

F.G. Planning Commission-Linda's Public Testimony May 2017

We have concerns relating to the effect of the Westside Plan on the development of Green Grove Cohousing Community, which was approved by the Planning Commission on May 3, 2015, as well as concerns about the high-stakes financial and environmental impact of the plan, as proposed by the City. Steep grades and geological and waterway challenges suggest that the proposed costs are not commensurate with the benefits. The required roadway infrastructure, as well as challenges with sewer elevations and water connections at higher than 400' need to be evaluated independently of what would be required to develop at lower elevations. Housing trends suggest millennials and boomers are looking for smaller and more affordable homes and a greater sense of community. High infrastructure costs which drive high construction costs would be counterproductive in meeting market trends and serving current needs.

Our project sits nearly in the center of this planning area. As we have not as yet been issued any building permits, decisions regarding the future development of the David Hill area directly impact us. We have made sizeable investments in providing all the necessary services to build Phase One of the project, including the extension of an 8" waterline 1700' up Thatcher Rd. and a fire hydrant at a cost of \$150,000, which constitutes construction of a qualified public improvement. To date, we have no written guarantee that we will be credited for the portion of this investment that was constructed to serve development in the entire area. Uncertainty now exists as well as to whether, what, how, and when construction costs may be dramatically impacted by the David Hill Planning Proposal.

The City Development Code does not yet recognize cohousing as a form of dwelling. Green Grove Cohousing Community represents a development approach that features sustainability at its core, featuring small home sizes (900-1400 sq. ft.), an emphasis on energy-efficient construction and alternative energy sources and a focus on pedestrian and alternative transportation sources. Individuals considering building in Green Grove cannot afford to subsidize, and should not be subject to vastly increased

SDCs for the high-stakes financial and environmental impact of proposed new infrastructure, a major portion of which will serve large lots at elevations above 400' on David Hill. The zoning and infrastructure costs for those homes would place them unequivocally in the category of high-end luxury homes. The environmental impact of their construction also defines them as outliers when the City is ostensibly encouraging social and environmental sustainability. Instead of burdening all potential builders in the David Hill planning area with inordinately high SDCs and supplementary SDCs that would unfairly impact construction of modest homes on smaller lower elevation lots, the City should differentiate the SDCs on construction of homes above 400'. Development should be restrained in higher elevations until market forces and housing demand would make it tenable for developers to shoulder the exceptional attendant costs. Meanwhile, development below the 400' level could continue to focus on increasing housing stock that is within reach of households in search of smaller, greener, and more affordable homes.

Thank you. (519 words)