

TRANSMITTED VIA EMAIL

March 26, 2019

Honorable Mayor Matichak and Members of the City Council
 City of Mountain View
 500 Castro Street
 Mountain View 94041

Dear Mayor Matichak, Vice Mayor Abe-Koga, and Councilmembers Clark, Hicks, Kamei, McAlister, and Ramirez,

RE: Item 6.1 – Rowhouse Development at 1950 Montecito

On behalf of SV@Home and our members, we write you today regarding the proposal to demolish a 34-unit apartment building and replace it with 33 for-sale rowhomes. The proposed redevelopment is only the latest example of the ongoing economic pressures and city policies that favor the replacement of naturally-occurring affordable housing with for-sale homes which, while priced lower than a detached single family home, are still outside the reach of even moderate income families. The City Council should take this opportunity to prioritize the development of a policy that will address these displacement issues through a consistent, city-wide approach.

We reiterate our call on the Council to task staff with crafting a strategy to proactively engage with this challenge. Staff and the Council could consider a range of policy options to address the displacement of low incomes families, from enhanced relocation benefits that would strengthen opportunities for at-risk households to continue to be a part of our communities to exploring opportunities for tenants or non-profit organizations to purchase at-risk properties. Staff could also consider variations of no-net loss policies, which seek to ensure that any redevelopment results in higher density housing and/or the replacement of naturally affordable units with deed-restricted homes.

At a time when the region faces a serious undersupply of housing, SV@Home agrees that it is appropriate in some circumstances to redevelop low-density housing developments to replace older, outdated buildings and achieve more density. We do not, however, support developments that will result in a net loss of housing units and instead stress the importance of leveraging redevelopment to achieve the replacement of affordable homes.

Mountain View is a leader in tackling the region's affordable housing crisis. But it's not enough to plan for and build new residential development. Cities must take actions to avoid losing existing naturally occurring affordable housing options or we are taking one step forward and two steps back.

Ron Gonzales, Chair
*Hispanic Foundation
 of Silicon Valley*

Janice Jensen, Vice Chair
*Habitat for Humanity
 East Bay/Silicon Valley*

Kevin Zwick, Treasurer
Housing Trust Silicon Valley

Kathy Thibodeaux, Secretary
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 Foundation*

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Amie Fishman
*Non-Profit Housing Association of
 Northern California*

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Janikke Klem
Technology Credit Union

Jan Lindenthal
MidPen Housing

Jennifer Loving
Destination: Home

Mary Murtagh
EAH Housing

Chris Neale
The Core Companies

Andrea Osgood
Eden Housing

Kelly Snider
Kelly Snider Consulting

Jennifer Van Every
The Van Every Group

Staff

Leslye Corsiglia
Executive Director

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Not only do many naturally-affordable apartments serve lower-income households for whom there are not enough deed restricted opportunities, they are often the only housing options for missing-middle households that earn too much to qualify for deed restricted affordable housing and not enough to afford the new high-rent apartments being built in Mountain View.

According to our analysis of City records up to the end of 2018, since 2015 more than 610 units of older rental housing have been lost or are in the process of being demolished and rebuilt. To put this in perspective, the City permitted 135 very-low, low- and moderate-income affordable units during this same period.

Finally, and to be clear, SV@Home's intention is not to single out one developer or proposed housing type. Rather we seek to call attention to the displacement challenge and encourage the Council to take this opportunity to consider holistically what types of city-wide policies could be put in place to ensure fair outcomes for both developers and residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David K Meyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue grid background.

David K Meyer
Director of Strategic Initiatives

