

## **The Poplar Community Meeting #1 August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

### **Breakout Group Summary**

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On August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Alameda Housing Authority (AHA) held the first of five community meetings to present information and solicit input from stakeholders. The first meeting was designed to establish a framework of existing conditions, AHA's goals, and to ask stakeholder for their input.

Participants at the meeting self-selected into one of four smaller breakout groups. Each group was provided with four questions to prompt a conversation about the project. Discussions were facilitated and notes taken by a member of the development team.

Below is a summary of the key comments received from the four breakout groups. The following pages provide more detailed notes from each.

1. Traffic: The existing Eagle/Broadway intersection is a problem. Tregloan is private and should not be accessed or parked.
2. Traffic Study: The community would like a traffic study to be performed.
3. Ingress/Egress: Desire access to/from Tilden rather than from Eagle.
4. Building Height: Five stories is taller than the other buildings in the neighborhood and in Alameda. Building height will limit sun access.
5. Parking: Concerned about less available street parking.
6. Building Style / Character: The existing character of homes on Eagle (and the neighborhood) is important.
7. Density: 50 to 60 units contributes to concerns about traffic, height, and parking.

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**Breakout Group Notes**

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**Breakout Group #1**

**Question #1: What do you value most about the neighborhoods surrounding The Poplar Site:**

- Lived there for 35 years, 3 houses off the site on Eagle Avenue – valued that the property was unused, it's ugly and quiet, but not impacted traffic or parking in the surrounding blocks when it was empty. Realize there is a need for housing without maximizing, and this is one of the most unusual and difficult things to do.
- Parking is the number one and starts the most arguments .7 spaces per unit and written as .3 per, it's a 120 rooms – 2 cars per apartment – impact the neighborhood and quality of life for them. When it was the school district, they were gone at 4 and on the weekends, and it was not a problem. If you have to park 2 blocks away, it will change your attitude toward your new neighbors. During the project testing, it was asked to put fencing up, so they don't go crazy. They have had constant people coming over the fence – they don't get to it, and the damage is already done. They have never addressed it – asked for the housing authority. I put 50 feet of covering on there already to start, and assumed that AHA would continue to respond without doing anything. We are going to have to see all that traffic, debris, dust, and standard construction stuff.
- Peace and quiet, and you can walk around the neighborhood and talk to your neighbors. There is a mismatch about the number of people who will be housed there, and housing is not anticipated. Original drawings were a 2 story, and the project has doubled in size – they cannot see how it will fit into the neighborhood or this side of the island. Trudeau is where I live, and it's private and not for it, as we have people coming through who don't reside there and will have to block access. It is the best access to the property. Unless you condemn our property, as we all own the middle of the street, you can't do anything. Unfortunately, the property does not have good access.

- Intersection is the big problem, can't turn left at Broadway onto Eagle, and you put this development on Eagle, 30-60 cars coming out, and already bumper to bumper to get to the bridge. I suggested they are redoing Tilden Way to at least have an exit, if not an entrance and an exit, they just turn right onto Eagle Way, and then use Broadway. Everyone coming out this tiny street – Pearl to Fern side, you cannot turn left, you will have to turn right, and it will reroute them right by a public school. It's a really difficult egress and ingress.
- Same as others, quietness and such, the main concern is the traffic, it's always backed up. Bridge lifts don't need to be lifted to cause traffic. How many accidents will happen at the roundabout? Round about by Payden is a long time. 4 months on
- Project funding – is there something that is going to be completed at a certain time? If funding dries up, will it delay the project?
- Quiet place and Trudeau – short cut to Buena Vista property lines go to the middle of the street, construction and delivery trucks, homeowners are responsible for paying for all costs. Affordable housing is supported, but it's too much for the site, and I understand the purpose. You want to delete one way, and it's the only way to get to the bridge. If you have an evacuation, it is impossible to get out of there. It's a matter of city planning, and major changes need to happen to make this workable.
- Traffic assessment will be the key for people in the group – they need to know what has been done, it's hard to believe a traffic assessment will come out saying this is believable.
- Property is right against our fence, will they build a type of barrier, so materials are not blowing into our property?
- It's a weirdly shaped property; the materials will blow into our yard. What do you do in the property's weird corners that are party?

**Question #2: What are the specific features this development could respect or reflect?**

- 3 story
- Everett Commons is nice; how many units are on that property, and what is the site size
- Avoid a 4-5 story building
- Weirder site with a more convoluted site
- Parking garage
- Underground parking garage
- An 8 ft water table will make it rough.

- Provide a shuttle stop and give it to the residents.
- Good partnership with AC to make the bus stop to protect from the elements near the property.

**Question #3: How can new housing fit into the existing character of the area?**

- It doesn't look like the property that is a couple of blocks away; this is a Victorian bungalow community. Something that follows
- Looking at Rosefield, thinking how much I'm not going to have daylight in my backyard
- Landscaping-wise, it's nice to have landscaping on the shorter eagle side and set back for the slower street side.
- Consideration of the building being a block or graduated building style – spaces in between, offsets let light.
- There are back residences tenants will be looking down on our backyard – placement of windows is a concern. If it's a tone of windows – residential line instead.
- Row of trees or landscaping to provide privacy
- Landscaping to incorporate this property into that area – there is a big area out front, Rosefield, that has great landscaping, but everything is built right on the sidewalk

**Question #4: What are your hopes and concerns related to the development of this site?**

- Is the amount of housing and the number of people a done deal? Is the density for the spot done? It seems concerning.
- You want to put 50 units in there, no matter what.
- The open side of the huge recycling plan – is there coordination for the gas factory? Across the Fruitvale Bridge, there is massive development on the site of the old factory. How will that affect the traffic and flow issues for these areas?
  - Direct this to the city
  - The glass factory is on the Oakland side of the Fruitvale bridge – it was sold, and all you would see is the factory – 30 acres of this, traffic off of that is horrendous. Distribution center.
  - What they are doing on Tilden right now, does AHA have input on that- they are cutting to a single lane, and we could take care of the ingress egress.
  - Can't park unless you have a permit – give it to the residents to prevent unwanted guest parking for long term on Pearl and other streets.

## Breakout Group #2

### **Question #1: What do you value most about the neighborhoods surrounding The Poplar Site:**

Values:

- Nice neighborhood
- Friendly
- Relatively quiet
- Great place to live
- Quiet block
- The school district provided a presence when it was in existence
- The school yard wasn't taking up space
- Turkeys, pets, and kids can play in yards
- Nice place to walk
- People can zig-zag because it's a shortcut
- Neighborhood centered around the school; houses sell because of the school nearby
- Neighbors all know each other
- A community has developed since the pandemic
- Walkability: close to Park Street, and kids can walk to school
- Long-time residents contribute to stability and safety
- Want to ensure changes lead to positivity
- Appreciates that AHA builds nice buildings
- Wants to make sure there is a sufficient maintenance budget; appreciates the design, good materials, and ease of upkeep
- Like Everett Commons as well
- People are previous supporters of affordable housing
- The neighborhood is full of 2-story and single-story buildings; a monolith would really stand out

Does not value:

- Traffic
- It's now harder to access
- Edison Elementary is currently packed

**Question #2: What are the specific features this development could respect or reflect?**

- Prefer to be physically proportionate; does not want a lot of density in the buildings
- Want plenty of parking; currently likes the availability of street parking
- Does not appreciate the current plan for parking: AHA-provided AC Transit passes will not address issues
  - Ex) Fruitvale Station development did the same thing, and parking is crazy there
- They appreciate the transit passes, but do not think that is a solution to address parking issues; they are concerned that neighboring streets will have less parking
- They like that the entrance is on Eagle, but it is a limited street to navigate
  - Want AHA to consider having egress on Tilden: maybe make it a one-way exit
- There is already a lot of traffic due to deliveries
- Need to coordinate with the roundabout for traffic control
- Broadway and Eagle is a “nightmare”
- Traffic on Eagle leads to more traffic on Pearl
- Egress out of sight on Tilden is preferred at least; preferred entrance and exit on Tilden

**Question #3: How can new housing fit into the existing character of the area?**

- Lower height; do not build the height at Rosefield Village
- Build a project with character (not like every other housing development); maybe use brick
- Most new projects look the same
- Plant trees (maybe add Poplar trees)
- Rosefield Village feels balanced because of the context of the neighborhood
- Is Alameda meeting the Housing Element requirements?
  - Reach out to the City of Alameda

- The existing character of the area is families
- Does AHA collect data on the people who live in Alameda?

**Question #4: What are your hopes and concerns related to the development of this site?**

- Lower density
- Egress/ingress on Tilden
- Most families with children will at least have one car; make more parking available on-site
- Build the project to scale with the neighborhood
  - Current residents are not allowed to build higher
- Current plan is double the first plan (initial size was more appropriate for the neighborhood)
- Upset about the sewage problem

### Breakout Group #3

*[Note: participants in this group elected not to use the prompts but had a general conversation about the project. These notes reflect that conversation.]*

**Overall takeaways:**

- Breakout questions were not addressed, but the concerns of neighbors were discussed amongst the group.
- Current traffic impact from leaving Eagle Avenue onto Broadway and Tilden is already difficult. Neighbors' assumption of the Tilden Improvement Project and the Poplar will make it even more difficult to commute in the area.
- The development team restated that this is not part of the Poplar project and is out of our control.
- Sunshade studies to be presented at the next meeting. The design team suggests showing a maximum of five stories through the easements.
- Neighbors of Tregloan Court informed that their street is a private street; they do not want access through Tregloan Court for non-residents.
- Neighbors on Eagle Ave emphasized the current scarcity of street parking; they want to ensure parking remains on site.
- Overall concerns of density and height
- When neighbors first heard of this project, they were not informed that the entire project was to be 100% affordable.

- Neighbors request a traffic study

Key comments:

- Neighbor A [on environmental study]: “ There’s going to be a lot of ‘half glass empty, half glass full.’ I’m concerned that at the end of the day, we’re going to hear words ‘There was no significant impact’ [to the neighborhood].”
- Neighbor A: “I’m trying to understand at a very, very high level the coordination of reducing a road from two lanes to one lane, and simultaneously adding 50-60 units, and I assume the exit and entrance will be on Tilden. I just can’t understand how you guys flow under the best of conditions, if the exit and entrance are off Tilden.”
- Neighbor B [in response to finding out site access will be from Eagle]: “Are you strongly counteracting that? Eagle’s got problems, and you’re not addressing the problem.”
- Neighbor B: “You’re going to put up 5 stories. I look back, and you’re going to put all the neighbors in the shade. Afternoon sun is the only sun we get in that neighborhood. If you put up 5 stories in that narrow lot, you are going to take away my garden, every neighbor’s garden, our living rooms, and our backyards in shade. There’s no other community on the island that I’ve seen that. Are you committed to not shading us?”
- Neighbor C: “I’m weary of reaching that fourth meeting, the final development plan, and all of these things that have really not been addressed, or the sort of rush to make this qualify for SB35 to sort of transform the project behind anybody’s ability to get a grasp on it, and to see real solutions, or to feel confident in this project.”

**Question #1: What do you value most about the neighborhoods surrounding The Poplar Site:**

**Question #2: What are the specific features this development could respect or reflect?**

**Question #3: How can new housing fit into the existing character of the area?**

**Question #4: What are your hopes and concerns related to the development of this site?**



## Breakout Group #4

### **Question #1: What do you value most about the neighborhoods surrounding The Poplar Site:**

- Informed us that the residents on Tregalon Ct street paid for the road because it is private property
- “First, when this project started, it was 20-30 units, 2-3 stories, but now I can’t accept this number of 50-60 units, are you kidding? Most of the adjacent houses are 1 story. Mine’s the biggest on the street because it’s a Victorian. To come in now and tell us this is what you are building - you can go somewhere else and do that. 5 stories do not fit into our neighborhood. Will it keep growing? The only way that fits is if you go up high. Your zoning is 38’ now. To get it up higher, you have to do something to get higher. I have lived on that street for 47 years. You are changing it. 2 stories, maybe, I can handle. To have this big building right next to you. And the traffic – what about the people who can’t park in front of their own houses? Our neighbor had to fight to get into the school. Adding more kids? Not enough room. Are they going to be bused elsewhere? Traffic, schools, height, I keep asking the last 3 years – only that it is getting bigger. To put this project in our little community is wrong. You don’t have to put it in our community. Do what’s workable in the neighborhood.”
- “I have a young daughter; she’s in the school district. It would be painful to me if she went to school with teachers who don’t live here. I value and understand having housing for teachers. As a community, we are facing, looking down a long barrel – I hope my daughter gets taught by people who live in this community. Finding ways to make this possible is very important to me and for my daughter.

### **Question #2: What are the specific features this development could respect or reflect?**

- “Cars – people going out. If I had little children again, I’d have one car, maybe 2. Where am I going to put them? How many cars are you planning? I was told there would be fewer than one parking space per unit. You might change the zones to get what you want, changing from 38’ to 50-60’ is huge.”
- Question: Would like confirmation about the percentage of teachers and the other makeup of residents. Thinks teachers should be #1.

- “It’s a great neighborhood – we’d like our son to live in an affordable place - he has a disability. The odds of him being in this project are difficult to imagine. It’s a nice neighborhood. Looking forward to seeing setbacks and where the sun comes up and goes down. As much as we don’t want traffic, we have to have some flexibility.”

**Question #3: How can new housing fit into the existing character of the area?**

- “It doesn’t.” “I’ve been waiting 3 years for the design.” wants to see “some charm”
- “Let’s be patient. See what they come up with.” (to neighbor A)
- “Don’t do what they did at Del Monte – slapped crap on top. They should have done a tower on the water and got people over there.”
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**Question #4: What are your hopes and concerns related to the development of this site?**

- “Alameda deserves to be treated better. It’s much different – getting crowded.”
- “I have neighbors who say, ‘they’ve already decided, what’s the point’ (in response to the design and getting input from the community on the design)
- Expressed concern over the school already being at capacity, and new residents would make it even more difficult for existing residents to go to local schools