



Activities in Alamo

A.I.A. 2008 - 2009 Meeting Dates

Planning Committee Dates

May 14, 2008	November 12, 2008
June 11, 2008	December 10, 2008
July 9, 2008	January 14, 2009
August 13, 2008	February 11, 2009
Sept. 10, 2008	March 11, 2009
October 8, 2008	April 8, 2009

Planning Committee Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at Ceekside Community Church, 1350 Danville Blvd.

Board of Directors Dates

May 15, 2008	November 13, 2008
June 12, 2008	December 11, 2008
July 10, 2008	January 15, 2009
August 14, 2008	February 12, 2009
September 11, 2008	March 12, 2009
October 9, 2008	April 9, 2009

Board of Director meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the Thursday following the second Wednesday of each month at Ceekside Community Church, 1350 Danville Blvd.

Joe Bologna - Newsletter Editor
P.O. Box 156, Alamo, CA 94507
925-314-0521

Our thanks to H&H Printing for producing our newsletter

Table of Contents

Committee Reports..... 2-15

Publicity.....2

Planning.....3

Transportation.....7

Membership Report.....9

Web Services.....9

Code Compliance..... 10

The Community Life Of Alamo 10

Candidate Statements..... 13

Board Election Ballot..... 15

Membership Renewal 15

AIA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Brad Waite, President

“So what’s happening in Alamo?” a former Alamo neighbor and old friend now living in Southern California asked me. It was a casual question, and I knew he was looking for a short answer. So I obliged, and we moved on to our childrens’ sports talk.

What I wanted to say was, “A lot is happening in Alamo!”

As I write this, the obvious happening in our community is the Alamo Incorporation Movement. Briefly, incorporation would make Alamo a legal jurisdiction of the State with its own local government, rather than a part of Contra Costa County, which is Alamo’s local government now. While not taking a position for or against incorporation, AIA supported the incorporation petition drive in order to see results of the State-mandated studies on the feasibility of incorporation for Alamo. These studies, which will come out between July and September this year, will explore issues such as tax revenue that is now generated in unincorporated Alamo and returned to the County, tax revenue that would accrue to the new town, tax apportionment between the County and the new town to make the County revenue neutral, and transfer of services from County agencies to the new town. We see the State studies as essential to helping Alamo voters know whether or not incorporation would benefit Alamo, and we encourage everyone in Alamo to read, question, and discuss them.

An aspect of the incorporation movement that I personally like is the sense of community it has engendered, among both those for and against the idea. The issue has created a buzz in our community. Alamo residents are characteristically very busy with families and jobs and schools and extracurricular activities, and it can take an issue with the ramifications of incorporation to attract their attention and get them involved beyond their usual orbit.

Last year was also a good year for building AIA membership, and we used our membership strength to help promote the values of AIA with our County government in Martinez. We need to continue to move forward with this strength so that Alamo and the members we represent will continue to be heard at the County level. I hope when you read this newsletter you will consider mailing the AIA membership form at the end of it to renew or to join us for the first time. Your membership support helps and inspires our efforts. It was the will of AIA members that influenced the County Board of Supervisors to postpone eliminating the San Ramon

(Continued from Page 1)

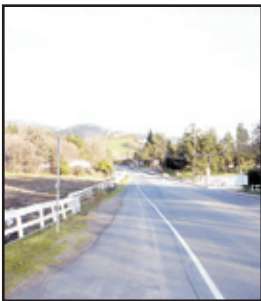
AIA President's Message

by Brad Waite, President

Valley Regional Planning Commission (we are still watching for the next shoe to drop!). The Commission gives an essential local – rather than county-wide – perspective about development issues in our immediate community.

With work, daily activities, and children, I know how hard it is to put forth another front and get involved with your community. It is time-consuming to just keep abreast of what is happening around you. But I encourage you to do so. This wonderful community where we all live is your home. You don't want to see it change dramatically in ways that affect you adversely in order to benefit those who have no stake in its livability. AIA will continue to be involved in what happens in Alamo, hopefully with your support.

In the following pages you will read reports of the AIA committee chairs for 2007. It was business as usual last year with our volunteer Board and committee members and chairs, who stayed very busy. I want to send a special thanks to them all, and especially to the members of our Planning Committee for the countless volunteer hours they give to serve Alamo. Their work is invaluable to our community.



AIA Publicity Report

By Grace Schmidt

Welcome to the AIA Annual Report for 2007.

Inside you will find individual reports of last year's activities from AIA's six volunteer committee chairs.

Their reports come to you as a recent part of a long history of AIA volunteerism in Alamo – since 1955. This year we have asked our committee chairs for reports that are suitably brief (for your reading pleasure), but we know that their work and the work of their committees is extensive, some individuals giving as much as twenty hours a month.

If you are not already familiar with the work of AIA, the Annual Report will introduce you to

what we do, and if you have followed our activities in the past, it will familiarize you with our current issues. Our procedure is for committee chairs to meet with Board members once a month – each Thursday after the second Wednesday (when the Planning Committee meets) – to discuss and vote on committee recommendations. All these meetings of AIA are open to the public.

Communication with the public is very important to AIA – and challenging, too, because we are all volunteers with jobs and families that claim most of our time. In 2007, we made some changes to make our communication more efficient and effective. We changed our telephone number to (925)314-0521 and made certain that voice mail at that number is continually monitored. (Please bear with us and call again if you get the occasional fax shriek; our resources are limited.) We reprogrammed the links to committee chairs on our website www.alamoca.org so that each link goes to the individual rather than to the website manager. And we continued a practice we started half way through the previous year of sponsoring an AIA page each month in Alamo's monthly newspaper, Alamo Today.

Our monthly page in Alamo Today celebrates the natural beauties and civic life of Alamo that contribute to quality of life here. It also supports and makes heard the voices of Alamo to our local government in Martinez. While we expect to find differences in point of view about traffic, roads, and development between Alamo residents and County government officials – differences that have percolated for over thirty years – we believe that the differences must continue to be allowed to be voiced and heard, and we support County policy that acknowledges that right.

A big part of our communication with Alamo citizens is this Annual Report. We send it to every household in Alamo. More than any individual piece of outreach or exchange with our membership, it gives a big picture and a small detailed picture of Alamo, as well as some signs that outline a picture of Alamo in the future. I urge you to read as much of it as you can find time for – in several sittings if that's what it takes in a busy household, to talk about the issues it raises with your neighbors in Alamo, and to contact us at any time that you want to continue the discussion.



PLANNING COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2007

by Roger Smith

The Planning Committee reviews applications made to the County Planning Department for real estate use. This review includes applications for subdivisions, land use permits, rezoning, variances, and, occasionally, amendments to the County's General Plan. Each item scheduled for review is placed on our Planning Committee meeting agenda, which is then mailed to all AIA members and also distributed by Committee members to neighbors of the applicant's property.

The applicant, their neighbors and all Alamo residents attending our public meetings are encouraged to give their input during our monthly Planning Committee meetings. For each agenda item, the Committee takes a position by majority vote. On the Thursday night immediately following the Planning Committee meeting, the AIA Board of Directors holds a public meeting and reviews the Planning Committee's recommendation. After the review, the Board's decision is then sent on to the County Planning Department as a recommendation.

The County Planning Department then reviews the AIA recommendation, together with recommendations from County agencies such as the Fire District, Flood Control, Public Works and others. County staff then formulates their recommendation to the County Zoning Administrator for discussion during a public meeting held at County facilities in Martinez.

Generally, the County Planning Department staff's recommendation and the County Zoning Administrator's decision are in agreement with AIA's recommendation. However, occasionally the County's decision is not in agreement with AIA's recommendation. Should this happen, AIA or other interested parties may appeal the decision and attempt to have it altered at a higher level County hearing.

Appeals are first heard by the San Ramon Valley Regional Planning Commission and then, if still under appeal, by the County Board of Supervisors.

In 2007, the Planning Committee was composed of

Jack Behseresht, Dave Ciapponi, Pat Gulliford, John Henderson (Chairman Emeritus), Greg Jones, Jeff McClung (Co-Chairman), Ed Moran, Preston Taylor and the writer. AIA Planning Committee members are all Alamo residents, many are business owners and all are customers of Alamo businesses. Each Planning Committee Member volunteers a significant amount of their personal time in the review of property applications impacting our Community.

During 2007, the AIA Planning Committee reviewed 67 agenda items with approximately one-half requiring successive hearings – some for several months. Most were recommended to the County for approval, many with conditions of approval added by AIA. Several flagrant items were recommended to the County for disapproval. In most cases, the County's final decision was consistent with AIA's recommendation.

Chevron

Starting in 2006, Chevron presented an application for AIA's review that involved extensive reconstruction of their present location on Danville Blvd. The site was to be completely redone with the current garage/convenience store removed and rebuilt on the south portion of the site.

In February, 2007, the County completed their review and approval of this application including the recommendations AIA made for the project. AIA Planning Committee members were present at this public meeting, spoke in support of the project in its final version and assisted in the process of finalizing several important details on the project.

The fascia around the canopy, as originally installed, was a manufactured item in material, form and coloring, completed as a finished product, then installed at the site. Once installed and prior to the completion of site construction and occupancy of the site, the fascia was painted to match the final colors approved for the site so that colors matched throughout the canopy, pump island columns, buildings and equipment actually on site.

Included in this on-going review of site colors, was the review of external materials that included improvements to the pump island column materials with installation of matching materials on the exterior of the building. The addition of these materials on both the exterior of the pump islands and exterior of the building did result in an adjustment in the colors originally approved for the project.

Continued on page 4

Also, during this phase of the construction process and prior to painting the fascia and the rest of the site, the Chevron logo section was slightly inset into the fascia to create a better overall impression.

AIA Planning Committee representatives, Senior County Planner Will Nelson and Chevron representatives conducted a series of site visits to discuss and ultimately agree upon the addition of a number of trees to replace those removed and to match/blend with the landscape architectural design for the site.

Also, the addition of an arbor along the fence/wall at the back of the site resulted in better overall sight mitigation for this side of the parcel. Over time, this arbor will support flowering vines to further add to this improvement for sight mitigation.

On Saturday, March 15th, 2008, Chevron officials were present at the Grand Opening for their Alamo station. In attendance were AIA Board President Brad Waite, Will Nelson, San Ramon Valley Regional Planning Commission member and AIA Transportation Chairman Mike Gibson, officials from the surrounding area, and this writer.



All of the participants at this Grand Opening commented about the attractiveness of the project and that the final result was worthy of the significant amount of time spent by both AIA and County Planning.

Other Non-Residential Applications

Under review during 2007, these included a continuing application on wireless transmission facilities for cellular services at 1241 Laverock Lane.

Applications for wireless transmission facilities need to balance the need of our community for improved service by the various cellular providers with sites that are visually non-intrusive. For example, sites that are prized for wireless transmission facilities are typically those that have elevation and geographic location enabling the range of coverage to be larger. These elevated sites tend to be very prominent and visible to residents, neighbors and travelers. The key in managing these sites is to focus on what will pro-

vide greater service to Alamo residents while minimizing the impact of new wireless antennas and equipment facilities.

As a committee, we have adopted a position that these facilities be located at non-obtrusive sites (wherever possible), that they be camouflaged through paint and other measures, be landscaped to minimize visual impacts, and be removed when the equipment is no longer in use. Performance bonding is being required to make sure conditions of application approval for work are actually performed and the facility continues to be maintained.

At the Laverock site, the original applicants, Cingular and ATT Wireless were encouraged to work cooperatively to improve the site and eliminate drainage problems appearing on the bank along Livorna.

Due to continuing consolidation within this industry, Cingular and ATT have now merged their wireless operations. The additional space at the site has been purchased by T-Mobile. This process of consolidation and purchase has slowed the rate of improvements to the site.

Currently, T-Mobile is in discussion with both County Planning and AIA on ways to complete installation of their services on site and complete the improvements for the site. When the work is completed, there will be space allocated at this site for an additional wireless provider.

AIA Planning Committee members continue to meet periodically with T-Mobile representatives to discuss the long over-due improvements at the site. Due to on-going personnel changes at T-Mobile, this process continues to be difficult to move forward.

Presently, work on the slope facing Livorna, including planting of vegetation and trees, has been completed. It is AIA's understanding that additional work on this project will continue to proceed to address AIA's other recommendations for the site, although progress is slow.

Other wireless sites under review for improvements include the 312 Alamo Square site (next to

Continued on page 5

Cherubini's Coffee House) for the addition of an emergency generator, an improvement to meet new 911 service requirements.

Residential Property Applications

It is generally misunderstood that every residential project in Alamo will find its way to AIA.

Residential Property project applications that meet all County Code Requirements typically are not referred to AIA for review. These applications are processed by the County's Building Department.

However, residential property applications that do not meet County building requirements are referred to AIA by the County's Planning Department.

In addition, applications involving construction on lots that are proposed for minor or major subdivisions, home offices, and tree removal, and certain applications involving the type of use of a parcel (land use) are referred to AIA.

Topic of Interest: Hillside Homes

Two of the three residences recently constructed on "Mona Lisa" hill are visible to the majority of Alamo due to the prominent nature of their lots.



For reference, this sub-division development as originally approved by the County in the 90s is located off Alamo Ranch Road and encompasses a topographically difficult property located alongside Interstate 680.

The County's General Plan (established some years earlier) designated this area as single family homes-low density and, for some reason, included the designated area for a distance alongside I 680 buffered by County land.

During the early 1990s, the owner wanted to subdivide this property (of approximately 20 acres) into approximately 10 parcels. To be subdivided, the property would have to be rezoned.

AIA and the Alamo community did not want these hillsides dotted with a large number of residences.

With help from the community, AIA was able to block this plan by recommending denial of the Rezoning Application and then actively pursuing this position throughout the process of review at the County.

As a result, AIA was successful in preventing any further expansion in the number of parcels (and number of residences). However, because the property was originally designated by the County as single family residence-low density, it could still be developed with a smaller number of residences. Then, if the design of the residences met all County Design Standards, AIA would be unable to review the project further.

A specific County design standard is that residences being constructed must meet a County requirement of not more than 35 feet in height from roof peak to finished grade. The County Building Inspection Department also must certify architectural plans and verify that a proposed residence meets this requirement.

Then, during the construction phase, the County Building Department must periodically inspect the construction to verify that the building continues to meet the requirement (and others). To determine height, the technique used is to measure from each construction component down to the grade/ground using a plum line.

Residences with multiple elevations (such as the most prominent residence constructed on "Mona Lisa" Hill), make the mass of a large residence appear even larger and not in compliance with the 35 foot height maximum. This is complicated by the lack of any mature vegetation/landscaping on the lot.

In addition to the first construction, the property owner wanted to further subdivide his parcel of 7.83 acres into two parcels, creating a brand new parcel for an additional residence to be located on the southwest side of the hill.

AIA and the Alamo Community still did not want to have any increase in the number of residences in this most visually prominent area. AIA was able to block this application as well by recommending denial based upon current zoning and general plan requirements. The County Planning Department

Continued on page 6

agreed, recommending to the Zoning Administrator that the application be denied.

However, applicants can appeal any negative decision on their application to the San Ramon Valley Regional Planning Commission and can then choose to appeal again to the Board of Supervisors.

In 2007, the landowner did indeed choose to appeal the denial of the application to the San Ramon Valley Regional Planning Commission (SRVRPC) and was scheduled for the review during the SRVRPC's February, 2007 meeting.

AIA Planning Committee members were present at this meeting and spoke in opposition to the application, as did several neighbors to the property. SRVRPC voted in support of AIA's and the County Planning Department's position that this application should be denied.

Although entitled to appeal to the Board of Supervisors, the property owner apparently has decided not to do so at this time. Having completed the construction and exterior of the residence, the property owner is presently at work on the interior and landscaping features for the residence.

The second property, located in this area and uphill from the first, has been constructed in an architectural design reminiscent of the Tuscan area of Italy. Based on the owner's information, the final construction resembles buildings constructed there during the 1800s that still stand today. The owner is using modern building principles to create an unusual residence that is still partially under construction. AIA is aware that Alamo residents believe the building may be something other than a personal residence (such as a mosque, winery, fort, etc.) The owner assures us that this is not the case, and the construction (verified by an informal AIA site visit with the property owner) does support completely the owner's position that it is a residence. It has also been independently verified as a residence by the County Building Department during their on-going inspection process for residential construction.

Because both of these residences are certified by County Building Department inspectors as being in compliance with County ordinances, AIA is unable to review these projects in any more detail.

Although AIA is unable to condition landscaping for projects that meet all County building requirements,

it is expected that both properties will ultimately have significant landscaping added for sight mitigation and noise control from traffic on I 680.

Another prominent property under review by AIA during 2007 was 7 Country Oak Lane. This application was for a new residence of larger size. Due to the need for demolition and removal of the current older residence, grading, landscaping and construction of the new residence, neighbors along the private road providing access to the property expressed their concerns about a variety of issues. In response to their concerns, the applicant had already significantly downsized the scale of the project prior to AIA's review and had worked with neighbors and the Home Owners Association to address all impacts of the proposed construction.

AIA Committee members conducted a site visit to verify details of the application and judge the impact of mitigation measures agreed to by the applicant and the HOA. AIA is in agreement with the mitigation measures agreed to and communicated this to the County Planning Department. The County Fire District may be requesting an alteration of the driveway to better address their needs. Should this result in a change to the application details, AIA has requested the opportunity to review and provide an update to our comments for that portion of the application.

Finally, in addition to numerous other applications for residential property reviewed by AIA during 2007, AIA also reviewed and commented on several other proposed minor sub-divisions (4 parcels or less) located at addresses of: 61 Crest Ave., 62 Crest Estates Drive, 137 Dean Road, 1251 Lavarock, 281 Livorna Heights Lane, 230 Livorna Heights Road, 1050/1060 Livorna Road, 102 Muir Lane and 359 South Ave. A project for sub-division of a parcel into 6 parcels, located at 1900 Las Trampas Road is also under review.

Decisions on important projects impacting the Alamo community can best be made after community input at our open-to-the-public monthly meetings. The Planning Committee meets every second Wednesday of the month at 7:00PM in the Creekside Community Church (1350 Danville Blvd) in the Modular building located adjacent to the Church parking area. We urge all interested Alamo residents to attend!



AIA Transportation Committee Report

by Michael Gibson

The AIA Transportation Committee monitors and works with Alamo issues involving traffic, roadways, public transportation and pedestrian safety.

The Danville Boulevard Project

As has been the case for the last several years, the most significant transportation issue under discussion has been traffic and pedestrian circulation in Alamo’s downtown area, or as the County refers to it, the “Danville Boulevard Traffic Improvements Project” (referred to here as the “Danville Boulevard Project”). The Alamo community’s dialog on this issue has been ongoing since the mid 1990’s. AIA’s 2005 Transportation Committee report recounts the entire course of events from that time until 2005. That report can be viewed or downloaded by going to AIA’s web site at www.AlamoCA.org.

In 2006, the County separated the elements of the Danville Boulevard Project into Phase I and Phase II. The County completed Phase I late last year, including modifications to the Danville Blvd./Stone Valley Rd. intersection, rebuilding of the traffic signal at that location and installation of in-pavement flashers at the pedestrian crosswalk at Jackson Way. Phase Two considers more significant changes, including possible driveway closures and modification of the Danville Blvd./Orchard Court intersection to either construct a roundabout or realign the Alamo Plaza entry and install a traffic signal. Now that the Phase I modifications are complete, in order

to see what improvements in traffic flow may result from the Phase I modifications, County staff has indicated that they will observe downtown Alamo traffic patterns for at least a year before making any decision on what, if any, aspects of Phase II should then be implemented

AIA’s 2006 and 2007 Transportation Committee reports contain detailed descriptions of both Phase I and Phase II. The 2006 report also includes an in-depth discussion of the pros and cons of the alternative Phase II proposals and AIA’s recommendation for a roundabout on Danville Boulevard at Orchard Court and the Alamo Plaza main entry. Those reports can also be viewed or downloaded by going to AIA’s web site at www.AlamoCA.org. Because of the significant decisions and complex considerations that may face the community in a year or so at Phase II, we urge you to do so. Briefly, the potential elements of Phase II are shown in the diagram below and the pros and cons of a realigned intersection with traffic signal vs. a roundabout are summarized in the table that follows.

Continued on page 8

	Realigned Intersection/Signal	Roundabout
PROS	<p>Improved safety.</p>	<p>Best safety for vehicles & pedestrians. Best traffic performance – little or no additional delay or backups. Best fit with surroundings. Improves the appearance and character of the downtown area.</p>
CONS	<p>Poor traffic performance – large new backups at peak hours, interfering with the operation of Danville Blvd. driveways and the Danville Blvd./ Stone Valley Rd. intersection.</p> <p>Likely need to widen Danville Boulevard north of Orchard to or beyond Jackson to increase capacity of the signal and reduce backups to acceptable levels. This would eliminate landscaping along Oak Tree Plaza and Andrew Young Park and increase the risk to pedestrians crossing at Jackson.</p> <p>Poor fit with Alamo Plaza & Wachovia Bank.</p> <p>Detracts from the character of the downtown – reinforces “auto strip” character.</p>	<p>Costs more; non-local funds must be secured.</p>

AIA Transportation Committee Report (Con't from pg 7)

In the coming months, AIA will research examples of roundabouts in other locations to give the community further information on the applicability of a roundabout to Alamo's situation.

The "Ultimate Configuration" for the Danville Blvd./Stone Valley Rd. intersection

There is another, much less defined, plan that has been in the county's Capital Road Improvement Program for several years now. It has sometimes been referred to as the "Ultimate Configuration" for the Danville Blvd./Stone Valley Rd. intersection. It involves widening to provide an additional southbound lane on Danville Blvd. near the intersection, an additional westbound lane on Stone Valley Rd. from the intersection into the I-680 interchange, widening the bridge over San Ramon Creek to accommodate the additional lane on Stone Valley, and signaling both off ramps to Stone Valley Rd. in the I-680 interchange. This is to accommodate increased traffic to and from I-680 and Danville Boulevard. Presumably because it accommodates primarily regional, rather than local, traffic, the project is budgeted at \$100,000 of local Alamo Area of Benefit funds and \$2,509,000 of unidentified, presumably non-local, funds. In contrast, the County has expressed no intent to provide non-Alamo generated funding for any aspect of the Danville Boulevard Project, even though its purpose is essentially to deal with the impacts of regionally-generated, freeway diversion traffic on downtown Alamo. **Because its essential purpose is to facilitate diversion of freeway traffic to and from Danville Boulevard, AIA has taken a position opposing the County's "Ultimate Configuration" for the Danville Blvd./Stone Valley Rd. intersection.**

Widening of Danville Boulevard in Connection with the YMCA

Pursuant to the requirements of its County approval, the YMCA (to be constructed off Danville Boulevard and Lewis Lane) is preparing to widen Danville Boulevard and remove fifteen of Danville Boulevard's existing trees. The widening/tree removal project covers about 800 feet of Danville Boulevard from Hemme Avenue to about 210 feet south of Woodhaven Court.

The project will change Danville Boulevard by:

- Creating a twelve-foot wide center two-way left turn lane for about 585 feet.

- Widening the east side of Danville Boulevard about six feet between Lewis Lane and the southern end of the project, coming within a few feet of the fences of homeowners.
- Adding a concrete walkway on the east side of Danville Boulevard between Lewis Lane and Hemme Avenue that will come near and, in some cases, abut the fences of homeowners. The space between the walkway and the road is presently shown to be filled in with decomposed granite.
- Widening the west side of Danville Boulevard by five to six feet for almost the full length of the project.
- Removing a total of fifteen trees on Danville Boulevard – twelve trees on the east side and three trees on the west side of the road.

With the support of Supervisor Piepho's office, AIA, the YMCA and the County will seek ways to refine the project to minimize the unbroken expanse of asphalt and decomposed granite paving, preserve existing trees, and better maintain the character of Danville Boulevard. AIA remains concerned, however, that this widening of Danville Boulevard may make it more likely that the County will seek to extend the existing two-way left turn lane, which now runs from downtown Alamo south to La Serena Avenue, further south to Hemme Avenue to meet up with the newly planned two-way left turn lane. This would likely cause more tree loss, increased traffic impacts to nearby neighborhoods and further loss to Danville Boulevard's character.

Requests to Reinstate the Alamo Road Improvement Committee

For many years, the AIA was represented on the Alamo Road Improvement Committee (ARIC), a County-sponsored local advisory committee that monitored and advised the County on local transportation issues. However, the County has not called a meeting of the ARIC in almost four years. Specific proposals were made to Supervisor Piepho's office in 2007 to re-establish this committee largely along its former lines. There are now current discussions with Supervisor Piepho's office in the setting of the Alamo Community Council to establish an Alamo Road Advisory Committee of sufficient independence to serve this purpose.



Membership Committee Report

By David Ciapponi

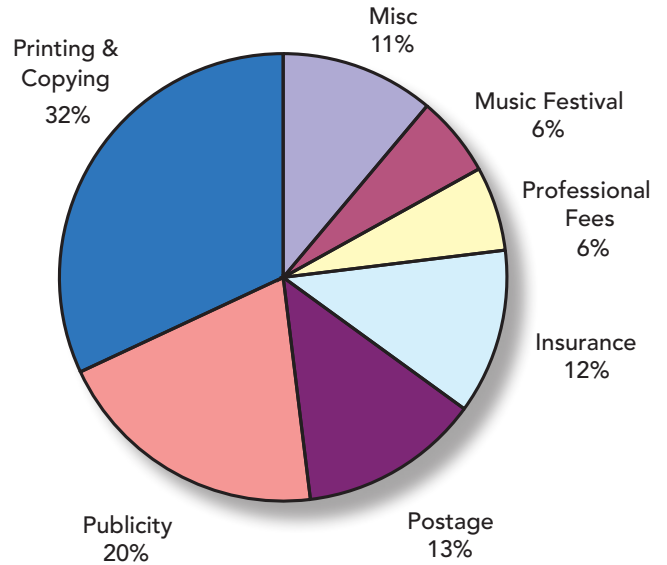
Membership is the foundation and the strength of the Alamo Improvement Association's voice in the community. About

600 of Alamo's 5000 plus households are Association members, an unusually large participation rate for a civic organization. Annual membership dues at \$50 per household make the AIA self-sustaining. AIA receives no government funding.

As AIA members, families receive mailed agendas of the monthly AIA Planning Committee meetings at which Committee members review County-referred applications for zoning changes, lot variances and splits, design reviews, etc. throughout Alamo. This AIA plan review process helps neighbors to stay comfortable with changes in their neighborhoods and neighborhoods in Alamo to preserve their pleasing character.

AIA members also receive notices of special meetings that AIA convenes from time to time about projects and issues of common and widespread interest and concern in Alamo. These special meetings, to get questions from the community and responses from experts or officials, are another way by which the AIA, in creating a dialogue about proposed changes in Alamo, helps to preserve the character of Alamo.

Where do your membership dollars go?



Join Or Renew Your Membership In The AIA Today!



AIA Web Site Report

By Smitty Schmidt

The AIA web site, at www.AlamoCA.org, continues to come on-line at a deliberate pace. The Home Page is current with upcoming meeting dates and agendas and past-meeting minutes for the Board of Directors and the Planning Committee. We are working on our next goal of regularly updating the Home Page "Hot Topics". On the inside pages, the page titled "The AIA" gives the organization purpose, committees and bylaws; "AIA meeting information" gives the meeting calendar for 2008; "Join AIA" gives an on-line membership application; and "Alamo 94507" gives information about Alamo civic life with links to other organizations. "Site Map" represents another future goal. Visit us and learn more about AIA at www.AlamoCA.org!

AIA's website URL is www.alamoca.org



Code Compliance Committee Report

By Jack Behseresht

Building construction in Alamo is governed by Contra Costa County zoning and building codes. Any deviation from these codes is deemed out of compliance unless it is approved by the County Planning Department as a variance or similar development review procedure. Examples of deviations are a fence that is over six feet tall, work that is done without a building permit, and work that encroaches into a required setback or an adjacent easement. There are no variances to the building code; however code compliance is often a “judgment call”, made by the building official.

Most code compliance issues can be avoided when the homeowner contacts the County before starting work on a project by either applying for a building permit or calling the Planning Department at 925-335-1210 and talking to a planner. It is advisable to not rely on a contractor alone to tell you whether or not your building plans are in compliance with County codes!

To report a compliance issue, call the County Building Inspection Department at 925-335-1171. AIA is ready to help you if you want to talk with someone about the issue before you talk to an official. If we find that a violation exists, we will make the referral to the County if you wish. To avoid neighborhood friction, we always keep the identity of the reporting neighbor anonymous.



THE COMMUNITY LIFE OF ALAMO

by Steve Mick and Grace Schmidt

2007 saw a resurgence in community spirit, participation in local civic organizations, and resident engagement in many aspects of life in Alamo. People are attuned to the benefits and rewards of being involved with their community. We see many opportunities for them to make a difference and have a role in the direction Alamo will take in the future.

CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

Alamo Merchants and Professional Association

The business and professional members of AMPA promote Alamo’s commercial district through networking activities and community events, including their popular annual Alamo Tree Lighting in December at Andrew H. Young Park. This year on May 29 they will sponsor a Business Trade Show at the Alamo Women’s Club. Each year they give a scholarship to a student from Monte Vista High School and a student from San Ramon Valley High. AMPA has produced a 20-page booklet of member merchant services that is available to the public at all members’ places of business. The Association monthly mixer is held fourth Wednesdays at 5:30 pm at various locations in the community that are posted on the website at www.alamobusiness.com. AMPA President is Richard Wood of E-Paynow.com at 788-5057.

Alamo Rotary

Alamo Rotary is the local affiliate of the international service organization of business and professional men and women. Each year they sponsor Alamo’s popular late-summer Wine and Music Festival, a big block party in Alamo Plaza that raises money for music education in local schools. Rotary also provides dictionaries for every third grader in Alamo schools, and they recognize an educator and a student of the year in each school. Every spring they sponsor an egg hunt for all children in the community. Rotary meets Wednesdays at noon at Round Hill Country Club. President is Allen Makely at amakely@sbcglobal.net.

Alamo Women’s Club

Alamo Women’s Club members are local women, employed or retired, who fundraise to support services

The Community Life of Alamo (Con't from pg 10)

that include a local hospice program, high school scholarships, and gifts of backpacks and teddy bears for children removed from their homes by Child Protective Services. Their clubhouse at 1401 Danville Boulevard, with its spreading, seasonally lighted oak tree, is a popular rental site for other community groups. April 23 is the date this year of the Women's Club's big fundraiser, a luncheon and fashion show at the clubhouse. Reservations can be made at 925-820-2621. The Club meets every month except July and August on second Wednesdays for tea and business, and on fourth Wednesdays for lunch and program. President is Lauren Hash. The Women's Club phone number is 925-820-1943.

Alamo Improvement Association

AIA is a community based organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing the character of Alamo as a livable community with passable roads, spacious residential lots, trees, and home-grown businesses that meet local needs. Each month AIA reviews, receives neighbor input, and makes recommendations about Contra Costa County-referred building applications for which the County makes final decisions. From time to time, AIA also sponsors community meetings on issues of importance to Alamo. AIA activities are supported by extensive volunteer time and yearly membership subscriptions of \$50 from about fifteen percent of households in Alamo. Each spring AIA sends its annual report of activities to every Alamo residence address.

The AIA Planning Committee meets on second Wednesdays, and the AIA Board of Directors meets on Thursdays following second Wednesdays, both meetings at 7 PM at Creekside Community Church, 1350 Danville Boulevard. All meetings are open to the public. The AIA President is Brad Waite, brad@lhfinancial.com.

COUNTY GOVERNANCE

The local government of Alamo, which is not incorporated as a city, is Contra Costa County. The County is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors, each member elected for a four-year term to represent a geographic district. Alamo is part of District 3, which the Board reconfigured in 2001 to include Alamo, Diablo, Danville, and San Ramon and several communities in East County.

Alamo's representative on the County Board of Supervisors is District 3 Supervisor Mary N. Piepho,

who has a district office in Danville (as well as in Brentwood) at 309 Diablo Road, 925-820-8683, fax 925-820-6627.

Alamo Community Council

The office of the District 3 Supervisor hosts a monthly meeting of representatives of Alamo community groups on second Thursdays at 5 PM at Swain House at Hap Magee Park. The Supervisor sets the agenda, and items can be added by attendees, who report on activities and issues of interest and concern, build lines of communication, and request feedback from the Supervisor's office. Speakers are invited to discuss specific issues like roads and traffic. The public is invited to attend.

County advisory committees in Alamo

The County also has five committees of Alamo members appointed by the District 3 Supervisor to advise the County on policies and practices for specific County government services in Alamo. All meetings are open to the public.

Alamo Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (R-7A) meets third Wednesdays at 4:30 PM at Swain House in Hap Magee Park in Danville. These recreation services are supported by County property tax and an Alamo parcel tax. R-7A funds an extensive recreation program of classes and activities for all ages, park improvements, and improvements to local school sports venues.

Alamo Beautification Advisory Committee (Zone 36) meets every other second Wednesday at 9 AM at The Cottage in Hap Magee Park. Beautification projects have been supported by an Alamo parcel tax of \$9.36 per year for the past fifteen years. Last year the Committee failed to receive voters' support for an increase in assessment, and now they are looking for the support of sponsors and volunteers for their projects. These include Stone Valley Road landscaping; median island improvements at Stone Valley Road and Roundhill Road; street sweeping on uncurbed sections of Danville Boulevard, Stone Valley Road, Miranda Avenue, and Livorna Road; and miscellaneous expenses of the "Boulevard of Trees" on Danville Boulevard.

Hap Magee Ranch Park Planning and Joint Operations Committee (JPOC) meets on a Thursday at 5 PM in February, May, September, and December at The Cottage. The next scheduled meeting in 2008 is May 22. JPOC exists under a joint powers

Continued on page 12

The Community Life of Alamo (Con't from pg 11)

authority between Contra Costa County and the City of Danville because this popular park in Danville sits at the border of Alamo. Its parking lot is scheduled for expansion in 2009.

Police Services Advisory Committee (P-2B) meets first Mondays at 4:30 PM at the Sheriff’s Valley Station, 150 Alamo Plaza. P-2B services are supported by an Alamo parcel tax.

Police Services Advisory Committee (P-5) meets second Tuesdays at 7:30 PM at Roundhill County Club, lower meeting room. P-5 services are supported by a parcel tax on residents of Roundhill Country Club.

ACCESSING THE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The County Board of Supervisors meets in public sessions on Tuesday mornings at the County administration building, 651 Pine Street, in downtown Martinez 94553-1229. (The 2008 calendar schedules the supervisors to meet on 32 out of 52 Tuesdays, the other twenty being fifth Tuesdays, holidays, or conference or seasonal breaks.) The County has a web site at www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/, and pages of useful information about the Board and Board meetings are available there.

Weekly agenda of the Board of Supervisors

The Clerk of the Board, also in the County administration building, at 925-335-1900, fax 925-335-1913, prepares and distributes agendas for the Board meetings. The agenda is available on the Friday morning before the Tuesday meeting at the County web site at www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/

[depart/board/board.htm](#) or by hard copy at the Office of the Clerk. A Board meeting agenda consists of (1) an open session of items discussed in public, (2) “consent items”, which are not discussed and are passed in a single vote unless there is an in-person request (which can come from the public) at the beginning of the meeting to discuss an item, and (3) closed session items, which deal with issues that by law are not discussed in public. The agenda also includes a helpful glossary of government terms.

Registering your opinion with the Board of Supervisors

If you see an item on the Board of Supervisors weekly agenda and you want to give the supervisors your opinion about it during the 96 hours before they vote on it, you can:

- Call the District 3 Supervisor, 925-820-8683, fax 925-820-6627, or e-mail the Supervisor at dist3@bos.cccounty.us, or go to the District 3 web site at www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/dis3/ to access the Clerk of the Board, or
- Call or fax the Clerk of the Board, who will give your message to all five supervisors, or
- Go to the County web site, click on Board of Supervisors/Submit Public comment and fill out a form, or
- Go to the Tuesday Board of Supervisors meeting and fill out a card at the beginning of the meeting asking to speak (three minute limit per speaker) during the period of public comment.

Contacts:

County administration building	651 Pine Street, Martinez 94553-1229
County web site	www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/
Clerk of the Board	925-335-1900, fax 335-1913
County agenda web site.....	www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/board/board.htm
Supervisor Mary Piepho.....	309 Diablo Road, Danville, 925-820-8683 fax 820-6627, dist3@bos.cccounty.us www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/dis3/
Alamo Improvement Association.....	Brad Waite, brad@lhfinancial.com
Alamo Merchants and Professional Association ...	Richard Wood, 788-5057
Alamo Rotary.....	Allen Makely, amakely@sbcglobal.net
Alamo Women’s Club.....	Clubhouse, 820-1943

2008 A.I.A. Board of Directors Statements

Glenn R. Brown — Ridgewood Road, Civil Engineer, 5-1/2 year resident

Community Involvement:

AIA Board Member; Upper Ridgewood HOA Member; Monte Vista Boosters & PTSA.

Statement:

Alamo is Balkanized by a collection of County-sponsored boards and committees, each of which contributes sincere effort, but without consensus on a vision for our future.

The County disregards these separate voices or chooses to respond to one which validates its own agenda, but which may not represent the majority of Alamo stakeholders.

Our Supervisor has suggested that a consolidating MAC [Municipal Advisory Committee] or even incorporation as a town might be in our future. We should make that decision for ourselves through debate and compromise as a community, not allow the County to impose its choice for local government. The AIA could provide the forum for that constructive debate.

Mike Gibson — Sara Lane, Architect/Planner, 23 year resident

Community Involvement:

A.I.A. Board of Directors for 21 years, current Transportation Chair, past Planning Chair; San Ramon Valley Regional Planning Commission, 14 years & past Chair; Association for the Preservation of Danville Blvd., Board of Directors for 22 years, past V.P. 2006 Alamo Citizen of the Year.

Statement:

Alamo's small town character and rural, low-density, natural beauty are rare. They need not and must not be sacrificed to rapid suburban growth around us or careless development and ill-advised "improvement" within our own community. I believe we can continue to refine our community, but not intensify our neighborhoods or expand the size of our downtown. We can work toward making our roadways safer, but we must also avoid damaging Alamo's character or attracting more traffic through our community. A.I.A.'s primary mission should be to preserve and enhance Alamo's character and strengthen our sense of community.

Jeffrey E. McClung — Livorna Road Businessman 23 year resident

Community Involvement:

Current AIA Board Member, co-chairman of the Planning Committee, member Roundhill Country Club

Statement:

I would like to help preserve the quality of life we enjoy in Alamo, present and future. My wife and I have built our home here and raised our children in this community. We have all seen many changes over the past 21 years. To insure that these changes do not destroy the semi-rural atmosphere we enjoy, we must all be vigilant in how we plan and replan the remaining Alamo properties. With my business experience I feel that I can help the community to this end.

AIA Board of Director Statements (Con't on pg 14)

Steve Mick — La Sonoma Dr., Retired, 18 Year Resident

Community Involvement:

Current member AIA Board of Directors, Member Alamo Parks and Recreation Committee (R7A), Member Alamo Beautification Committee (Zone 36), Board of Directors - Veterans Memorial Building Development Committee of the San Ramon Valley

Statement:

Our semi-rural Alamo lifestyle is increasingly being pressured by the demands of growth and a concomitant increase in traffic. Any further development in the downtown area must be closely monitored and assessed to ensure that there is minimal impact to traffic. It is vitally important that Alamo retain its unique character and identity. The best way to do this is to ensure that the political and administrative control of Alamo remains with the residents of Alamo insofar as possible.

Joseph A. Rubay — Erselia Trail, Small Business Owner, 35 year resident

Community Involvement:

Contra Costa Fair Board Director, Alamo Precinct Captain for Political Campaigns National Director for Missile Defense Advocacy

Statement:

I am a former Certified Public Accountant. I now run a small business that specializes in Real Estate Appraisals. Since my days as Student Body President at Monte Vista High School, have been active in local, state and national politics. I believe in a fiscally responsible small, green government that promotes public safety.

Roger Smith – High Eagle Road, Businessman, 12 Year Resident

Community Involvement:

Current member A.I.A.; Board of Directors; Planning Committee member, current Chair; numerous coaching positions for our area's youth teams; RHCC Swim Team Board member.

Statement:

The small town ambiance of Alamo needs to be preserved. Without community involvement, the small town character of Alamo will continue to face haphazard and uncontrolled development. We need to have a balanced approach to development, one with common sense and awareness of protecting our community. Traffic congestion continues to be a problem and of concern to our community. I would like to be of service to Alamo by finding solutions that work.

Brad Waite — Las Trampas Road, Businessman, 16-Year Resident

Community Involvement:

Current President, Board of Directors (6 years), AIA Membership and Agenda committee chair, Past member Alamo Beautification Zone 36 committee, member of AIA 15 years.

Statement:

I have enjoyed my time these past few years with the AIA Board and its efforts to preserve what we all enjoy in Alamo. I would like to continue my involvement with the AIA Board in the effort to have Alamo's voice heard at the County level. My goals if elected for another term would be to expand our membership base and to broaden the AIA's role into the future of our downtown, the ever-increasing traffic issues, and other areas that affect quality of life in Alamo.

2008 – 2009 A.I.A. Board of Directors Ballot

Please Vote for Six (6) candidates only. Ballots must be received by May 22, 2008.

You must be an AIA member and have paid your \$50 membership fee for your vote to count.

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glenn R. Brown | <input type="checkbox"/> Steve Mick | <input type="checkbox"/> Roger Smith |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mike Gibson | <input type="checkbox"/> Joseph A. Rubay | <input type="checkbox"/> Brad Waite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jeffrey E. McClung | | |

Alamo Needs You!

The larger our membership, the louder our voice. Your opinion is important – not just to us, but to the County as well.

If a substantial portion of Alamo is represented by A.I.A., the needs and desires of our community achieve more recognition. The character and quality of life that make Alamo unique and beautiful are constantly being challenged. Your help and support give A.I.A. increased ability to ensure that our area retains its peaceful, rural atmosphere.

Please join us and send in your 2008 dues!

2008 – 2009 A.I.A. Membership Form

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail _____

Please check one:

- I/We am/are renewing my A.I.A. membership
- I/We am/are joining the A.I.A. for the first time
- I/We have already paid my 2008-2009 AIA Dues

Please check one:

- Send my monthly agenda by mail only
- Send my monthly agenda by e-mail only
- Send my monthly agenda by both methods

I would be willing to volunteer time to the A.I.A in the following area(s):

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Web Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Roads & Highways | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning Violations | <input type="checkbox"/> A.I.A Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Clerical |

Please detach and return this entire page (and your check for \$50) in the enclosed envelope and mail it to Alamo Improvement Association, P.O. Box 156, Alamo, California 94507.

Alamo Improvement Association

P.O. Box 156
Alamo, CA 94507

Presorted
Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Alamo, CA
Permit No. 2



The Alamo Improvement Association

What Does It Mean To Our Community?

The purpose of the Alamo Improvement Association is to assure Alamo residents a voice in the process that governs our community. The AIA was founded in 1955 to preserve and foster the established character and quality of Alamo as a semi-rural, low density, residential area.

Since Alamo is not incorporated as a city or town, Contra Costa County is the administering agency for our community. Alamo homeowners pay taxes to the County, and all decisions affecting Alamo are made at the County level.

Services such as police and fire protection, traffic control and road maintenance, regulation of zoning, planning and development, and the determination of Alamo's future environmental and scenic qualities are all controlled by County officials in Martinez.

The AIA Board of Directors is an elected group of volunteers. The Board functions through its officers and committees as an advisory group and liaison to the County to represent the interests of our community.

The Planning Committee reviews and submits comments and recommendations to the County on all proposals for new developments and all of the discretionary applications for Alamo.

The Transportation Committee monitors official activity concerning local traffic, street maintenance, road improvement projects and regional transportation issues.

The Environmental Committee works to preserve and enhance Alamo's environmental resources such as parks, creeks and open space.

The Zoning Violations Committee works with concerned local residents and County officials to enforce laws that protect the welfare, safety and appearance of the Alamo community.

The AIA is self-supporting through its membership. Your participation builds the foundation of our strength and influence. If you would like to support what we are doing, please help us to increase our effectiveness by joining the AIA so we can do a better job for you - and for Alamo!

A one-year membership in the A.I.A. is currently \$50 per household. Your dues will support our efforts through 2009.

As a 2008 member you will receive all our newsletters and agendas through May of 2009. We will keep you informed about current issues and our upcoming hearings and meetings.

The Alamo
Improvement
Association is your
voice in the process
that governs our
community.
