



Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning  
Mountain View, CA 94041

April 8, 2014

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

Re: 700 East Middlefield Road RREEF project

Dear Mayor Clark and City Council members:

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning (MVCSP) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the RREEF project at 700 East Middlefield Road, which you are reviewing at your April 8, 2014 study session.

We have reviewed the staff report and request that you consider the following :

- We are very pleased that 700 East Middlefield will be included in the Transportation Management Association (TMA), that RREEF is targeting LEED Platinum status for the project, that a number of excellent off-site public benefits are proposed, and that RREEF plans to contribute approximately \$6,480,000 towards affordable housing in Mountain View.
- We would like to see complete pedestrian and bicycle access through the site north to Encinal Park on Corte Madera Avenue. This could be considered a public benefit and would help to connect pedestrian and bicycling routing between Mountain View and Sunnyvale. Note that this has been a logistical challenge for the developer, as private properties and roadways exist between the site and the park.
- We hope that one or more hydration stations (which can be used both as a water fountain and for refilling water bottles) can be provided in the site's open spaces or, as a public benefit, at the Middlefield light rail station. We suggest that RREEF contact those managing the Water To Go program through the County Department of Public Health or the Santa Clara Valley Water District to discuss viable options. While the Water To Go program is intended for public spaces and schools, they still might be able to help with useful information and resources.
- While the number and arrangement of the pedestrian and pedestrian/bicycle paths throughout the site look great, we are concerned about the shared 12-foot wide bi-directional paths (which include six feet for each direction). MVCSP and other organizations in Mountain View have been pressing for more separation of pedestrian/bicycle traffic, and this could be an issue from our perspective. We suggest that RREEF consider either or both the Google campus and the proposed project at 100 Moffett Blvd. For example, for Google,

history or complaints, incidents, or injuries due to shared pathways to date. And, for 100 Moffett, design considerations and current plans for combined pedestrian/bicycle paths on site.

- In general and as applicable, in order to ensure that the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists are met in and around the project location, we urge you to require the following:
  - Adequate sidewalks with minimum widths called out
  - Adequate number of publicly-available bicycle racks
  - Road and curb designs that help to ensure pedestrian and bicyclist safety, including reduced curb radii, landscaping, and traffic-calming features
  - Safe passage for pedestrians where driveways cross sidewalks
  - Accommodation for pedestrian and bicycle direct access to destinations nearby the project location; for example, to avoid the need to go around the site to get to such destinations

For your reference, we are including our comment letter to City Council from February 2013 below. Note that much of what is mentioned here might have already been addressed or resolved. However, the ongoing jobs/housing imbalance issue remains a troubling one for the city as a whole, and we are not aware of any new developments for a East Whisman Precise Plan.

*We would like to comment on the commercial development project at 700 East Middlefield Road that is being proposed by RREEF Real Estate.*

*First, much of what is proposed is very good. For example, buildings rated for LEED gold or platinum; design intended to provide for bird safety; amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists; plenty of open space; protection of heritage trees; and measures addressing the need for a high proportion of transit-oriented development in our city.*

*However, what we do not see mentioned or discussed so far is how the city's and area's jobs/housing balance will be affected by the expected increase in the number of jobs as a result of this project. Specifically, an increase in housing availability in our city should at least match the number of new jobs expected. Otherwise, we will continue to see the drastic rise in housing costs that both home-buyers and renters have been experiencing. Since this project is being presented as a "highly sustainable office development," not including housing impacts and possible mitigations is a completely unsuitable oversight.*

*In relation to the fact that the February 12th staff report for the 700 East Middlefield project did not mention housing at all, much less provide any details related to mitigation, please bear in mind that sustainability is not only about environmental sustainability (although this is vitally important), but also quality of life, and social and economic diversity in our city, both of which have been hallmarks of Mountain View since its very beginning. With so much new development and related activities now being proposed and undertaken, this is certainly not the time to forget what the full sustainability profile for our city must entail. If thousands more people are to be priced out of Mountain View residency each year, along with the local stores that need low rents to survive, that is a very bad direction to go in.*

*As councilmember Bryant observed during the February 12th study session addressing this project proposal, there is no increase in the diversity of uses included in the proposal. Mixed use including housing would be one way to establish diversity. Of course, new housing does not necessarily have to be at the*

*same location as the development, but close to the project site would be ideal (for example, near the LRT stations in the area), and certainly within our city should be expected.*

*Additionally, the design of the streets in the area is very poor (for example, with poor connectivity to light rail, lack of a street grid, and inadequate availability of services). As a result, workers are dependent on driving in cases where they need to run errands or access services during the day.*

*The design of the streets in the area is abysmal. There's poor connectivity to light rail and the area lacks a street grid and there are no services. Workers are dependent on driving should they need to access services during the day or wish to run errands.*

*The bottom line is that a comprehensive East Whisman Precise Plan needs to be developed before this project is approved and further large office projects in this area are considered. Otherwise, planning decisions and approvals will be made by necessity on a case by case basis, which is neither efficient or likely to provide consistent results. This precise plan should take into account not only transportation and community impacts, but also should provide recommendations and requirements to help balance housing offsets due to new projects that increase the number of jobs in our city. Furthermore, robust and complete comprehensive planning for the East Whisman area should not be limited to the Precise Plan alone. As this work is defined and taken up, transportation planners needs to be involved, and the developers should cover the expense. Ultimately, the true and total cost of the needed infrastructure needs to be identified, and ways found to cover it.*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Bruce England  
for the Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning