



Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning
817 Montgomery Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

April 1, 2019

Mountain View City Council
City Hall, 500 Castro Street
PO Box 7540
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

Re: 6.1 Residential Development at 2310 Rock Street

Dear Mayor Matichak and City Council members:

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning (MVCSP) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on a proposed residential development at 2310 Rock Street.

With the continued demand for all types of housing in Mountain View, uncomfortable and devastating changes are occurring for those who rent. Specifically, as naturally affordable older apartment buildings are sold and redeveloped with “for sale” townhomes, families and individuals are being forced to leave Mountain View. One key reason for this is that those who have been displaced cannot find comparable housing at equivalent rental rates. Although providing “for sale” units meets the stated City Council goal of increasing home ownership, the inevitable displacement is a real problem.

Note that, two years ago, City Council set the following goal:

Promote strategies to protect vulnerable populations and preserve the socioeconomic and cultural diversity of the community.

Also, the General Plan includes the following policy LUD 3.5 -“encourages residential developments to serve the City’s diverse households & incomes”.

And, the EIR for the 555 East Evelyn Avenue Residential Project to be reviewed by EPC this week includes Impact POP-1: “The project would not displace housing or people” (see page 123 of the Draft EIR, <http://laserfiche.mountainview.gov/Weblink/0/edoc/226907/EPC%202019-04->

[03%20Item%205.1%20Staff%20Report%20-%20Exhibit%208%20\(Draft%20EIR%20and%20Final%20EIR\).pdf\)](#)

Even more distressing is the fact that many of these redevelopments are replacing existing apartments with fewer "for sale" units. Specifically, the proposed 2310 Rock Street development will result in a total of four fewer units (59 to 55). Last year, the project at 333 North Rengstorff was approved. In that case, 31 townhouses will replace 32 apartment units.

Once affordable units are eliminated, it not only adversely affects the people and families who live there, but it also has a negative impact on businesses being able to hire local residents, schools where children attend, and the entire fabric of the community.

Although MVCSP does not specifically propose at this time that the change from rental to "for sale" be stopped or put on hold, it is important to set in place firm policies and guidelines to lessen the impact. MVCSP favors the following:

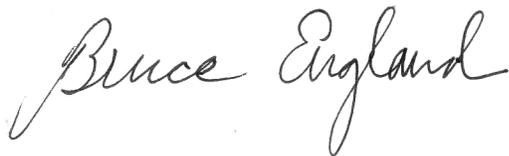
- Do not allow a lower number of replacement units to be built
- Set a greater compensation package than currently exists for residents being displaced
- Offer incentives to developers to build smaller and more affordable units so the result is a net increase in housing units.

That said, it seems to us that this development process is happening at an alarming rate, and a moratorium on conversion of naturally affordable units should be considered until the City has a chance to thoroughly assess the problem and provide policies that can address the displacement issue. We are concerned that Mountain View seems to be at a tipping point and is losing too many naturally affordable units in the City that we might not be able to recover from unless more bold action is taken.

We urge you to direct Staff to explore better ways to address this situation and enact the needed measures as quickly as possible.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce England". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bruce England
for Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning

cc:

Dan Rich, City Manager

Matthew VanOosten, Senior Planner

Stephanie Williams, Planning Manager/Zoning Administrator

Aarti Shrivastava, Community Development Director

Lisa Natusch, City Clerk

About Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning is a group of local volunteers dedicated to making Mountain View as beautiful, economically healthy, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian accessible, and affordable as possible. MVCSP member interest and expertise covers areas such as housing, transportation, the environment, the economy, and beyond!

For more information, see <http://www.mvcsp.org>.

To contact us, send email to mvcsp.info@gmail.com.