



Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning
Mountain View, CA 94041

February 2, 2015

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

Re: Agenda Item 4.1, February 3, 2015: North Bayshore Precise Plan and Residential Uses

Honorable Mayor McAlister and City Council members:

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning appreciates this opportunity to comment on the proposal to study additional housing in our community. We support goals for increased housing in general, including a very substantial percentage of affordable housing, and studying housing in North Bayshore in particular.

MVCSP urges the City Council to initiate a comprehensive study of housing options in North Bayshore. We hope that the planning process is notably open, community-driven, and robust. In parallel with Staff's study of what, where, and when North Bayshore housing options could be viable, a substantial community outreach effort could accurately report the varying views of all major North Bayshore stakeholders, including employers, businesspeople, developers, landowners, and residents -- especially those already living in North Bayshore. We think it essential that Council establish ambitious and achievable milestones for this parallel community-oriented outreach process, start it within the next two months, and complete it no later than the end of 2015.

We strongly suggest that a residents-only workshop, including Council members, be convened very early on so that Council clearly hears what residents do and do not favor. Including extensive public input from the start will be invaluable in designing a North Bayshore community that is economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable, while still protecting local wildlife. A review of the 2008 General Plan visioning results and the Environmental Sustainability Task Force recommendations would be a good place to begin the discussion. There should be no presuppositions on where, how much of, and what type of housing should be considered--our community is prepared to think outside the box. If further changes to the North Bayshore Precise Plan are required, that is fine.

Council should also take steps to ensure that no areas suitable for possible future residential development in North Bayshore are eliminated in advance by preemptive commercial development. We recognize the challenge currently built into the process, with Gatekeeper-type applications for commercial development being submitted based on a Precise Plan that disallows housing. This must be reconciled with preserving possibilities for future residential proposals. Correlating housing needs with the amount of commercial development allowed would also be very helpful.

Thank you very much for your critical work on this extremely important topic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Aaron Grossman".

Aaron Grossman
for the Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning

cc: Daniel H. Rich
Martin Alkire
Terry Blount
Randal Tsuda