

# Sierra Club – Alameda Election November 2012

## Questionnaire for City Council – Jeff Cambra Response

### General Approach

As a Councilmember, we will be counting on you to help Alameda develop environmentally, equitably, and economically while preserving our natural and cultural heritage. As long as economic growth equates to material growth requiring materials from outside of the local area, such as large homes and automobiles and other possessions, there will be a tension between economic development and environmental stewardship. What guidelines do you use to achieve sustainable and equitable economic development and preservation of our natural and cultural heritage?

### RESPONSE:

An essential role of government is to set guidelines and policies that promote initiatives and core values. Elected officials are charged with creating legislation to further these objectives. The resulting laws serve to level the playing field in a capitalist society so that in its quest to be more competitive or make more profits, corporations do not destroy the environment or drive wages and benefits to the sub-poverty level. One only needs to look at history to see evidence of the effects of unregulated capitalism.

Both as an Eagle Scout and as a Wildlife Biology major at U.C Davis, I learned the basics of environmental stewardship and the consequences of not practicing sound environmental practices. As a local elected official, I will continue to create awareness, promote education, and lead by activity and example. Some of my past activities include:

using my video production skills to help Miss Alameda spread her message of commercial composting by creating a video that has run on the local public access channel. You may view the video here: <http://blip.tv/alameda-currents/miss-alameda-says-compost-5532984>,

risked life and limb to film what it is like to bike through the Posey Tube.

You can view the video here: <http://blip.tv/alameda-currents/jeff-cambra-rides-the-posey-tube-5476321>,

producing events that promote functional cycling like Bike to the Movies and Tour de Tracks to reduce auto trips,

supporting our urban farming movement by having the League of Women Voters co-sponsor a table display for the Backyard Growers, Beekeepers, Chicken Coop, Ploughshares Nursery, and Project Leaf.



### **Guidelines for the Environment**

Require environmental impact reports for all major projects and support mitigate measures to reduce or remove harmful impacts. Provide incentives to encourage builders to construct LEED certified buildings. My decisions would also be guided by the need to improve air and water quality without placing an undue financial burden on residents with limited financial capacity. As for day to day activities, my core principles are reduce consumption, reuse at the highest and best use, recycle, and rot. These principles would carry into my decision making as a council member.

### **Guidelines for Economic Development**

Require project labor agreements on major projects to be sure corporations do not obtain a competitive advantage by reducing wages or benefits to workers. Create incentives to use local resources including apprenticeship programs and local hire requirements.

### **Toxics and Environmental Restoration**

1. Alameda Point is a Superfund site and the Navy plans to leave some contaminated materials in place and impose deed restrictions, some in perpetuity, on the land when it is transferred. The toxics at Alameda Point pose potential hazards to both people and other living things. Do you think existing cleanup standards are adequate? Do they protect other living things as well as humans? Is it advisable for Alameda to permit the construction of housing, such as Shinsei Gardens, above soil containing fuel or chlorinated hydrocarbon vapors? Is it advisable for the City to accept deed restrictions that require the City to enforce restrictions on digging into soil in perpetuity where residual “marsh crust” (heavy asphalt like hydrocarbons from town gas plants in the 1800s and early 1900s) is found?

**RESPONSE:** As I understand the present agreement, the Navy is required to clean up Alameda Point for specific uses (residential, commercial, open space, etc.) and is using published human “safe” levels of toxins as the standard. While it is arguable that these standards actually protect humans, it is clear that

the standards do not take into account other forms of life. Consequently, I do not believe that the clean up standards are adequate for other living things.

I do not support the construction of residential housing over soil containing contaminants. I am interested in knowing what are the alternatives to being forced to accept deed restrictions? What options does Alameda have? Does the City have some type of leverage it can use to compel the Navy to clean up Alameda Point to a higher standard.

### **Regional Development (Bill Smith and Jon Spangler)**

2. Is it important that Alameda consider regional issues when developing Alameda Point, such as regional jobs housing balance, housing for those who cannot afford to pay market rate rents, and regional transportation systems? What would you or your major supporters like to see developed at Alameda Point?

**RESPONSE:** Multifamily housing with basic retail and frequently used service businesses clustered around transit hubs with connections to Lake Merritt BART, Oakland CalTrain. Create a ferry stop at the seaplane lagoon. I would support the full implementation of the Housing Element and the use of the Density Bonus to promote work force and multifamily housing options.

3. What modes of transportation should the City support to develop in Alameda and the region? Possible modes include auto, motorcycle, bus, ferry, BART, bicycle and walking. Which modes do you see increasing their share of trips in the future?

**RESPONSE:** As a member of BikeAlameda, I promote the use of the bicycle for short functional trips like shopping, dining, and taking in a movie. For regional connections, I prefer a multimodal connection to regional transit hubs to serve the specific needs of different segments of the population and one that does not promote the use of a car over other modes.

4. How would you create major transportation hubs with high-density housing, especially low-income housing? Do you support Alameda's revised housing element, the first one certified by the State in nearly two decades?

**RESPONSE:** The starting point for land use decisions is the general plan. I would be sure that the general plan (and any specific plan overlays) reflected the uses required to create a transit hub. Zoning should allow for a variety of housing types that would support low cost housing alternatives. I strongly support the recently passed housing element.

5. What are the biggest barriers to green job development in low-income communities and how would you overcome these barriers? **RESPONSE:** Residents in underserved communities face a number of challenges in obtaining jobs – green or otherwise. People living in these communities may not possess the skill set to qualify for a job. An integrated GED/Trades program that gives the student

the skills needed to perform the job is the first step. The training program should be coordinated with the building trades unions where union workers could teach students the advanced skills in green building, etc. Given the enormous opportunities at Alameda Point, I would support these types of relationships and would support including them in the project labor agreement.

### **Resource Management (Water, Materials, Energy)**

6. Alameda has an outstanding solid waste recycling program and has worked well with CASA to implement it. What do you think can be done to improve our solid waste recycling program and do you think the City will meet the County's landfill waste reduction goal?

**RESPONSE:** I am familiar with one aspect of the City's solid waste recycling program and wholeheartedly support the City's efforts to date. In order to improve the program, I would prioritize the outreach of City staff to high generator users (either as a single business or as a segment of a business type) first and then move to smaller generators. Education and convenience are the keys to a successful program. As a final implementation strategy, I would consider some type of enforcement to habitual offenders.

7. Do you support AMP's sale of excess recycled energy credits to fund energy conservation programs in Alameda?

**RESPONSE:** Without knowing the type of programs and their potential impact on reducing consumption in the long term, I do not have sufficient knowledge to reply to this question. If the net affect of such a program results in decreased consumption overall, I would review such a proposal.

### **Fauna, Flora, Open Space and Recreational Land Management**

8. According to the 1996 Community Reuse Plan, the runway area at Alameda Point is slated to become (1) a national wildlife refuge and (2) California Public Trust land (Northwest Territories) for open space and recreation.

After the US Fish and Wildlife Service refused the Navy's terms for accepting the land to create the Alameda National Wildlife Refuge, the Veterans Administration expressed a willingness to take over the parcel and manage the least tern colony, while it runs a medical clinic and columbarium. The VA would be responsible for maintaining the runway area as a wildlife refuge. It is possible that the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) would manage that refuge site. Do you support the section of the reuse plan that calls for creating a wildlife refuge?

**RESPONSE:** I do support the creation of the wildlife refuge as a means of preserving the habitat for the wildlife and waterfowl living in the immediate area. I also support having EBRP District manage the refuge. The District has the staff and knowledge to manage the refuge. I do not see the VA hiring the necessary staff to manage the refuge.

9. Do you believe it's appropriate for the city to require EBRPD to give Measure WW funds to the city before the park district creates and manages a regional park on the Northwest Territories?

**RESPONSE:** I do not believe that the City should require EBRP District to purchase the land for the

regional park using Measure WW funds. So long as the conveyance from the Navy to Alameda is free, I will support actions that would allow EBRP to manage the proposed park.

10. Enterprise Park, located next to the USS Hornet and Breakwater Beach, includes active soccer fields, a dormant campground, a shuttered recreation building, and unused volleyball, basketball and tennis area. What would you do to help create the regional park at this location as called for in the base reuse plan?

**RESPONSE:** I would assemble a coalition of stakeholders and interest groups (potential users) to decide where to get the funds needed to perform the work needed to get this area productive. I would then do outreach to secure volunteers to perform cleanup.

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