, saying they can’t find the paperwork that shows it is safe for student use. The closure is prompted by the discovery of unsafe conditions at the Alameda Adult School during a \$1 million paint and window replacement project there. That discovery will lead the district to move the adult school to another campus.

February 2012: In a report, a structural engineer tells schools officials the old high school buildings that haven’t been retrofitted are at risk of collapsing during a strong earthquake and recommends fencing and retrofit work.

Brief History of Alameda High School *cont'd*

June 2012: The district releases a report that shows Alameda's schools will need an estimated \$92 million in fixes; it says Alameda High School needs \$20 million worth of work.

August 2012: A fence is erected around the non-retrofitted portions of Alameda High.

January 2013: Administrative offices are moved from Alameda High to a rented building in Marina Village.

History Part 2:

Presentation by Quattrocchi Kwok Architects

Presentation by Stakeholders

- **Alameda Architectural Preservation Society**
- **Alameda Association of Realtors**
- **Alameda Education Association**
- **Alameda High School Teachers**
- **City of Alameda**
- **Legacy Committee – Ed Kofman**
- **At Large Stakeholder – Alice Lai-Bitker**

This section of the program is to allow the public to provide facts and submit questions for future responses.

Next Steps

- **Options Meeting – April 15, 6:00 p.m. Alameda High School Cafeteria**
- **Options Meeting – April 20, 1:00 p.m. Alameda High School Cafeteria**
- **Shared Interests Meeting – May 9, 6:00 p.m. Alameda High School Cafeteria**